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Journal Publication Process

As a double-blind peer-reviewed, open-access, and NepJOL-indexed professional ELT journal, the Journal of NELTA Koshi (JoNK) publishes research articles and book reviews related to English Language Education. The journal focuses on topics such as English language teaching methodologies, curriculum development, language acquisition and development, teacher training and professional development, multilingualism and cross-cultural communication, technology in language teaching, specialized English language teaching, inclusive and diverse perspectives, research in English language teaching, global Englishes, language policy and planning, literature for language development, and innovations in teaching. Additionally, JoNK welcomes practical training session plans for teaching English language skills and aspects, as well as reflections on teacher training programs and articles derived from classroom teaching experiences or professional collaborations in any field.

Each year, the JoNK editorial team issues a call for research articles along with submission guidelines through the NELTA website, professional networks, and social media, providing a 2-3 months' timeline for submissions. Upon receiving the articles, the editorial team conducts an initial screening to determine whether to forward them to reviewers or return them to authors for revision and resubmission. To enhance the quality and professional rigor of the journal, submissions undergo a review process followed by subsequent revisions and improvements after the initial submission. The editorial board maintains anonymity during the selection process and continues this practice, as far as possible, when the submission is sent back to the author for revision.

The review and publication process is as follows:

- The editorial team calls for articles, specifying the submission deadline and guidelines.
- They acknowledge receipt of each manuscript.
- The manuscript undergoes peer review by two anonymous reviewers.
- The author is notified of the manuscript's acceptance or rejection, based on reviewers' feedback, within 5-7 weeks of submission.
- Reviewer comments are forwarded to the author for the final submission of the article if it is accepted after subsequent assessments. Initial consideration for publication, based on one or more rounds of revision, does not guarantee final publication.
- Authors must submit the revised draft within one week of receiving feedback on the first draft. If the editorial board deems it necessary, a second round of comments may be provided, with an additional five days for revision. Late submission at any stage of the review process may be considered as opting out of the publication process.
- Before acceptance, each manuscript's plagiarism level will be checked using software, and the author will be required to minimize any issues if necessary.
- The editorial board will make the final decision on the manuscript's acceptance or rejection and notify the author.
- Finally, the manuscript will undergo copyediting and final production.

Editorial

Advancing English Language Teaching: Reflecting on Emerging Trends and Practices

It is with great pleasure that we present the second volume, first issue of the Journal of NELTA Koshi (JoNK) for August 2024. This issue reaffirms our commitment to fostering critical discussions and disseminating cutting-edge research in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). As a peer-reviewed, open-access journal, JoNK serves as a vital platform for educators, researchers, and practitioners to share insights and innovations that shape the evolving landscape of language education.

In this issue, we are proud to feature ten diverse and thought-provoking articles, along with a book review, that collectively address key themes in contemporary ELT. The breadth of topics covered underscores the dynamic nature of our field, where theoretical advancements and practical applications intersect to create meaningful educational experiences.

The volume opens with **Parshu Ram Shrestha**'s article, Storytelling as a Pedagogy to Scaffold Critical Thinking Skills: A Thematic Review, which highlights the strengths of storytelling as a technique for teaching English in Nepalese classrooms by reviewing extensive literature on the subject. Following this, **Anupama Manandhar**, **Md. Ziaul Karim**, and **Laxman Gnawali** present their research findings on the challenges of teaching English in mother tongue-dominant schools in Nepal, emphasizing the necessity for teachers to integrate students' mother tongues to teach effectively in multilingual settings.

In the third article, **Nasrin Pervin**'s personal narrative explores the impact of reflection on the personal and professional growth of educators through a qualitative research investigation. **Thir Bahadur Khadka**'s contribution, English Studies from Global to Nepali Context: Critical Debates, Challenges, and Possibilities, analyzes the critical debates, ongoing challenges, and future prospects within English Studies in both global and Nepali contexts. Likewise, **Basanta Raj Dhakal**'s article, Boosting Comprehension: Engaging Strategies for Teaching Reading, investigates strategies to enhance reading comprehension, based on semi-structured interviews and non-participant classroom observations of three basic-level teachers. Meanwhile, **Ramji Acharya**'s work on Translanguaging Dynamics in Non-Native English Classrooms explores the pragmatic use of code-switching by English instructors, highlighting its role during interactions within the English teaching and learning process.

Muna Aryal's article, Teachers' Strategies for Improving ESL Learners' Speaking Skills, examines the perceptions of Nepalese English teachers regarding the strategies employed to enhance ESL learners' speaking skills. **Dr. Shiva Ram Pandey**'s contribution, Rummaging on a Research Method, presents a comprehensive review of qualitative research methods, discussing philosophical perspectives, paradigms, parameters, and practical applications for aspiring researchers. **Raju Yonjan**'s study, Teachers' Perceptions

and Practices in Using ICT for ELT at the Secondary Level, investigates secondary-level teachers' perceptions and practices of using ICT in the classroom. The tenth article by **Gopal Basnet** delves into the language of cursing in rural settings, analyzing its impacts on family, community, and schools. Finally, **Tripti Chaudhary** offers a critical review of The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners, reflecting on the book's contributions to the field.

This volume engages with major themes such as emerging trends in ELT methodologies, teacher professional development, learner-centered approaches, cultural and linguistic diversity, classroom-based research, ICT integration, and medium of instruction. As we navigate the complexities of ELT in a rapidly changing world, the articles in this issue remind us of the importance of remaining responsive and adaptable. The research presented here not only contributes to our understanding of effective teaching strategies but also challenges us to rethink conventional practices in light of new evidence and perspectives.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and the editorial team for their invaluable contributions to this issue. Their dedication ensures that JoNK continues to be a leading resource for ELT professionals, fostering a community of practice that is both reflective and forward-thinking. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the NELTA leadership at both the Province and Central levels, especially Prof. Dr. Laxman Gnawali, NELTA President; Mr. Guna Raj Nepal, President of NELTA Koshi Province; Mr. Keshav Prasad Bhattarai, Central Committee Member; Mr. Rabindra Baral, General Secretary of NELTA Koshi; Mr. Dharmendra Bhattarai, Senior Vice-President of NELTA Koshi; and the entire NELTA Executive team for entrusting us with this professional opportunity. Special thanks to the computer designer Rajendra Puri and Bhagawat Press, Biratnagar, for their excellent work.

Finally, we encourage our readers to engage critically with the content of this issue and consider how the insights shared can be applied in their own teaching contexts. By doing so, we collectively advance the field of ELT and contribute to the ongoing improvement of language education worldwide.

Happy Reading!
The Editorial Team
Journal of NELTA Koshi (JoNK)
August, 2024

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Storytelling as a Pedagogy to Scaffold Critical Thinking Skills: A Thematic Review

Parshu Ram Shrestha[1]
[1]Asst. Lecturer, Janta Multiple Campus, Itahari, Sunsari

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Corresponding Author:
Parshu Ram Shrestha
Email: parshushrestha31@gmail.com

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Abstract

Storytelling is a scantily discussed teaching method in Nepal. Though mentioned in the school curricula, the situation of research and practices in storytelling as a method used in English language classrooms is not clear. To understand storytelling's effectiveness as a teaching method, and its connection with critical thinking skills, it is important to ask how it has been perceived and explored by the teachers and researchers respectively. This study was conducted with 25 research articles (out of total 90 articles downloaded from different Internet sources) published in the field. This study has concluded with the results that show storytelling can be a good method in English language classrooms to help students enhance their critical thinking skills, and various forms of storytelling with variety of tools and techniques can be used for the purpose.

***Keywords*:** storytelling, pedagogy, critical thinking skills

Introduction

Stories are narrative texts popularly used in English language textbooks in Nepal for reading comprehension exercises. They are regarded as less challenging for most learners of English than other genres because they demand less background knowledge about the issues they discuss (Smith et al., 2021). The narrative, whether it's written text or in any other form, is effective for not only reading comprehension exercises but also any other media it is used in (Delgado et al., 2018, p. 34). Therefore, stories are a compulsory part of English language learning experience for Nepali students.

The narration or storytelling activity can be a part of teaching-learning, or pedagogy. Pedagogy includes methods and teaching activities that create interaction between the teacher and the learners (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002, p. 10). Storytelling techniques for teaching students in the Nepali EFL classrooms may be both exciting and entertaining. However, the experience may be different according to the type of the storytelling chosen, such as 'oral,' 'written,' 'digital,' etc.

Some critics (Green, 2004; Landrum et al., 2019) think that storytelling is effective for various purposes of teaching. It can be an effective strategy for a teacher in his/her classroom. Green (2004) found storytelling's usefulness in growing students' interest, supporting teachers' delivery, helping students understand and remember the lesson, and increasing the teacher-student or student-student relationship. However, it depends on a teacher as to how s/he uses storytelling as a strategy in his/her classroom.

Mostly oral, written, and digital storytelling have been widely popular around the world. Oral storytelling, a very old tradition, has been used by humans for generations with "pedagogical strategy" (Coulter et al., 2007) for passing information or lesson to their progeny. An oral storyteller uses both verbal (words, sounds, voice projection, intonation) and non-verbal (gesture, facial expressions, hand gestures) techniques to tell the story. Therefore, oral storytelling engages the audience with imagination or mental imagery. It is an effective teaching-tool as it teaches the listeners (students) the "vocabulary and reading comprehension" (Choo et al., 2020) along with the universal human values.

Though teaching critical thinking skills to English language learners is a growing demand, it is challenging to the teachers. For Liang and Fung (2020), the students' lack of proficiency in the language and poor or zero understanding of culture related to the language hinder their learning. On this context, storytelling can help develop the students' communication skills and cultural comprehension (Dewi, 2021). This also supports the enhancement of the students' critical thinking skills.

This paper aims to explore how much useful storytelling as a teaching method is for the students to learn critical thinking skills in English language classroom. Though storytelling has long been used in Nepal and abroad as a form of entertainment and a means to spread messages, it has also been given much attention lately by the academics around the world as a powerful means of communication and teaching-learning activities. On this context, the position of storytelling as a pedagogy in Nepal and abroad is the focus of this study. I hope this study will support future researchers in this topic to study further about the dynamics and directions of storytelling in English language classrooms.

Literature Review

In Nepal, English has long been a prominent language in education. It is taught as a compulsory subject from Grade One to the Bachelors Level (Curriculum Development Centre, 2076 BS a, p. 36). In school curriculum of English as a subject, students' reading skill has been given the highest priority. In Basic Level (up to class 8), reading has 25 marks in external assessment (Curriculum Development Centre, 2078 BS a, p. 63; 2077 BS, p. 100). In Secondary Level, National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2076, has given more importance to reading skill than in the basic level. Reading has 40 marks in external assessment of classes 9 and 10 (CDC, 2078 BS b, p. 52) and 35 marks in classes 11 and 12 (CDC, 2076 BS a, p. 57) Compulsory English course.

As far as storytelling is concerned, it is a method scantily identified and discussed by the school curriculum in Nepal. The word "story telling" has been mentioned three times as a classroom

activity in the Class 1-3 curriculum; however, it lacks explanation of what that means (Curriculum Development Centre, 2076 BS b, pp. 23-24). Similarly, it has been mentioned only once in the curriculum of Classes 4 and 5 (Curriculum Development Centre, 2078 BS a, p. 58). Secondary Education Curriculum for Classes 9 and 10 is also not different in this case. It has only one word "storytelling" (CDC, 2078 BS b, p. 50) mentioned as a method of teaching, and one "story telling" (CDC, 2078 BS b, p. 51) as a tool for formative assessment. The same case is of Secondary Education Curriculum for Classes 11 and 12 with just one entry "story telling" (CDC, 2076 a, p. 56) as a tool for formative assessment. It shows that storytelling is a not so much identified and practiced method of teaching and learning in Nepal.

Stories are easy to memorize due to their structure and emotional link with the audience. Therefore, storytelling can be "a powerful pedagogical approach" if used "judiciously and properly" (Landrum et al., 2019). We know storytelling is a universally accepted form of communication between generation to generation of human beings. Actually, storytelling has long been used as the "most fundamental communication method" (Widrich, 2012) in the human history. It has multiple benefits in classroom (Sunar et al., 2022; Young, 2015, pp. 30-31); therefore, its growing popularity in Nepal can be felt. Moreover, oral storytelling can be used as an efficient classroom method for enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving skills in Nepali students.

Storytelling around the World

Storytelling as a method of classroom teaching has begun to get heeded by the academicians and the researchers lately. Almost all of the studies that examine storytelling as a method for enhancing critical thinking skills have been conducted within the last two decades.

In my research, I found that the researches related to storytelling as a tool for developing critical thinking skills started only after 2000 though storytelling has a long history in human civilizations. The study revealed that digital storytelling, oral and written storytelling are the most used forms of storytelling for academic purposes.

Digital Storytelling: A Dominating Form

Mainly two forms of storytelling are found popular among the teachers and students: Traditional storytelling (Oral or Written) and Digital storytelling. However, the scene is dominated by the digital storytelling recently. In Mendoza's (2015) opinion, once more the modern humans have returned to the visual form of storytelling with technology through photography. The various social media have revived the history of storytelling.

Further, the studies conducted in the US (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Becker-Bell, 2020; Chess, 2013; Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022; Desai & Marsh, 2005; do Amaral & Windchief, 2019; Enciso, 2011; Groshans et al., 2019; Locklear & Hunt, 2021; Maddin, 2012; McKay, 2010; Meyer et al., 2009; Sutcliff, 2015) are on digital storytelling. It is a form of art which uses storytelling in company of multimedia (Dogan, 2024). These studies signify the great attraction of digital storytelling among both teachers and students in a technologically advanced country like the US where various multimedia are used in the classrooms.

Digital storytelling has been found effective mainly in raising "criticality" (Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022; Locklear & Hunt, 2021), exploring "identity" (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Locklear & Hunt, 2021) or "culture" (Locklear & Hunt, 2021), lessening "ethical confusion" (Gachago & Livingston, 2020), examining the "relationship between anti-Blackness and language" (Becker-Bell, 2020), conversing about "difference and inherent power structures" (Gachago et al., 2014), and increasing "students' interest in their studies" (Raffone & Monti, 2019). The digital storytelling has mainly been useful in raising students' critical thinking and interest in the topics they are taught.

Oral Storytelling and Other Forms

Oral narrative, which is another popular form of storytelling, has been used effectively to strengthen students' communication capacity (Russell, 2018), develop young children's critical thinking skills (Shank, 2016), explore "silenced consciousness" (McKay, 2010), shape the students' "perceptions, behaviors, and characteristics" (Meyer et al., 2009), promote teacher-student "critical engagement" (Desai & Marsh, 2005), and develop students' skills for critical thinking and problem-solving (Pavlou, 2019). However, Pavlou's (2019) study has not been complete and conclusive. Overall, these studies establish that oral storytelling has been another popular method tested for various academic purposes in the classrooms.

Storytelling can also be conducted in the form of "self-reflective writing" (Chess, 2013) and "critical reading and journal writing" (Sutcliff, 2015). They can be used to develop students' emotional balance and resilience. In this light, Mabingo (2019) studies storytelling in the form of African neo-traditional dances which were found to be beneficial for the enhancement of the students' cultural and artistic knowledge.

Storytelling for Critical Thinking and Resiliency

Mostly, the African American researchers (do Amaral & Windchief, 2019; Locklear & Hunt, 2021; Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022; Becker-Bell, 2020; Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Mabingo, 2019; McKay, 2010; Meyer et al., 2009) devised storytelling as a classroom method to strengthen the critical thinking capacity and resiliency of their students. Using Tribal Critical Race Theory, do Amoral and Windchief (2019) used the method of reading stories and creating 3D models for specific scenes on middle school computer science teachers of American Indian or multicultural origins; however, the research was inconclusive as it was only the first phase of the research and the second phase would start only after the participants went to college. Locklear and Hunt (2021) made 10 teenage indigenous Lumbee students create documentary as part of their storytelling projects which enabled them with bold voice and critical thought. Davaslioglu and Lizarazo (2022) also concluded that digital storytelling improves students' critical thoughts while helping them learn the language. Becker-Bell (2020) made Black community students aware of white language supremacy; whereas Angay-Crowder et al. (2013) developed tolerance among 12 multi-lingual middle school immigrant students through digital storytelling. Mabingo (2019), on the other hand, used dance performance and McKay (2010) took help of counter-narratives as storytelling techniques for creating consciousness in their students. Meyer et al. (2009) also proved that storytelling is effective to develop resilience in students with changes in their ways of seeing, doing, and being.

Whatever they did, all the above-mentioned researchers' wider goal was to enable the people of the minority communities to preserve their traditional cultures and identities. The good news is, in most of these studies, storytelling has been proved to be a powerful tool for encouraging the participants to brace themselves up with knowledge, courage, and power to deal with their lived experiences in a better way.

Methods

Methodology is the process of a research work. It is the systematic guideline for a researcher which helps him/her choose a research paradigm, method, data collection and data processing tools so that the research work is effective, reliable, and result-oriented. The present study has analyzed the data thematically. For this, the qualitative research synthesis method for TESOL and Applied Linguistics discussed by Chong and Plonsky (2021) has been applied. The qualitative research synthesis or QRS, with its each step, has been conducted systematically. (See Fig. 1).

Designing Research Questions

This review on storytelling as a method for scaffolding critical thinking skills focuses on research and practice of storytelling in English language classroom. The questions used during the research were:

1. How is storytelling as a pedagogy for critical thinking skills conceptualized?
2. How is storytelling as a pedagogy for critical thinking skills operationalized?
3. How is storytelling as a pedagogy for critical thinking skills evaluated?

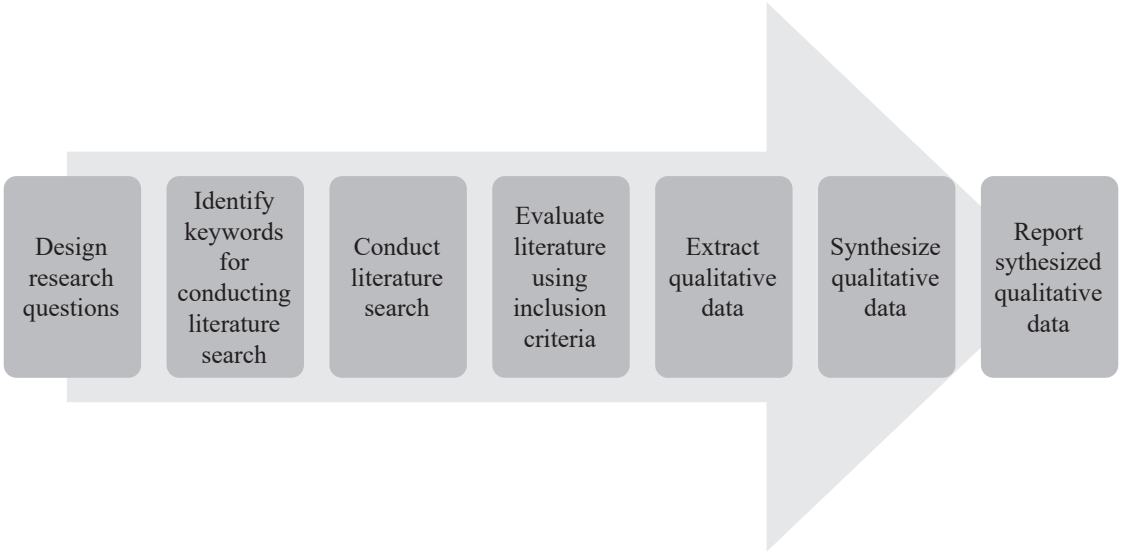


Fig. 1. A Methodological Framework (Source: Chong & Plonsky, 2021)

Keywords Identified for Conducting Literature Research

The related literatures for storytelling and critical thinking were searched with precise coin words. Being aware of the importance of accuracy of the search terms, I used the following search strings for the better result:

"story" AND "critical thinking"
"storytelling" AND "critical thinking"
"storytelling" AND "pedagogy" AND "critical thinking"

The above list of search terms indicates my position and future involvement in the matter of storytelling as a pedagogy to enhance critical thinking skills.

Literature Search Conducted

Literature for this review was performed through an exploratory search on electronic research databases. The searches were performed on Google Scholar and ERIC. I conducted a search on Google Scholar with search items "allintitle (story AND critical thinking)" and "allintitle (storytelling AND critical thinking)". The research with the first research item yielded 30 articles in total. The second research item yielded 40 articles. Similarly, I conducted another research on ERIC with search items "Storytelling" AND "pedagogy" AND "critical thinking" (Peer Reviewed + full text available in Eric). This research yielded 20 articles.

I searched articles and completed their selection using the steps outlined in the Figure 2.

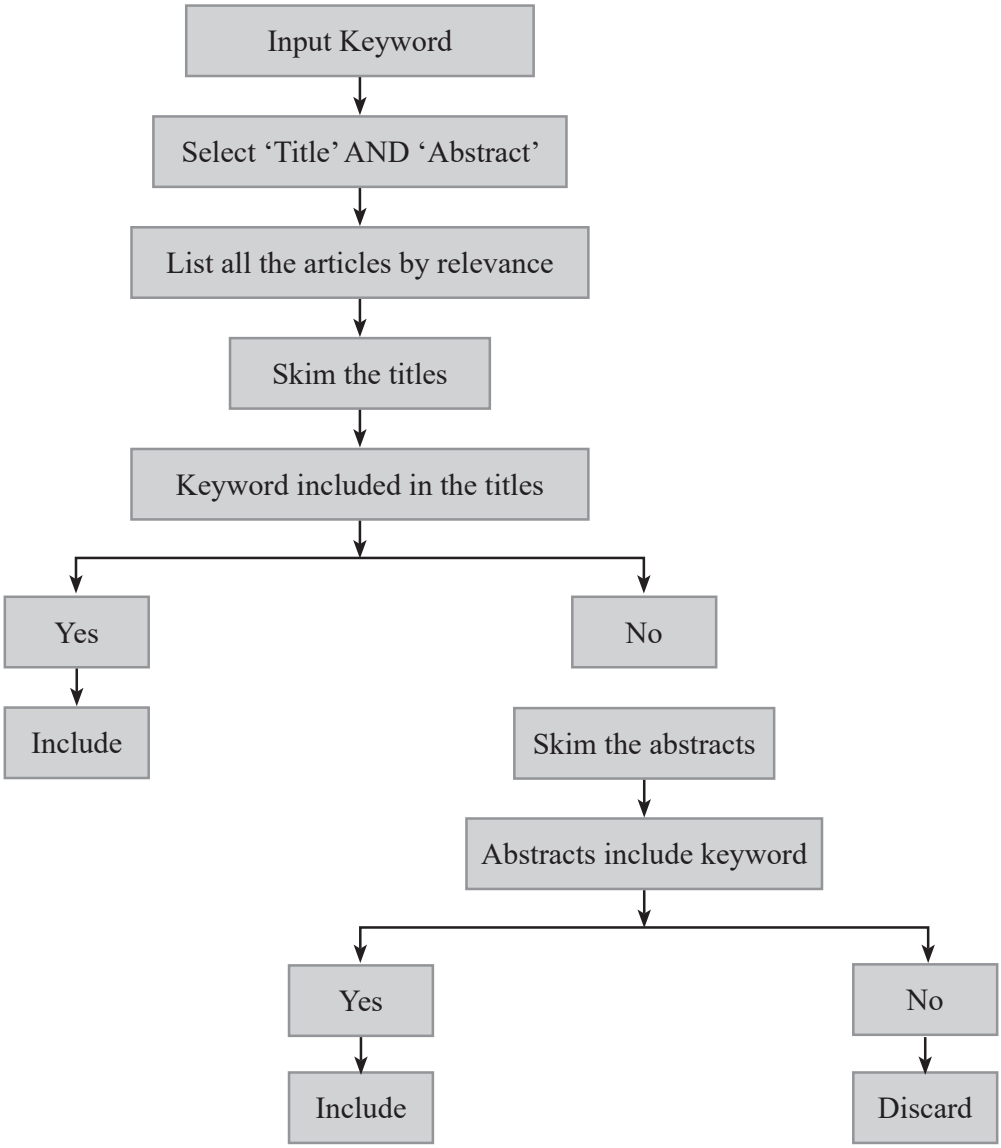


Fig. 2. First selection of articles.

Evaluating Literature Using Inclusion Criteria

Among all the articles collected from various internet sources for the study, I chose only the articles focused on storytelling as a method for teaching critical thinking skills, as the second step of

the process. Upon the first reading of all the articles, only 25 articles were found to be useful for the present study. 65 articles were out of the scope of the study for various reasons. Out of the unused articles, 28 were irrelevant for the study, 20 files were not openable, 12 files were duplicate, 3 were incomplete articles, and 2 were not in English and not readable.

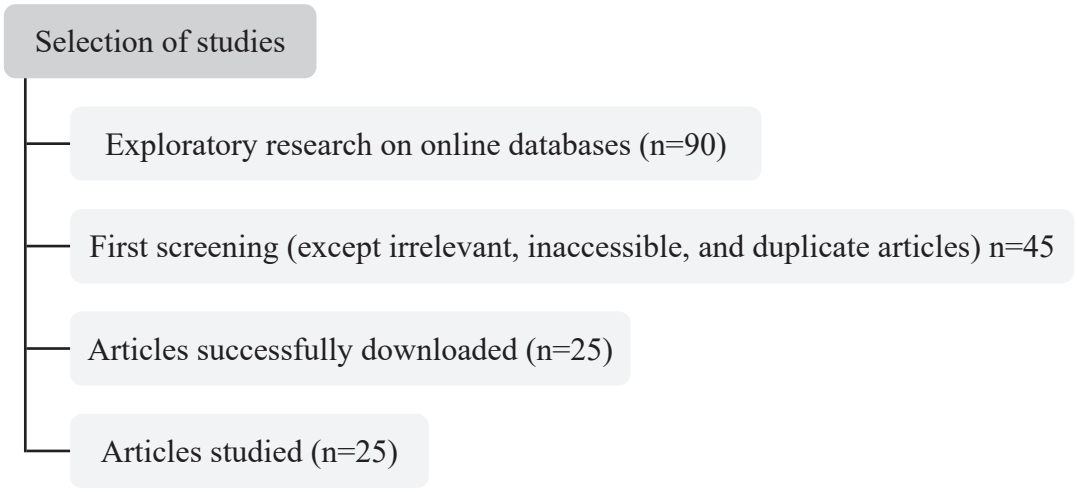


Fig. 3. Articles selected for study.

Extracting and Synthesizing Data

I created a table in Excel to extract the data from the articles. In the table, I created multiple columns with the titles: 'Author/year,' 'Purpose of the Study,' 'Research Design,' 'Location of the Study,' 'Participant Selection,' 'Data collection,' 'Data analysis,' and 'Findings'. First, I filled each column with the information from the research papers. Then, I extracted the details from the articles as the interpreted findings. However, I completed the coding manually without using any sophisticated data extraction software.

Results

The research questions used have guided the findings of this study. The study has answered the questions: How is storytelling as a pedagogy for critical thinking skills conceptualized? How is storytelling as a pedagogy for critical thinking skills operationalized? and How is storytelling as pedagogy for critical thinking skills evaluated? elaborately to reveal the positions and scopes of storytelling in English language education.

How is Storytelling as a Pedagogy for Critical Thinking Skills Conceptualized?

The research papers included in this study has been found with various concepts and theories used in them. They are: 'computational thinking' (1 study), 'granting voice and perspective' (4 studies), 'ethicality' or 'personal values' (2 studies), 'critical thinking abilities' (8 studies), 'deeper understanding of issues' and 'perception' (5 studies), and 'identity' and 'power' (5 studies).

'Critical Thinking Abilities' as the main concept is found to be the most commonly drawn idea (in 8 studies). Those studies (Shank, 2016; Sutcliff, 2015; Yang & Wu, 2012; Sahibzada et al., 2020; Yazdani et al., 2022; Akyeampong, 2018; Lestari et al., 2017; Jathaenthrung et al., 2021) were conducted within this decade. This framework has been closely followed by two conceptual

frameworks: deeper understanding of issues and perception (5 studies) and identity and power (5 studies). 'Deeper understanding of issues' and 'perception' (Maddin, 2012; Groshans et al., 2019; Meyer et al., 2009; Desai & Marsh, 2005; Nagai, 2008) and 'identity' and 'power' (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Mabingo, 2019; Enciso, 2011; McKay, 2010; Gachago et al., 2014) both have been performed within the last two decades. However, the latest studies seem focused on 'granting voice and perspective' (Locker et al., 2021; Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022; Becker-Bell, 2020; Muasya & Kajungu, 2018), 'ethicality' or 'personal values' (Russell, 2018; Gachago & Livingston, 2020), and 'computational thinking' (do Amaral & Windchief, 2019). The use of critical thinking skills seems to have been inclined to political studies in its latest development.

Among the research papers included in this study, seven papers inform 'digital storytellin' as their theoretical framework (Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022; Gachago & Livingston, 2020; Maddin, 2012; Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Yang & Wu, 2012; Akyeampong, 2018; Lestari et al., 2017), followed by 'storytelling' (3 studies) (Russell, 2018; Shank, 2016; Meyer et al., 2009). Several other theoretical frameworks have also been employed, such as Critical Race Theory (do Amaral & Windchief, 2019), Interpretive Analysis (Unlocking Silent Histories) (Locklear & Hunt, 2021), Case Study (Gachago & Livingston, 2020), Black Language Pedagogy (Becker-Bell, 2020), Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) (Maddin, 2012), Multiliteracies pedagogy (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013), Theory of Experiential learning (Mabingo, 2019), Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML) (Groshans et al., 2019), Critical and community engagement pedagogies (Sutcliff, 2015), Blommaert's (2005) Sociolinguistic and Ethnographic Theories of Voice (Enciso, 2011), Critical Pedagogy and Critical Race Theory (McKay, 2010), Theories of Resistance, Counter-storytelling, and Multimodality (Gachago et al., 2014), Critical Pedagogy, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Literacy Studies (Desai & Marsh, 2005), and Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Nagai, 2008). This shows that storytelling as a classroom method is highly compatible with any kind of theoretical framework.

Three of the included studies (Sahibzada et al., 2020; Lestari et al., 2017; Jathaenthrung et al., 2021) are informed by Quantitative (Quasi-experimental) framework. So, the storytelling method is not a qualitative-only method. It can also be used with quantitative or semi-experimental research design.

While doing this study, I observed that storytelling when used as a pedagogy has mostly been useful for raising or developing critical thinking of the participants. The storytelling is mainly conceptualized for raising awareness as well as spreading information on a particular topic. Since storytelling is an engaging activity for the students, it is effective in rethinking, redefining, and reinterpreting the history and identity of the minority groups such as African-Americans. Storytelling can become their voice against oppression, injustice, and inequality.

How is Storytelling as a Pedagogy for Critical thinking Skills Operationalized?

Operationalization of storytelling as a pedagogy for enhancing critical thinking skills refers to the teaching-learning activities conducted in classroom and out of the classroom. I present the conclusion of the measures applied for encouraging critical thinking skills by means of storytelling

used in the various studies.

14 of the studies were conducted in universities and nine in schools. Two occurred out of both school and college, of which one (Groshans et al., 2019) was conducted among online participants recruited via email and another (McKay, 2010) studied the African-American adult learners, aged 61-80. Both didactic and experiential approaches were taken by the studies conducted face-to-face or using technology, inside and outside classrooms.

Mainly the studies that were conducted inside the classroom included experiential learning with 'writing self-reflection' or 'critical reflection' (Russell, 2018; Shank, 2016; Angay-Crowder & Yi, 2013; Gachago et al., 2014; Akyeampong, 2018), 'digital storytelling' or 'documentary creation' (Locklear & Hunt, 2021; Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022; Gachago & Livingston, 2020; Becker-Bell, 2020; Angay-Crowder & Yi, 2013; Gachago et al., 2014; Akyeampong, 2018; Jathaenthrung et al., 2021), 'journal writing' or 'critical writing' (Sutcliff, 2015), 'students' critical textual productions' (Enciso, 2015), 'in-depth, focused group, or individual interviews' (Muasya & Kajungu, 2018; Meyer et al., 2009; Yang & Wu, 2012). Similarly, didactic learning occurred through 'discussion in group or classroom' (Russell, 2018; Shank, 2016; Maddin, 2012; Gachago et al., 2014; Akyeampong, 2018). Uses of 'peer review' (Maddin, 2012), 'think, pair, share activities' (Lestari et al., 2017), and 'dance performances' show the possibility of help from formative assessment in enhancing critical thinking skills.

Thus, this study revealed that storytelling can be used in both classrooms and out. Storytelling can be conducted in both face-to-face or online situations. It is useful for all age groups (school children, university graduates, or senior citizens). Various tools which are mainly focused on introspection and self-reflection, such as writing self-or critical-reflection and journal writing, can be used to implement storytelling as a pedagogy to scaffold critical thinking skills. Digital storytelling and documentary creation provide a great space for the researcher and participants for showing creative and critical thinking skills. Group or pair discussion, peer review, interviewing, and 'think, pair, share' activities are vital tools for implementing the effects of storytelling for developing critical thinking.

How is Storytelling as a Pedagogy for Critical Thinking Skills Evaluated?

Since most of the studies conducted with storytelling as pedagogy to enhance critical thinking skills are qualitative, the research tools used for evaluation are also mostly qualitative. Only 4 out of 25 studies included in this study have employed quasi-experimental research design with 'pre- and posttest analysis' (Groshans et al., 2019; Sahibzada, et al., 2020) and 'mean and standard deviation' (Yazdani, et al., 2022; Jathaenthrung et al., 2021). This indicates the majority of the qualitative articles included in this study.

Among the qualitative studies, the main tools employed for the evaluation are: 'content data analysis' (do Amaral & Windchief, 2019), 'interpretive analysis' (Locklear & Hunt, 2021), 'close reading' (Davaslioglu & Lizarazo, 2022), 'observation' (Russell, 2018), 'critical questioning' (Russell, 2018), 'narrative analysis' (Gachago & Livingston, 2020; Shank, 2016; Becker-Bell, 2020), 'interviews' (Muasya & Kajungu, 2018), 'evaluation rubric' (Maddin, 2012), 'participant

reflection and presentation' (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013), 'critical analysis' (Mabingo, 2019; McKay, 2010), 'periodical assessment and feedback' (Sutcliff, 2015), 'ethnopoetic analyses' (Enciso, 2011), 'multimodal discourse analysis' (Gachago et al., 2014), 'thematic interpretation' (Meyer et al., 2009), 'interactive discourse analysis' (Desai & Marsh, 2005), 'descriptive analysis' (Yang & Wu, 2012; Lestari et al., 2017), and 'critical reflections and discussions' and 'digital documentaries' (Akyeampong, 2018). This myriad of tools devised for analyzing the data in the studies included signifies the wide scope of the research.

These findings indicated that most of the studies conducted on storytelling as a pedagogy to scaffold critical thinking skills have employed content or data analysis method for deciding on the results. They contain observation or interpretation as the methods to perform the analysis. Majorities of the studies have been conductive with qualitative methods while a few studies have also tested quasi-experimental designs.

Discussion

When reviewed, the key findings lead us to the conclusion and some implications. Critical thinking skills are not limited to thought process only. It seems to be linked with political issues like 'identity' and 'power' as well as 'personal values' and 'ethicality'. In other words, critical thinking means thinking deeper on any issue that surrounds us. Another observation is that, with the growing use of digital technologies, digital storytelling has been the most popular form of storytelling. Some other studies which use other different theoretical frameworks reveal the popularity of the qualitative researches over quantitative ones.

Similarly, more studies seem to have been conducted in colleges or universities than in schools. Almost, all age groups have been included in the studies related to critical thinking skills. Most studies conducted inside classrooms have employed variety of tools for experiential and didactic learning. Writing self-reflection or critical reflection and digital storytelling seem to be more popular than the others. However, it depends upon the nature of studies and the choice of the researcher on a particular situation. Concerning the issues around evaluating critical thinking skills, there seem to be variety of methods that can be employed. Those tools for evaluation are mostly qualitative; however, some quantitative tools like pre- and posttest evaluations and mean and standard deviation are also getting popularity.

Conclusions and Implications

The above discussion concludes with some important implications. First, critical thinking skills are not limited to the classroom teaching and learning only. Since it is getting political attention day by day, especially for the minority groups or politically suppressed class, it cannot be limited to academic issues only. Hence, most studies conducted inside classrooms may not be so effective.

Another important thing is that almost all studies have been conducted in the US, Africa, and some Asian nations; whereas, the similar studies in the South Asian countries were not included. This is because of the limitations of this study. First, the scope of this study was limited. Therefore, I might have missed some papers due to my limited research scope. Second, this study was limited to

the research works available only in English. While applying the inductive coding method for data analysis, I tried my best to minimize my subjectivity and biases by adopting more inclusive definition of 'critical thinking,' such as 'deeper understanding of issues,' 'identity,' and 'power'.

Varieties of conceptual frameworks have been found used in the studies conducted. Most of them are linked with political terms such as 'identity,' 'power,' and 'voice'. Digital storytelling seems to have been the most popular framework used followed by oral storytelling. Most of the studies were conducted in universities and schools. They were accompanied by writing 'self-reflection' and 'critical reflection'. Pair discussion, peer review, interviewing, and 'think, pair, share' were the vital tools used. Finally, the studies used variety of evaluation tools such as 'content data analysis,' 'interpretive analysis,' 'narrative analysis,' 'critical analysis,' etc.

The future studies might include broader studies with papers published in other languages and fields of studies. Articles published in hardcopy or paper journals must also be included.

The implication of this study may be that 'storytelling' is popularly growing as a teaching-learning method used for increasing critical thinking skills in students. Though digital storytelling has been frequently tried, other forms of storytelling such as oral storytelling, story writing, etc. need more experiments in future.

Author's Bio

Parshu Ram Shrestha is a life member of NELTA (Nepal English Language Teachers' Association). Currently, he is an executive-member of NELTA Sunsari. Since he received M.A. in English from Tribhuvan University in 2007, he has been teaching English at both Secondary and Tertiary levels. At present, he is an Assistant Lecturer at Janta Multiple Campus (T.U.), Itahari, and a Post Graduate Teacher at SOS Hermann Gmeiner Secondary School Itahari, Sunsari. He is also an M. Phil. scholar at Kathmandu University in English Language Education, and has attended and presented his papers at various national and international ELT conferences. He has keen interest in both academic and creative writing.

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ELT in Mother Tongue Dominant Schools in Nepal

Anupama Manandhar[1], Md. Ziaul Karim[2] & Laxman Gnawali[3]
[1]English Teacher at Ullens School, Lalitpur, Nepal
[2]Associate Professor, Department of Languages at BAU, Mymensingh, Bangladesh
[3]Professor of English Language Education at Kathmandu University

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Corresponding Author:
Md. Ziaul Karim
Email: zia.language@bau.edu.bd

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Abstract

English language teaching (ELT) in mother tongue (MT)/first language (L1) dominant primary schools in Nepal, a multilingual country, without the use of L1 may pose difficulties to both teachers and students. Overemphasis on only-English/Nepali teaching may create language phobias among students at the early stages of their lives and can force some vernacular languages and cultures to die. Hence, MT-based schools may help to preserve the local languages and cultures by going against the trend of teaching only English or Nepali. This qualitative study explored three English teachers' teaching experiences in three Nepal Bhasa dominant primary schools at Kathmandu valley. Guided by the interpretive paradigm, the teachers' perceptions and teaching experiences were captured through interviews and classroom observations. Findings show that teaching English in a multilingual class is challenging because teachers need to know and apply their students' mother tongue(s) to teach effectively. The use of L1 reduces learners' dropouts, builds a language learning foundation and using only English/Nepali disregarding L1 may kill indigenous culture. This study is beneficial for not only the teachers, but also the policymakers, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders to get insights for providing a rightful space to the use of L1 in ELT classrooms.

Keywords: ELT in L1 dominant schools, teaching practices, Nepali primary schools, ELT in a multilingual class

Introduction

Mother tongue plays a very influential role in English language teaching (ELT) and second language acquisition, especially in primary schools. Although at the end of the 19th

century, the supporters of the direct method banned the use of L1 in ELT classrooms, the L1 application has recurrently been acknowledged as a rich source of accelerating L2 (in this case, English) learning (Cook, 2001). A lot of studies have found that effective education happens when we educate the children in their mother tongues. As stated by Cummins (2009), L1 develops a learner's foundation for learning another language and hence, it is essential to preserve the L1. According to him, learners with a strong base in their L1 develop fast literacy abilities in the language taught at school. L1 is the best medium for teaching another language to a young learner since s/he can comprehend well and communicate freely (Ndamba, 2008). Teaching in L1 in the early grades helps learners to learn better than in L2 or any foreign language (Poudel, 2018). Therefore, preserving and promoting mother tongues is important while teaching English inside the classroom walls of a school.

In the context of Nepal, a lot of controversies arose regarding the incorporation of community languages like Tamang, Newar etc. in the school curriculum in addition to the official Nepali language. Joshi (2022) reported that the Constitution of Nepal 2015 largely favored education in the L1, but the current medium of instruction (MOI) policy has prioritized the historically dominant Nepali and English languages as the mediums of instruction. Due to an imposed MOI in schools, many mother tongues are on the verge of extinction (Gyanwali, 2022). For example, it is believed that Nepal Bhasa cannot help a Newar to survive in the outside world where Nepali and English are dominant. That is why, many parents have stopped transferring the language to their children. Butzkamm (2003) opined that the L1 is mostly considered as an evasive maneuver that needs to be applied only in emergencies. For more than a century, the existing ELT attitude has been discouraging the use of students' L1 in language teaching (Cook, 2001). We also feel that the use of L1 as an entrance door has been firmly shut in the ELT classrooms in Nepal.

However, some young parents want to preserve the L1 and so, inspire their offspring to communicate in Nepal Bhasa at home, as they think that the kids will learn Nepali automatically from their schools but not Nepal Bhasa. We believe that the use of Nepal Bhasa as an MOI within classrooms can help learners attain the target language (e.g. English) and it can be transferred to the outside world, where Nepal Bhasa is marginally used while Nepali and English are dominantly applied. This research is an initiative to find that midway. It may help in bridging the gap between what policy states and how the teachers or real stakeholders practice teaching English in Nepal Bhasa medium schools at Kathmandu valley. This study aimed to explore English language teachers' teaching practices in the Nepal Bhasa dominant primary classrooms in the Kathmandu valley. It also tried to find out the advantages as well as the challenges of using L1 in ELT classrooms.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this research to find answers from the context:

1) How do the teachers teach English in the Nepal Bhasa dominant primary level classrooms?
2) What advantages do they have using L1 in their classrooms?
3) Which challenges do they face while using L1 in English classes?

Need for Mother Tongue Based Schools

Nepal is a multinational, multicultural, multilingual, and multi-religious Himalayan state (Shrestha, 2012). As stated by Joshi (2016), when education was first made available to the masses after the descent of the Rana regime, it was exclusively in the Nepali language. He further argues that public schools follow the curricula in Nepali, as a second language is imposed among different ethnic groups, even in places where the majority of children do not apply it as the L1. It is mandatory to communicate in Nepali everywhere from school to official work whereas, nobody can use the L1 for any official use. Gautam (2021) claims that tribal language communities (e.g. Newar, Magar, Gurung, Tamang, Limbu, etc.) are shifting towards the use of Nepali and English as a symbol of modernization, superior identity, prestige, and high socioeconomic position.

Contrastingly, according to Cummins (2009), children's level of L1 proficiency is a strong predictor of their second language (L2) development. He also added, promoting L1application in school develops the children's skills not only in the native language but also in other languages taught in school. In Nepal, the government also circulated a vital document (The Multilingual Education Implementation Guidelines - 2010) in order to implement an L1-based multilingual education program (Ghimire, 2012). Despite the policy support, this program has not received satisfactory responses since L1-based multilingual education schools did not flourish a lot. According to Ghimire (2012), the 1990 Constitution of Nepal recognized all the native languages of different Nepali communities as national languages and granted rights to the communities to open L1-based schools. Even the 2015 Constitution mandates all children of indigenous nationalities (Adivasi Janajati) to obtain basic education in their L1 (Fillmore, 2019). Nevertheless, this constitutional provision also failed to motivate the communities to establish such schools. Only one mother tongue school, named 'J S B K', has been established in the outskirts of Kathmandu valley. The school provides education in Nepal Bhasa and has been running successfully to date. Therefore, there is a need for more such schools in the country for the sustainability and preservation of the language.

Cummins (2009) states that it is imperative to continue to protect, improve and disseminate our native languages at home, school, and outside places to develop a diverse society and preserve our cultures,. In this regard, the people from the Newar community (8th largest ethnic group) are in the forefront of running several schools successfully till now. According to the 2021 Nepal census, Newar community consists of 1,341,363 people (4.6% of the total population). This study, therefore, explores three Nepal Bhasa schools of Newar community at Kathmandu valley as fields of study.

Benefits of Using Mother Tongue in English Language Classes

As language learning is an ongoing process, the learner's age, level, background and the teacher's perceptions should be taken into consideration to teach the language (Sipra, 2007). If the teacher uses only the target language in classrooms and ignores his/her learners' backgrounds, the learners may find language learning very stressful and may resent learning

that language. Moreover, it hampers their pace and willingness to learn and use the language. Harbord (1992) underlines the fact that teachers in an 'all-English classroom' are responsible for causing student incomprehension and resentment. In this regard, the mother tongue can assist in contextual learning, new lexical development and explaining complex ideas and syntactic rules. Teachers with required skills in the students' native languages find themselves more efficient in teaching than the ones who lack the skills (Rhalmi, 2009).

English language teachers teaching monolingual students with lower levels of English proficiency find their native language and cultural background as a scaffolding tool to optimize their target language learning. According to Sharma (2006), L1 instruction in ELT classroom is a rehabilitation tool for those learners who secretly bring their bilingual dictionaries into classrooms and hide them under the table. Atkinson (1987) strongly claims that the use of L1 can effectively and quickly assist in explaining words or concepts in English classes. Stern and Allen (1992) argue that whether we like it or not, an indisputable fact of life is the L1-L2 connection and new knowledge is gained based on the L1. Macaro (2005) highlights that avoiding the L1 increases learner's repetition, and makes him/her a slow speaker. The learner sometimes mumbles and finds difficulty in finding proper lexis, and uttering appropriate syntax. As a result, language teaching-learning becomes time-consuming, boring and less realistic. In tune with these facts, Nunan and Lamb (1996) argue that L1instruction is inevitable in language classes, especially in primary levels.

English Language Teaching in Nepal

In every sphere of everyday life, English plays a vital role and it is a medium of intra and international communication and global exchange (Brutt-Griffler, 1998). Nepal has embraced English at the heart of educational planning (Sharma, 2006). English is incorporated in the national curriculum as a requisite discipline from the basic to the higher levels and has become an undeniable component of Nepali education system. Making English teaching effective in primary schools requires trained teachers, effective teaching strategies, appropriate resources, strong management, and good network and communication facilities. Unfortunately these facilities are mostly lacking in all educational institutions in Nepal.

In case of Nepal, English is gaining a superior position to Nepali and other national languages. Giri (2015) depicts the trichotomous positioning of English in Nepali education system – before 1950s (during Rana regime) English as the only MOI, then after 1950s as EFL, within a few decades as ESL or sometimes as ENL (English as a Native Language) forming a Nepali variety of English, (Nenglish in a comic way), though it is still at the inception level. Similarly, Sharma (2022) states that the Nepalese education system is affected by English language learning fever. Here, the hidden role of English language teaching-learning can be associated with culture, power, and identity. The policy of teaching only English promotes the hegemonic benefits of the Western states and their local collaborators (Ashcroft et al., 1989), and disperses capitalism in multifarious ways in the context of Nepal. Therefore, ELT in Nepal is either a symbol of superior status in society or a brainchild of linguistic imperialism.

Challenges of Multilingual Education System

Bhandari (2016) attempted to find out the drawbacks and rewards of teaching English in multilingual and multicultural Nepal. His findings suggested that the linguistically heterogeneous learners and their parents' negative outlooks are the key constraints for the effective implementation of multilingual education. UNESCO (2011) conducted a study to explore the realities of the Multilingual Education (MLE) program which indicated that the MLE program may not be effective without its conducive and realistic implementation in schools. The study also focused on the need for parents' awareness-raising program so that the parents can realize that education through L1 at the beginning of schooling will enrich their children's capabilities to learn another target language like Nepali or English.

Methods

It is important to follow certain philosophical stances like ontology, epistemology, and axiology and take a paradigmatic approach. As stated by Bryman (2008), ''Research paradigms describe a cluster of beliefs and dictates what should be studied, how research should be done, and how the results should be interpreted'' (p. 696). In this qualitative research, our ontological view was influenced by subjectivism to show multiple realities based on various factors like the different practices of teachers in Nepal Bhasa dominant ELT classrooms to enhance the learning of primary level students. The epistemological knowledge was gathered through interactions with the primary level English teachers. While carrying out the research, the values and ethics of the society, families, and the individual were maintained through investigating the multiple perceptions and truths of the participants. The interpretive paradigm was applied since the subjective experiences of participants were collected by meaning oriented methodologies, such as interviewing and participant observation. Teachers' lived experiences through the narrative enquiry method were collected and recorded in addition to the observations of their classes in realistic settings. Barkhuizen et al. (2013) mention that narrative enquiry helps researchers understand the inner psychological worlds of the research participants and help them reflect on their own works.

Research Sites and Participants

Three Nepal Bhasa dominant primary schools at Kathmandu valley were chosen as research fields. The three schools were (code names used) - the Rising Sun School (the first-ever Nepal Bhasa School established in 1990 with foreign support), Kathmandu Star School and Modern Beacon School. Three English teachers (one from each school respectively; pseudonyms given as Dilip, Rina and Srijana) as research participants were selected for the interview and observation through purposive sampling. The participants were selected based on having a good command of Nepal Bhasa and the English language. We managed to convince our respondents for the interview and class observation without any qualms. The participants were informed of the study and were given their own space and time to open up their minds to share their experiences. With all the formalities done, the final consent for conducting interviews and observations was taken from the school authorities.

Data Collection and Analysis

Observations and semi-structured interviews were the data collection procedures. To be consistent with all the three participants, an interview protocol (see Appendix) was prepared so that the same areas could be covered with each interviewee for the satisfaction of the research purpose. Initially, time and place were scheduled for an interview. A friendly environment was created before each interview and we made sure that all our participants were comfortable enough to answer our questions. The interviews (ranging from 40 – 60 minutes each) were conducted in Nepal Bhasa as the participants could feel comfortable enough to answer our questions. While interviewing, the conversation was recorded (with their consent) with a smartphone voice recorder. Interviews preceded the class observations but the interview and class observation of one research participant took place on the same day (i.e. three separate days required for three participants). Their ways of teaching in the ELT classrooms were observed for the whole class time (40 minutes) with a particular focus on how much they used their mother tongue while conversing with the children. Field notes were taken and later analyzed with reflective notes.

The recorded data of the interview and observation were transcribed into English, and were separated as per the research questions and coded with different colors. Later, meaningful patterns of concepts and themes were drawn out. Creswell (2007) states that in research, qualitative data analysis consists of organizing the data for analysis, then clustering them into themes via a coding process and accumulating the codes to finally represent the data in discussions, figures, or tables. In this case, we generated six different themes that are discussed in the next section.

Findings and Discussions

The findings categorized into six themes are: (i) Teaching Strategies Applied, (ii) Reducing Dropouts through L1 as MOI, (iii) Use of L1 for Building a Foundation, (iv) Use of Only English or Nepali Kills the Indigenous Culture, (v) Going against the Trend and (vi) Challenges Faced by the Teachers. These themes are also interpreted with the support of relevant literature and discussions.

Teaching Strategies Applied

Language teaching through code switching to L1 in the time of necessity is a usual psycho-linguistic process (Cook, 1996). The teachers teaching in the Nepal Bhasa dominant classrooms were found using multiple languages at a time - Nepal Bhasa and Nepali languages were more frequently used in English lessons. However, after observing their classes when the teachers were asked which language they frequently used in the English classes, most of them replied - Nepali. In contrast, Rina answered,

> *Nepali, English, and Newari. I think it's easy but when teaching in class, I teach in Nepali and English also, as children need to know English too. So, I have to go through all three languages, because when I teach them English words in Newari,*

there are many Newari children. It is easy for them to understand and remember.

The only reason behind using three different languages was to ease the teaching-learning process and make the students learn the content well. Dilip also expressed that while teaching English and Nepali, the languages are mostly used with the occasional use of Nepal Bhasa for an explanation when necessary. However, our observations revealed that Nepali and Nepal Bhasa were used more than English in the classrooms. What they normally narrated and what they practised in class were quite different. Theoretically, they believed that frequent use of English in the English classes is a must but practically they used all three languages almost equally.

Teachers applied traditional lecture modes. However, some of the major practices observed were code switching, use of audio-visual materials such as charts, a rhythmic version of the text, and drama techniques to activate the auditory and visual stimuli of students. Srijana shared,

> *I use materials as well and say, 'Look here. What is this? '* I *teach them new words using chart papers and writing small and capital letters. I show them by drawing and colouring. I draw 'ka- kapa, kha- khala' in A4 paper and they seem to grasp it faster. They have books also. I show them videos on the projector. I surf the internet and use the science lab also.*

With the internet and its features within the reach of a fingertip, the teachers and students can and should make the most of it. Rina also voiced,

> *Nowadays English can also be taught through mobile phones, using speakers so that all students can hear the audio and it can be used everywhere and it's handy as well. So, I use cell phones and speakers while I let students dance and sing on the grounds.*

Her statement implies that audio-visuals can also be utilized in outdoor activities. Other than the use of videos at school, learners can be persuaded to watch educational and informative videos on YouTube with parental guidance at home. A technique teachers used to teach was by acting. Srijana shared,

> *Since I act when I teach, the students seem to catch up faster. I use the board a lot too. If the lesson is about rabbits, I act and make them act like a rabbit too. I make them search for the answers to the questions given in the text.*

Little students tend to focus more on the classroom when the teaching involves some actions and activities. She further added, ''*When I am active, the class becomes interesting and teaching is fun. They give the answers quickly as well*''. Upon asking whether she felt comfortable with the Nepal Bhasa as MOI, Srijana answered, ''*No. I teach in English only. I rarely use the Newari language. I enact and teach.* '' Her responses indirectly indicate that she acts in the class to manage the class effectively and play different roles.

Reducing Dropouts through L1 as MOI

Children can express their emotions and feelings better in their mother tongue than in a different (second or foreign) language. In this regard, Dilip opined,

> *Some of the parents stopped teaching them their mother tongue while some left the school as they could not apprehend the language spoken in the schools. The leaners whose native language was not Nepali, but Magar, Tamang etc. also faced the same problem. So, the parents started teaching them the language understood by everyone at school and the outside world i.e., Nepali. That's how the languages got endangered and many dropped out of school as they couldn't understand the instructions and information given by the teachers in school.*

The teacher believed that if students were allowed to use their L1, they could be motivated to learn. In this regard, Benson (2005) reports that L1 use in the primary level (early years) develops students' literacy skills in the target language and makes them interactive in classrooms. It also reduces memorization and assists students to learn the new language creatively through interaction with others. Moreover, using the mother tongue can be a solution to minimize the rate of dropout as the students' comfort and willingness to learn, to an extent, depends on it. The students achieve the ability to obtain quality education if they are efficient in understanding the target language and culture (Dhakal, 2015).

In Nepal, many students whose L1 is not Nepali struggle in schools and have an average lower test scores (CERID, 2005). Mishra (2023) reports that the dropout rate is abundant in community schools and some reasons include failing in the exams, school facilities, punishment and economic status. Srijana opined that asking students to speak in a language foreign to them and limiting their voices is a type of punishment that may develop a sense of detestation and hesitation in them to attend the school. If young learners are not allowed to use their home languages in schools, they cut a sorry figure in the exams, repeat exams and classes for a high rate of failure and some ultimately drop out of schools. This is not an uncommon scenario in Nepal (Awasthi, 2004).

Both Dilip and Srijana emphasized the importance of mother tongue based education. After observing their classes respectively in two schools-the Rising Sun and Kathmandu Star schools, it was found out that the schools gave primary importance to preserving the Nepal Bhasa in the classroom. They felt that even the parents' interests helped preserve the Nepal Bhasa language to some extent. In this regard, Dilip posited,

> *Formerly, the parents also used to talk in Nepali and teach their first child Nepali so that s/he would get familiar at school but now they have taught their second child the Newari language. The school has preserved the language in this way also. Newari and Nepali are the media while English is the third language. And in doing so, it was noticed that Newari language was being conserved.*

Revealing the threat of extinction of the Nepal Bhasa, Dilip stated, ''*Everywhere you go, you need to speak either in English or in Nepali. There isn't a place where you are required to speak in Newari which made it difficult for Newari-speaking kids.*'' According to him, Nepali and English languages are used everywhere but Nepal Bhasa is not used as such. As a result, the Nepal Bhasa -speaking children face a lot of difficulties and some drop out from school

accepting their defeats of not being able to fight for grabbing the target language. Devkota and Bagale (2015) consider this type of massive dropout from primary schools by the students of the marginalized and socially excluded groups as a crosscutting issue that creates an obstacle in obtaining education for all (EFA) and hence, suggest reforms like enhancing teacher quality (child-friendly teaching), introducing alternative educational provisions for dropouts, encouraging local teachers and incorporating two MOIs (mother tongue as one).

Role of L1 in Forming Learners' Foundation

Education through L1 at the early stages makes learning a wonderful experience as the children will not struggle to grab the complex ideas of the target language. They will progress fast in learning the new language as their L1 will work as a facilitating tool (Heugh, 2006). Children blessed with schooling in their mother tongues in early grades appear to get significantly higher learning outcomes and literacy levels (Mackenzie & Walker, n. d.). Alidou et al. (2006) recommend incorporating local languages in early grades and even extending them to later stages as much as possible for positive outcomes.

Both Dilip and Srijana have been balancing three languages (Nepal Bhasa, Nepali, and English) in time of necessity while teaching English. Srijana opined, ''*To those who speak Newari, I explain to them in Newari. It is quite difficult here. Those who don't understand the Newari, just sit there. They look confused, and so I explain in Nepali too.*'' Dilip shared, ''*Using the Newari language in the school as the medium of communication didn't mean that the other languages were to be boycotted.* '' The prime motto of language use is to make the learners understand better. This can be reflected in the views shared by Srijana, ''*I use English while teaching English and Nepali while teaching Nepali. I use Newari only when there is confusion and the students don't understand. That means English, Nepali, and Newari, all are used. This must be beneficial. The students also must understand properly.* '' So, we can see how code switching from a target language to L1 works in mono or multi lingual class settings and why teachers need to learn all the mother tongues of the learners for their clear understanding of the lesson. Use of L1 builds a good foundation of language learning for students.

Use of Only English or Nepali Kills the Indigenous Culture

The overuse of English can be a threat to the local culture and language. Putting his opinion in favour of L1 as an MOI, Dilip stated,

> *People are adamant about the English medium but we speak Nepali/Newari at home. The English language is important as it is widely spoken but the method we use, is not correct. And its effective learning does not mean that our language and culture need to be neglected.*

He indicated that we should not risk our language while teaching English. Moreover, he was worried thinking that even in the government offices and other places, only Nepali is the language spoken due to which the Nepal Bhasa is on the verge of being endangered. Nepali

and English are replacing other vernaculars and emerging as only dominant languages in Nepal. Dilip argued that people from monolingual contexts or cultures cannot understand the problem of multilingual contexts. According to him, ‘’*The Japanese and the Americans have their native languages. Hence, they don't understand the problems of multilingual communities. Likewise, the Brahmin and Chettri communities of our country are oblivious to this problem and only a few understand it.* ‘’ He added that even the government prioritizes Nepali or English only, despite knowing the significance of local cultures and languages. The students from monolingual communities such as Newar, Magar, Tamang, etc. need to learn languages other than their L1. This has resulted in their growing craze towards Nepali or English language while their native tongue is on the verge of extinction.

Studies have shown that English medium instruction (EMI) creates difficulties and challenges for learners and harms the development of indigenous culture and language. In the views of Sah and Li (2018), although the school they explored claimed to offer EMI education, the actual language of instruction in class was Nepali, since teachers lacked proficiency in English. Consequently, the students developed neither English language proficiency nor content knowledge and this EMI gave birth to educational inequality, linguistic marginalization, and injustice for underprivileged children. That's why; McKay (2003) puts emphasis on integrating the learners' local cultures with ELT inside the classrooms. In this regard, Ramirez (2023) believes that the students are silently crying out for an educational pedagogy that will prepare them to find opportunities, and feel proud of their identities and for this, they require a culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) that can ignite their desire to learn and become useful members of a society by bridging the gap between home and school. Culture, if integrated into a curriculum, can be learned and shared by the students in a relevant teaching context. Using L1 in English language classes is one way of preserving the culture of that group of learners.

Going Against the Trend

English is ideologically associated with power and prestige due to which the local cultures and languages are neglected (Sah, 2022). The participants' views and love towards their L1 indicate that they are challenging the power dynamics. Dilip and Rina indicated that establishing a Newari School itself is an act of challenging the hegemony of English and Nepali.

Let's cite an example of a pre-class observation in Modern Beacon School. All the students getting ready for the morning assembly started singing the Newari with the teachers. It was followed by the Nepali anthem. Then the students and the teachers greeted one another in the Newari language. The aroma of a mouth-watering cuisine (nine bean soup called Kwanti in Newari) came from the school Kitchen as it was an important festival (*Janai Purnima* in Nepali and *Kwanti Punhi* in Newari) in the Newari community on that day. The school celebrates every major festival so that students can know the local culture. Thus, they had been inculcating and preserving Newari culture.

Now let's talk about the core finding of the class observation (lower KG class taken by Srijana). Srijana drew pictures of everyday words on the whiteboard and sometimes also used flashcards in between. For more clarifications, both she and her students code-switched back and forth from Newari to Nepali to English or vice-versa, as the following sample conversation shows:

Teacher: *What is this* (shows an axe on the flashcard)?
Students: Axe
Teacher: *What do you call Axe in Nepal Bhasa?*
Students: *paa*
Teacher: *What do we call it in Nepali?*
Students: *bancharo*

It was interesting to see the teacher bring in real-world examples, present to the young learners with pictures, acting, flashcards and most importantly translating English into Newari and sometimes in the Nepali language. Learning is more effective when lessons are taught verbally, non-verbally and visually to the students. The teacher allowed students to express their understanding or feeling in whichever language they were comfortable with.

The above scenario reveals that the teacher wanted to go beyond the trend to preserve the L1 and ease the learning for Newari monolingual students. Although the focus was mother tongue (MT)-based instruction unlike other Nepali or English medium schools, the teachers and the students were allowed to use the other two languages (Nepali and English) as per the need. Sah (2022) reports that many Asian and African multilingual countries have shown their positive commitments for the adaptation of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), but most of the learners with lower socioeconomic backgrounds are deprived of such education. The EMI adoption serves the purposes of the advantaged students who can develop educational credentials to compete in future professional endeavors. According to Hornberger (2002), plurilingual practices in class may help the local languages to ''evolve and flourish rather than dwindle and disappear'' (p. 30). Therefore, the MT-based schools are putting their efforts to go beyond the trend to save the local language and culture.

Challenges Faced by Teachers

Almost all the teachers faced similar challenges in English classrooms. Dilip shared that due to the overemphasis on English and Nepali, the other language speaking learners are in trouble. They neither can speak Nepali or English nor can communicate in Newari. Similarly, another participant Rina revealed that her school aims to preserve the L1. According to her, it is quite difficult to run such a school as they have to compete with the English and Nepali Medium schools. In schools, teachers are bound by a strict routine and they get very limited time to complete the syllabus. The teachers code-switch from English to Nepal Bhasha or oftentimes the Nepali language for presenting their lessons in a more comprehensive way to the young learners. Some teachers felt that they required more professional development training to learn the novel teaching techniques and methodological

approaches to make ELT interesting and outcome-based for the learners coming from diverse backgrounds like Tamang, Magar and Gurung. According to the teachers, it is a great challenge to teach in multilingual classrooms and teaching a third language has more difficulties than teaching a second language.

Conclusion

From the data collected through classroom observations, interviews, and field notes, we have come up with some key insights – advantages of using L1 in classes, drawbacks, pedagogic implications and further scope of study in this field. The participants reported that the students feel comfortable to learn and share in the language they know better. According to them, the use of L1 has several advantages in ELT such as children get motivated to engage in active class participation and performances, they can autonomously express their ideas, and at the same time, they gain clear comprehension of the meanings of complex English words. Students react, realize, understand, remember, and reflect in their L1 better and faster. The teacher's use of the L1 can positively impact the learner's acquisition of the target language. Furthermore, this minimizes the dropout rates of the students.

There are also some drawbacks of using L1 in a diverse class. The participants opined that in schools, the children with local vernaculars as L1 find it difficult to compete with children with Nepali as L1. Hence, imposing English or Nepali as an MOI makes students less privileged in learning. Moreover, the teacher needs to be highly trained to apply multiple languages with caution. Otherwise, this may prevent students from being able to use the target language (English) productively. The overuse of L1 in the classroom seems to make some students teacher-dependent as they completely depend on teachers' translations. The participants expressed that overemphasis on the languages- English or Nepali is a threat to their culture. Therefore, their priority was to preserve their L1 without neglecting the role of English and Nepali.

Teachers should have pedagogic soundness to teach a multilingual class. They need to apply various techniques like making drawings and word associations, discussing synonyms and antonyms, using flashcards and asking for definitions and incorporating relevant audio-visuals to make the primary school children get more involved in group or pair activities with enthusiasm. It is also suggested that a foreign language is learned well when a suitable environment is created with a rightful space for both the L1 and the target language. Creating a favorable environment for the preservation of local culture and language, mother tongue-based education is a must and in this context, student achievement of learning a target language will also be fruitful.

This study has a limitation as it is a small scale research that has found out the importance of the use of L1 in multilingual classrooms where only three school teachers are interviewed and observed. More research in this field is necessary to obtain a wider picture of the present scenario in case of L1 use in an ESL/EFL classroom. Wider scale study will

enhance the generalizability of this kind of study. However, this research will add insight to the pedagogic practices in multilingual classes, particularly by the English language teachers. It will also ignite positive realization by the school authority, curriculum specialist, policy makers and many other stakeholders to incorporate L1 as a powerful tool in teaching a foreign or second or a target language.

Authors' Bio

Anupama Manandhar is an English Teacher at Ullens School, Lalitpur, Nepal. She has completed her MEd in ELT from KUSOED, Kathmandu University. She is a dedicated, and hardworking teacher who always looks for innovations in her teaching dynamics. In addition to her teaching, she sometimes does anchoring in public events. She loves to attend conferences and present her creative ideas.

Md. Ziaul Karim, an Associate Professor in the Department of Languages at BAU, Mymensingh-2022, has been teaching English for almost two decades. His areas of interest include syllabus design and teaching English through technology. Mr. Karim obtained his BA and MA degrees from the English Department of Dhaka University. Currently, he is a PhD fellow at KUSOED, Kathmandu University, Nepal.

Dr. Laxman Gnawali, Professor of English Language Education at Kathmandu University, Nepal, taught English at primary, secondary and tertiary levels for fifteen years. After his second Masters from the University of Exeter, UK, he found interest in teacher education and training. His interest areas include language pedagogy, action research, and teacher professional development. He currently leads NELTA as its President.

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Integrating Research, Theory and Knowledge for Professional Development: A Narrative Inquiry

Nasrin Pervin[1]
[1]Senior Lecturer at the Department of English and Modern Languages at North south University, Bangladesh

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Corresponding Author:
Nasrin Pervin
Email: nasrin.pervin@northsouth.edu

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Abstract

This personal narrative in qualitative research investigation delves into the impact of reflection on the personal and professional growth of educators. Critical reflection emerges as a pivotal concept that educators assimilate into their daily practices. Despite ongoing discussions about its essential nature, the role of critically reading and reflecting on theories and research in preparing teachers within South Asian pedagogy remains uncertain. This article adopts a cross-case study approach, incorporating a personal narrative from an educator to explore critical reflection in community development. The researcher critically analyzes two scholarly articles from distinct journals, grounded in the belief that theory and knowledge evolve through simultaneous research and reflection. The study's findings underscore the importance of reflection in enhancing teachers' awareness of personal and professional growth, contributing to advanced community knowledge. Improving professional knowledge through research is a key outcome, enabling educators to optimize theory and knowledge for locally relevant, high-quality scholarship.

***Keywords**:* community development, critical reflection, scholarship, and research

Introduction

The idea of professional learning is a form of highly complex and skilled "practice" as it describes a set of circumstances for deep understanding, ethical conduct, and higher-order learning circumstances' which is deeply rooted in bodies of knowledge that are 'created, tested, elaborated, refuted, transformed and reconstituted' in institutions (Shulman, 1998, p. 10). It also requires a specialized body of knowledge acquired by extensive academic

preparation' (Livingstone & Antonelli, 2012, p. 16). In a critical professional development process, professionals define them as a collective identity with agreed values, recognized responsibilities and acceptable or required behavior in "a particular field of practice" (Appleby & Pilkington, 2014, p. 11). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999, p. 250) discuss three notions as 'a stance of inquiry' to build the relationships of 'inquiry, knowledge and professional practice' in 'the world of educational policy, research, and practice,' and they are: 'Knowledge-*for*-practice' (formal knowledge); 'knowledge-*in*-practice' (practical knowledge) and 'knowledge-*of*-practice' (generating knowledge by not differentiating between formal and practical knowledge).Assimilation of these notions allows educators to integrate diverse forms of knowledge, enhancing both teaching and learning experiences through a comprehensive approach. This integration fosters a dynamic educational environment where theory and practice inform and improve each other.

Professional development is about learning through self-learning by practicing theoretical principles (Eraut, 1994, p. 15) and developing expertise- as they affect the lives of learners of all disciplines through the rapid social, communal and economic changes. Teachers' professional knowledge and practices may differ not only among countries but also among teachers within a country, but experienced professionals would constantly evaluate 'the effectiveness of their work (Schön, 1983) because it brings a new scope to inquiry about the problematize situation with new perspectives (Little, 2003) for community development. Caine and Caine (2010) believe that educators must be quintessential learners. In line with that, Brookfield (2017) advises that critically reflective teaching will only occur if educators challenge their ways of acting by discovering 'assumptions' in their professions and critically studying them, which eventually leads to developing a sense of purpose in the community.

To be knowledgeable and expert means being professionally well-equipped, and it usually involves the process of teachers' feeling about how other people see them "in terms of their status, standing, regard and levels of professional reward" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 152). Schön (1983) views professionalization as being distinct and reflective by using real-world knowledge, while Hargreaves (2000) defines it as upgrading quality and standards of practice and improving the status and standing of professionals. Hargreaves (2000) also defines *professionalism* as upgrading quality and standards of practice, and following that, he defines professionalization as 'improving the status and standing,' which Schön (1983) views as being distinct and reflective by using real-world knowledge.

As professional knowledge is layered with academic knowledge, professionals reinforce their work by getting endorsements from research and theories (Shulman, 1998), and they can face challenges that are paused against their learning experiences. This enables them to negotiate the challenges they face and helps them to release the unavoidable 'tension between theory and practice' (Shulman, 1998, p. 517). Theorists also try to understand the social settings with shared values in education (Weis et al., 2009), so knowing the social context helps professionals perceptions' of practice in education (Shulman, 1987).

Again, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (19992, p. 50) state that educators need to generate knowledge by discovering their classrooms so 'the knowledge and theory' they produce can be used "as generative material for interrogation and interpretation' because it brings theoretical framework that is firm knowledge-based and this 'empirical setting . . . enables one to make both theoretical and empirical claims . . ." (Shulman, 1987, p. 20). The crux of the argument is located in Eraut (1994) when he says that theoretical knowledge has to be adapted to suit the particular demands of each practiced situation in a practical context. Thus, a fusion of theory and experience is required to practice professionalism in one's field.

Gardiner (2014, p. 35) says being professional is bringing what we are not aware of into our awareness' or 'making what is unconscious, conscious. We can also refer to Gramsci's enlightening view that knowing oneself enables one to master one's identity, and thus by knowing others will make one critically reflective in one's inquiries (cited in Fusaro, 2010). These penlights Socrates' "know thyself" dogma as to know oneself ensures that one is in control of oneself as part of asserting one's identity for the changes of society. Educators' professional learning is a continuous development, not solitude; instead, it starts with identifying the educational results they value in their professional teaching-learning practice. Moreover, knowledge and skills need to be reflected through their professional expertise to establish a bridge between the gap of current understanding and the valued outcomes (Timperley, 2008).

One of the prime resources of being professional is one's experience, which should be administered by integrating reflection on action and reflection in action as a reflective professional (Schön,1990). Moreover, one's 'active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief' makes the ground firm with a solid foundation of 'reflective thought' (Dewey, 1933, p. 6). For example, 'better teacher means enhancing student learning outcomes' (Guskey, 2002, p. 382). Therefore, constant, ongoing active processing is an indispensable element for optimal professional development (Caine & Caine, 2010).

Continuous professional learning and its allocation of resources constitute an ongoing journey that professionals across various fields must undertake. It is imperative for individuals in all professions to remain attuned to the dynamic interplay among them, recognizing its potential contribution to community development, even if it entails making small changes in society. Consequently, this paper delves into the researcher's perspective on professional learning, elucidating it through a personal narrative shaped by the critical examination of two articles. Based on the process of reflection and understanding, the researcher's chosen methodology is restructured and applied. To do so, first, the researcher starts by sharing the personal narrative that developed from her personal and professional experiences as an educator. Next, the researcher critically reflected on the chosen two articles to discover the perceptions and insights that may inform both philosophy and practice for educators' professional development.

Literature Review

One of the fundamental aspects of professional development is the critical reflection that revolves around within the educational field. Šarić and Šteh (2017) highlighted the theoretical significance of critical reflection in the educators' lives, however, their research reveals a significant difference between how its theoretical importance works and how practical implementation among teachers works - a gap that is further explored and investigated by Winberg et al. (2023) research. In the research of Šarić and Šteh (2017) , they emphasize mostly on the importance of how integrating critical reflection into teaching practices can generate new insights which would enhance student learning experiences in a better way; on the other hand, the research of Winberg et al. (2023) presents illuminating insights mainly focusing on the historical insights and discoveries of the different universities of technological aspects and how these universities lack of a tradition of implanting critical teaching and learning in the professional atmosphere. Arguably and critically, both of the studies challenge the established norms that are traditionally practiced in universities by mitigating the potentials that are needed for transformative change within educational institutions to foster critical awareness among educational professionals.

Similarly, Akella et al. (2021) focused onto into the role of critical reflection and how it is within the communities of practice which further attentions by demonstrating its effectiveness to create positive atmosphere among educators to enhance self-awareness for professional growth in the educational domain. Moreover, the integration of reflective practice is much needed for the educators' professional development field as it suggests various complex layers of teachers' complexity in their critical reflection and how this emphasizes the teachers identify awareness (Philp-Clark & Grieshaber, 2024). In line with this, Akella et al. (2021) in their research advocated for more collaborative reflection and open dialogues as they are the essential aspects of professional development which is much needed for teachers in their professional practice. Similarly, Philp-Clark and Grieshaber (2024) emphasize the importance of clear objectives and social collaboration in fostering sustainable reflective practices.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, the researchers explore how skilled the teachers are in practicing their reflective skill in their teaching and discover that there is a discrepancy between the reflective practices they made by themselves and the actual engagement in their teaching practices (Gudeta, 2022). This suggests that there should be professional development programs for the teachers where the culture of reflective practice will be facilitated by focusing on lifelong and continuous learning that will make the teachers involve in practical engagement (Akella et al., 2021). This idea is further extended by Shin et al. (2022) in the context of nursing practices, who highlighted how critical reflection plays a crucial role in enhancing critical thinking and experimental cognitive abilities. This additionally emphasizes the need for strategies and approaches that are systematic by nature to measure critical reflection competency to foster professional development opportunities in the field of professional domain.

In the context of higher education field, Chisholm (2012) discusses how the transformative potential of reflective practices can be attained through the lens of "critical friends" who will work and provide support by challenging the educators for their professional development. In line with this argument, Akella et al. (2021) and Philp-Clark and Grieshaber (2024) advocate/advocated for the collaborative and mentorship-based approaches with the focus on the mentorship for colleagues that will enhance in advancing teaching and learning while Saylag (2013) develops a framework on the critical reflection for professional development from the perspectives of psycholinguistic field, offering how reflective practices can be achieved by challenging the traditional views that language learners possess in their mental cognition which urges the need for pedagogical aspects that should be integrated in the teaching and learning context to shape learners' perspectives.

Therefore, the above literature presents a critical analysis based on the lens of argument for the integration of critical reflection into professional development programs into various higher educational fields. Despite the challenges in implementation, critical reflection holds immense potential for transformative change by fostering self-awareness, enhancing teaching practices, and ultimately improving teaching learning outcomes. By embracing reflective practices supported by collaboration, mentorship, and systematic approaches, educational institutions can advance teaching and learning in meaningful ways.

Research Questions

1. How do we (e.g. ELT teachers or like such) develop professionally through critical reading and reflection?
2. How do ELT teachers integrate research, theory and practice for community development?

Methods

When designing the methodology for my research on the impact of reflection on the personal and professional development of educators in the field of community development, I gave utmost importance to including personal narratives. As an educator, I understand the need of sharing personal experiences to enhance the research environment, in line with Dowling and Brown's (2009) focus on careful selection of samples to ensure validity. Integrating personal narratives enhances the exploration by introducing a human element, aligning with the requirement for thoroughness and complexity in the research endeavour. Following the guidelines of Crowe et al. (2011) and Yin (2003), I utilize the case study approach to thoroughly examine two articles from different publications. As the aim is to asses how the theoretical perspectives aligns with the real-life teaching contexts, the approaches are chosen to discover common characteristics to fit into the practice aspects in the domain of professional development. To justify this, the case study approaches for the chosen methodology seem to be effective in the perspective of different contexts that have many instructional difficulties which may enable researches to form their own conclusions (Salmons, 2016).

Data Collection and Process

The selection process for scholarly articles involved clear criteria, including relevance to the research topic, publication quality, and diversity of perspectives within the field. This process ensured that the chosen articles would provide valuable insights into the research questions.

The data collection process included conducting a comprehensive literature search using academic databases and screening abstracts and conclusions for alignment with the research objectives. Final selection was based on the articles that best met the established criteria. By using a thematic approach and focusing on the qualitative aspects of "how" and "why" instead of just the quantity, as suggested by Cohen and Manion (1994), and using qualitative content analysis, it becomes easier to identify new issues and debates. By intertwining personal narratives with this analytical framework, I aimed to capture the multifaceted nature of the teaching experience. Ultimately, this process seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing personal and professional growth among educators in the realm of community development.

Fraternity Between Practice and Learning/Knowledge

The Educator's Journey: A Narrative

My professional learning and profession have given me a unique opportunity to understand that learning and practice reciprocally fraternize. I look back on my progress as an educator, and I am reminded of my process of being professionally skilled. I practice different approaches in teaching, which I acquired through theoretical knowledge, following a trial and error method, as teaching- practice brings maximum benefits from exercises through teaching-learning experiences; it is also a challenging task as socio-cultural and geographical factors affect a broad cross-section of learners and educators (Marais & Meier, 2004). So, I find myself reading more deeply, listening and learning more actively and carefully -- because I have to reimagine the contexts that I may not be able to relate with my experiences, even when I deeply care about those contexts. If not given attention, these encounters may affect students' perception of the teaching profession (Quick & Sieborger, 2005).

Professionals cannot work in isolation; hence, professional knowledge demands specific responsibilities and accountabilities as they hold 'specialized knowledge' by being 'trusted' within 'their particular communities' (Shulman, 1998, pp. 515-520). Aristotle's episteme- a 'true and certain knowledge is essential in one's practice as it means if you 'know' something, it has to be 'true. His 'phronesis - wise practical reasoning' aims to follow some principles in particular circumstances, but sometimes we take imperfect decisions in the context, which directs us morally to set a particular condition (cited in Eisner, 2002, p. 1).

The specific conditions matter to improve teaching in a 'particular' educational field, and we can recognize this 'particular' condition with 'phronesis' (Eisner, 2002). Furthermore, to create an environment of good teaching, we should consider 'artistry and aesthetic' perspectives (Eisner, 2002, p. 382). With 'craft experience,' educators can bring good in

teaching by 'knowing' and 'understanding' the students, which is influenced by 'timing, manner and tone of that 'particular' context (Eisner, 2002, p. 381). I also believe what Eisner (2002, p. 384) suggests that as educators, we can bring the 'revolution in assumptions and practice' of an institution as it has a role to play, but that should not always be 'the heart of teacher education.

Moreover, collaborative research is essential in a professional community as we share a mutual concern, and with collaboration, we can transfer our knowledge and hone our expertise in a particular area of knowledge by constantly interacting (Dubé et al., 2006). Timperley (2008) also reminds me that we need to have mutual trust with each other in our professions to bring about a fundamental change in practice as we differ in terms of our schemata which are affected by situational and contextual factors where a theory-practice nexus needs to be developed through the integration of process and product knowledge (Shulman, 1998). Furthermore, we can develop professionalism through personal research as it is a parallel process between 'professional and personal learning' (Caine & Caine, 2010).

As I navigate through this rich tapestry of literature, it becomes increasingly clear that the realm of professional learning is characterized by a continuous interplay between theory and practice, personal and communal, necessitating a responsive and adaptable approach. This reflection on the literature serves as a guidepost, shaping my evolving role as an educator and deepening my commitment to fostering a positive impact within the professional community.

The Condition of Knowledge Governing My Field

My dominant knowledge is a pragmatic teaching process at the Tertiary level suited to the condition of learning specific to the country where I work. In my current role as an educational practitioner, my main focus is teaching and researching. The challenges I deal with regularly are: defining, organizing, planning, and evaluating in the light of the development of an academic habitus. My field of knowledge is dominated by what Braun et al. (2011, p. 588) give importance to contextual dimensions, namely 'situated, professional, material and external' as they inform and require the specific educational practice. The students are accustomed to memorization skills- which I do not find the ideal for all situations and students. The biggest challenge is meeting all the varied learning styles and needs of the students with a reminder of the high number of student's enrollment.

Furthermore, the lack of research experience in student intake is another barrier I face as an educator in my workplace, so I follow 'self-educative process' through the 'inner sense'- 'the matter of consciousness and a manifold of empirical inner intuition' (Ak, 1798 as cited in Kant's view, 2004, p. 41) to make the students fit in the society to act intelligently (Dewey, 1933). I reflect upon my pedagogic discourses with knowledge structure notions (Braun et al., 2011) and draw issues from past experiences to anticipate the future of the context (Dewey, 1998; Schön, 2008). Hayes and Doherty's (2017, p. 129) 'angles' [prediction, understanding, emancipation, deconstruction] are crucial in the same light as they enlighten us to our ways of places where we get stuck. Thus, we build tensions and dilemmas that develop

'across fracture lines, without losing the integrity of different knowledge.' Therefore, to negotiate our actions in response to the problems, action research should be done 'carefully,' 'systematically' and 'rigorously,' as a part of regular activity -' plan, act, observe, reflect' (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1992, p. 10).

My areas of expertise also match when Braun et al. (2011) highlight the importance of implementation and 'enactment' policies, as we see that there is a demand to find out how we enact 'the policy' practically and apply it in our professions. An educator's field is conceptualized as a 'dilemmatic space' which is 'ever-present' because we make choices and compromises to negotiate the conflicting situations by mitigating a range of fluctuating conditions that are imposed on us as a relational category wherein one object is related to another or others' (Fransson & Grannas, 2013, pp. 4-11). I am conflicted when I observe that the policies in institutions bring out disappointing results even after the inclusion of an active teaching-learning method with a collective focus (Hill et al., 2013). As I interpret and recognize 'self-interests and ideological distortions ... the correspondences and non-correspondences between understandings, practices and the structure of educational situations' (Carr & Kemmis, 1986 p. 205), my process of self-reflection tends to transit through dilemmatic spaces.

I experience dilemmas when I perceive that through the subconscious and conscious observation, academicians are influenced by their preconceived notions than solid shreds of evidence, so the problem arises as 'a broader field of discourse' integrated with 'academic and professional knowledge and debates' (Dowling & Brown, 2009, p. 8). As I consider teaching something to be grateful for the knowledge I can share and skills I can help students develop, I am often jolted into an awareness of the situation - 'systematic oppression and thus, I am in dilemmas when I see not able to do justice to my students need to analyze lived challenges and thematize actual experiences- which are termed as 'dilemmatic spaces' (Hargreaves 1994; Fransson and Grannäs 2013), but I can resonate what Hargreaves (2003) argues that satisfactory progress in a professional workplace will be seen eventually.

We, as educators, are affected and conditioned by many external factors which mediate what we can do in our professional field. The conflict comes when we compromise with the 'knowledge of the powerful' as we have already acquired the 'powerful knowledge' (Hordern, 2018). We develop trust in our' powerful knowledge' knowing it well that challenges and questions seek to find the 'truth' about the society we live in (Young, 2013). Regarding the dilemmas we deal with in educational contexts, Braun et al. (2011), Franssen and Grannäs (2013) and suggest we can resolve constraints that constantly conflict with our own moral and professional values considering several factors of a given place. However, Hordern (2018, p. 796) mentions that the powerful groups of society try to disregard educational research as it seems to be weak, therefore, do not find 'educational knowledge' powerful.

Moreover, in every society, we have these powerful groups who misuse their powers and impose conditions on educators that limit what educators can achieve by bringing the

reality of a situation with professional praxis (Hargreaves, 2000), so the system lies not on powerful knowledge but the knowledge of powerful (Hordon, 2018). We all come into our professions with our values and judgments, and with experiences, they metamorphose with 'metacognitions' which are submerged and influenced by several variables and 'universal features' 'with a vision for the future (Shulman, 1998, p. 518). These features are a barrier to our performances in our professional praxis, which Kemmis and Smith (2008) refer to - the danger in our profession as social and political factors judge us to follow the rules or 'rules which Lakhini (2016, pp. 3-20) recognizes as a medium of 'culture scape- the mental cognition of real 'truths' and the ideas we believe as in 'truths.' As a practitioner, the pragmatic residuals in my field of practices reflect when I deal with complex and uncertain societal conditions.

While Hatton and Smith (1995, pp. 37-42) argue that dilemmas are based on educators' conceptualization of a considerable barrier through 'dialogic reflection' which requires imposed knowledge in a particular situation, Fransson and Grannas (2013) state that dilemmas are spaces that educators negotiate over' time and opportunity for development. Schön (2008) posits that educators need to develop a kind of artistry with "intuitive knowledge about the existing conditions by demonstrating multiple 'truths' that counter rather than 'propagating post-truth developments in our field" (Gore,2017, p. 369). Gore (2017, p. 368) further suggests that to strengthen professionals, we 'must reconcile differences among educational research as there is not a singular way to view many issues which we face regularly, but, by reframing existing preconceptions, we can redress emerging and evolving challenges (Braun et al. 2011; Fransson & Grannas 2013; Hatton & Smith 1995; Schön 1983).

Hargreaves (1994) urges for emergent-new professionalism as new professionals lack knowledge of theories in institutions (Troman, 1996), so professionals/'architectures' should practice a set of 'ecologies of practices' (Kemmis et al., 2014, pp. 25-43) to value 'of the theory underpinning pedagogy' (Linda, 2008, p. 29). This can be nurtured through 'a balance between support and challenge, and between theory and practice' (Kemmis & Smith, 2007, p. 10), so a theory-practice connection created through the 'proposition' and 'process' knowledge – 'the maxims that guide the practices of able teachers' (Shulman, 1987, p. 11).

An educational researcher can integrate different phases of research with a collaboration of 'professional culture' to improve education to build the social order systems (Hargreaves, 2000; Sharma, 2018). Moreover, Shulman's (1998, pp. 520-521) comprehensive perspective of "six universal features of professions: service, theory, practice, judgment, learning from experience, and community is a 'challenge for the pedagogies of professions' to create and foster the work as an emergent view of education in the professional field especially 'when questions of the quality of practice are at stake."

Looking back on my career, I see how important it is to have a practical approach to higher education instruction that is adapted to the unique educational needs of the country I work in. Defining, organising, planning, and evaluating, all within the ever-

changing framework of an academic habitus, are constant problems for me as an educational practitioner who focuses on both teaching and studying. Managing these obstacles requires a constant balancing act between accommodating students' varied learning styles and accommodating the large number of students enrolled. In line with the action research cycle proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1992), the literature highlights the importance of collaborative research as a strategy to overcome obstacles and improve teaching methods. The literature helps me to understand the nuances of education, where problems emerge from biases, systemic oppression, and outside forces. At issue are the interplay between influential knowledge, social power structures, and the necessity of resolving disagreements in educational research. The continuous pursuit of a balance between theory and practice is echoed by Hargreaves's (1994) proposal for emergent professionalism. A thorough framework that emphasises the complex duties and difficulties inherent in the pedagogies of professions is provided by Shulman's (1998) universal characteristics of professions. In light of these considerations, it is clear that the professional world is complex and ever-changing, and that the key to success is a dedication to lifelong learning and flexibility.

Case Study 1: A Theory of Education

In 'A theory of education,' Sarid (2018) provides a broad look into the age-long question: 'what is education?' He thinks that education, as a project, has always been a crossing between the traditional and institutionalized approach, which gets misinterpreted because the origin and the definition of education have never been addressed**.** Once more, by being objective, Sarid (2018) notes, education is not a grounded approach due to its longing to institutionalized root because learning and' places of learning' both work as a nexus which states:

> Education is a continuous practice of purposively structured learning processes aimed at the realization of ends that are consciously derived from a certain the conception of the 'good'. (Sarid, 2018, p. 480)

This extract leads to the fundamental question: what is the extent of knowledge that leads to the succession of 'education' or the extent of knowledge that a person/student has to go through to become an educated person and also, when and where 'the end of being educated' generally leads one into?

Sarid (2018, p. 483) debates unstructured teaching methods to discuss the bi-dimensional analysis with the reference 'good,' which is used in education as 'common good' while referring to the purpose of education. It has both socio-cultural, philosophical and politico-economic roots, but one of the major problems is that 'good' can be both inside and outside the domain of education as 'mirroring' and legitimizing factors. If education tends to reshape the learner, then who is going to reshape education? Does it need any form of revision to do in order to sustain? What 'good' can education bring to the table of the discussion of the feasibility of education?

Sarid (2018) also argued that education provides 'change' as it is perceived that change is

eminent in any learning process. In the learning period, people are obligated to 'change' as its root dictates towards knowledge; thus, the most rigid form of education can also change a learner's motivational factors due to both 'social acceptance' and lack of it.

Sarid (2018, p. 486) also connects the variability of knowledge with Schwartz's theory of universal values. As the bi-dimensional theory mostly flattens the dimension of education which, in contrast with Schwartz's one, is a chance that most of the vital elements of education have been overlooked by educationists for a long time. As Sarid (2018, p. 486) explains this in his theory:

> Schwartz's theory of universal values is particularly advantageous since, instead of construing values as isolated (semantic) entries, it acknowledges the relations of values to one another. According to the theory, some values are more closely related to other values and, in some instances,… adherence or commitment to others.

This particular theory has ten concepts ranging from religious education to liberal modernist education and the concept of religious education, as Schwartz explained, as the medium thought to have 'conversational' and self-driven 'transcendental' values (Sarid, 2018).

Referring to 'Liquid education,' Sarid (2018, p. 490) describes a specific educational process that requires 'emancipation, reflexivity and flexibility by marginalizing knowledge and knowledge boundaries. In the later part of 'liquid' education, transformative-critical education re-examines the structures of the society and its monumental bodies so the learner can achieve certain educational goals. Finally, the philosophy of 'the liberal-modernist education' stimulates students in four stages: 'self-enhancement, conservation, openness to change, and self-transcendence,' as suggested by Sarid (2018, p. 492), which need to be practiced to address the conflict between the old and new systems of thought.

Case Study 2: Globalization, the Strong State and Education Policy: The Politics of Policy in Asia

Lim (2016) states that 'The Global West' has dictated the terms of education policy across the world but, with the emergence of some strong states in Southeast Asia, the hegemony of the West in this field has been challenged. In particular, south Asian countries in general and Singapore have framed and applied policies as both text and discourse in tandem with their cultural particularities and nationalistic aspirations.

Lim (2016) further examines how the Singapore state has refurbished and regulated its education policy with critical thinking as its motto. Its 'paternalistic authoritarianism' in formulating and applying the national curriculum seeks to ensure that Singaporean citizenry develops intellectually and communally to aim to attract international capital and investments by offering a technologically sound workforce out of its nationals. Therefore, the national education program of the city-state hinges on firm government manipulation in terms of the interpretation and translation of policies. However, the social process of appropriation and application of knowledge via education policy concerns itself with three

fields such as 'production,' 'reproduction' and 'recontextualization; the stakeholders of all educational programs are in the main 'official recontextualizing field' (ORF) and 'pedagogic recontextualizing field' (PRF) (Lim, 2016, p. 714). While the first group is engaged in policy preparation, the second is involved in its application and propagation at the grassroots. Lim's (2016) notion of ' recontextualization can parallel within and Brown's (2009, p. 7) process of ''recontextualizing in education, which concerns how a server applies the knowledge with 'imposed principles of selection and organization.' Hayes and Doherty's (2017, p. 136) 'Deconstruction' theory can be connected here when they suggest that 'power relations and problems are constituted in ways we have made them up as there is a strong relation between 'bodies of knowledge and the practice competencies they inform.'

Furthermore, Lim (2016) puts a premium on how 'Asia as method' has gained currency in academia of late. South Asian countries such as Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Japan, with their recent colonial experiences, have manifested nationalistic orientations with their national curriculum, and these nations, with Singapore being a particular case, are trying to catch up with the developed world and also to outperform their more fancied competitors on the global stage.

With that end in view, Lim (2016) points out that their national education policies reflect their national ambition to emerge and sustain as global players by garnering global cash flow in their economic landscape. Thus, Lim (2016) scrutinizes the underlying mechanisms and politics of education policies of these Asian states, with a particular focus on Singapore, which prioritize collaborative development instead of a neo-liberal attitude of protecting and promoting the rights of individual citizens.

Discussion

Interfacing Research, Knowledge, Learning and Practice for Community Development: Cross Case Analysis

The exploration of knowledge through the mode of interrogation, as advocated by Dowling and Brown (2009), has been a transformative process, encapsulated by the careful study of two selected articles. The revelations garnered from these articles have provided profound insights into our existing knowledge, practices, and learning methodologies. The consistent themes across both articles have served as a foundation for integrating research and practical knowledge, thereby contributing to the advancement of our shared community.

In understanding the theoretical underpinnings of education, Sarid's (2018) assertion that education does not happen by chance but must be meticulously planned resonates deeply. Following Shulman's (1987) concept of 'wisdom for practice,' which encompasses codified knowledge, skills, understanding, technology, ethics, and disposition, becomes pivotal in navigating the complexities of an ever-changing educational landscape. The necessity of a well-thought-out inquiry method, involving pondering alternatives, drawing inferences, and considering diverse perspectives, becomes apparent in addressing the multifaceted goals of education, particularly in complex situations (Higgins, 2011).

Sarid's (2018) philosophy of avoiding biases in conceptual edges aligns with the ongoing struggle to read and write across differences, as highlighted by Weis et al. (2009). Schwartz's theory of universal values, encompassing political, religious-sentimentality, traditional-sentiment, and transcendental aspects, proves particularly relevant to the context, shedding light on the diverse dynamics in Bangladesh. The intersections of religiously driven political parties, sentiments rooted in family and societal structures, and adherence to long-standing customs highlight the intricate interplay of values in shaping educational policies and practices.

However, the critical reflection process also surfaces Yip's (2006) cautionary note on self-reflection, emphasizing the potential dangers if unacceptable conditions are overlooked in the process. Therefore, this presents how the approach self-reflection can be as a reminder to make awareness of the probable multiple relevant layers of complexities in the field of professional development filed which will ensure that the critical discussion is well grounded. In the various socio- cultural context, critical lens on different perspectives, theories and values are needed to develop education policies that will focus on the inclusivity for the professional development of educators.

All things considered, the investigation, which was aided by an approach to methodological triangulation and epistemology, has been profound. Two articles were carefully examined, and the results shed light on our current knowledge, practices, and ways of learning, which has greatly aided our community's overall development. Recognizing the ever-changing nature of educational practices and the necessity for a variety of inquiry approaches in intricate settings, I wholeheartedly embrace the significance of careful planning and practical wisdom. The relevance of inclusivity in establishing educational policies is highlighted by the awareness of the value of unbiased opinions. By looking at Bangladesh through the lens of universal principles, I can better understand the complex relationship between politics, religion, tradition, and transcendence in that country. Therefore, it is needed to approach the potential of critical reflection with much care and caution which will create the bridge between the complexities and practical aspects of teaching and learning situations in multiple contexts. As I wrap up this reflective process, I am more reflected on discovering multiple viewpoints and values which I find crucial to create educational policies that are inclusive and sensitive to our specific socio-cultural context.

Comparison of Personal Narrative with Research Findings

The interplay between practice and learning is reflected though the lens of personal narrative, which resonates with Shulman's (1998) concept of professional knowledge. Shulman (1998) focuses on how professional knowledge requires specific expertise, responsibility, and trust in different socio-cultural contexts in the professional development domain. In line with this perspective, this narrative highlights the need for the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice- that is what exactly Shulman (1998) views. Furthermore, the researcher's narratives can be paralleled with the Caine and Caine's

(2010) view who emphasized that the educators need to reflect on their professional growth by integrating theoretical knowledge with practical implication -a process that should be simultaneously practiced for professional and personal learning.

Furthermore, the researcher's narrative addresses the challenges that the educators face while fitting themselves in accommodating diverse learning styles and managing a large student body in their classrooms. This discussion is also aligned with Braun et al.'s (2011) discussion when they presented various contextual dimensions ('situated, professional, material, and external') for the growth of professional development that influence educational practice. Moreover, the case study approach that this narrative study used as a method further validates and justifies the improved teaching practices which Kemmis and McTaggart's (1992) call for systematic, rigorous research to address educational dilemmas in multiple situational contexts. Thus, a practical application of case study approach is demonstrated and highlighted by integrating action research principles with an emphasize to improve continuously through he four layers of cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

Divergence from Theoretical Expectations

Though the alignments are uncanny, it has been observed that the personal narrative and theoretical expectations are characterized by notable divergences. For instance, the researcher's narrative discusses on how the researcher struggles with the preconceived notions and systemic biases within the higher educational field, which is echoed what Dowling and Brown's (2009) explored as in biases and power structures in education in their research. Arguably, this notion is different than what Lim (2016) discussed and suggested a more structured approach in Singapore's educational policy context, where the aim is more strong state intervention for the intellectual and communal development. This narrative study also goes through the process of trial-and-error method which can be contrasted with the top-down, policy-driven approach in Singapore, as it highlights a divergence in addressing the challenges in its own educational context.

Moreover, Sarid's (2018) theory of education posits that education, as a project, has always been a crossing between the traditional and institutionalized approach which aims at the specific conceptions of the 'good.' The narrator's narrative study is more adaptive on the ground of the researcher's trial-and-error teaching method which differs from the structured method that Sarid (2018) has taken in his study that emphasizes on the bi-dimensional analysis of 'good' in education. This view of Sarid's proposes to initiate the understanding of the importance of both socio-cultural and politico-economic backgrounds in educational context. On the contrary, the main focus of this narrative study is to dissect the practical challenges of teaching that are present in diverse contexts but not explicitly to address the broader philosophical and socio-economic dimensions in relevant contexts in the field of professional development.

Implications of the Divergences

The divergences that are addressed in this study represent the multifaced layers of complex dimensions variables in the context of various educational practice. As this narrative

study is based on a trial-and-error method and it followed the context-specific strategies, this study needs to adopt a flexible approach that sometime underpinning theoretical framework may be overlooked. However, it should be noted that Sarid's structured theoretical framework may reflect on educational aims and objectives, it still may not cover all the challenges educators face in their real-life context for their professional development. Therefore, this narrative personal reflective study may be a suggestive study that requires more positive and receptive approach in educational teaching and learning context that will lead the educators to reflect on their own approach while taking study in dynamic and diverse educational environments.

Limitations and Implications

By employing personal narrative and case study methodologies, this research seeks to explore the relationship between reflective practice and learning in social community development. While these methods provide rich insights, they also have significant limitations.

Personal narratives are subjective and may introduce biases due to the individualistic nature of the experiences shared. This subjectivity limits the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Similarly, case studies focus on specific instances, which may not capture broader trends and patterns, further limiting generalizability.

To address these limitations, future research should consider using mixed methods, incorporating quantitative data to complement the qualitative insights from personal narratives and case studies. Methods such as large-scale surveys and longitudinal studies could enhance the validity and applicability of the findings. Additionally, this research underscores the importance of context in educational practice, suggesting that solutions must be tailored to specific socio-cultural and geographical factors. Future studies should investigate these contextual influences in greater detail, potentially through comparative research across different regions. For practical application, educators and policymakers should supplement personal narratives and case studies with broader research methodologies to ensure that educational policies are both evidence-based and contextually relevant.

Conclusion

Professional learning, particularly within the educational sphere, is a multifaceted and dynamic process deeply rooted in critical reflection, theory-practice integration, and continuous development. This article has underscored the significance of professional learning through a thorough exploration of scholarly literature and personal narrative. It has highlighted the crucial role of critical reflection in fostering self-awareness, enhancing teaching practices, and ultimately improving learning outcomes.

The literature review revealed a compelling argument for the integration of critical reflection into professional development programs across various educational contexts. Despite challenges in implementation, critical reflection holds immense potential for

transformative change by challenging established norms, fostering collaborative dialogue, and promoting mentorship-based approaches. Moreover, the methodology outlined in this article emphasizes the importance of personal narratives and case study approaches in enhancing research validity and complexity.

Through a synthesis of theoretical insights and practical applications, this article emphasizes the need for educators, particularly those in the field of community development, to engage in continuous learning and reflective practices. By embracing reflective approaches supported by collaboration, mentorship, and systematic methodologies, educational institutions can advance teaching and learning in meaningful ways, ultimately contributing to the broader goal of community development.

Reflecting on my exploration, I find that my awareness regarding research, practice, and learning has undergone a journey marked by complex and paradoxical conceptions (Berlak & Berlack, 2012, p. 211). To a considerable extent, I have discerned the intricate process of integrating practice with knowledge and learning. However, I acknowledge that this understanding is not yet complete; it is merely the beginning of a new horizon, a cognitive choice fraught with the challenges inherent in various actions (Berlak & Berlak, 1981).

Undoubtedly, the realm of teaching and learning is a dynamic and challenging situation, prompting practitioners like myself to uphold professional obligations. This involves developing and maintaining professional relationships with diverse learners, communicating and acting ethically, promoting positive values, and adhering to professional standards, as emphasized by Honig (1996). In recognizing the absence of a singular right approach to teaching, I echo Hirst's (1993, p. 184) perspective that education should be primarily concerned with social practices rather than a mere pursuit of knowledge. Moreover, Guskey's (2002b, p. 51) call to "document the evidence" between effective and ineffective activities in professional development practices resonates with my commitment to continuous improvement. Reflecting on my personal narrative as an educator, I am reminded of the need to critically assess and adapt my teaching strategies, acknowledging the evolving nature of educational practices.

As suggested by Guskey (2014), my ultimate assertion is that we, as educators, should light the lantern to illuminate the best possible way forward. This involves a commitment to becoming better practitioners who objectively value the learning context. Emphasizing the importance of rooting our efforts in local, social communities, this approach opens doors for us to contribute meaningfully to the broader international educational landscape. In essence, I see this as a call to action—a call to light the lantern for the development of a knowledge-based community, echoing Guskey's insightful perspective.

To account for teachers' transforming progress, future study might examine the sustained impact of longitudinal reflective practices on teachers' professional development through reflection and reading. Technology integration, cross-cultural comparative studies,

and action research in the classroom can also provide nuanced viewpoints. Mentorship programmes, non-traditional reading materials, and reflective practices in teacher education programmes need further study. Further investigation is needed of the dynamics and effectiveness of classroom-based learning communities centered upon reflection, as well as the direct relationship between teachers' reflective engagement and student outcomes. I hope this study directions will help us understand how reflective practices and reading might improve teachers' professional growth.

Thus, professional learning is not merely a static process but a continuous journey of self-discovery, growth, and adaptation. It is through critical reflection, integration of theory and practice, and collaborative engagement that educators can effectively navigate the complexities of their profession and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Author's Bio

Nasrin Pervin is currently working as a Senior Lecturer at the Department of English and Modern languages at North south University, Bangladesh. She is an Associate Editor of the International Journal of Multidisciplinary perspectives in Higher Education. Nasrin has presented and published papers in a number of international Conferences and Journals on diverse topics.

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English Studies from Global to Nepali Context: Critical Debates, Challenges and Possibilities

Thir Bahadur Khadka[1]
[1]Asst. Professor of English at Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mid-West University, Surkhet, Nepal

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Corresponding Author:
Thir Bahadur Khadka
Email: thirendrababu@gmail.com

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Abstract

This paper aims to present an analysis of the critical debates in the area of English Studies emerged from the time of its initiation and still going on, various challenges that this discipline has undergone, and its future prospects. Based on library research method, the analysis of the relevant online and physical library materials related to English Studies has been conducted. The findings show how English Studies has undergone the critical debates like whether English is the subject of colonial domination or socially progressive project, whether it has to give privileges to literary studies or creative writing, and whether it has to adopt a single standarised form of English or world Englishes. In addition to it, it shows that despite undergoing a number of critical debates and challenges due to either the ongoing process of departmentalisation or the African abolitionist movements, English Studies has become refined, updated and interdisciplinary area of study. Proper redesign and reformulation of English courses, incorporation of local art, culture and literature, adoption of new technology and vocational aspects etcetera could make it more relevant, effective and impactful in the days to come.

Keywords: colonial domination, creative writing, departmentalisation, digital humanities, interdisciplinary, world Englishes

Introduction

English Studies as an interdisciplinary area of study consists of the study of language, literature, culture, creative writing, rhetoric, media, theatre, art, film, multi-media, information and communication technology, history and many more (Pope, 2016). As it can incorporate the complex patterning of varied subjects like "Classics, Theology, Rhetoric, Composition

and History (Literary and Linguistic) and a wide range of 'Studies' (Theatre, Film, Literary, Cultural, Communication and Media) as well as a wide range of critical theories and cultural practices (from New Critical and Formalist to Feminist, Poststructuralist and Postcolonial)" (Pope, 2002, p. 48), it is regarded as an established field of study with broader range. As a subject, however, it is characterized by critical debates, discourses and contrasting views such as either English is a subject of colonial domination or a socially progressive project (Ellis, 2014), either it should give privileges to literary studies or creative writing (Cowan, 2016), and either it should bring forth a single standardized form of English or allow space to world Englishes (Kirkpatrick, 2016).

The existing critical debates on different dimensions of English Studies replicate different challenges it is undergoing although they often indicate its dynamic and evolving nature. It is just like the way the ongoing process of separation of many sections and subsections of English Studies with distinct departments can be observed both as a disciplinary challenge and an expansion of its area of study. The challenge is basically due to their conflicting claims of different departments under English Studies and confusion among the students particularly in terms of selecting the departments for higher study. Likewise, the expansion is the result of the establishment of new and new departments with distinct curriculums that offer the possibility of the incorporation of varied subjects and issues of study. Some departments, for example, are integrating digital humanities and the application of innovative teaching and research approaches to address the need of changing time and circumstances. Addressing the global need of vocational dimension and the demand of the English language classes, some departments are becoming popular either in the area of developing students' language proficiency or teaching literature courses. Despite the increasing flow of students in some departments, some other departments have decreasing flow of students and are in the direction of closure. In this context, this study has significantly analysed different dimensions of English Studies including critical debates, discourses and challenges it has undergone. The analysis has been conducted for exploring what future prospects English Studies has and how it could be made more effective in the days to come. This study was conducted to analyse the critical debates, discourses and challenges in relation to English Studies, and synthesise the way this discipline could have better future.

Methods

Adopting library research method, this study was carried out with the analysis of few relevant journal articles, research papers and related books conveniently selected from both the physical and the online libraries in relation to English Studies basically the debates on its nature and various challenges it has undergone. Collecting different documents consisting information, description and analysis related to how English Studies began in India and Britain, how it was opposed such as in African universities and what various internal conflicts that this discipline has been undergoing, I analysed and described regarding how

this discipline has undergone different modifications along with the changing circumstances. Besides analysing the data obtained from relevant library documents, my personal observation of the ongoing academic activities in English departments such as under Humanities and Education faculties in Nepal has also been employed for the analysis. Finally, the analysis has been synthesised for exploring what future prospects English Studies has and how it could be developed more effectively in future.

History of English Studies: Colonial Domination or Social Progress?

English Studies as an academic practice commenced in the British colonial era in India particularly the nineteenth century. Khadka (2022) states that the institutionalisation of this subject underwent a long debate and power exercise concerning whether it would become a part of colonial domination or socially progressive project. Such debates either in the support of English Studies or against not only created challenge but also caused it to adopt new modifications, changes and reformations, thereby accelerating this discipline itself.

The initial debate was "about the East India Company's colonist education policy, between Orientalist . . . and Anglicists" (Gupta, 2016, p. 104). Orientalists were the non-Western scholars such as Indians who were in favour of a traditional Sanskrit education for the natives particularly to promote indigenous language, local culture and Indian civilization. Unlike this, the Anglicists or the Westerners wanted Westernized education in the English language to begin in India. They advocated the knowledge in English and English literature to be far better than the knowledge in Sanskrit or other indigenous languages. The long standing power exercise for and against the initiation of English Studies finally paved way for the initiation during the mid-nineteenth century making India, as Gupta (2016) writes, "the first Asian country, and amongst the first in the world, where English Studies was established as an academic discipline in higher education" (p. 99). Although English Studies got established in the higher education in India making it the first nation to formally begin English Studies in the world followed by England, the voices from the side of Indians in this or that way went on. In 1990s, for example, people demanded for reducing British and American literary portions to give more space for Indian literature in English. Indian resistance became dominant that ultimately compelled University of Delhi to revise its BA and MA English syllabi with reduction in British and American literature and the incorporation of Indian literature in the English language.

Taking participation in the debate on different aspects of English Studies, Ellis (2014) states that the most powerful, contrasting and contradictory stories of English Studies include how it has become the instrument of colonial and class domination besides achieving the identity of socially progressive project. Drawing upon Macaulay's *Minute of Indian Education 1835* and Newbolt's proposal *The Teaching of English in England1921*, he shows how they claimed the knowledge in English and English literature far better than the knowledge in Sanskrit or Arabic, and argued teaching English in schools and universities as a subject necessary for forming well-designed arguments. However, such claims and arguments

are analysed as the product of colonial mindset by the postcolonial scholars like Viswanathan, Walsh, Sampson, Sinfield, Garber and many others. They have extensively portrayed English as the instrument of colonial domination and criticised Macaulay's assertion, stated in his *Minutes 1835*, "I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues . . . I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" (Macaulay, 1835, p.1). They critiqued the way Macaulay attempted to suppress the educational activities as well as the publications in the indigenous languages prevalent in Indian subcontinent. Macaulay's claim replicates his colonial mindset where he seems claiming to have complete understanding of the colonized people, their literature and also the weight of value. It is quite similar to what Achebe (1995) states:

> To the colonialist mind it was always of the utmost importance to be able to say: 'I know my natives', a claim which implied two things at once: (a) that the native was really quite simple and (b) that understanding him and controlling him went hand in hand—understanding being a precondition for control and control constituting adequate proof of understanding. (p. 58)

Achebe means to say that the colonialists' attempt to understand the natives is to get control over them. This is what Macaulay tried to do by initiating English Studies in India. In his text *Orientalism*, the post-colonial critic Edward Said argues that "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degree of a complex hegemony" (p. 5). Like Said, other post-colonial thinkers believe that westerners tried to expand their domination over non-westerners through different means, and the politics behind the initiation of English Studies in non-western countries is a part of their hegemony over non-westerners.

Narrating about Viswanathan's observation on English Studies, Ellis (2014) further writes, "she traces the rise of English as a subject in schools and universities in India from the beginning of the nineteenth century and also in the examinations for the Indian Civil Service: examinations specifically designed to create an indigenous administrative elite" (p. 5). Viswanathan's response to English as a colonial project of creating British government's colonial administration in India is quite similar to the observation of Walsh in the context of British colonialism in Ireland.

The contrasting view takes English Studies as a socially progressive project that connotes progress, enlightenment, justice and democracy. Regarding the progressive aspect of university extension movement that incorporated the courses for women and marginalized group of people and linking it to the emergence of English Studies, Ellis (2014) further states, "Set against the background of an elite higher education in Oxford and Cambridge . . . the university extension movement sought to extend the opportunities for higher education to women and to students from a wider range of social classes, especially in industrial towns and cities" (p. 8). As the extract indicates, the opportunities for the previously marginalized

groups of people came in existence and in that run Oxford University in the UK "established its own English degree suitable for women and those third rate men" (Ellis, 2014, p. 8, in 1895). Likewise, vernacular language and literature became the subject of study. Walworth School was notable as a place where English had been developed by several scholars like Alex McLeod, John Dixon and Harold Rosen. They examined English Studies as progressive and supported the university exchanging programmes.

Internal Debates on English Studies: Privileges to Literary Studies or Creative Writing?

English Studies also has undergone the internal debates and contradictory views on whether it needs to give privileges to literary studies or creative writing. The scholars of literary studies and the scholars of creative writing have their own specific claims on the significance of teaching literary courses and creative writing courses respectively. Literary Studies basically focuses on the study of the western and non-western literary texts either written in English or translated into it. Creative writing courses, on the other, primarily deal with imparting creative writing skills on the students. Cowan (2016) states that for "Literary Studies . . . literature is what has been written; for Creative Writing, it is what is being written" (p. 48). Literary studies puts emphasis on the product while the focus of creative writing is on the process. Although both the process and the product are the significant wings of English Studies, they do have certain degree of clashes and debates with their own specific claims. There is clash or debate regarding what focus English Studies should have in its courses.

The scholars have talked about different aspects of creative writing attempting to defend university writing courses in the academia. For example, Myers (2006) states that the courses of creative writing significantly imparted students' writing skills in higher education after getting its full growth in late 1960s and early 1970s. Likewise, Cowan (2016) argues that creative writing has been taught everywhere particularly because it enables the students in writing and composition. The contribution of creative writing and writing courses for writing, editing, proofreading, publishing, public affairs, public relations, business activities, literary creations, media writing etcetera has been making it more prominent in many university English departments in the world. Green (2012) states:

> From publishing to copywriting, editing, journalism, proofreading, public affairs, public relations, teaching, in-house business, communications, information technology, market research, community work, from working in a literary agency, to working in a library or various branches of the media or many aspects of the cultural industries - in all these professional areas and more, training and experience in creative writing can give a significant advantage. (pp. 326-327)

Green clarifies on the contribution of creative writing in different professional areas and fields with increasing significance. Relying on such multi-dimensional advantages and growing significance of creative writing, the university English departments in the USA have given

major focus on practical kind of writing courses over the last 40 years (Russell, 2016). Some faculty members of English departments particularly those who were interested in composition founded Conference on College Composition and Communication popularly known as CCCC in 1949 in the USA that published a newsletter (later a journal) that ultimately established a foundation to make writing a recognized field.

Despite the increasing popularity of writing courses like creative writing, many opposing arguments and contrasting views are raised particularly from the scholars of literary studies although both the scholars of creative writing and literary studies belong to the English departments. The scholars of literary studies, as Cowan (2016) further writes, argue that "Creative Writing programmes dupe their students with false claims about future publication, that the literary marketplace is saturated with the products of such programmes, that institutions shield their students from real experience, and that literary endeavour is necessarily solitary" (p. 40). The professors of literary studies say that creative writing is not the matter of teaching and learning but it is the part of individual talent learnt in isolation and thus they have tried to neglect and often exclude it from English departments. Against this position, the professors of creative writing argue studying literature as unnecessary and worthless.

Teaching English Language: Single Standarised form of English or World Englishes?

One of the aims of teaching English subject particularly in non-Anglophone countries is teaching the English language. Thus, majority of English classes either in the university or the school levels can be observed giving focus on both content and linguistic aspects. The students of English are supposed not only to master over the subject matter but also the linguistic skills. However, still many debates and discourses can be observed in this domain regarding whether teaching and learning English should follow British English as a standard form or it should allow local varieties of English.

Taking participation in the debate, Kirkpatrick (2014) states, "Although many different varieties of English have been spoken for several centuries, it is only surprisingly recently that the field of study that has become to be known as World Englishes has been established" (p. 33).Taking the initiation of World Englishes after several centuries of the presence of many varieties of English, he goes on engaging in this debate drawing up on the British linguist Randolph Quirk and Indian-American linguist Braj Kachru. Quirk (1985) argued that teaching English subject should give emphasis on a single standardized form of English (cited in Kirkpatrick, 2014). He stressed on the British model of English for all the non-native learners. However, Quirk's claim contradicted with another linguist Kachru. Kachru (1976), for example, stated:

> It is obvious that in the Third World countries the choice of functions, uses and models of English has to be determined on a pragmatic basis, keeping in view the local conditions and needs. It will, therefore, be appropriate that the native speakers of English abandon the attitude of linguistic chauvinism and replace it with an attitude of linguistic tolerance. (p. 236)

Kachru's emphasis gives space to the regional varieties of the English language rather than forcing the non-native learners to learn a single variety. He believed that the ability of the English language to preserve 'Americanness' in American variety and 'Englishness' in British variety is its strength. Thus, he proposed to let the preservation of 'Indiannesss' in Indian variety of English language. His "position of the plurality of Englishes led to the establishment of the World Englishes field of discipline" (Kirkpatrick, 2014, p. 33).

There are still debates and discussions regarding the focus of the English language courses particularly in the third world countries. Some people prefer either British or American variety of English to be the model of learning the English language through English subjects while others argue for promoting regional variety of Englishes. British Council, for example, could be observed acting to promote the English language. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL) and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) are two internationally accepted standarised tests designed to measure the English language proficiency. The students from non-native countries of the English language face either TOFEL or IELTS examinations before getting enrolled in the English-speaking universities in the world. The classes of TOFEL and IELTS are conducted in different parts of the world.

Specialisation and Departmentalisation: An Ongoing Process

The process of specialisation and departmentalisation under English Studies has been going on. Specialisation process stands for the shift of attention from broader area of study to specific courses and areas of expertise. This process has developed the concept of departmentalisation, the process of separating different departments with their own specific courses of study. In the USA, for example, a rebellion began within English departments in 1910s and 1920s that resulted into the subjects like pedagogy leaving English departments in 1912, journalism in 1917, theatre in 1920s, language and linguistics in 1924, and creative writing in 1940s (Russell, 2016). The separated subjects developed into their own departments. The separation of Applied Linguistics as an independent department is an example in this case. Talking in this concern, Gupta (2016) states that "Applied Linguistics (focused on ELT as an instrumental programme) seems set to grow within the existing institutional spaces of English Studies-within English departments-in the near future" (p. 116). Gupta's claim is for the possibility of the beginning of new departments under English Studies. Analysing such a possible challenge for the mainstream of English Studies, he further writes:

> If Applied Linguistics subsection broke away from English Studies and became separate institutional entities (departments), and formed independent professional bodies, the remnant English Studies would still have to find ways to survive in an environment where resources are allocated according to vocational/professional measures and market demand. (p. 116)

Gupta clarifies that the creation of cleft between the sections and subsections of English Studies is creating challenge for some departments under this discipline. The growing

attraction to Linguistic departments with separate identities and the decreasing attention towards the department of literary studies, for instance, could make the departments of literary studies vanish at some point of time if they do not act rigorously.

From the high priority to English courses at Tribhuvan University right after its establishment in 1959 (Bista, 2011) to the establishment of English departments at different other universities in Nepal, English has occupied an important space. It has been taught as a major subject primarily under Education and Humanities faculties. English departments under these faculties have their own claims regarding the significance of curriculum, teaching methodologies and priorities. The faculty of Education primarily focuses on language, linguistics and teaching methods while the faculty of Humanities gives privileges to literary analysis, literary theories, creative writing, critical and philosophical discourses and such others. If teaching and learning the English language is the major focus of research and studies under Education departments, the study on literature and literary analysis is the major focus of studies under Humanities and Social Sciences. Despite having some courses in common and a common process of modifying the courses along with integrating digital technologies in teaching-learning and examination practices particularly in the latter days (Acharya et al., 2022; Khadka & Acharya, 2023), a kind of tussle in terms of the significance of courses can be observed going on between these faculties.

Preferences to Local Art, Culture and Literature: An African Context

The voices raised against English Studies particularly against the study of English literature and the demand for replacing it by the study of local art, culture and literature can also be the challenge for the sustenance of this discipline in some parts of the world. For example, some universities in Africa argued for replacing English Studies by African Studies. Justifying the argument for the abolition of the existing departments of English in the African university colleges, Thiong'o (1995) writes, "We want to establish the centrality of Africa in the department. This, we have argued, is justifiable on various grounds, the most important one being that education is a means of knowledge about ourselves" (p. 441). Thiong'o's argument clarifies the growing consciousness of African scholars for the need of developing national art, literature, culture and identity by studying them in the national universities instead of studying foreign literature and culture. It replicates African consciousness regarding the importance of putting African literature at the center of analysis along with employing African perspective for the analysis instead of relying on foreign literature and perspective for analysis. Although the voices for abolishing English departments and establishing the departments of African literature and culture in the African universities can promote the African identity, language, culture and literature, it has direct impact on the sustenance of the English Studies.

Future Prospects

Despite having critical debates and challenges, English Studies has been in existence with additional progress as well as better future prospects. Carter (2016) states that by

adopting both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a mixed form, English Studies has become more impactful in the present days particularly by analysing social, political, cultural and different other issues and becoming able to fulfill its social duty. Addressing such issues is important in the sense that "aesthetic values are important but there are, for example, social, political, communal and community values too" (Carter, 2016, p. 16). Addressing these aspects and incorporating diverse fields of study, English Studies has been adopting interdisciplinary nature to integrate distinctive components of multiple (Nissani, 1997). Interdisciplinary aspect has become the strength of English Studies as it can generate fresh configurations of knowledge and become like "a party that all parties want to come and contribute" (Pope, 2016, p. 250). Pope believes that interdisciplinary aspect of English Studies has made it "an intrinsically heterogeneous subject constituted by the complex interplay of Language-Literature-Culture-Creativity (p. 249). The continuous emphasis on the development of interdisciplinary courses at different universities in the world not only replicates how English Studies could modify its courses to address the demand of the changing time and circumstances but also what sort of possibilities the entire discipline does have in the coming days.

English studies particularly literary studies can also be observed in the threshold of great competition along with the advent of different digital devices and tools. There are many digital tools and applications bringing forth the digitised materials and videos. Instead of sitting in an armchair and reading the books, people prefer watching films, YouTube videos, television programmes and getting information from social-media. English Studies has got the challenge to modify itself such as to digitalise the reading materials and draw the attention of the readers. To address ongoing challenge, digital humanities has been taking space as a new dimension under English Studies. The development of digital humanities is bringing forth this discipline as an advanced "field of study, research, teaching, and invention concerned with the intersection of computing and the discipline of the humanities" (Deegan & Hayler, 2016, p. 161). With the advent of this aspect, digital tools and methodologies have been analysing and interpreting literary texts, historical documents as well as cultural artifacts in an interesting way. The combination of computational techniques with traditional humanities research replicates regarding how English Studies could modify its courses particularly to integrate digital technology so as to widen the area of teaching, researching and inventing in this discipline, thereby replicating its future prospects.

There is growing significance of the English language learning, demands of the courses and classes for students' linguistic development, and the creation of job opportunities for the candidates with English proficiency. English Studies can benefit the students by enhancing their comprehensive power, critical and creative ability, the capability of translation and many more. This is the reason that Pope (2002) suggests the scholars of English not only to reflect on its past but also to articulate its future. Such scholars need to synthesise the ongoing debates within the area of English Studies, analyse its lapses or the external

challenges, and seriously work for redesigning its courses carefully considering the market value of its products. If humble efforts are made, the English Studies is sure to flourish in the coming days.

Conclusion

The observation on debates and discourses sometimes in favour and sometimes in opposition of English Studies have not only posed challenges for the development as well as sustenance of this discipline but also contributed to bring it ahead with additional modifications and reformations. The perception on English as a colonial product got minimised with the increasing significance of English Studies while the debate on preferences on either literary studies or creative writing has given way to incorporate both the wings. The increasing use of different varieties of English which are pragmatically equal has lessened the overemphasis on a single standardised form of English although the compulsion of TOFEL and IELTS tests for the students pursuing higher studies in English-speaking universities has kept the debate still alive. Likewise, the voices against English Studies in the African universities have opened the way for incorporating local art, culture and literature in the courses, thereby enlarging the area of English Studies itself. In the similar manner, the increasing opportunities of language classes, translation, publication, media production, international relations and tourism for the students of English have given vocational dimensions to this discipline. There are still many debates, conflicting voices and emerging challenges in this domain but they also offer the opportunity to rethink, redesign, update and upgrade the courses of this discipline.

Author's Bio

Thir Bahadur Khadka has been working as an Assistant Professor of English at Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mid-West University, Surkhet, Nepal, for over a decade. Along with presenting papers at national and international conferences, Khadka has published research articles and book chapters in various journals and books. Additionally, he has edited several university journals. His areas of interest include literary theory, diaspora, cultural studies, and ICT. He can be reached at thirendrababu@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0002-4070-4956.

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Boosting Comprehension: Engaging Strategies for Teaching Reading

Basanta Raj Dhakal[1]
[1]PhD candidate in English Education at the Graduate School of Education, Tribhuvan University

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Corresponding Author:
Basanta Raj Dhakal
Email: brdhakal200714@gmail.com

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Abstract

Reading unlocks the doors to knowledge, imagination, and empathy. It is a gateway to knowledge to transform learners' potential. Employing purposive sampling, this qualitative case study investigates engaging strategies to enhance reading comprehension based on semi-structured interviews and non-participant classroom observations of three basic level teachers. Five key themes emerged from the qualitative analysis of data: Activating prior knowledge, posing thought-provoking questions, summarizing key points, encouraging predictions, and fostering personal connections. These strategies were found to promote active reading, suggesting potential for wider implementation. Future research should examine their long-term impact on achievement and effectiveness in diverse settings.

Keywords: reading comprehension, critical thinking, prior knowledge, questioning, making connection

Introduction

The concept of reading encompasses a multifaceted process that involves not only the decoding of text but also the comprehension, analysis, and internalization of written materials. Decoding is the ability to translate written text into speech by rapidly matching graphemes to their corresponding phonemes and blending them to form recognizable words (NRP, 2000). However, decoding alone is not sufficient for reading comprehension, which is the ability to understand and interpret the meaning of text. Reading is fundamental in acquiring language skills, as it is closely linked with other linguistic abilities such as writing, speaking, and listening (Dhakal, 2021). Comprehension is considered the essence of reading. Snow(2002) defines reading comprehension as "the process of simultaneously constructing and extracting

meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" (p.11). The development of reading comprehension is a primary objective, as it enables learners to engage with academic tasks effectively. Reading is a gateway to a universe of knowledge, imagination, and empathy that empowers individuals to explore new worlds, understand diverse perspectives, and connect with others on a deeper level (August & Shanahan, 2007).

Based on the review of literature, Pelila and Palangyos (2021) identified four perspectives of concepts: reading as a skill, an ability, a process, and a procedure that play a big role in the world of language. Students' achievement in reading is reflected throughout their lives. Reading holds a significant role in instructed second language learning context. Yet, not everyone grasps the true potential of this transformative skill. For many, particularly in basic-level classrooms, reading comprehension can be a challenging hurdle, hindering their academic and personal growth.

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of reading comprehension for academic success and personal development (August & Shanahan, 2007). Research suggests that strong reading skills are linked to improved vocabulary, critical thinking, and analytical abilities (National Reading Panel, 2000). Moreover, proficient readers demonstrate greater empathy, social-emotional intelligence, and cultural awareness (Molnar et al., 2019). However, despite its significance, reading comprehension remains a struggle for many students, particularly in early grades.

Readers intentionally employ strategies to overcome comprehension difficulties, constructing meaning and enhancing understanding when faced with textual challenges (Adunyarittigun, 2021). Although some earlier studies (Alkhasawneh et al., 2013; Awada & Plana, 2018; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; McKeown & Beck, 2016; Pelia & Palangvos, 2021) have reported instructional strategies for reading comprehension, Phuong (2022) emphasized that it is crucial to investigate further into the strategies of teaching reading comprehension. While earlier research exists on general comprehension strategies (Pelia & Palangyos, 2021), there's a gap in knowledge specifically focused on engaging strategies used by teachers at the basic level in the context of Nepal. This study has potential to contribute significantly to the field of literacy education. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to delve into the fascinating world of reading comprehension, focusing on effective strategies that can unlock its wonders for all learners. In particular, this study is guided by the research question: What are the engaging strategies employed by the teachers to boost reading comprehension of basic level students?

Literature Review

Several factors contribute to comprehension difficulties, including limited vocabulary, lack of background knowledge, and inadequate use of reading strategies (Erniwati et al., 2023; Pikulski & Chard, 2005). Fortunately, research indicates that effective instructional practices can significantly improve reading comprehension. Studies have identified various strategies

that promote active learning and engagement, such as questioning, summarizing, predicting, activating prior knowledge, and making personal connections (Erniwati et al., 2023; Guthrie, 2002; Pressley & Gaskins, 2008).

The literature on reading strategies encompasses a diverse range of studies, methodologies, and findings. A systematic literature review aimed to consolidate the most mentioned reading strategies across various studies, identifying 71 strategies categorized into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities (Pelia & Palangyos, 2021). This review highlights the ongoing focus on identifying reading strategies and their relationships with various factors (Pelia & Palangyos, 2021).

The importance of reading comprehension and the role of reading strategies, including summarization, are further emphasized as vital for improving English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' reading comprehension skills (Awada & Plana, 2018). Additionally, multimedia and text-based reading approaches, which may include summarization activities, have been found to enhance reading comprehension skills in high school students (Alkhasawneh et al., 2013). Summarization is a valuable strategy for improving reading comprehension across diverse educational levels and contexts. It is supported by cognitive theory and has been empirically validated as an effective practice for enhancing students' understanding of texts (McKeown & Beck, 2016).

Koda (2007) identified vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge, metacognitive information, and reading strategies as key factors influencing reading comprehension. Gilakjani and Sabouri, (2016) expanded on this, highlighting the additional impact of reading attitude, effective comprehension instruction, text complexity, and text structure.

Earlier studies have consistently demonstrated a strong link between learners' reading strategies and their ability to comprehend text (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). The scholarly research on reading strategies have consistently emphasized their importance in enhancing reading comprehension skills across various educational contexts. Studies have found that teaching reading strategies is essential for developing students' comprehension skills. However, there is a noted deficiency in teachers' preparedness to effectively design and implement these strategies (Okasha, 2020; Pearson & Afflerbach, 2008). Research has demonstrated that students show significant improvement in reading comprehension when they are explicitly taught reading strategies (Erniwati et al., 2023; Okasha, 2020; Pearson & Afflerbach, 2008). Reading strategies and reading frequencies together accounted for a 33.2% variance in students' reading comprehension skills (Amir et al., 2020). This indicates that both the use of reading strategies and the frequency of reading practice are significant factors in improving comprehension.

Moreover, the distinction between reading skills and strategies is critical for effective teaching. Reading skills refer to the ability to decode and understand text, while reading strategies are the deliberate, purposeful actions readers take to decode text, understand words, and construct meanings of text (Pearson & Afflerbach, 2008). Research consistently

demonstrates that reading strategies significantly improve comprehension (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

The most common reading comprehension strategies identified across various studies include question answering (Almasi & Roberts, 2009; Fisher et al., 2000), summarization (Duke & McMaster, 2002; Pressley et al., 2000), predicting (Afflerbach et al., 2008; Foreman & Douglas, 2011), activating background knowledge (Carnine et al., 2004; Paris et al., 1991), and making connections (Santucci & Faircloth, 2005; Wilhelm, 1997).

Question answering involves students responding to questions posed by the teacher or the text itself, which can help clarify understanding and encourage deeper engagement with the material (Liu, 2020). In a study, Fisher et al. (2000) found that using open-ended questions requiring higher-order thinking skills promoted deeper understanding and critical thinking in struggling readers. Similarly, research by Almasi and Roberts (2009) reported that questioning strategies fostered active engagement and discussion, leading to improved comprehension and vocabulary development.

Summarization requires students to distill the main ideas and essential details from a text, which aids in memory retention and understanding of the text's structure (Duke & McMaster, 2002). Pressley et al. (2000) demonstrated that summarizing activities, such as creating graphic organizers, helped students identify key ideas and improve their ability to retell stories. In the same vein, Duke and McMaster (2002) found that summarizing after reading passages led to better retention of information and improved performance on comprehension tests.

Predicting strategies involve students making predictions about the text based on their existing knowledge, which can activate their schema for better comprehension (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Foreman, & Douglas, 2011). Afflerbach et al. (2008) showed that using prediction strategies like brainstorming potential storylines increased student engagement, motivation, and interest in reading. Supporting this study, Foreman and Douglas (2011) reported that prediction activities helped students activate prior knowledge, anticipate upcoming events, and focus their attention during reading.

A study by Paris et al. (1991) highlighted the importance of activating prior knowledge in facilitating comprehension and building upon existing understanding. Likewise, Carnine et al. (2004) found that explicitly teaching background knowledge relevant to the reading material improved comprehension, especially for struggling readers.

A study by Aisyah and Arief (2021) and Wilhelm (1997) demonstrated that encouraging students to make personal connections to the text increased their motivation, engagement, and overall enjoyment of reading. Similarly, research by Santucci and Faircloth (2005) also found that making connections to personal experiences and real-world scenarios helped students understand the text on a deeper level and make meaning from the content.

Above literature review affirms the potential benefits of various reading strategies, however, their effectiveness may vary depending on the context and the individual learner. It

is essential to continue exploring these strategies to better understand their impact on reading comprehension and literacy development.

This qualitative case study builds upon this existing research by investigating the implementation of these strategies in basic-level classrooms in Nepali context. This study seeks to identify engaging and effective instructional practices by examining teacher experiences that can enhance reading comprehension and unlock the full potential of reading for all learners.

Methods

This qualitative case study explored engaging strategies for enhancing reading comprehension in basic-level (Grades 6-8) classrooms. A purposive sampling approach was employed to select three teachers and their students from basic-level classrooms. The selection criteria focused on experienced teachers known for implementing engaging reading practices and diverse student populations in terms of reading abilities and backgrounds.

Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. Interviews were conducted with each individual teacher, focusing on their implementation of reading comprehension strategies and their perceptions of their effectiveness. Each teacher's classroom was observed for a minimum of three sessions, focusing on interactions and activities related to reading comprehension strategies identified in the literature review. Observational notes documented teacher instruction, student participation, and classroom dynamics.

The collected data were analyzed thematically using an inductive approach (Barun & Clark, 2006). Codes were developed based on the research questions and emerging themes, and data were then categorized and analyzed to identify patterns and insights.

To ensure trustworthiness, data triangulation (interviews and observations) and member checking were employed. Informed consent was taken from the participants along with confidentiality, and anonymity of participants was ensured to maintain research ethics.

Results and Discussion

The qualitative analysis of interview and classroom observation data revealed five key themes related to engaging strategies for enhancing reading comprehension in basic-level classrooms. They are described below.

Activating Prior Knowledge

Activating prior knowledge was the first theme that emerged from the field data. It involved connecting new information to what students already know, which helps them make sense of the text and retain the information better. All the participant teachers advocated the importance of activating prior knowledge. They maintained that it is essential for teaching reading comprehension because it helps students make connections between new information and their existing knowledge. This was evident when participant A said,

"When students are able to relate new information to what they already know, they are better able to understand the text and remember it later on ". Participant C further asserted that activating prior knowledge helps students 'engage with the text on a deeper level'. This shows that by connecting new information to their existing knowledge, students are able to make predictions, ask questions, and draw inferences, which are all important components of reading comprehension (Snow, 2002). This active engagement with the text leads to deeper understanding of the material and better retention of information (Pressley, 2002). This finding supported earlier studies by Brown (2004) and Smith and Jones (2010) who found that students who were taught to activate their prior knowledge before reading a text performed significantly better on comprehension tests than students who did not use this strategy.

Another recent study by Johnson et al. (2015) showed that activating prior knowledge helped students make connections between different texts, leading to improved reading comprehension. In addition, research by Guthrie (2003) has shown that activating prior knowledge is particularly beneficial for struggling readers. Participant teachers repeatedly emphasized that students often struggle with reading comprehension due to insufficient background knowledge. By activating the prior knowledge, teachers can play a crucial role in helping students build upon their existing knowledge to understand new concepts (Guthrie, 2003).

During classroom observation, it was revealed that teachers employed various methods to activate students' background knowledge before, during, and after reading. This included brainstorming activities, discussions about personal experiences, and connecting the text to familiar topics. All the participant teachers acknowledged that activating prior knowledge helped students understand the text on a deeper level.

Overall, activating prior knowledge is a powerful strategy for teaching reading comprehension. By helping students make connections between new information and their existing knowledge, teachers can improve students' understanding of the text and enhance their retention of information. The evidence supports the effectiveness of activating prior knowledge for improving reading comprehension, particularly for struggling readers.

Questioning

Next effective strategy for improving reading comprehension reported by participant teachers is the use of questioning. During classroom observation, it was unveiled that questioning was frequent and so pervasive in all the participant teachers' classrooms. Teachers emphasized the importance of asking students questions before, during and after reading, to help them engage with the text, think critically about the material, and deepen their understanding. For instance, teacher B said:

> I use questions all the time. Questions are powerful tools for promoting reading comprehension as it encourages students to actively engage with the text. When students are asked questions about the material they are reading. They are forced to think critically about the content. They are asked to make connections between the

ideas. They draw inferences based on the information presented. This helps students understand the material more deeply. It also improves their ability to retain and recall information (Teacher B, personal communication, February, 2021).

Previous research has also shown that questioning can significantly improve reading comprehension. In a study conducted by Guthrie (2003), students who were taught using a questioning strategy showed greater gains in reading comprehension compared to students who were not. Guthrie found that questioning helped students focus their attention on key ideas, make predictions about the text, and monitor their understanding as they read.

In addition to improving reading comprehension, participant teachers emphasized that questioning can also help students develop important critical thinking skills. Teacher A said, "We can help students become better readers by asking them questions and to analyze and evaluate the information they are reading. This helps them to be able to think critically about the text they read".

During the interview, teacher C maintained that when implementing a questioning strategy for teaching reading comprehension, the types of questions asked is crucial. She preferred to ask open-ended questions that require students to think critically and provide detailed responses than asking closed-ended questions that only require a 'simple yes or no answer'. This shows that this teacher is aware of developing critical thinking skills in the students. She further emphasized that teachers should ask a variety of questions targeting different text elements, such as main ideas, supporting details and author's intent.

During classroom observation it was evident that participant teachers scaffolded the questioning process by starting with simpler questions and gradually increasing the complexity as students became more engaged with the text. Teachers provided opportunities to develop skills they needed to become independent readers by providing students with opportunities to practice answering questions on their own. This way students were able to comprehend and analyze texts on their own.

All three teachers employed various questioning techniques to promote deeper understanding. They used open-ended questions, prompting students to analyze characters, infer motives, and make connections to the text. All teachers reported that questioning fostered active engagement and developed reading comprehension.

Making Connections

The next theme that emerged from the field data was making connections. Teachers reported that they encouraged their students to make personal connections to the text by relating to characters, events, and themes. This involved activities like drawing parallels to their own lives they have experienced, discussing emotions evoked by the story, and identifying lessons learned. Both teacher B and C reported that making connections made the reading experience of their students more meaningful and memorable. For instance, teacher A was teaching reading in grade 8, Unit 5, Reading I. At that time, he asked his students if they crossed the road from zebra crossing. Students replied that they did it often. Teachers

frequently connected the reading content to their personal experiences. This way, teacher B claims that readers are able to deepen their understanding and retention of the material by actively engaging with the text and relating it to their personal experiences, prior knowledge, and other texts. This strategy not only enhanced comprehension but also fostered critical thinking and promoted a more enjoyable reading experience.

This finding corroborates with the findings from earlier studies. For instance, a study by Duke and Pearson (2002) has shown that making connections while reading can significantly improve comprehension. When readers make connections between the text and their own experiences, they are better able to understand and remember the material. This is because making connections helps to create a framework for organizing and integrating new information with existing knowledge (Duke & Pearson, 2002).

Participant teachers emphasized that readers can also make connections to other texts they have read. Teacher A maintained that readers can 'gain a deeper understanding of the themes, characters, and ideas presented in the material by making connections between different texts. This intertextual connection can enrich the reading experience and provide new insights into text.

Furthermore, teacher C believed that making connections can help readers to engage with the material on a deeper level. By relating the text to their own lives, readers are able to see the relevance and significance of the material, which can increase motivation and interest in the reading. This active engagement with the text can lead to a more meaningful and enjoyable reading experience.

Encouraging Prediction

The fourth theme that emerged from the field data is predicting. Predicting what will happen next in a text is a form of active engagement that requires readers to use their prior knowledge and context clues to make educated guesses about the content (Snow, 2002). Readers are able to anticipate the direction of the text when they can make predictions (Awada & Plana, 2018). This can help them stay focused and motivated to continue reading. Additionally, predicting helps readers connect with the text and their own experiences, which can deepen their understanding of the material read. During classroom observation, it was revealed that participant teachers encouraged students to predict the lesson from the title and pictures at the beginning of the lesson. The teachers also asked students to predict what comes next during reading. For instance, teacher B was teaching reading in grade eight. At that time, he asked students to look at the picture and guess what they were going to learn. Teachers asked the students to predict what comes next during reading instruction.

Research has shown that encouraging prediction can significantly improve reading comprehension. A study by Smith and Jones (2018) found that teaching prediction strategies increased student comprehension by 20%. This demonstrates the powerful impact that prediction can have on understanding and retention of information.

Teacher C believed that encouraging students to predict can help readers develop 'critical and creative thinking skills'. This reveals that when readers are forced to think critically about the text and evaluate the evidence to support their guesses, it can help readers become more analytical and critical in their reading (Awada & Plana, 2018), which can benefit them in other areas of their academic and professional lives.

Involving students in activities like making predictions based on titles, pictures, and prior knowledge, participant teachers believed that predicting can keep them engaged and motivated to continue reading. This shows that encouraging predication is a valuable strategy for boosting reading comprehension. By actively engaging with the text and making educated guesses about what will happen next, readers can improve their understanding and develop critical thinking skills.

Summarizing

All participant teachers strongly believed that summarizing is a crucial skill that can significantly boost reading comprehension. Summarizing helps readers grasp the main points of a text more easily by condensing information into a concise form. During classroom observation, participant teachers asked students to read the text and retell what they understood. Teacher A and B both often asked students to read a paragraph, summarize, and retell key ideas from the paragraph. Teachers encouraged students to summarize key ideas at various points during reading and after reading. This involved creating graphic organizers, writing short summaries, and participating in partner discussions. These teachers reported that summarizing helped their students retain important information and omit irrelevant details.

These findings are similar to the findings of McKeown and Beck (2016), who found that students who received instruction in summarization strategies demonstrated significantly higher levels of reading comprehension compared to their peers. This highlights the importance of teaching summarizing skills to enhance reading proficiency. These findings reveal that summarizing strategy encourages readers to actively engage with the text and requires them to analyze and synthesize the information, leading to a deeper understanding of the material. Summarization can also help readers become more critical thinkers (Awada & Plana, 2018). By summarizing a text, readers are encouraged to evaluate the credibility and relevance of the information presented (Awada & Plana, 2018). The results of this study corroborate with existing research highlighting the effectiveness of these engaging strategies in promoting active reading and comprehension (Guthrie, 2002; Pressley & Gaskins, 2008). The teachers in this study implemented the strategies creatively and effectively, fostering a positive learning environment where students felt engaged and motivated to participate.

Overall, these findings suggest that incorporating these strategies into basic-level classrooms can be beneficial for enhancing reading comprehension. This qualitative case study involved a limited number of participants and classrooms, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, relying solely on interviews and observations may introduce bias based on participant perspectives and researcher interpretations.

Conclusion

This study offers valuable insights into the use of engaging strategies for enhancing reading comprehension in basic-level classrooms. While educators employ a range of reading comprehension strategies, key strategies employed include question answering, summarizing, predicting, and activating prior knowledge. The effectiveness of these strategies can be influenced by the context in which they are used and the proficiency of the teacher in conveying them to students. The identified strategies offer practical ways for educators to promote active reading and empower students to unlock the full potential of reading. Educators can incorporate these activities into their teaching practices to help students become more proficient lifelong learners. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study which employed a relatively small sample. Further research is needed to explore the generalizability of these findings across diverse contexts and student populations. Additionally, subsequent studies could investigate the enduring impact of the strategies on student achievement, and explore potential challenges and adaptations needed for wider implementation.

Author's Bio

Mr. Basanta Raj Dhakal is a PhD candidate in English Education at the Graduate School of Education, Tribhuvan University. With expertise in English language teaching and teacher education, he is a dedicated ELT practitioner and scholar. As a life member of NELTA, his research interests are focused on teacher development, literacy, and literature.

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Translanguaging Dynamics in Non-Native English Classrooms

Ramji Acharya[1]
[1]MPhil Scholar at Kathmandu University

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Corresponding Author:
Ramji Acharya
Email: ramji_mpele21@kusoed.edu.np

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Abstract

This research investigates the pragmatic applications of code-switching employed by English language instructors in the pedagogical context, aiming to discern its role during interactions within the English teaching and learning process. The study, conducted in Lalitpur across three educational institutions, observed over 15 classes taught by five different educators. Utilizing interpretive ethnography within a qualitative research paradigm, the methodological framework involved meticulous observation, audio-visual recordings, and subsequent transcription for data collection and analysis. The findings revealed that code-switching in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom serves as a facilitative tool for enhancing interactions during the learning process. The identified purposes of code-switching by teachers during instructional activities include clarification, reiteration, explanation, inquiry, translation, assessment of comprehension, emphasis on linguistic elements, inferential communication, vocabulary development, facilitation of class discussions, provision of feedback, support for memorization, classroom management, and entertainment.

***Keywords*:** Code-Switching/Mixing, translanguaging, English language teaching, sociolinguistic

Introduction

Effective communication plays a pivotal role in the field of language instruction. Proficient communication in language teaching necessitates using diverse communicative techniques by educators. To establish a robust communicative rapport with students, language teachers employ various strategies, including code-switching, code-mixing, translanguaging, and various discourse markers (Ataş & Sağın-Şimşek, 2021). Code-switching, in particular, is

a prevalent phenomenon observed in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, manifesting itself in both teacher and student discourse within English Language Teaching (ELT) settings.

Diverse linguistic definitions contribute to varied conceptualizations of language. Crystal (2008) posits that language constitutes a tangible act encompassing speaking, writing, and signing within a context (p. 265). Richard and Schmidt (2010) define language as a structured system of human communication, involving organized sounds or their written representations (p. 311). The utilization of structured sounds, or codes, during communication, is crucial for conveying specific messages. Wardhaugh (1986) underscores that language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols employed for human communication (p. 3). In this context, code-switching operates as a function of the arbitrary vocal system, aligning with Wardhaugh's definition of language as the systematic production of sound for message delivery.

Language serves as a conduit for transmitting culture, messages, and intentions across members of a society and from one generation to the next. Within the structure of a language, reflections of a culture's worldview and significant distinctions can be discerned (DeCapua & Wintergerst 2016). The historical prevalence of the grammar-translation method in language instruction, rooted in nineteenth-century pedagogy, underscores a shift towards contemporary language teaching methodologies. The increasing demand for English language proficiency worldwide has led to a substantial need for quality language teaching and instructional materials (Richards, 2006). Consequently, the demand for effective teaching methodologies persists, with communicative language teaching (CLT) emerging as a predominant choice.

While many language educators opt for communicative language teaching, there exists a broad spectrum of interpretations regarding its definition. Richards (2006) characterizes communicative language teaching as a set of principles encompassing language teaching goals, the learning process, optimal classroom activities for facilitating learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the educational setting. Despite its popularity, language teachers often possess limited knowledge about the intricacies of the communicative language teaching approach, emphasizing the ongoing need for enhanced understanding and awareness within the pedagogical community.

Non-Native Context

English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are distinct instructional paradigms within the broader framework of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The nomenclature differentiates the instructional context based on the linguistic proficiency and familiarity of learners with the English language.

EFL, represented by the acronym EFL, pertains to the teaching of English to individuals who encounter the language primarily for academic pursuits or professional tasks, without prior exposure or comprehensive knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In this educational setting, English serves as a foreign language, and students engage with English

subjects for the explicit purpose of language acquisition. The objectives extend beyond mere communicative competence, encompassing preparatory measures for future endeavours in English-speaking countries, international trade, and other professional commitments. The pedagogical emphasis in EFL contexts gravitates towards the development of communicative functions rather than a meticulous focus on linguistic elements.

Conversely, Bayley and Shafer (1998) argue ESL, denoted by the acronym ESL, characterizes situations where individuals refine and enhance their existing proficiency in English. Imagine a student who immigrated to an English-speaking country with some basic English skills. ESL classes would help them refine their communication, grammar, and vocabulary to function effectively in their new environment.

Typically, ESL learners possess a foundational understanding of English as a language and undertake further studies to perfect their language skills. ESL instruction is characterized by a faster learning pace compared to EFL, as learners in this context already possess rudimentary reading and writing skills in English. This prior familiarity accelerates the learning process, distinguishing ESL from the more introductory nature of EFL instruction. The dichotomy between ESL and EFL manifests in the fundamental distinction between learners who approach English as a new and unfamiliar language, as in the case of EFL, versus those who seek to advance and refine their existing English proficiency, as in the case of ESL (Nesi, 2012). The inherent differences in learner readiness and linguistic exposure underscore the unique challenges and considerations associated with each instructional context.

Code

Code serves as a versatile linguistic medium facilitating effective communication with comprehensive meaning. This encompassing term may denote a dialect, register, or language. Richard et al. (2010, p. 87) defines code as a term interchangeable with language, speech, variety, or dialect, considered by some to be a more natural descriptor. It is employed when emphasizing a language or language variety within a specific community. Code functions as a communicative tool adaptable to context and situation, facilitating conversation through a set of conventions for converting one signaling system into another (Crystal, 2008, p. 82). It encompasses not only conversations but also the entire spectrum of functions and tools vital for human communication.

In the global linguistic landscape, English serves as a paramount vehicle for communication among speakers of the language and diverse linguistic varieties. The prevailing trend of linguistic globalization has led to the widespread occurrence of bilingualism. In bilingual communities worldwide, individuals frequently engage in code-switching, the practice of alternating between two languages or dialects to meet communicative demands. Code-switching predominantly manifests in spoken language rather than written expression. As elucidated by Muysken (2000), code-switching encompasses instances where lexical items and grammatical features from two languages coexist within a single sentence, highlighting its inherent linguistic functions.

Moreover, code-mixing, as articulated by Shogren (2002), involves the embedding of various linguistic units, such as affixes, words, phrases, and clauses, in a manner that requires participants to reconcile auditory input with comprehension. This linguistic phenomenon, as described by Bokamba (1989), entails the deliberate integration of diverse linguistic elements, including words, tones, morphemes, and even entire sentences from one language into another. Code-mixing serves as a strategic approach to delivering a message effectively, employing various linguistic techniques and tools to enhance communication (Alcnauerová, 2013). In essence, both code-switching and code-mixing exemplify dynamic linguistic practices, enriching communication by drawing upon the resources of multiple languages and linguistic elements.

Code Switching and Code Mixing as Translingualism

Code-switching, a linguistic phenomenon involving the integration of multiple languages, occurs when speakers incorporate alternative linguistic elements into their primary language during communication. This practice entails the alternation between two or more languages within the context of a conversation. Various linguists offer diverse definitions of code-switching, shedding light on the intricacies of this linguistic phenomenon. Chana (1984) defines code-switching as the juxtaposition of items from two different languages within a passage of speech. This definition emphasizes the occurrence of code-switching when a speaker seamlessly inserts elements from two distinct languages into their utterance, creating a language mixture. Gumperz (1982) underscores that code-switching occurs when speakers consciously or subconsciously blend two different languages within a speech, relying on the meaningful comparison of strings formed according to the internal rules of distinct grammatical systems.

Hoffman (1991) expands on this concept, stating that code-switching encompasses the use of two languages or linguistic varieties within the same utterance or conversation. This definition highlights code-switching as a situation where a speaker utilizes two different languages to communicate during the same speech event. Additionally, Wardaugh (2006) introduces the concept of code mixing, which occurs when conversants use both languages within a single sentence, reflecting intra-sentential switches.

Methods

To achieve the research objectives, I undertook ethnographic research procedures, a methodology that diverges significantly from experimental methods in its underlying assumptions, methods, and approach to evidence (Nunan, 1992, p. 56). In contrast to the practical action-oriented data collection of experimental procedures, ethnographic research, rooted in anthropology and sociology, focuses on human behaviour, knowledge acquisition, and its application in real-world settings, with a tradition extending even to the study of animal behaviors (Wilson, 1982, as cited in Nunan, 1992, p. 56).

According to Le Compte and Goetz (1982, as cited in Nunan, 1992, p. 57), ethnography is characterized by the utilization of both participant and nonparticipant observation, a concentration on natural settings, and the incorporation of the subjective views and belief systems of participants in structuring the research. The investigator refrains from manipulating study variables, emphasizing a holistic understanding of the research context. Ethnographic research adheres to key principles such as adopting a grounded approach to data, providing 'thick' explanations, and moving beyond mere description to engage in analysis, interpretation, and explanation (Nunan, 1992). Watson and Ulichny (1988) emphasize the importance of interpretation, analysis, and explanation in ethnography, suggesting that explanation should take the form of grounded theory derived systematically from data.

The concept of 'thick explanation' underscores the necessity of considering all factors that may influence the phenomena under investigation. Chaudron (1988, as cited in year) identifies ethnography as one of the major traditions in applied linguistic research, describing it as a qualitative, process-oriented approach to investigating interaction.

Given the interpretive nature of ethnographic research, it involves extended participant observation, making the process time-consuming due to the substantial amount of raw data required. The research is open in nature, and to fulfill the research objectives, I meticulously framed the study based on ethnographic research. This involved selecting the research problem, formulating objectives, and designing the research framework, serving as a blueprint for the study. Afterward, I made essential preparations for participant selection and developed tools for data collection aligned with research objectives. Following refinement of these tools, I conducted fieldwork for data collection, organizing and thematically analyzing the data to draw meaningful insights. This comprehensive process aligns with the principles of ethnographic research, emphasizing a nuanced and in-depth understanding of the research context. The study concentrated on data collected from five different teachers, emphasizing their speech behavior with regard to code switching. The primary objective was to uncover the purposes driving the speaker's decision to change the code during English language instruction.

Participants and Selection Procedure

The population under consideration for this study comprised English language teachers who incorporate code-switching in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. Employing a convenient sampling technique, I selected five English language teachers to achieve the specified objectives. The selection process involved visiting two schools in close proximity to my workplace, where I identified and approached English language teachers for data collection.

To facilitate easy access to data, I sought permission from teachers in my own school for classroom observations. The teachers readily agreed, expressing a mix of apprehension and enthusiasm, making the observation process feasible. Prior to the observations, I provided a

detailed explanation of the purpose behind my study and outlined the specific activities I would be engaging in during the classroom sessions. This initial communication was crucial in gaining the teachers' understanding and cooperation for the observational aspect of the research.

Participants

The research was carried out at two schools located in Lalitpur, where the primary medium of instruction is the English language. In both educational institutions, English is taught as a foreign language. The study involved the participation of five English language teachers, all of whom specialize in English language teaching at the secondary and higher education levels. These teachers graduated from various universities, and their selection as participants was based on a convenient purposive sampling approach.

Among the participants, four were male, and one was female, all of whom shared Nepali as their mother tongue. The educational background of the participants varied, with two holding M. Phil degrees from Kathmandu University and the remaining three having completed their master's degrees in English language teaching from Tribhuvan University. Despite some participants having recently completed their master's degrees, they possessed significant teaching experience. Notably, two participants had been teaching English for over ten years.

While the participants demonstrated a good understanding of the research, some initially displayed a limited interest in becoming involved in the study. Nevertheless, they extended their support with great enthusiasm and made commendable efforts to contribute to the research, showcasing their commitment to the advancement of English language teaching.

Analysis of Data

In this study, audio recordings of the teachers' lectures were meticulously transcribed by the researcher to ascertain the types and functions of code-switching employed by English language teachers in an English as a foreign language classroom. The audio recordings captured fifteen lectures of varying durations, conducted by five different teachers in the context of an English as a foreign language classroom.

The data analysis unfolded in two stages. First, the audiotaped recordings were scrutinized based on the three types of code-switching proposed by Poplack (1980): Tag-switching (involving exclamations, tags, discourse markers, adverbials, terms of address, etc.), Inter-sentential switching (involving the insertion of a phrase or a clause between sentences), and Intra-sentential switching (involving the insertion of words, phrases, or clauses in the middle of a sentence). Subsequently, the data underwent analysis according to the purposes of code-switching as suggested by Appel and Muysken (1987) and Hoffmann (1991). The analytical approach adopted in this study was qualitative and descriptive in nature.

Results and Discussion

The findings revealed that English language teachers employed code-switching for various purposes, a practice facilitated by their contextual bilingualism. Teachers who were

unfamiliar with the students' mother tongue were less inclined to engage in code-switching. However, when there were multiple common languages shared between teachers and students, the likelihood of code-switching increased, occurring in diverse situations and serving various communicative purposes. The subsequent sections will delineate instances where the teacher utilized code-switching in the mother tongue of the students.

Translating New Words, Tag and Sentences

Translation, whether intentional or inadvertent, is a pervasive aspect of language teaching. It is challenging to identify a monolingual classroom in language instruction, as even in classrooms where the mother tongue is the medium of instruction, the translation technique plays a crucial role in aiding student comprehension. In the Nepali language classroom context, translation is frequently employed by both students and teachers to facilitate understanding. This process, known as code-switching, involves the simultaneous use of two languages. An example of this is when a teacher switches the code to translate a new word, such as "spectacles," rendered as "power bhayeko chasma" or "Glasses, power navayako chasma." Translation, in this context, extends beyond a mere word-for-word rendition, often involving supporting phrases to convey nuanced meanings.

Tags, or commonly used expressions in language teaching, are frequently utilized in translation. During observations, the repetition of the same tag multiple times appeared less effective, prompting the teacher to incorporate exact translations. For instance, the phrase "See here, (Yeta hera)" is used as a tag with its exact translation. The efficacy of such translation or code-switching is influenced by the teacher's satisfaction and the students' responsiveness. At times, tags with translations are employed as colloquial expressions, serving as a habit for the teacher during language instruction.

Commands or requests in the form of tags, such as "Be attentive, Dhyan deu hai," are frequently used in language teaching, further highlighting the commonality of code-switching. When a teacher completes a sentence and repeats it in the second language, students tend to be more attentive and satisfied. This translation strategy is used to emphasize specific sentences, with additional information often provided in the second language. For example, "*You have to look at your answer, Timile answer hernu pardacha, ani balla timile bujhdachhau. Answer herne ani connect garne*." Here, the teacher not only translates the sentence but also adds clarification in Nepali, demonstrating that code-switching is employed to enhance comprehension.

In another instance, the teacher translates a sentence while incorporating terms from the first language, such as "relative clause" and "sentence." This demonstrates that code-switching is used strategically to provide clear concepts and explanations to students. Overall, the integration of translation and code-switching in language teaching serves as a valuable tool for effective communication and comprehension.

Explaining Difficult Ideas

The utilization of one's mother tongue to articulate intricate ideas is a natural inclination, and similarly, teachers resort to code-switching to elucidate challenging concepts. In the course of this research, it became evident that the teacher employs the second language with confidence, believing that it will effectively convey complex ideas to the students. The instances of code-switching observed in the following examples exemplify this strategy: "Do you know performance-changing drugs? *Teyo kheladi le gair kanooni rupma ausadhi haru prayog garxan ni performance badhaune*." In these examples, the teacher strategically switches the code to expound upon specific noun phrases, showcasing a departure from mere sentence translation. In the first example, the teacher initially uses the first language and subsequently employs the second language to provide a more detailed explanation of the topic, demonstrating the deliberate use of code-switching to clarify intricate phrases or ideas.

Maintaining Discipline

Teachers employ code-switching to address students and establish expectations for positive moral conduct and classroom behavior. Tags and phrases are employed as disciplinary measures, such as "*hey, yeta hera, kina chaleko, book nikalnu pardaina*," emphasizing the need for maintaining discipline in the language class. Alongside English phrases, teachers also integrate Nepali phrases by switching from L1 to L2. This approach is occasionally applied in integrated language instruction, where frequent code changes are utilized. Silence in the classroom is also influenced by the teacher's state of mind, and in cases of overcrowded classrooms, teachers may use English words to maintain order.

Furthermore, teachers may use long examples or address specific incidents in Nepali to assert control over the class. An example of this is the teacher using L1 for certain words and phrases, stating,

"*Timilai kehi kaam linu chha. Timi pasalma gayau kehi saman chahiyeko chha. Tyaha j sukai hos timilai matlab vayena hoina? Whether man is there or woman is there, no matter for you. Tara yeha chai sathi haru sanga basda problem bhayo. Kun duniya ma chhau ka timiharu*."

This intentional use of L1 for maintaining discipline and providing real-life examples proves effective in classroom management, highlighting the acceptability of using L2 in an English language class.

Making Listener Attentive

In instances where students divert their attention to friends or engage in gossip, the teacher strategically employs L2 to regain and maintain their focus. The use of regular language, a similar intonation or tone, or inadequate eye contact has the potential to distract students from their studies. Conversely, the intentional use of L2, characterized by a high tone and a stern gaze, proves effective in capturing the students' attention. Throughout this intervention, the teacher employs L2 with phrases such as "*Yaha hera hai, khoi ta book,*

nursery 12 class jasto……maile vane pachhi jhula hernia thalis. Hai listen hay! Look at here, yaha hera ta." The purpose of code-switching in these instances is to redirect students' attention back to the class or the ongoing instruction.

Repeating Important Points

In many instances, teachers tend to translate complex structures into L2, but there are cases where the teacher repeats the same information in L2. This approach may stem from the teacher's lack of confidence in the students' understanding in L1 or a desire for personal assurance. Repetition of the same meaning in L2 serves the purpose of providing students with additional clarity and confirmation on the matter at hand. In these situations, teachers often rephrase controversial ideas in both languages, making modifications to vocabulary and meaning to simplify the concept.

For example, a teacher may say, "*tyo glass ra spectacles vanya ni, power vayeko navayeko chasma vanna khojiyeko ho tara hami kahilekahi synonyms ko rupma prayog garna khojiraheka hunchhau.*" In this example, the teacher uses L2 more explicitly to explain the concept. The teacher employs "spectacle" for "*power bhayako*" and "glass" for "*power nabhayako*," providing additional information that goes beyond a direct translation. This method of explanation involves repeating the words in L2, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Motivating Students

Motivation plays a crucial role in language teaching, and language teachers employ various techniques to inspire and encourage their students. The use of different languages with distinct tones can be an effective strategy for fostering motivation in the classroom. In multilingual classes, a teacher can utilize a variety of languages to teach a particular language, contributing to enhanced learning and heightened motivation among students. Code-switching, whether employed consciously or unconsciously, serves as a language teaching technique to motivate students, with the frequency and language preference determined by the teacher's motivational approach.

Conscious and unconscious code-switching for motivational purposes depend on how frequently a teacher seeks to inspire students and the language chosen for this purpose. Here are examples of the teacher using L2 for student motivation:

"Warm up, tataguni paryo ni tapai haru lai."

"Ma Nepali dherai janne chhu bhanne lai pani yo challenge ho hai."

"Natak garko bhaya panoi nagareko jastai hos hai ta bujhnu bhayo ta?"

"Maile skeleton matra bhaneko thiya ni le yeha hera full flesh text chh aba bhayana ta sajilo?"

These motivational expressions in L2 during language teaching not only help students concentrate on their tasks but also contribute to a heightened eagerness to engage with the teacher and participate in various activities.

Quoting Examples from Real Life

Human experiences are inherently diverse, and when sharing the nuanced details of personal experiences, using one's mother tongue often enhances the expression of authentic feelings. In such situations, teachers may engage in code-switching, employing their mother tongue for conveying difficult vocabulary or opting for a mixture of codes. While some teachers may narrate the entire story in L2, the blending of codes is frequently observed during extended L2 use. For instance:

"*Listen hai aaja yo period ma padhauna aaina mero substitution aru kasaile garnuvayo tara kamko substitution vayo hola tara person ko substitution hunccha? hudaina. Word ko pani tyahi rahechha, kahile kahi kaam chalauna ka lagi arko sabda prayog garinchh. Prayog gareta pani has its own value. Meaning ko substitutionko lagi gariela*."

In this example, certain challenging Nepali terms are substituted with English words. Whenever a teacher deems it convenient to incorporate English vocabulary into Nepali speech, whether consciously or unconsciously, they may opt for the English terms. Similar instances were noted during my observations, even in Nepali discourse.

Explaining Different Concepts

The translation of challenging vocabulary items and phrases may not always suffice for foreign language learners, especially when confronted with complex contexts in language teaching. At the initial and foundational levels of translation, code mixing occurs with simple and less familiar words. For instance:

"*yo international book ma lekhak ko nam jaruri xaina*."

In this expression, the use of "international book" is perceived as more accessible than "*antarastriya pustak*." Similarly, the substitution of "*Import*ant" for "*jaruri*" and "*author*" for "*lekhak*" serves to simplify the language for learners. The teacher strategically switches the code to incorporate easier words when explaining various concepts in language teaching.

Findings of the Research Study

Based on the analysis of the data and the interpretation of the results, this section summarizes the major findings and key aspects of the study. The primary focus of the study was to examine the purposes behind code-switching in English language teaching. The investigation delves into the code-switching behaviors of teachers during the instruction of the English language in an EFL context. The samples extracted from the data provide a consistent representation of the speech patterns and code-switching tendencies exhibited by the teachers in the formal classroom setting. Context and subject matter were identified as key factors influencing code-switching behaviors, and the results appear closely connected to the speaker's mood, the reasons for code switching, and the specific circumstances in which the code switching occurred.

Code-Switching for Clarification

Teachers often switch between languages (code-switching) to clarify complex concepts for their students. This technique is employed in several situations. Firstly, teachers may

code-switch when encountering difficult vocabulary or confusing grammatical structures. They might switch to the students' native language (L1) to explain the concept or provide a simpler equivalent in the target language (L2). This helps students grasp the meaning and avoids confusion. Additionally, teachers may repeat key phrases or sentences in either L1 or L2 for emphasis, ensuring students understand the intended meaning. Sometimes, students themselves might prompt this repetition by requesting clarification.

Secondly, code-switching is a valuable tool for explanation. Language teaching involves various elements like vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. When a sentence appears complex, the teacher might explain it in L1 to provide a clearer breakdown. This allows students to grasp the individual components before understanding the whole sentence in L2. This targeted explanation using the preferred language ensures students receive the necessary information to understand the concept effectively.

Checking Comprehension

The teacher asks questions or uses tags in L2 to check students' understanding. While instructing in language students seem confused at the same time the teacher asks some questions to check students' understanding. Switching or using tags in L2 is a code switching to check students' understanding. Checking language comprehension is a very important task in language teaching where a teacher may use various activities to measure students' understanding. During the use of multitasking to understand students' understanding about the class the teacher uses L1 and L2 simultaneously which is a type of code switching for checking a student's understanding.

While making inference the teacher asks questions in both languages. Sometimes the teacher asks questions in English language and sometimes he changes the code or asks questions in L2, while asking questions to make inferences the teacher switches the code or sometimes s/he uses mixed expressions. Which is the purpose of code switching. An inference is an idea or conclusion that is drawn from evidence and reasoning. It is an educated guess. When a teacher makes an inference you are reading between lines or just looking carefully at the facts and coming to a conclusion. The process can be seen as an evaluation of students while the instruction is going on smoothly. A teacher can make inferences to check the students' comprehension. Similarly, at the same time the students can ask questions in self.

Asking for memorization is one of the processes of evaluation in language learning class. In this case the teacher sometimes uses both the languages to ask questions to the students. During the evaluation of memorization the teacher sometimes translates the exact question in l2 and sometimes modifies the question with mixed expressions.

Classroom Management

Teachers switch the code during the discussion in class to make discussion more effective and meaningful. A teacher uses multiple ways and languages in classroom discussions as a result s/he switches the code may vary on the frequency alternation of

language. It is because of the variety of students with different linguistic backgrounds and language proficiency. To be more specific or informal to answer the questions of students the teacher switches the code. In this section the students' code switching is ignored. To manage class the teachers are found using l2 and sometimes mixed expressions as classroom management is the additional technique in language class, however the role of language in management of class cannot be ignored.

Translation

Translation is the communication of meaning from one language to another language. Translation refers to written information whereas interpretation refers to spoken information. The purpose of translation is to convey the original tone and intent of a message, taking into account cultural and other differences between source and target language. The translation communicates the same message in another language. Here in this study the speaker translates the message into another language shifting/switching code during the class.

Conclusions

The outcomes of this study contribute a nuanced perspective to the understanding of code-switching and its impact on classroom interaction. Code-switching is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but is, to some extent, reflective of fundamental teaching principles. The research, based on rigorous observation of English language teaching classes, reveals various factors influencing student teachers' code-switching in the classroom. Employing a qualitative research design within an interpretive ethnographic research paradigm, this study systematically analyzes and explains data collected through in-depth observation.

The observation focuses on the specified objectives, aiming to identify the code-switching strategies of teachers to discern the purposes behind mixed expressions in English language teaching classes. While initial assumptions suggested specific strategies, the observation reveals that code-switching occurs randomly, sometimes strategically, and at times unconsciously due to the interference of the first language with the second language speaker. Despite the apparent randomness, specific purposes behind the mixed expressions are identified and analyzed in the research.

The study's participants are English language teachers in Nepal, specifically in Lalitpur district, teaching in reputable secondary schools with higher qualifications and considerable language teaching experience. The mixed expressions recorded during their teaching reveal the professional quality of participants in language teaching. The findings emphasize that code-switching is a significant strategy employed by language teachers, even in the context of English as a medium of instruction.

The research identifies several purposes for code-switching during English language teaching, including translation of new words or phrases, maintaining silence, repeating essential points, motivating students, explaining different concepts, and providing real-life examples. Despite

institutional restrictions in some cases, teachers frequently use mixed expressions, which are well understood by students.

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the why, when, and how language teachers employ code-switching in formal classroom settings. It emphasizes the multifaceted nature of code-switching in language teaching and highlights its value in enhancing comprehension and communication in the English language classroom.

Author's Bio

Ramji Acharya is an MPhil Scholar at Kathmandu University with a keen interest in Alternative and Integrated Assessment and the integration of ICT in Education. He is currently serving as a Coordinator at Regent Residential School. Nepal

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Teachers' Strategies for Improving ESL Learners' Speaking Skills

Muna Aryal[1]
[1]MPhil Scholar, English Language Education at Kathmandu University School of Education

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Corresponding Author:
Muna Aryal
Email: aryalmuna306@gmail.com

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Abstract

The study examines the perception of Nepalese English teachers on the strategies employed to enhance ESL learners' speaking skills. To gather insights and experiences, interviews were conducted with two secondary-level English teachers from schools in the Kathmandu valley. The findings reveals that creating a supporting learning environment and utilizing different teaching strategies, such as task-based learning and communicative language teaching are crucial for improving students' speaking abilities. The study also highlights how socio-economic and cultural factors influence language learning, underscoring the need for the inclusive and equitable educational practices. Despite the study's contributions to understanding effective ESL teaching practices and its practical implications for educators and policymaker, effective reading strategies are underestimated. The study emphasizes the importance of adopting effective teaching strategies and fostering supportive learning environments to enhance ESL learners' speaking skills and confidence in using English.

***Keywords*:** ESL teaching Strategy, English speaking, speaking skills, teaching speaking

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing world, effective communication has become increasingly significant in both academic and professional contexts. As a globally dominant language, English, plays a crucial role in facilitating this essential to this communication. Therefore, English as a second language learners (ESL) need to improve their speaking abilities the most in addition to their reading, writing and listening skills. Speaking English fluently is essential for both academic achievement and navigating various professional contexts where English is used as the *'lingua franca'*. Speaking is frequently seen as the most difficult skill for ESL

learners, according to recent research, because it demands immediate verbal expression and interaction (Shabani, 2021).. Many students experience anxiety when speaking in the classroom which may be related to a fear of exposer. Additionally, difficulties in speaking may arise from various factors including a lack of engaging teaching strategies, insufficient vocabulary to express ideas, and limited opportunities for practices.

Reflecting on my journey of learning English brings to mind the challenges I faced as an ESL learner. I used to be quite reserved, and hardly rather than , hardly speaking unless directly prompted. My schooling was marked by my reticence, especially when it came to speaking English. It became evident that there was a bias among teachers, favoring those who were already proficient speakers. Activities like prayers or speaking competitions seemed reserved for the selected few fluent in English. The teaching methodology further accentuated the divide. Teachers would often conduct classes autonomously, finishing chapters, assigning tasks and departing, leaving most students silently absorbing the lesson. As Nepali is our primary language, opportunities to practice English at home were scarce. Even in English classes, instructors frequently used Nepali to teach. I distinctly remember the start of each academic year when the school imposed strict rules enforcing the use of Nepali or English? within the premises. However, this decree often faded within a month, leaving us to revert to our default mode of communication. Back then, I didn't fully grasp the implications of my silence. It was only later that I realized both the advantages and drawbacks of remaining reticent in an environment where English fluency was highly prized and unequally encouraged.

Speaking skills depends on having speaking abilities, which is the capacity to the capacity to communicate verbally. However, the examination centric approach of the Nepali educational system lacks the sufficient and scientific assessment of this skill, leading teachers as well as learners to focus not enough emphasis on them. As a result, speaking and listening skills are frequently neglected, which makes students hesitant, shy and fearful of making mistakes. This issue highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach to language acquisition that gives the same priority to all language skills and is primarily caused by the examination-focused structure of the system. Although some schools have designed courses to improve students' speaking abilities with an emphasis on oral skills, a large number of schools neglect them and lack structured support for speaking. However, this is not always the case, and one significant challenge remains to be the lack of structured support for speaking skills.

This article addresses this gap through an analysis of the approaches that teachers use to develop students speaking skills drawing on personal experiences and observations. As an ESL learner, I selected this topic to explore the role teachers play in improving students' speaking skills. This study aims to identify students' speaking difficulties and explore the strategies teachers employ to cope with these challenges. It also describes how teachers' strategies are implemented in the teaching of speaking. A substantial body of research has been conducted on teaching speaking skills globally (Thornbury, 2005; Brown, 2007). This

research aims to address the gap in under explored research on teaching speaking in Nepal by examining the experiences of English Teachers in improving students' speaking skills. The central research question guiding this research is: **'What teaching strategies and resources do teachers use to develop the speaking skills of ESL students in English classes?**' This article provides a concise of teachers' experiences, respectively, focusing on the changes encountered by teachers and their coping strategies.

Literature Review

Effective speaking is a vital aspect of language proficiency, especially for ESL (English as a Second Language) learners. This literature review explores the significance of speaking skills, the challenges ESL students face and effective teaching strategies for enhancing these skills.

Importance of Speaking Skills

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning, involving the generation, reception and assimilation of information (Brown, 2004). For ESL learners speaking particularly helps them to enhance the skills needed to organize and clarify their ideas, which improves their capacity to communicate vocally. To develop oral skills of students', teachers need to provide appropriate materials and teaching strategies and create a good environment in the learning process for students. Despite efforts from teachers and curriculum designers, many ESL students still struggle to use English for real communication. As stated by Hedge (2000), the primary objective of teaching English as a foreign language is to equip students with effective communicative skills and grant them access to global opportunities. Thus, overcoming the obstacles encountered by ESL learners requires providing plenty of opportunities for English practice both within and beyond the classroom. As stated by Brown (2004), assessments essentially serve as a tool for determining a student's proficiency in speaking English. Overall, speaking skills are essential for learning and using a language, and teachers can help ESL students develop their speaking abilities by using efficient teaching strategies and regular practice to help them become comfortable communicators in the language.

Teaching Speaking

Speaking proficiency in ESL students' needs focused strategies and approaches since effective spoken communication is essential to language proficiency. According to Richards (2008), many language learners throughout the world place a high value on enhancing their English-speaking skills in order to take advantage of more chances for school and employment. Lack of confidence, insufficient exposure to real-world language use, and a lack of practice opportunities are common issues addressed by these learners (Ur, 1996). Teachers need to use a variety of teaching methods which encourage student engagement and actual language use in order to overcome these obstacles. Task-based learning and communicative language education are especially successful because they emphasize practical interaction and communication above rote learning (Nunan, 2004). Through the implementation of various activities like role-plays, debates, and group discussions, teachers may provide students with

authentic and varied language experiences, consequently enhancing their speaking abilities (Brown, 2007).

The skill of teaching speaking also depends extensively on assessment. Self-assessment and peer feedback are examples of formative assessments that help students track their progress over time and highlight areas for development (Harmer, 2007). In addition to assessing skill, these assessments encourage students by highlighting their achievements while setting appropriate language goals. Building on these insights, this study investigates the specific strategies employed by teachers in Nepal to improve ESL students' speaking skills, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of effective language teaching practices in this context.

Methods

In this study, I adopted an interpretative approach to deeply explore participants' experiences, as understanding individuals' subjective perspectives can reveal valuable insights into educational practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This approach enabled it to be more convenient to analyze teaching techniques comprehensively as well as the challenges in developing students speaking abilities. To collect data, I conducted semi-structured interviews with two English teachers from Kathmandu district, referred to as Participants A and Participants B, using pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. The interviews utilized open-ended questions to encourage detailed responses, providing rich qualitative data on the teachers' strategies and challenges in teaching speaking skills. The data initially gathered in Nepali, were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to identify recurring themes and insights. These findings, presented under four thematic categories, aim to shed light on effective teaching practices and the challenges faced in improving students' speaking proficiency in English.

Results and Discussion

This section presents and examines the results from the interviews, focusing on key themes such as learning opportunities and the creation of learning environments. It highlights the importance of the strategies in teaching speaking and how teachers address learners' problems in ESL classrooms. These insights reveal the various strategies teachers use to enhance ESL students' speaking skills and the challenges they encounter,

Learning Opportunities

Learning opportunities are crucial for effective student education, encompassing various responsibilities within teaching. Teachers need to have the skills, equipment, and knowledge required to support students become effective communicators in social situations. This includes understand both expression and comprehension. During interviews, I gathered experiences, about how teachers narrative on learning opportunities. Regarding this my first Participant 'A' shared;

> Not everyone has the same childhood. In my case I have two brothers and both were sent to boarding school for a quality education, while I was

> enrolled in a local government school which limited my exposure to ESL learning opportunities. I did not get the chance to explore myself or learn English properly during my school years. After completing school, I insisted on pursuing further education despite my family's initial hesitation. My determination to overcome these limitation drove me to complete masters in English language education. Now I teach in a community school to provide better opportunities for my students and I want to ensure that other children do not face the same obstacles I did.

The reflections of Participant A illustrate the significant barriers that arise from socio-economic and gender-based discrimination while trying to access quality ESL learning opportunities. The challenges she faced including a lack of exposure and resources highlight the systematic inequalities in educational access. Her resolution to overcome these barriers and provide better opportunities for her students reflects a commitment to address these challenges and improve ESL education for future generations. Regarding on this, Participants B stated,

> Even with a strong foundation, I had trouble speaking English. I was not faced with problems like financial hardship or discrimination because my father was a businessman and my mother was a Montessori teacher." In spite of a nurturing environment, my early schooling prioritized written exams and rote learning over the development of speaking abilities. The school prioritized writing to pass board exams, leaving speaking skills underdeveloped. Later, because I was passionate about wanting to become an English teacher, I enrolled in speaking practice courses offered by different organizations. My experience shows how a lack of focus on speaking skills in the educational system may hinder the development of language proficiency even in supportive environments.

The narratives provided by Participants A and B highlight encounters and challenges faced when trying to take advantage of learning opportunities, especially when it comes to developing spoken language skills. These personal experiences emphasize how crucial it is to have safe places and adequate resources to facilitate holistic education. In order to cope with social circumstances, effective communication strategies are essential, emphasizing the need of addressing inequalities in educational access.

The participant experiences highlight the value of inclusive learning environments that encourage the growth of speaking skills. Through recognizing and addressing the different backgrounds and experiences of students, teachers may create meaningful learning opportunities that enable students to overcome obstacles and achieve success (Hughes, 2003). It is crucial from teachers to prioritize creating safe and supportive learning environments where students feel valued, respected and motivated to engage fully in their education. Teachers can equip students with the skills and confidence they need to succeed in their

language learning pursuits and manage social situations by putting into practice inclusive teaching methodologies and effective strategies for communication. Ultimately, teachers can support students in realizing their full potential by keeping the values of equity and inclusivity.

Creating Learning Environments

Creating effective environments for learning is essential for supporting students' language development. According to a recent research, creating a positive and supportive environment for learning in the classroom is essential for helping students' language abilities. For instance, Mercer (2020) highlights how collaborative learning environments support students' engagement and language acquisition. This emphasizes how important it is to have strategies and resources that support students' speaking skills and develop more confident and fluent speakers. The participant A discussed the importance of intentionally creating an environment.

> Environments that promote learning must be established, they don't just happen. This speaks to the core of what makes education effective. In order for students to fully participate in their educational journeys, teachers and educational organizations must proactively create environments where they feel empowered, encouraged, and supported.

In her continuation, Participant A addressed her approach by stating that teachers who understand how important it is to create a positive learning environment can employ strategies like collaborative learning, inclusive teaching, and supportive systems for feedback. Such approaches assist in creating environments where students feel appreciated, respected, and motivated to realize their full potential. Similarly, Participant B talked about her methods for fostering a supportive environment in the classroom.

> I always begin by supporting students in becoming at comfortable. I use strategies like assigning students to read books turn by turn, having them presenting on subjects they have studied, and promoting involvement in class activities. It is essential to establish an environment in which students actively participate. Allowing students to express themselves is important, even when their ideas aren't fully developed.

The strategy used by Participant B is consistent with Slavin's (2003) viewpoint, which supports moving away from a teacher-centered method and to one in which students actively explore, uncover, and apply fresh concepts on their own independently. Students' participation and speaking abilities are improved by this active role. Both participants highlighted the need for teachers to be flexible and constantly update their teaching strategies to address various learning styles. They emphasized that students can progressively develop their confidence and speaking skills by using different techniques. This approach is reinforced by the study's theoretical framework rooted in constructivist learning theory which highlights the active role students have in constructing their own knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In conclusion,

developing inclusive and supportive learning environment is essential for encouraging students' interest in and proficiency with language effectively (Bygate, 1987). By fostering such environments, teachers not only help students grow academically and personally, but they additionally encourage an eternal passion of learning and self-improvement.

Strategies for Addressing Learner Problems in Speaking

One of the most common obstacles that students face in language learning classrooms is speaking anxiety. Participant A shared personal experience during a discussion on the reasons why some students find it difficult to speak, highlighting that fear of challenges is a major barrier. She stressed the importance of fostering a safe and supportive environment where students feel free to express themselves without fear of judgment. Participant A recounts,,

> Being a teacher I have realized that creating a supportive environment is essential. It is important for teachers to placing students in situations where they feel empowered. In my classroom, I prioritize inclusive teaching strategies that foster confidence and competence. I strive to ensure that every student understands how significant and valued their voices are. I have seen firsthand how speaking difficulties can impact a student's confidence which is why I work hard to create supportive environment where every student feels encouraged to participate.

Further she said that a key feature of effective learning is the active involvement of the learner's mind. Teacher needs to know the value of interactive speaking exercises in the classroom. As she believes that active participation is key to learning, she offers students opportunities to practice speaking in a supportive environment, thereby bolstering their confidence and fluency. In order to further explore the idea of speaking anxiety, participant B mentioned the pressure students experience to perform effectively in a short period of time. Regarding to this, participant B revealed,

> Students often feel overwhelmed by the expectation to speak English fluently and accurately in front of their peers. Although grammar and vocabulary have a part in speaking reluctance, it is crucial to provide a calm environment that supports learning. I make it a point to create a comfortable environment where students feel at ease expressing themselves. I provide supportive feedback and encouragement to help alleviate their anxieties and build their confidence

This statement and classroom practice appear to be clarifying that teaching ways or materials make classroom meaningful and effective. Group activities, interactive activities among learners and interaction between teacher and students are the essential classroom activities which make classroom more effective (Harmer, 2007). Regarding the implementation of different strategies in classroom, I got the positive response from both of them. To sum up, the perspectives shared by both individuals highlight the significance

of compassionate teaching strategies that give priority to the wellbeing and engagement of students. Teachers can enable students to overcome speaking anxiety and succeed in their ESL learning journeys by establishing supportive learning settings and using a variety of speaking exercises.

Importance of Speaking Strategies in the Classroom

Effective speaking techniques must be implemented in the context of ESL learning, if teachers want their students to advance their language and communication skills.. These teaching methods not only help students become more proficient speakers, but they also boost their self-esteem and encourage them to engage in class discussions. Teachers may have a big impact on students' capacity to communicate successfully in the target language by giving them scheduled practice opportunities and making sure the learning environment is encouraging in relation to classroom strategies for improving students' speaking skills. As stated by Participant A:

> If we don't guide students with a certain topic then no topic no preparation leads them to be unknown of how to talk and what to talk. Is teacher able to provide the enough information or students opportunities to practice target language? It is one of the most serious issues which needs to be addressed.

Participant A highlighted the significance of using various techniques to encourage students to engage in active learning. She underscored the importance of assigning discussion topics, appointing leaders, and grouping students, as crucial components of her teaching methodology. The idea highlights how crucial organized guidance is for creating effective communication. Her approach follows line with Harmer's (2007) belief that meaningful speaking exercises are essential to student engagement and language development. Her narrative's analysis highlights the need for focused and encouraging teaching strategies by showing how students may find it difficult to improve their speaking abilities without sufficient preparation and direction. Also, participant B provided information regarding the strategies for enhancing students speaking abilities. She shared:

> I focus about creating a friendly environment where students are at sufficiently comfortable to take part. Adopting activities and strategies to motivate students is crucial. I provide them with topics that they can relate to, and I use monitors to ensure they are using the target language correctly, which makes the activities productive.

Participant B has demonstrated an awareness of how to overcome speaking anxiety and provide a more inclusive learning environment by focusing on establishing a supportive atmosphere and using relatable concepts. Previous research by Mendez and Marin (2007) from the University of Quintana Roo produced very good results when it comes to the application of methods. These results highlight the techniques' efficacy in encouraging student participation in speaking exercises and, as a result, in promoting excellent learning

outcomes. The statement indicates that without using relevant strategies, effective teaching and meaningful learning does not take place.

Upon analyzing the participants' perceptions, it becomes evident from the narratives that teachers must embrace the belief that children learn most effectively through active engagement. This means that for meaningful learning to occur, students should not only be exposed to ideas and concepts but also be encouraged to experience and apply them practically. Such hands-on experiences facilitate a distinct form of learning, as described by the participants. It is observed that children grasp concepts more thoroughly and perform better academically when they are directly involved and actively participate in learning activities. Furthermore, these practical experiences are often the most enjoyable for students. Hence, the optimal educational approach for teachers is one that is active and co-constructive, where students are actively involved in their learning process. The studies concluded with the opinions expressed by Participant A were very similar to that of participant B but both have limited time for practice activities. From my own experience, I can claim that student-centered activities and collaboration of learning make classroom more effective and inclusive but these activities should be related with the subject to be taught. The gap between theoretical and practical learning are the crucial issues.

Conclusion

This study examined the perspectives of Nepalese English teachers from the Kathmandu valley to explore their perception regarding ESL learners' speaking skills using an interpretative approach. It shed light on the strategies, experiences, and challenges teachers face in improving students' speaking abilities. The research highlighted that creating a supportive learning environment and employing various teaching strategies such as task based learning, communicative language teaching and this issue has not been discussed earlier fairly enough to be concluded here. are essential for developing ESL learners' speaking proficiency. Teachers' experiences revealed that overcoming challenges like speaking anxiety and limited practice opportunities is critical for student's success. Moreover, socioeconomic and cultural variables have a big impact on the quality and accessibility of education. (but is it a relevant point?).

The study provides valuable insights into effective ESL teaching practices, highlighting the importance of inclusive and supportive classroom environments. It shows how thoughtful strategies and teaching approaches can significantly enhance students' confidence in speaking English as well as in their speaking abilities in general. However, the research's limitations include a small sample size which may not fully represent broader contexts or an educational settings but it covers an almost important strategies and challenges related speaking strategies. Future research should consider larger, more varied samples and explore additional dimensions such as long term impacts of teaching strategies and perceptions of their learning experiences.

The practical implications of this study suggest teachers and policymakers should focus on implementing effective teaching strategies and creating supportive environments to improve speaking abilities of ESL students. Developing a more equitable and efficient ESL education system requires collaboration between teachers, administrators, and policymakers to address the concerns identified. Future research could provide deeper insights into maintaining and enhancing teaching practices and supporting students in diverse educational contexts.

Author's Bio

Muna Aryal is currently pursuing her MPhil in English Language Education at Kathmandu University School of Education. She teaches English at Rising Academy Pvt. Ltd. and also works as an English news writer at Mero News Media. Her areas of interest include English Language Teaching Methodology, Professional Development, and Qualitative Research, along with exploring various research fields.

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Rummaging on a Research Method

Dr. Shiva Ram Pandey[1]
[1]Associate Professor, Gramin Adarsha Multiple Campus, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

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Corresponding Author:
Shiva Ram Pandey
Email: shivram.pandey73@gmail.com

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Abstract

Rummaging on a research method is a review article on qualitative research method. It briefly presents what qualitative research is, its philosophical perspectives, paradigms and parameters, nature and features, how to generate qualitative data and analyze them, rigour and quality in qualitative research. It draws the conclusion that qualitative research is really good in the field of social and educational research to develop quality in teaching, learning and research. Furthermore, it was explored from the study that qualitative research method is subjective in nature. It uncovers and discovers rich data and reality in a naturalistic context. It is both reflexive and communicative. It has its deep faith on multiple realities. It is highly rigorous in terms of process to unearth in-depth information out of a phenomenon. It aspires to make a quest for maintaining quality in the field of research.

Keywords: method, qualitative, review, rigour

Introduction

I like to begin writing this article with forceful adage which is in a way related to qualitative research method that is impermanence is the rule of game in this post modern world. I believe that life is incidental and death is accidental. To my understanding, qualitative research method is full of life with incidents. One should have the ability to capture the incidents of joy or pain while carrying out the qualitative research (Pandey, 2012). The other prominent thing in this postmodern world is that the only constant thing is change. Change is contextual. What is good to me in one context may not be good in another context. It indicates that a number of interpretations are possible in a qualitative research method. The strength of this method is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the human

side of an issue – that is, often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals.

Qualitative research methods are effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. When used along with quantitative methods, qualitative research can help us to interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation and the implications of quantitative data (Paton, 1990). Although findings from qualitative data can often be extended to people with characteristics similar to those in the study population, gaining a rich and complex understanding of a specific social context or phenomenon typically takes precedence over eliciting data that can be generalized to other geographical areas or populations. In this sense, qualitative research differs slightly from scientific research in general (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Qualitative research is a type of scientific research. In general terms, scientific research consists of an investigation that seeks answers to a question, systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question, collects evidence, produces findings that were not determined in advance and produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study. Qualitative research method shares these characteristics. Additionally, it seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations (Paton, 1990).

Qualitative research method is not only about what people think but also why they think so. It is based on the disciplines of social sciences like psychology, sociology, and anthropology (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, the qualitative research methods allow for in-depth and further probing and questioning of respondents based on their responses, where the interviewer/researcher also tries to understand their motivation and feelings. Understanding how your audience takes decisions can help derive conclusions in market research (Paton, 1990).

Qualitative research methods are designed in a manner that help reveal the behavior and perception of a target audience with reference to a particular topic. There are different types of qualitative research methods like an in-depth interview, focus groups, ethnographic research, content analysis, case study research that are usually used. The results of qualitative methods are more descriptive and the inferences can be drawn quite easily from the data that is obtained. Qualitative research methods originated in the social and behavioral sciences. Today our world is more complicated and it is difficult to understand what people think and perceive. Online qualitative research methods make it easier to understand that as it is more communicative and descriptive (Creswell, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

Research, in a common parlance, is a systematic process of investigating the truth. It is an academic and problem-solving activity. Qualitative research makes an attempt to

understand the meaning of an experience and strives to understand how all the parts work together to form a whole (Paton, 1990). In this context, the purpose of this study is to explore different perspectives of qualitative research method both in social and educational settings.

Research Question

This study has aspired to explore the different dimensions of qualitative research method. As this is a review-based article, the researcher has accessed to the relevant literature and documents. In this context, the study has cultivated the following research questions:

How do you perceive qualitative research method?

Why is qualitative research method vital in social and educational settings?

How is qualitative research method carried out?

Literature Review

I believe that qualitative research explores multiple realities and it is subjective (Pandey, 2012). It is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. It is characterized by a concern for the individual to understand the subjective world of human experience. Qualitative research tends to be associated with participant observation and unstructured, in-depth interviewing (Creswell, 2012).

I really agree with the idea that qualitative methodologies are powerful tools for enhancing our understanding of teaching and learning and they have gained increasing acceptance in recent years. Quantitative measures, on the other hand, cannot adequately describe or interpret a situation. Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings. Strauss and Corbin (1998) assert that qualitative research means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived yet by means of statistic procedures or other means of quantification. Qualitative researchers seek illumination, understanding and extrapolation to similar situations; qualitative inquiry accepts the complex and dynamic quality of the social world.

Patton (1990) advocates a 'paradigm of choices' that seeks methodological appropriateness as the primary criterion for judging methodological quality. Some researchers like Strauss and Corbin (1998) believe that qualitative and quantitative research can be effectively combined in the same research project. Qualitative methods are appropriate in situations where one needs to first identify the variables that might later be tested quantitatively or where the researcher has determined that quantitative measures cannot adequately describe or interpret a situation. Research problems tend to be framed as open-ended questions that will support discovery of new information. It describes data both from researchers' and readers' perspective.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) qualitative approach to research is a critical interpretive approach to understand social complexities through the use of multiple methods in order to triangulate the lived reality. It is a field of naturalistic inquiry and situated activity that locate the observer in the world. As the world is constructed, reconstructed and deconstructed through continuous interpretive performance of humans, qualitative research captures this interpretive phenomenon from multiple and contrary lenses.

The key difference between quantitative and qualitative methods is their flexibility. Generally, quantitative methods are fairly inflexible. With quantitative methods such as surveys and questionnaires, for example, researchers ask all participants identical questions in the same order. The response categories from which participants may choose are 'closed-ended' or fixed. The advantage of this inflexibility is that it allows for meaningful comparison of responses across participants and study sites. However, it requires a thorough understanding of the important questions to ask, the best way to ask them, and the range of possible responses. Participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next Study design is iterative, that is, data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned Denzin and Lincoln (2005).

According to Paton (1990) qualitative methods are typically more flexible – that is, they allow greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participant. For example, qualitative methods ask mostly "open-ended" questions that are not necessarily worded in exactly the same way with each participant. With open-ended questions, participants are free to respond in their own words, and these responses tend to be more complex than simply 'yes' or 'no'. In addition, with qualitative methods, the relationship between the researcher and the participant is often less formal than in quantitative research. Participants have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in greater detail than is typically the case with quantitative methods. In turn, researchers have the opportunity to respond immediately to what participants say by tailoring subsequent questions to information the participant has provided (Cresswell, 2012). It is important to note, however, that there is a range of flexibility among methods used in both quantitative and qualitative research and that flexibility is not an indication of how scientifically rigorous a method is. Rather, the degree of flexibility reflects the kind of understanding of the problem that is being pursued using the method (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Methods

The available literature such as articles, thesis, journals, books and google have been reviewed, interpreted, and analyzed to explore ideas, needs and importance of research methods in general and qualitative research method in particular. Thematic and theoretical literature have been reviewed to further substantiate the study. The concept of qualitative research method has been intensively reviewed. The relevant research method theories,

personal and professional experiences and expertise of the researcher have been deployed to arrive at the conclusions.

Philosophical Perspective and Paradigm

Philosophical position is very significant to conduct any research. The reason behind it is that it is a comprehensive belief system, world view or framework that provides research guidelines for successful research practice (Babbie, 2015, as cited in Sapkota, 2019). The philosophical position is determined by ontology, epistemology and axiology of the study. According to Henn, Weinstein, and Ford (2010), ontology is the set of assumptions regarding the real world, and epistemology refers to the way of knowing the world, which shows such assumptions. Axiology is considered as the theory of value or the nature of ethics, which "considers what value we shall attribute to different aspects of our research, the participants, the data and the audience to which we shall report the results of our research" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017, p. 28).

Epistemological position was that human knowledge of the world is relative and it depends on the interpretation of an individual's past and present experiences as participant is the source of knowledge (Kazmierska, 2018).

The recent development of qualitative research proceeded in different areas. Each of them is characterized by specific theoretical backgrounds, specific concept of reality and their own methodological programs. For example, ethonomethodology is a theoretical program, which first led to: the conversational analysis differentiated in new approaches like genre analysis and discourse analysis. Even though there are variations in theoretical assumptions and their methodological focus, three major perspectives summarize them. The three research perspectives are: symbolic interactionism and phenomenology, ethnomethodology and constructionism, structuralist or psychoanalytic positions assume unconscious psychological structure and mechanism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005)

Qualitative research opposes the normative approach that human behavior is essentially rule governed and it should be investigated by the methods of natural science. It believes that knowledge is subjective. It opposes the imposition of external form and structure by retaining the integrity of the phenomena under investigation. It believes in interpretive approach by opposing the traditional normative approach to study human behavior by getting inside the person and understanding him/her from within. It assumes that there are multiple realities; the world out there is not an objective thing but a function of personal interaction and perception (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

According to Patton (1990) qualitative method is a highly exploratory, inductive approach in need of interpreting rather than measuring with a focus on processes rather than ends. It does not believe in manipulation of variables, administering a treatment or predetermining of hypotheses rather it observes, intuits and senses what is occurring in a natural setting. It does not believe in establishing a universal theory to account for human and social behavior rather a theory should emerge, grounded on data generated from research (Creswell, 2012).

Before conducting a qualitative study, a researcher must do three things. First, he/she must adopt the stance suggested by the characteristics of the naturalist paradigm. Second the researcher must develop the level of skill appropriate for a human instrument or the vehicle through which data will be collected must prepare a research design that utilizes and interpreted. Finally, the researchers must prepare a research design that utilizes accepted strategies for naturalistic inquiry (Patton, 1990).

Features of Qualitative Research

According to Patton (1990) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) the features of qualitative research can be presented as below:

Qualitative research helps uncover multiple truths rather than single truth. It studies phenomenon/a exploring its multiple complexities. It uses different sets of assumptions of knowledge claim. It is intently associated with epistemological pluralism with different rigour/validity criteria. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. It studies things in their natural settings. It involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials. It is interpretive and a meaning making process. It is a matter of craft. It is inductive theory building process. The researcher is the source and force of process.

Qualitative research method is reflexive in the sense that it values the reflexivity- the self-awareness- of the researcher. It is also empathetic since it aims to understand people, not to measure them. Moreover, it is communicative as it focuses on communication which is considered a selective process of meaning production in social contexts (Sarantakos, 2005).

Benefits of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research allows for flexibility and adaptability when undertaking research, so a study can be adapted and tailored in response to emerging issues, problems or trends. It provides the opportunity to collaborate with participants and include them as an active part of the research process (Patton, 1990). Qualitative research is very important in educational research as it addresses the “how” and “why” research questions and enables deeper understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context. Qualitative research allows researchers to ask questions that cannot be easily put into numbers to understand human experience (Sarantakos, 2005).

Qualitative research method is valuable when studying information relevant to specific populations. Qualitative method may be the right approach when the researcher aims to explore a problem, honor the voices of participants, map the complexity of the situation, and convey multiple perspectives of participants (Creswell, 2012). The qualitative approach to gathering information focuses on describing a phenomenon in a deep comprehensive manner. In qualitative method, this involves interviews, open-ended questions, or focus groups. Typically, a qualitative study is made up of a small number of participants due to the fact that qualitative studies tend to take more time. Because of the investment in this type of research

and the relatively few number of participants, findings from qualitative research cannot be generalized to the whole population. However, such research serves as a spring board for larger studies and deeper understanding that can inform theory, practice, and specific situations.

There are some benefits of using qualitative research approaches and methods.

Firstly, qualitative research approach produces the thick description of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences; and interprets the meanings of their actions (Denzin, 2005). In terms of language testing, for example, Bachman (1998) showed in his study that qualitative research results provide the relationship of information processing with performance specifically and deeply. Similarly, Chalhoub-Deville and Deville (2008), argued that qualitative approaches are employed to achieve deeper insights into issues related to designing, administering, and interpreting language assessment.

Secondly, there are some who argue that qualitative research approach holistically understands the human experience in specific settings. Denzin and Lincoln (2005), for example, mentioned that qualitative research is an interdisciplinary field which encompasses a wider range of epistemological viewpoints, research methods, and interpretive techniques of understanding human experiences. From the perspective of epistemological position, any language assessment cannot be set apart from context, culture and values of where it was used (McNamara, 2001).

Thirdly, interpretivism research approach is regarded as an ideographic research, the study of individual cases or events (Kelin & Myers, 1999); and it has abilities to understand different people's voices, meanings and events. So the source of knowledge in this approach is the meaning of different events (Richardson, 2012).

Fourthly, the qualitative research admits the researchers to discover the participants' inner experience, and to figure out how meanings are shaped through.

Fifthly, qualitative research methods such as participant-observation, unstructured interviews, direct observation, describing records are most commonly used for collecting data (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). During the data collection, the researchers interact with the participants directly such as it happens while data collection through interviews. Consequently, data collection is subjective and detailed.

Thus, the thorough and appropriate analyses of an issue can be produced by utilizing qualitative research methods, and therefore the participants have sufficient freedom to determine what is consistent for them (Flick, 2011). As a result, the complex issues can be understood easily. For example, researchers acknowledged that, because of the nature of classroom dynamics, learners' behaviour may be affected by the numerous factors outside of research focus. In this respect, the qualitative research approach is required to capture these dynamics (Sarantakos, 2005).

Maintaining Rigour and Quality

In the case of findings, both researchers and readers share a joint responsibility of reestablishing the value of the qualitative research product. I agree with Eisner (1991) who

says that coherence, consensus and instrumental utility are the three feature of qualitative research. To maintain trustworthiness redefinition, interpretation of the interpretations of others, credibility can be established through triangulation of data, which contains method, data, multiple analyses, theory triangulation (Patton 1990). The output of the research should be generalizable. It should be very appealing on the part of readers. There should be a good harmony or consistency between process and product. It has to be dependable. Conformability contains raw data, analysis notes, reconstruction and synthesis products, process, personal notes, preliminary development information (Lincoln and Guba: 1985). Eisner and Patton (1990) say that the credibility of a qualitative research report lies heavily on the confidence readers have in the researcher's ability to be sensitive to the data and to make appropriate decisions in the field. Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that humans are the instruments of choice for naturalistic inquiry. Humans are responsive to environmental cues and able to interact with the situation. They have the ability to collect information at multiple levels simultaneously. They are able to perceive situation holistically. They are able to process data as soon as they become available. They can provide immediate feedback and request verification of data and they can explore atypical or unexpected responses. Theoretical sensitivity refers to a personal quality of the researcher. It indicates an awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data.

Techniques and Tools of Data Collection

In qualitative research method unstructured interview, observation, life history, and open ended questions are used as a technique in the study to gather information about the participants' lives as suggested by Bryman (2008) that life history interview is used to gather information about the participants' complete life history, and as suggested by Connelly and Clandinin (1990) that particularly unstructured interviews are used in the process of data collection in narrative inquiry. Butina (2015) also mentioned the use of an interview to collect narratives/stories of individuals reflecting their identities.

Generating and Analyzing Data

I agree with the idea of Patton (1990) who says that purposeful sampling is the dominant strategy in qualitative research. Purposeful sampling seeks information rich cases, which can be studied in depth.

Qualitative interviewing utilizes open-ended questions that allow for individual variations. Patton (1990) says that interview can be taken through informal conversational interviews, semi-structured interview and standardized open-ended interviews. Tape-recorder is an indispensable vehicle to record the data. Another way of data collection is through observation.

According to Sarantakos (2005) observation provides knowledge of the context in which events occur and may enable the researchers to see things that participants themselves are not aware of or that they are unwilling to discuss.

Observing from outside, passive presence, engaging in limited interaction can be done while making observation. To record the data, field note can be used. In other source of data, the document analysis can be done. Such document might include official records, letters, newspaper accounts, diaries and reports (Patton, 2005).

While analyzing the data, qualitative researchers tend to use inductive analysis of data (Cohen, Manon & Morrison, 2007). Qualitative analysis requires some creativity. Analysis begins with identification of the themes emerging from the raw data, a process sometimes refer to as open coding. The actual voice of participant is coded (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Another way of analyzing the data, according to Patton (2005) is linking which is also called axial coding. Reexamination of data can be done.

Conclusion

From the aforementioned review on qualitative research method, it is concluded that qualitative research allows for flexibility and adaptability when undertaking research. A research study can be adapted and tailored in response to emerging issues, problems or trends. It provides the opportunity to collaborate with participants and include them as an active part of the research process. Qualitative research is very important in educational and social research as it addresses the "how" and "why" research questions and enables deeper understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context. It allows researchers to ask questions that cannot be easily put into numbers to understand human experience. It is valuable when studying information relevant to specific populations. Qualitative method may be the right approach when the researcher aims to explore a problem, honor the voices of participants, map the complexity of the situation, and convey multiple perspectives of participants. It uncovers and discovers a new insight in a related field. It is subjective in nature. It explores rich data in a naturalistic context. It is both reflexive and communicative. It has its deep faith on multiple realities. It is highly rigorous in terms of process to derive in-depth information out of a phenomenon. It aspires to make a quest for maintaining quality in the field of research. Qualitative research is the demand of a day in the present world. However, it is more time-consuming, and expensive. It requires special knowledge to carry out the research. Maintaining generalizability is quite challenging in this method. However, contextual generalizability can be well-maintained.

Author's Bio

Dr. Shiva Ram Pandey is an Associate Professor in English Education at Gramin Adarsha Multiple Campus, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He has been teaching at campus since 2098. Dr. Pandey has published a number of articles both in national and international journals. He has authored and co-authored a number of books. He has been supervising a number of M.Ed., MPhil., and PhD level theses from both national and international Universities

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Teachers' Perceptions and Practices in Using ICT for ELT at the Secondary Level

Raju Yonjan[1]
[1]Permanent primary teacher at Gaumati Secondary School in Sindhuli

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Corresponding Author:
Raju Yonjan
Email: rajuyonjan2020@gmail.com

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Abstract

Information and Communication Technology is a daily used material across the globe nowadays which has been recognized to be included in Education field. The study aims at teachers' perceptions and practices in using ICTs. This study employed a quantitative research design for Data collection among 40 ELT teachers from 9 different rural/municipalities in Sindhuli. The experiences of using different ICT gadgets and digital tools in the ELT were collected using a questionnaire. The findings of the study are that the students seemed eager to learn from the ICT gadgets and digital tools while integrating it into the teaching pedagogies. I report that the ELT teachers have positive experience on using the ICTs. The study further says that 62% teachers are positive towards ICTs usage in the ELT classroom. This study helps the concerned authorities to think about the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in the ELT classroom. The study recommends that there is a need of a series of training on how to integrate ICTs into the teaching pedagogies.

Keywords: teachers, ICT tools, digital tools, multimedia, digital literacy

Introduction

Information and communication Technology (ICT) has grown up as a new issue in Nepal. It is an extensional term for information technology that stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals) and computer, as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage and audiovisual system that enable users to access, store, transmit and manipulate information. In addition to, ICTs, the modern technologies for storage, manipulation, and dissemination of information, include both hardware tools such as laptops, smart phones, projectors, and

software tools such as email, Skype, Facebook, and YouTube (Poudel, 2022, p. 104). Actually, technology is the sum of techniques, skills, intellect and method.

ICTs in English Language Teaching and Learning

Development in ICT has become an integral part of our personal and social lives and it influences our professional career as well. With this reference, Gholami et al. (2010) found that investigation in ICT, education, economic and economic literacy can play a significant role in equalizing opportunities for marginalized groups and communities. Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) as the name suggests, is the use of technologies in service of learning. The implementation of technological resources is straightly related to the way teachers perceive their use and functionality (Yunus, 2007)

There is numerous software that can help in teaching English. John (1991) and Dodd (1997) examined the practice with the aid of computer software to understand meaning and grammar. Their studies found that the teacher facilitates students to research into the language without knowing in advance what rules and patterns are used, so students are encouraged to make one up in their own terms. Fernandez- Villanueva (1996) emphasized that concordance program provides more input and motivation than regular classroom exercises in her German Language. Calyani and Cahyono (2012) investigated ICT practices and their attitudes towards ICT among 37 Indonesian teachers teaching English as foreign Language in different level. They believed that use of ICTs in the class help students to learn English better. They argued that teachers did not use ICTs in the class because of lack of ability, exposure and training to devise appropriate pedagogical model.

Information and Technology (ICTs) Teaching and Learning in Nepal

Information and Communication Technology in teaching English seems mandatory to make the classroom effective and meaningful. Yunus et al. (2013) argued that ICT in education as a teaching and learning tool and also emphasizes the use of ICT usage to enhance productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of the management system. (p.1). The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) considers education as a fundamental right of the people. Current national plans on education also emphasize the importance of ICT. For example, the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) (2016-2023) has identified some of the strategies to ensure equitable access to education. The MoE has considered the use of ICTs in education as one of the strategies to achieve the broader goals of education (ICT in the education Master Plan of Nepal 2013). The SSRP has envisioned implementing and expanding the ICT assisted teaching and learning process in all schools. The SSRP further argues that ICTs in education are an innovative and effective teaching and learning tool. ICTs do not only help the urban area students; they also help to remote area students through digital devices. In addition, National Education Policy 2076 has mentioned in its goal that education will be techno-oriented. Similarly, Teacher Competency Framework 2072 has also mentioned that teacher should have the knowledge regarding ICT gadgets and digital tools at eight points with four subpoints.

Connecting it to my classroom, I saw computer for the first time when I was studying in class 8. It was new material for me. I operated knowingly and unknowingly. Later, when I reached class 10, I dreamt to do something different in computer area. I passed SLC. Unfortunately, I could not go for it. Later, I completed I. Ed. with major English in Education Faculty. Then, I started teaching English at Lower Secondary School in Samaya Pathshala. I recognized that they felt boring with the traditional teaching methods that I used. I, later started using ICT tools such as Laptop, smartphones, projector as per need with my lessons to teach them. Students were more excited towards learning. Moreover, it assisted me to show something immediately with the help of internet and then I thought that it might be the best way of teaching for the students. It helps in profusion when you want to impart knowledge to the students. The objectives of the study were to identify the perception of the Secondary level English on the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools and to find out the practice of the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in ELT classroom.

So, I have gone through a number of studies on ICT tools in teaching English language. I found many studies advocating for ICT tools. But I didn't find the studies carried out to explore the perception of use of ICT tools in teaching English. Therefore, I decided to explore the perception of Secondary Level English Teachers using of ICT tools in teaching English. Th study aimed to explore the perceptions of English teachers in ICT tools using in the English Language Classroom. To guide my study on the purposeful manner I set a research questions: How do the Secondary Level English Teachers perceive the use of ICT in teaching English? How do the Secondary Level English Teachers practice ICT tools in ELT classroom? And What types of ICT devices are used by the Secondary Level English Teachers?

Methods

The study employed a quantitative research design, which focused on experiments, correlation, objective surveys etc. And also, quantify information for objective analysis and generalization. The total sampling population of the study was 40 English Teachers from nine rural/municipalities of Sindhuli district following simple random sampling. According to Acharya (2013), "In quantitative method, every individual has an equal chance of being selected in the sample from the population" (p. 330). The area of the study is ICT in teaching English in Nepal and fields were nine rural/municipalities of Sindhuli district. The data which are presented in this paper are first hand data collected in the real field. The primary sources of data were the 40 English Teacher in Sindhuli. Books, reference books, articles, newspapers and, web pages were read to make the paper more and more authentic, reliable and valid as secondary sources.

The only tool for data collection of the study is a closed-ended questionnaire. A questionnaire is the main means of collecting quantitative primary data. In this regard, a questionnaire enables quantitative data to be collected in a standardized way so that the data are internally consistent and coherent for analysis (Roopa and Rani, 2017). For the data

collection, 40 English Teachers were asked various questions regarding use of ICTs in order to obtain fact and reliable data on use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in ELT classroom. A questionnaire tool was designed to collect the data of individual English Teacher. Questionnaire was distributed to each of the 40 English Teachers, and also had informal discussions with the principals of all public schools in order to know whether the English Teachers directly dealt with application of ICTs in the ELT classroom or not.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics is that a researcher has to conduct his/her study without harming respondent's personal matters. According to, Bos (2020) ethics is an inquiry into what is right and wrong, and what researchers ought to do. Further, it is important that researchers usually refer to some ethical guidelines to ensure they have adhered to the principles of good research practice (Judd et al., 1991). During the study, consent was taken from respondents before asking the questions to maintain anonymity the names of the respondent are hidden Researcher had not tried to go against their scrutiny during the study, rather respondents were seemed happy and glad to be the part of this study. In addition, this paper hasn't been duplicated, rather it's been endorsed by a number of citations to make it more authentic and more reliable.

Results

In this section, the data that I had collected through questionnaire from 40 EL teachers, are analyzed and interpreted. In addition, collected data are analyzed and interpreted with the different sub topics

Practices of ICT tools in ELT in Classroom

I have mentioned here the practices of ICT tools by different English teachers in teaching English. I have tried to clarify it from the below bar diagram.

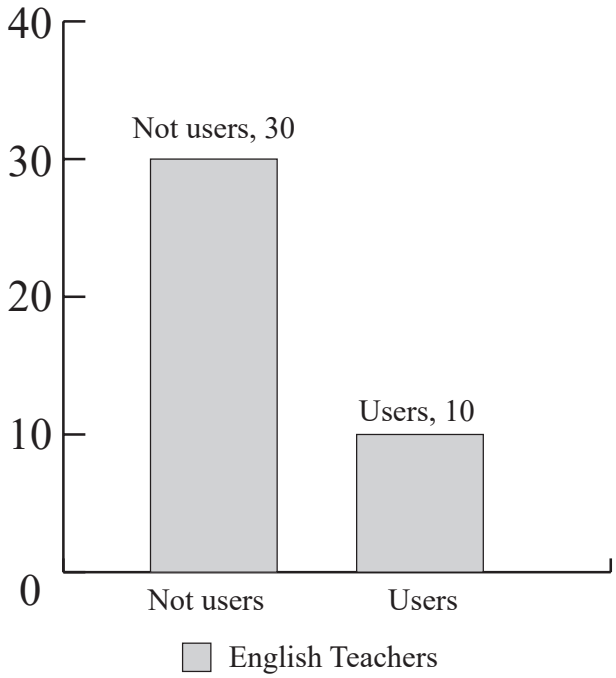


Fig. 1. Practices of ICT tools in ELT in Classroom

The bar diagram points out the practices of ICT tools in ELT classroom by the English teachers. According to figure 1, it looks 30 English teachers do not seem using ICT tools in ELT classroom which is three times more than the teachers who use ICT tools in ELT classroom. So, it indicates that we have very worse condition of use of ICT tools integrated to our pedagogy of teaching. Out of 40 only 10 teachers have confirmed that they use ICT tools in teaching English.

Update on use of ICT tools

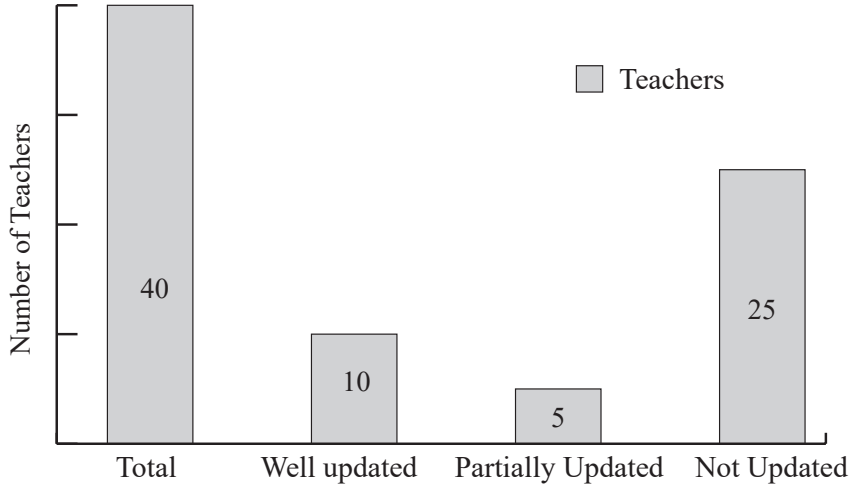


Fig. 2. Update on ICT Tools

The information given in the bar diagram is about the English teachers update on use of ICT tools. Less than 40% teachers are updated and can use ICT tools well. This bar diagram depicts that 10 English Teachers are only well updated in using of Information and Communication Technology and 5 are Partially updated but 25 students are not updated out of 40 English teachers who have been researched by researcher. In summary, it says that more than half English teachers are not good at use of ICT tools dramatically.

Mostly Used ICT Gadgets in the ELT Classroom

In this section, maximum use of electronic tools by English teacher has been attested in the pie chart. It will obviously vivid which material is used most in spite of having challenges in the country like ours.

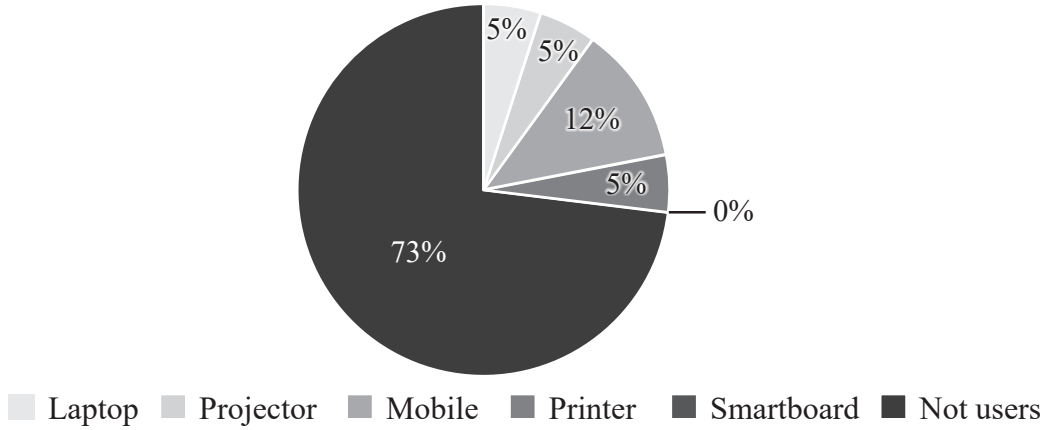


Fig. 3. Mostly used electronic device in the ELT classroom

Figure 3 focuses on use of ICT gadgets by English teachers.it distinguished on percentages. 12% English teachers have used Mobile in the ELT classroom, however, 5% use Laptop. Similarly, 5% has used Printer and Smart board users are 0%. 73% does not seem to have been used any electronic devices and does not seem to have ICT approach in the ELT classroom. It is very lowest percentage of Digital Literacy.

Digital Tools Used by English Teachers.

In this section, I have mentioned the number of English teachers and the types of Digital tools in the Pie chart, whether they use or not, in the English Language Classroom. It describes in detail of raw data which was collected from the respondents about the digital tools used by the English teachers.

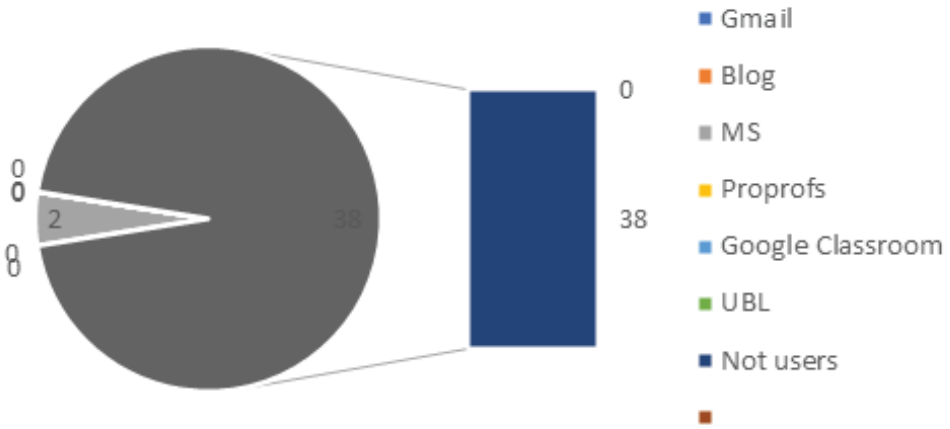


Fig. 4. *Digital tools used by English teachers.*

Figure 4 indicates that not almost all teachers use digital tools. According to the above pie chart, two English teachers have used Microsoft Office (MS). Likewise, no teachers seemed to have been used Gmail, Blog, Proprofs, Google classroom and UBL in teaching English. It vividly appeals that training in regard to use of ICT gadgets and digital tools are necessary for the professional development of Teachers in Nepal.

Views on Use of ICT Gadgets and Digital Tools

Here, I have tried to draw the views of all the 40 English Teachers of Sindhuli about ICT gadgets and digital tools. They have put their views. I have drawn it accordingly in the pie chart below. The data is interpreted below the pie chart vividly.

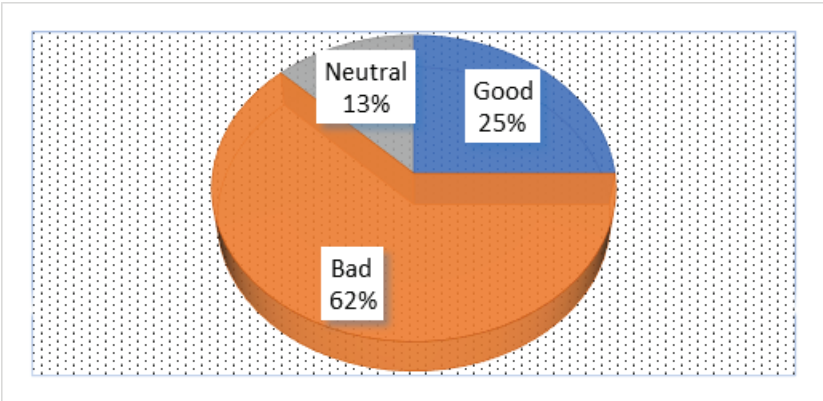


Fig. 5. Views on use of ICT gadgets and digital tools

Figure 5 shows that 25 % English Teachers have a positive response towards use of Information and Communication Technology while still 62% English Teachers have bad response towards Information and Communication Technology and 13% stayed neutral. Although the modern technology is leading the world right now, still 62% of English teachers did not show attest interest and 13% stayed neutral to it. It means they were totally relay on our traditional Teaching method such as GT method, Direct Method.

Willingness in Using ICT Gadgets and Digital Tools

It's been endeavored to identifying the fact that how many English teachers are in which favor out of three criteria. With this regard, I invariably asked to 40 English teachers what they actually feel about.

Table 1. *Willingness in using ICT gadgets and digital tools*

Teachers	Willingness	Unwillingness	Nothing
Male	30		
Female	10		
Total	40		

According to the table 1, Willingness to get use of ICT gadgets and digital tools trained could be beheld. It indicates that they are very much ready to integrate ICT gadgets and digital tools in the pedagogy to move one-step forth. The above table has pointed all teachers in the favor of use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in teaching English.

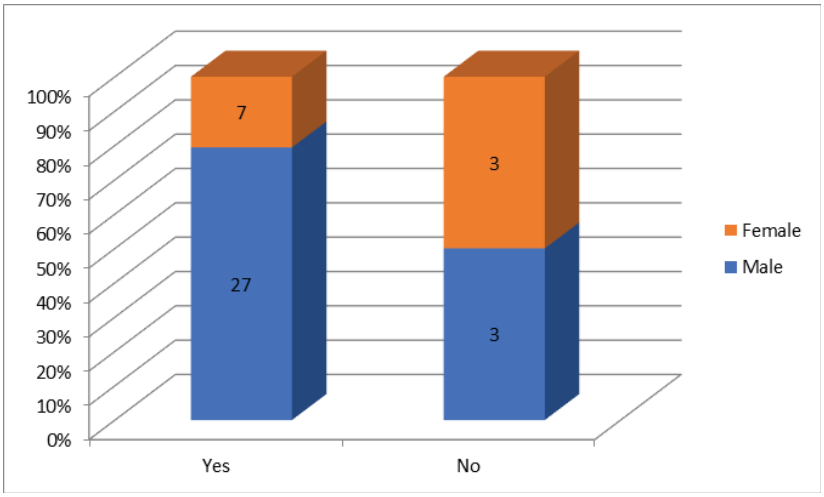


Figure 6. *ICT motivates students*

The bar diagram shows maximum teachers agree that ICT motivates the students. More than 50% teachers are agreed that ICT motivates their learning. Above bar diagram points out 20 male teachers agree ICT motivates the students but only 10 male teachers ticked on 'No'. Similarly, among 10 female teachers, 7 are positive and 3 are not agreed with ICT motivates the students. On the basis of this bar diagram, it can be said that more than 90% teachers signify that ICT motivates the students in their learning.

Discussion

The study aimed to explore the teacher's perception and practices of ICTs in teaching English language in the classroom. The survey shows that the practice of ICTs in EL classroom is found worse. Most of them were found not updated in the ICTs and can't use it in the classroom. And taking their views through the survey, 62% teachers had negative response to the ICTs despite the fact that students showed the desire to learn English by integrating ICTs into the lesson. It was obvious as they were uncertain about the ICTs. I asked them if they were willing to use it to engage the students. They said that they are ready to use it and they needed training for it. However, they are habitual in using mobile phones in the classroom. Furthermore, the paper draw a conclusion that majority of the English teacher are willing to use ICT in their classroom, however, they still lack sound knowledge of it. Moreover, the paper clearly attests that the ICTs motivate the students to learn more. In this sense, Davis (2007), the incorporation of the technologies into English classroom can help achieve: (i) cognitive gain by providing visual images, (ii) motivational gain providing fun, and (iii) interactional gain by providing convenience sharing.

Moreover, while teaching if teachers use digital tools and gadgets in their classroom, students learn properly, at the same time they also learn how to use it. When they learn to use it, they will use it in their learnings. Meaning that, ICTs provide opportunities for exploring the communicative power of the English learner by engaging them in exploring literary texts and several other interactive activities in exciting ways (Richards, 2007). It cannot be guaranteed that the teacher with only content knowledge can teach better. He or she must have pedagogical and technological knowledge in the same range, as a variety of technology-enhanced gadgets and digital tools can create an interactive learning environment to develop learners' autonomy and meaningful learning, which provides a huge amount of exposure to language (Acevedo, 2016). For this reason, it is important for language teachers to be aware of the latest and best equipment and to have a full knowledge of what is available in any given situation. Teachers can use Multimedia Technology to give more colorful, stimulating lectures (new Horizons).

So, it can also be said that use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in teaching English is problem around Nepal because it is very new to us. The most of the teachers lack digital literacy as I found through the study I did. I didn't see of using digital tools or ICT integrated pedagogy into their content in teaching English. According to Chapelle (2003), the technology-mediated tasks are the means of benefits for the language learners for getting better input, for receiving assistance in knowledge and understanding, and for activating deep processing of input. Therefore, we assure that ICT helps students to learn faster than the traditional teaching approaches. For this, all level of Government has to think in an equal way to uplift digital literacy to make education sector further better as SSRP (2016-2023) have mentioned in their document.

Conclusion

ICTs seem mandatory in teaching and learning process in the school to engage students in massive in Nepal. The teachers can use technologies for collecting teaching-learning resources, motivating the students and making more frequent interaction with quick feedback. ICTs in language teaching can have countless benefits. The development in the use of ICT, like language lab, videos, satellite broadcast, videoconferencing and web seminars can have support the richness and quality of education both on and off campus. Furthermore, Rabah (2015) finds better students' engagement and enhancement of their learning process as the benefits of ICT integration in teaching and learning. It has been the indispensable tools that facilitate the teaching and learning of English Language.

The study therefore, recommends that English teacher need a series of training regarding the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools, and technology based physical infrastructures to yield productive students in the near future with the direct assistance of modern ICTs that is used by English Language Teachers. This study mostly helps to English Language teachers in a way that it arouses and provokes them to attend technology-based training and also, to any concerned authority. Further, it will help to sketch the plan about technology-based learning as well. The conclusive findings of this study have been preceded by some significant recommendations that would be worthy enough for the concerned authorities such Ministry of Science, Education and Technology, Centre for Education and Human Resources Development (CEHRD).

Author's Bio

Raju Yonjan is a permanent primary teacher, who teaches at Gaumati Secondary School in Sindhuli. He pursued M.Ed. in English Language Teaching from Kathmandu University School of Education last year. His interested areas are Multilingualism, and ICT in Education. Similarly he is a life member of NELTA Sindhuli Branch. He has 8 years of teaching experience in different levels primary, secondary and higher level.

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Language of Cursing and its Effect on the Community, Family and Schools

Gopal Basnet[1]
[1]Head teacher, Shree Sharada Secondary School, Rawabesi Rural Municipality-2, Kharpa, Khotang and Chair, NELTA Khotang Branch

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Corresponding Author:
Gopal Basnet
Email: bgopal819@gmail.com

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Abstract

This article deals with the language of cursing and its effects in schools and society. Being based on the observation and interviews, the study enlisted typical examples of language of cursing in the rural Nepal, and discusses their impacts on community, schools and families. It also explains the cursing words and further presents why people curse in society. The study concludes with the fact that language of cursing might have both positive as well as negative impacts and the user need to be careful while using them according to the context, participants and its effects. The teachers, administrators and all the concerned might be beneficial by understanding prevalent language of cursing.

Keywords: Cursing, Language, Slang, Taboo

Introduction

This section briefly introduces the cursing language from the point of view given by scholars and then presents such type of language used by the people in the society. Wardhaugh (2006) defines cursing language as a unique instrument for communication utilized by any group of people as it is the means of communication. That's why it is spoken by a group of people to express their ideas each other. Such a type of language has a long history. As it is spoken by a human, it is called human language, which is as old as writing. Before analyzing the data, I have reviewed the works of different people such as philosophers, psychologists, linguists, creative writers, logicians, and literary critics what they viewed about language. Aristotle argues that the representation of the mind's experience is speech (as cited in Jay, 1992). Similarly, language is a system of freely created symbols that is used exclusively by humans to communicate thoughts, emotions, and wants. It is not instinctive (Sapir, 1921). Likewise,

Chomsky defines language as studying human language brings us closer to what some have dubbed the "human essence," or the special mental traits that are, as far as science allows us to believe, exclusive to humans.

By the above definition, we have a general saying of language that language is a means of communication and self-expression. Nepal is home to 131 languages (CBS, 2078), They are divided into the following language families: Dravidian, Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic, and Tibeto-Burman. They all have different natures, different cultures, and different environments. One of these languages is Nepali which the present research on cursing language is based on.

Cursing language is a type of discourse. How do cursing words come into the mind? Who is helping to learn such cursing words? They are the major thoughts of the study. The thoughts are created by different cultures, natures, and environments.

Background of Cursing (*sarapne*) Language

This study tries to reflect the ideas of the cursing language in the hilly area of Khotang District RawaBesi rural municipality, Nepal from the sociolinguistic point of view. The reason why there are multiple "bad language" classification systems, according to Jdetawy (2019), is that the standard for what constitutes "bad language" in any given language is dynamic. To fully comprehend any statements or utterances that fall under the category of "bad language," one must be aware of how bad language is classified (Anderson & Trudgill as cited in Jdetawy, 2019). Cursing language has many other names such as swearing language, rough language, cursing, swearing, obscenities, and expletives. Similarly, in Nepali, the cursing language is also known as *sarapne*, *gaaligalauzgarne*, all of which means cursing. It is a socially offensive use of language. It is called impolite, rude, indecent, and culturally offensive too.

Jay (1992) proposed a classification system for bad language. They roughly fall into the following categories:

Cursing: Cursing is the act of employing words or phrases that allude to divine power with the intent to cause harm to other people. It can also mean expressing a desire for someone or a group to suffer misfortune, evil, or death.

Profanity: Words of this kind are derived from religious doctrine. When someone uses this word, it's usually a sign of disrespect for God, religion, or holy objects or it's more likely a sign of ignorance about these topics.

Blasphemy: When someone uses this term to disparage someone, The term "blasphemy" is used to disparage a particular religion or set of religious principles. Disrespecting the divine is another definition of blasphemy. Put differently, the act of cursing God is blasphemy (Montagu, 2001). It can also refer to the act of speaking sacrilegiously about God or other sacred subjects.

Taboo: the taboo intends to prevent the speaker from acting out and preserve a certain level of societal cohesion. Put another way, it serves to safeguard delicate objects like ethnic

groups or paranormal retaliation. Taboo words are those that, in some cultures, are taboo to speak. These remarks may disrespect other faiths. It also entails discussing sexual activities in public, including some offensive subjects like mental illness and mortality.

Obscenity: The most insulting words are those classified as obscene. Using language that even remotely touches on intimate human anatomy is considered obscenity. According to Battistella (2005), obscenity relates to terms or expressions that derogatorily distinguish between sex and anatomy or sexual and excretory activities. Fuck and shit are two instances of profanity. The most offensive word is "fuck" (Jay, 1996).

Vulgarity: crude terms that are frequently associated with the speech of the uneducated are referred to as vulgar words.

Slang is the term for specific non-standard phrases that are frequently used within a certain group of individuals, such as artists, drug users, youths, etc., to communicate internally.

Epithets are short, sharp words or phrases that individuals use to show frustration and rage. They can also be used by someone to damage themselves. An epithet may allude to a person's color, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, or outward appearance, among other things (Battistella, 2005). Furthermore, an epithet is a quick outburst of emotive language resulting from sudden fury or irritation, according to Jay (1996). Epithets include terms and expressions like "Nazi," "midget," "retard," and "motherfucker."

Insults and slurs: These are verbal attacks directed towards other people by the speaker. The majority of insults and slurs are directed toward racial or ethnic groups or society as a whole, and they can give rise to prejudice or preconceptions. The main cause of insults is the speaker's lack of regard for other people. When you call someone a "bitch" or "bastard," you are insulting them. When you refer to someone as "nigger" or "black," it may be an ethnic insult (Jay, 1996). According to Jay, the potency of an insult arises from emphasizing the perceived or actual bad attributes of the target. The speaker, he said, shows no regard for other people. Racial insults are categorized as ethnic slurs. For example, Phrases such as "ape" for a black person and "flip" for Filipinos.

Scatology is the study of how human faces or excrement is used in some utterances, both in the process and the final result. Permadi (2017) asserts that while Jay's classification scheme is sufficiently thorough, it is still challenging to identify distinct distinctions amongst the ten suggested groups. For instance, there is a subtle yet ambiguous distinction between obscenities and taboos.

In addition to vulgar language, taboo topics can include offensive topics including superstitious beliefs, ethnic slurs, and supernatural abilities. While some terms that are offensive and typically relate to pornographic senses are considered obscenity. Given the aforementioned distinctions as well as other distinctions that may arise within each category of "bad language" or "dirty words," this study investigates how Nepali people swear, the reasons behind their swearing, and the consequences of their swearing-in both the classroom and in society at large.

Swearing: Swear words, sometimes referred to as curse words, have been used throughout history in all nations and civilizations. Swearing is "as old as man and coeval with language," according to Montagu (1998: 5). According to Dewaele (2006), swearing is a universal language used to convey strong emotions such as fear, joy, rage, and enthusiasm. The meaning of several expletives has evolved throughout time. Furthermore, some contemporary profanity was not seen as impolite centuries before (Qingqing, 2013). According to linguistic theory, swear words—which can also be spelled swearwords—are words that are taboo when discussing sex, religion, and social customs (Allan & Burridge, 2006). An attempt to inflict harm on another person by using specific words or phrases is another definition of swearing (Jay, 1996, p.8). Similarly, Battistella (2005) classifies taboo language such as epithets, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity and defines swearing terms as hostile language. Moreover, Andersson and Trudgill (1992) characterizes swearing as a form of language use in which the expression (a) alludes to something forbidden and/or stigmatized in the society; (b) should not be taken literally; and (c) can be used to convey strong feelings and opinions. The main purpose of this study was to find out how cursing language is used in society, how people use it when they feel angry or in other situations and to find out the effects of such language in the school and society. The following research question are explored throughout the study.

1. Why do people use cursing language?
2. What are the effects of cursing language in society and schools?

Literature Review

Stone et al. (2015) investigated cursing in various settings. The various swear words they used helped to clarify. Their research focused on profanity in medical environments. They brought up concerns regarding a possible link between verbal abuse and physical aggression when swearing (Stapleton et. al., 2022). Similar research has been done on normal and pathological swearing from a psychoanalytic standpoint. Marston (2007) articulates the vocabulary of Greek ritual cursing similarly. The study is based on myths. He clarified historical events so that those who are not familiar with them might grasp this book.

In a similar vein, Jdetawy (2019) examined profanity in a theoretical work. It is predicated on information gleaned from a large body of research on forbidden words and cursing. A sociolinguistic method was used to examine and debate different facets of swearing. The purpose of this essay is to define the nature, kinds, purposes, and motivations of profanity. Based on the analysis, this study concludes that there are multiple classification schemes for "swear words" and "bad language," which is because the definition of "badness" varies among languages.

The "poverty of vocabulary" assumption—which holds that people turn to prohibited terms when they are at a loss for words—was coined by Jay and Jay (2015). Similarly, according to Burridge (quoted in Jay and Jay, 2015), It's not for nothing that swear words

are referred to as "strong language"—they are socially and emotionally crucial, vital parts of our linguistic repertoires that help in stress relief, pain management, improving stamina, and forging ties with friends and coworkers. By assessing the relationship between forbidden word fluency and general verbal fluency, in an effort to verify this theory and disprove the poverty of vocabulary theory, cognitive scientists from Marist College and the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts have undertaken a new investigation. According to the poverty hypothesis, there ought to be a negative association between your language skills and how much you swear. However, the researchers postulated the exact opposite: your vocabulary would be more extensive the more you swear (Voldesolo, 2016).

Cavazza and Guidetti (2014) discuss the use of profanity in political speech in this manner. Their experimental study looked at how participants' gender and use of foul language affected how convincing they were in real life. Swear words are used in colloquial language. when those in positions of authority casually use such offensive language in public. Profanity can be passed down across generations. Men curse more frequently than women in certain societies, and women curse more frequently than men in others. It is limited by the social context in which individuals reside. I'll concentrate on the words used in cursing in this study. My research examines speech patterns and their impact on education and society.

Methods

I have used pseudonyms of the participants to whom I have interviewed. Based on the interpretive philosophical paradigm and qualitative research design, I observed many instances of quarrels, disputes and discussion in the Rawabensi rural municipality. First, I maintained the personal diary for keeping record of all the language of cursing for more than six months. First, all the information was recorded in Nepali language, and later translated in English. Observation is done in the local community and schools. I also went to local houses and collected those cursing words while they were speaking. For the more clarification in the data, I interviewed six participants who were the teachers in schools of municipality. Based on the responses, I developed the codes, categories and themes during the process of data analysis. Moreover, I anonymized participants in the data presentation for their privacy and ethical values.

Results

Let me present a case I observed first. I was sick. I was watching through my kitchen window. The school was open. There was no holiday. There was an ox. The ox was grazing on its way or by the side of the path. Five people including the son, daughter, father, and mother were going home from work. The time was 1:30 PM. I observed the following conversation.

A daughter told her brother: *oh kale*! *goru~leha~nla* 'the ox will hit'.

Kale replied: *handaina* 'it doesn't hit'.

Father*: yojemarajlaaiyatichhitokaslefukayaxa*? 'This god of death so quickly who opened/released (literal translation)

'Who released/ untied this ox so early'?

Wife: *Dudulaa Thanakkabhaachinuni. Marna nasakekopisach*! 'The hand break. One who is not dead.' (literal translation).

'May his hands break down'! 'Dead fuck'.

Father: *boksikoChhoro* 'Witch of the son' (Literal translation) Son of a witch (Free translation.)

Son of the witch. Colloquial language.

Wife: *gayeramaarana*! 'Go and kill'

The husband and wife shared a glass of wine or spirits. The ox accomplished nothing. They owned the ox. Their caste was lower than theirs. Their kids haven't been sent to school. They used to argue when they had a drink. After the husband and wife argued, the wife would occasionally begin cursing at the husband. It was their daily task. They have no idea what a curse is.

Is it wrong to swear? A participant gave a raised voice. It's not horrible, but someone who swears feels content and at ease. Cursing is a private affair. What makes people swear? I posed this query to the attendees. Rewan retorted that when others fail to accomplish what the first person intended, people tend to swear emotionally. Ranma, a different participant, retorted that individuals curse when they are unable to manage their fury. This cursing is a result of human passion and human jealousy. In response, Sabina said that people curse when they're upset.

We have a historical background of cursing. We honestly believe this because the cursing of Bhuvan Laxmi Malla (Wife of Kaji Bhim Malla) is even popular today and people believe. She cursed, "Ill fate should befall in this country on those people, who are honest and patriotic". The wife of Bhim Malla was so angry at Nepal's government that she cursed the country to perpetually suffer from social, political, and economic issues. She swore that Nepal would never prosper. Nepali men and women revealed and detected the cursing words in the quarrel. Nepal is a land cursed by sati. Sati custom was dangerous and devil-like demon work. Many satis died cursing when they wanted to live. It was written in religious texts that the curse of Sati is very severe.

Similarly, a holy man, upset by Prithvi Narayan Shah, cursed the monarch, saying that his family would rule for only ten generations before being wiped out in a bloodbath. It shows that there was a belief in cursing even in the monarchy because they were high-level people. Likewise, the king hurled the sacrifice upon the earth. Feeling enraged, Gorakhnath cursed the monarch, claiming that the ten fingers represented the number of generations that would govern. Whether it is true or not we have faith. Cursing has religious value according to the Swasthani book. Swasthani is a religious book and Hindu women stay brata for a long time until one month. Brinda, wife of Jalandhar had cursed Lord Vishnu before burning him on the pyre. Vishnu's work was deceitful. He came disguised as Jalandhar and remained in sexual contact with Brinda, due to which Jalandhar died. Then, she cursed Vishnu telling: may

you stay as grass! May you stay as the tree! May you stay as the rock! We believe that cursing began from the time of god. It is continuing up to now.

I found out more and more examples from observation. I included them in my study and I felt better to explain. I have mentioned them as follows:

murkha.' stupid': It is used to curse negatively. It means someone like a stupid.
bahulaahaa 'Psychatic': It is used to express negative backbiting
chuplaag 'Shut up': It is used to scold and draw attention
Cursing related to scolding
enaagaakattochirinamarna 'Oh, naked man rice break die' (Literal translation), meaning 'Come to eat rice' while scolding rudely.
bhundifuTaunamarna 'stomach break die'(Literal translation), meaning'Come to eat rice'.Special type of cursing used in society and school).
kaaTToghichnamunTi 'Rice eat come (Literal translation), which means 'Come to eat rice'(free translation) (here *kaaTTo* means eat rice at someone's house where there is a religious ritual after the death of a member of a family on the 11th day).
terobhuDipaTapaTafuTos 'Your stomach break' (Literal translation) that means 'May your stomach break or split'. Free translation- (curse in a rude way).
TalaiTuuuuupareraharyobansamaalagun 'You sound of snail green bamboo bring' which explains 'May your body be taken on a green bamboo with the rattling sound of a snail! (Dangerous curse, when people die they carry the corpse bound with rope in a green bamboo).
marnanasakekaabaahan 'Die not being able to chariot' 'May death come to you'(The cursing related to death).
chaatimaajorgiddha'breast on two eagles' Couple of eagles on the breast/chest.
gadhaa 'donkey' 'Idiot'
Daamnaa 'Work without' 'Without work'
marijaa 'die go' May god damn you'/ 'die'
tero kriya paros 'your funeral lie' 'May your funeral happen'/ 'May god damn you'.
terojagalTaachharchhu 'Your hair scatter', 'I will split your hair'
May your hair dissimilate!
boksee 'witch'
haijaale lane 'cholera take away' May cholera take you away
terokaalparos 'Your death lie.' May god damn you.
paTakkaankhaafuTos 'Eye break' 'May your eye break!/ 'May you be blind'/ May you be a one-eyed man/woman
abujhmurdaa 'Ignorance corpse''Dead one'.
khaananapaakaasaalaaharu 'wife's brothers who have not got anything to eat' 'scoundrel!/ idiots'
terolaadi 'your stomach' Oh, your stomach!

hera, prithivikobhari 'look, load of earth! 'Burden to earth'
marjaa'Godie' 'Go and die'
terobaaukosampattikhakochhara 'Your father's property eaten is 'Have I eaten your father's property'

Discussion

Cursing words are dirty words. Dirty expressions are offensive in society. I found out from the participants' thoughts when people feel angry and can't win, they start to curse. When people are under strain, in abrupt pain, angry and agitated, or faced with something unexpected and usually unwanted—though not always—they will swear. Participants said that in our community, men tend to be more violent than women.

The Effects of Cursing on Society

Every one of the six participants shared their opinions regarding the impact of swearing on society. Cursing is considered disrespectful language in society, according to participant Janma. It takes society in a bad direction. People won't know if something is cursed or not if they utilize it in public regularly. It also causes issues for the culture. It is unfavorable labor. Ramila said that the poor people curse the rich people. Cursing phrases can often draw so much attention that they become associated with taboo subjects, those parts of our culture that make us uneasy in the classroom. Most people do not know whether I am cursing or not. On the other hand, illiterate people and literate believe there is power in cursing. They curse to be open and clear. They give their responsibility to the gods that the gods have to fulfill. Gods are omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient so that gods can favor.

The Effects of Cursing in the School

It creates a negative attitude in the school too. Students what they hear at home, they use at school. Its negativity quickly overspreads in the school environment. Cursing affects language learning to the children in society and school. Bad things spread fast everywhere. The environment of school does not become child-friendly due to the cause of cursing. They are not legal words. Cursing is not a polite form of speaking. Educated people are rarely permitted to speak using cursing words. When they purposely hurt, offend, or belittle someone in any way, they are abusing them by calling them names or making other offensive remarks. Speakers express a certain attitude towards what is being spoken by using a forbidden term; these attitudes can include annoyance, disgust, surprise, and so forth.

People utilize a variety of objects and emotions to curse, including physical parts, sex, wrath, dishonesty, intoxication, crazy, disease, danger, animals, religion, fear, and location. When he/she doesn't win s/he opens the dress and is naked and begins to curse friends. Sometimes, students fight in school, the lost one begins to curse. Other students come and gather then begin to laugh at the words that they speak. The cursing words come out emotionally and unknowingly. Through my observation, I also saw such events at school as a teacher. When people can't do their work, they swear or curse at that time. They may

curse their boss, son, daughter, father, mother, husband, wife, and workers. It is bad because it identifies un-civilization in society. Cursing loses the standard form of language. People curse to take satisfaction.

There is one romantic story. A six-year-old child was cursing at her parents. She was weeping and sitting on muddy ground. I asked her, "Why are you weeping and cursing at your parents?" She replied that my parents made me carry such heavy books. I cannot carry such bulky books. I helped her but I laughed hearing her voice. Students have learned to curse from their home and society when it comes to school with them and widespread in school.

To minimize cursing, do awareness work. Teach the people to call cursing badly. Tell them cursing damages the language. Teach the people the standard language. End the social discrimination and social repression. Sometimes, it may be positive too. Lamotte (2021) brought up the advantages of swearing. They are as follows: cursing could indicate intellect; using profanity could indicate sincerity; profanity raises one's threshold for pain; cursing is an indication of originality; using curse words rather than blows.

Above mentioning thoughts are positive too. They help to minimize cursing and people are very happy. We can avoid it by giving positive cultural education. It can be changed through person, family, society, and community. Students curse when they face a lack of a clear concept of the subject and fail to achieve the goal.

Jdetawy (2019) explores the primary drivers, incentives, and purposes. They could be: 1) conveying the speaker's emotions in specific circumstances, such arguments and reprimands, 2) have a beneficial (using profanity in humour and jokes) or bad (using it to hurt someone) influence on other people, 3) has a hypoalgesic (pain-relieving) action that improves pain tolerance, reduces tension, and brings emotional stability back to a person. 4) Assist others in letting out their feelings, 5) non-emphatic emotions such as surprise, grief, laughter, rage, frustration, and delight are thought to be the psychological causes of swearing. 6) Using profanity when conversing with friends can convey a certain level of intimacy, 7) a parson may utilize profanity to express him, lift their spirits, and build a personality. 8) to express anger and unhappiness in a private and intimate setting; 9) to denote closeness or friendship; 10) to bolster a group's identity. The aforementioned terms are very useful in our community.

Conclusion

People don't feel offended by the cursing language. Cursing words need attention. But when they use regularly it is hard to hypothesize there may be any improving value in them at all. Some people say views that swearing can be creative, smart, and downright lyrical. Swear words attract attention because they involve taboos. In some societies, especially in towns, dirty words are offensive to society and language. But, in some communities, dirty word usage is the background of society. Illiterate people can use more dirty words than literate people (observation). I found out that the main cause is education. They learn it in childhood

period from the society. Cursing words are not standard words. Literate and educated people do not use maximum cursing words so that we can say that cursing words are dirty words. The notion that using coarse language is a sign of failure is being contested by new studies (Voldesolo, 2016). They know the nature of the terrible people and aid in improvement. Cursing is an indication of an inadequate vocabulary resulting from ignorance, sloth, or impatience (Voldesolo, 2016a). Cursing dismisses the language. It also damages the standard level of language. Illiteracy and ignorance of knowledge are the main reasons for cursing. People curse to take satisfaction. Cursing has a long history. We can study the cursing in different ritual books like the Mahabharat, the Swasthani, the Ramayan.

Generally, walkers curse the people. Those people who are not under their guardians. Landscape areas people curse more and more. Society should create accurate proper environments not to use such filthy words or cursing language. Due to the use of such language, there is an indirect effect in the school. Students curse the teachers when they fail and secure low marks in the examination. They also curse when they do not understand the teaching or do not know the lessons. Illiteracy is a hindrance to the progress of society. People should have as much knowledge as they have. The curse is also the main cause of illiteracy and the defect is that which spreads in the society due to widespread superstition and reaches the school and then reaches the society and the virus reaches the mind of the educated and uneducated people and it spreads from person to person, people to people, community to community, and society to society.

Author's Bio

Gopal Basnet is a secondary-level English teacher /Headteacher at Shree Sharada Secondary School, Rawabesi Rural Municipality-2, Kharpa, Khotang. He has completed his MPhil in English Education from Kathmandu University. Currently, he is chair of NELTA, Khotang Branch.

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Book Review

The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners

Tripti Chaudhary[1]
[1]MPhil Scholar, Department of English language education at
Kathmandu University School of Education

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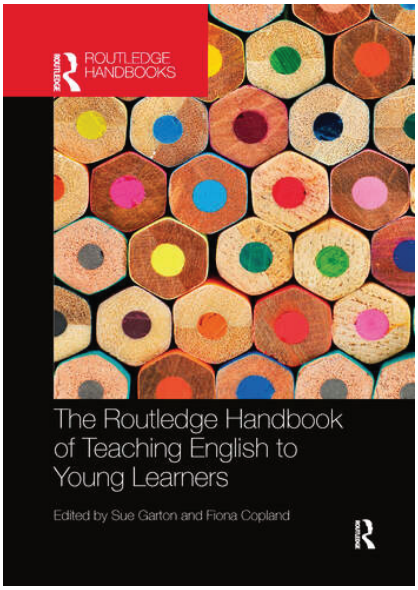
Corresponding Author:
Tripti Chaudhary
Email: triptichaudhary015@gmail.com

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Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA), Koshi Province
Email: journalofneltakoshi@gmail.com

The edited book 'Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners' was published in 2019 by two renowned scholars, Sue Garton and Fiona Copland. The book constitutes 32 chapters and international scholars have written from a wide range of geographical areas of the world;mainly from East Africa, Mexico, the South Pacific, Japan, France, the USA, and the UK. This book focuses on second language acquisition, discourse analysis, pedagogy, and technology. It has given an overview of the current field situation of different states in the different chapters. It also highlights identifying key areas of Teaching English to Young Learners(TEYL). Similarly, it has given an idea and method of teaching in difficult situations and from Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Each chapter has given suggestions and a possible solution to shape the future research agenda of TEYL (Teaching English to Young Learners) in several countries. It has given practical advice to students, researchers, and teachers. It celebrates the field of 'coming age' in the research area of primary-level, English language teaching.



The volume opens with a list of remarkable contributors who have supported the area of research. Then after the introduction part, it gives a background of researchers how they came together in the same issue, how they got united, and how they became interested in the area of young learners which has become as truly an international perspective. After that writers mentioned the

scope of the volume which addresses two key issues; one is terminology and next is the age of younger children, finally it is decided to call Young Learners (YLs), Early English Learners (EEL) Early English Language Learners (EELL) and English Young Learner (EYL) under the age of 5-12 years children.

The book is divided into six sections. The first chapter starts with the wider circumstances, inspecting areas such as policy and motivation. The second chapter studies the young learner classroom at a more micro level, with sub-chapters on classroom management and teaching through English, amongst others. In the third chapter, the authors find a mainstay of research; pedagogy. The fourth chapter studies the work of curriculum and technology, and chapter five emphasizes researching young learners, including a chapter on involving young learners as researchers. Finally, chapter six explores overviews of EELL (Early English Language Learner) in regions where it is growing in popularity: Africa, Asia, Europe, South America, and the South Pacific.

The summary of the different chapters gives the key findings of Young Learners research. Mainly, the first section discusses new insights and critical issues in the primary school context. It has related it to current policy for example the starting age of, the place of English in curriculum, and the effect on language diversity. According to the researcher, the key implementer of policy is a teacher who could play the role of bridging of gap between policy and practice. Besides that, researchers have recommended that children's motivation for language learning is difficult, unstable, and dynamic so their features must be taken into consideration because most children have few choices about learning the English Language. In these circumstances, bottom-up initiatives can be beneficial with collaborative inquiry-based with both teacher and student

The second section is about the 'YLs classroom' and the researcher recommends that children from linguistically varied backgrounds may need particular involvements to flourish academically because of the context of using English as a dominant or non-dominant language in the classroom. Children who migrate to a country where English is the dominant language, in this situation children develop language skills in English and face difficulties but who cannot get into this environment should be encouraged by bilingualism and build their cognitive power. Similarly, searcher has raised the agenda of Differentiated Instruction (DI) it can be used in TEYL in general and special settings and it can be applied to Young English Learners too. According to the researcher, there is a question; does the teacher use L1 or L2 in the classroom of YLs? According to suggestion collection, the teacher could use language of their own choice. Classroom management is necessary for a new approach which is the school level approach.

The third chapter summarizes the major point of the researcher's suggestion on the area of young learners teaching on pedagogy. The researcher has studied the listening and speaking skills of young learners aged 6-11 years. She states that the problem in teaching listening and speaking skills can be kept in two categories as either it could be teacher-

related or curriculum-related. As the suggestion of the researcher, teachers can apply an integrated teaching approach which can provide a series of activities based on the principles. Consequently, researchers examined the reading and writing skills and they explored the links between literacy and learning to read and write in a second language. To teach grammar effectively, it is necessary to focus on the interconnectedness of grammar and vocabulary. It can be integrated into other activities such as storytelling. The author also examines effective approaches to grammar teaching to young learners. The approaches are practicing the activities and using them in the classroom. Another component of teaching vocabulary is to develop a large vocabulary by focusing on the form, meaning, and use of words. In conclusion, storytelling has become an increasingly popular approach to teaching young learners with some practitioners building a whole syllabus around it. The literature-based approach is effective for YLs by using storybooks, poems, and more factual stories.

The fourth chapter is about technology and curriculum. It has focused on the use of ICT in TEYL such as; the use of technology outside the classroom in the form of gaming and mobile use for both inside and outside in the classroom. They have also given lots of suggestions to integrate new technologies into the English curriculum at the primary level.

The fifth chapter discusses 'researching YLs'; there have been issues with researching YLs, particularly for early graders. According to researchers, the information collection method should be appropriate for YLs. Due to this, children can also be involved in discussion-making around research design and their participation can make it fruitful for data collection. The last section 'Regional Perspective' on teaching English to YLs, discusses different perspectives and looks at how TEYL is being implemented in different regions of the world, specifically, Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the South Pacific.

My Analysis and Recommendation

After reading each section and chapter of the book, I found that the structure of the book is well-managed. The content is appropriate for English language teachers and curriculum designers. Every chapter is structured with detailed information, research experience sharing, and recommendation methods for use in the classroom. The conclusion and comment section are briefed in each section. The book has 32 chapters under 6 sections, which have been written by different international writers. Every section clarified the agenda with research findings. Moreover, researchers have mentioned the method of inclusiveness and participation of different types of children in English language classrooms. Teachers could give special concertation to those children who are unable to get academic learning and play the role of bridge between practice and creating an environment for learning. However, in the context of Nepal also some Younger Learners are getting very good exposure inside / outside the classroom but some are not getting the policy. Similarly, the book has given clear guidance and pedagogy for teaching listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. They have focused on using a storytelling approach by interconnecting grammar

and vocabulary by integrating them into other activities. This approach is also very applicable in our local context and other developing countries. Likewise, new technology, ICT in TEYL; use of Computer Assisting Language Learning (CALL), and affordances of mobile learning inside and outside the classroom for effective learning though in our context ICT may not be approached in some remote areas of schools so teachers should have to be creative for using other teaching materials in the English Language Classroom of YLs.

Similarly, for teaching English to Younger Learners teachers need more support for running their class effective way. In that case, they need constructive training for professional development. Finally, in my view, the context could be different, teachers could be different in different countries but the agenda and issue of teaching English to Young Learners might be the same and it should be raised by policymakers while designing the curriculum. The book has given a comprehensive overview of key issues in the field of teaching English to young learners in the twenty-first century. Similarly, it also presents a credible research agenda for the way forward. The collection is recommended to anyone interested in teaching English to Young Learners.

Reviewer's Bio

Tripti Chaudhary is persuading an MPhil in English language education at Kathmandu University. She is also working in an international organization, called Save the Children. she has been working in different INGOs for a decade to contribute her knowledge and skills in the education field. The areas of her interest include teacher professional development, parental education, and research in different areas.

Reference

Garton, S. & Copland, F. (Ed),2019. *The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners.* Routledge.