

Volume 20 Number 1-2

December 2015

Journal of NELTA

Volume 20 Number 1-2

Journal *of* NELTA



Nepal English Language Teachers' Association



Journal of NELTA

Volume 20 Number: 1-2 December 2015

Advisor

Meera Shrestha

Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Vishnu S Rai

Deputy Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Laxman Gnawali

Guest Editor

Dr. Christina Manara

Editors

Dr. Binod Luitel

Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey

Balaram Adhikari

Madhu Neupane

Reviewers

Rama Mathew	Harunur Khan
Tikaram Poduel	Hima Rawal
Kalyan Chattopadhyaya	Prem Phyak
Tika Poduel	Bal Krishna Sharma
KR Dhakal	Ganga Ram Gautam
Phuong Le	Ram Ashish Giri
Surabhi Bharati	Hemanta Raj Dahal
Prithvi N. Shrestha	Rishi Rijal
Vaishna Narayan	

Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA)

GPO Box No.: 11110, Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone: 977-1-44720455

E-mail: ccnelta@gmail.com

Price Rs. 650/-

Journal of NELTA has been indexed in:

● *Academicindex.net* ● *Journalseek.net* ● *Linguistlist.org*

Advisor

Meera Shrestha

Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Vishnu S Rai

Deputy Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Laxman Gnawali

Guest Editor

Dr. Christina Manara

Editors

Dr. Binod Luitel
Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey
Balaram Adhikari
Madhu Neupane

Central Executive Committee 2015-2017

President

Ms. Meera Shrestha
meeranep@hotmail.com

Senior Vice President

Ms. Motikala Subba Dewan
motikala_d1@hotmail.com

Vice President

Mr. Ishwori Bahadur
Adhikari
ishwor555@hotmail.com

General Secretary

Mr. Padam Bahadur Chauhan
padamchauhan77@gmail.com

Secretary

Mr. Kunjarmani Gautam
gautamkunjar@yahoo.com

Membership Secretary

Mr. Ashok Sapkota
assapkota@gmail.com

Treasurer

Ms. Sarita Dewan
dewansarita031@gmail.com

Members

Mr. Hemanta Raj Dahal	hemanta_dahal@hotmail.com
Prof. Dr. Anju Giri	giri.anju1@gmail.com
Dr. Binod Luitel	binodluitel71@gmail.com
Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey	gpandeytu@gmail.com
Dr. Dinesh Kumar Yadav	aastic_y@yahoo.com
Mr. Nabin Prakash Mahat	nabin_215@yahoo.com
Mr. Laxmi Prasad Ojha	laxmijha99@gmail.com
Mr. Jaya Ram Khanal	khanaljaya2004@yahoo.com
Mr. Damodar Regmi	damodar.regmi@gmail.com
Mr. Chet Raj Regmi	regmi9chetraj777@gmail.com
Mr. Prem Prasad Paudel	prempoudel95@gmail.com
Mr. Jagadish Poudel	paudeljaggu@gmail.com
Ms. Usha Kiran Wagle	wagleyusha@gmail.com
Mr. Keshav Prasad Bhattarai	kesarikeshav@gmail.com
Mr. Surya Prasad Ghimire	suryapdghimire@yahoo.com
Dr. Purna Bahadur Kadel	kadelpurna@yahoo.com
Mr. Kamal Raj Lamsal	lamsalkamalraj@gmail.com
Mr. Surendra Raj Ojha	ojha_sr@yahoo.com

Editorial



The birth of this issue of the Journal of NELTA took place in the aftermath of the great earthquake of 2015 that affected, among others, the key stakeholders of classrooms i.e. students and teachers. The irreparable loss of lives and property at schools left scars in minds of the old and the young. The classes had to be suspended which, in many cases, were never resumed at the original place. The ELT professionals who survived joined hands with other volunteers in rescue and relief of the victims. Gradually life came back to normalcy, at least for those who were fortunate to survive. And this normalcy was also seen in the continuity of the contribution from the teachers, teacher educators, material writers and researchers from Nepal and abroad. The earthquake did not shatter the professional commitment we collectively possess for the continuous improvement and innovations in ELT.

Several changes have been witnessed in the field of ELT. On the one hand, communicative language teaching approach enjoys the centre stage in the mainstream ELT in many contexts. On the other hand, it is challenged in a way that it may become a history. The recent additions in the language pedagogy include Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), project-based language teaching, flipped classroom, alternative assessment and several others. But the major leap in the way we teach English language is embracing the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT). With ICT, we now have mobile assisted language learning, Computer Assisted Language

Learning (CALL), Media Assisted Language Teaching (MALT), online learning and several other modalities of learning and teaching of English.

We are happy to see that the papers in this issue cover a variety of ELT practices and innovations reflecting the development in ELT classroom pedagogy mainly in EFL contexts. The issue includes papers on contextualization and culture integration in EFL contexts, project-based learning as a pedagogy, and managing and surviving in difficult classrooms. Likewise, there are papers dealing with learners' roles, language proficiency and standardized tests and the use of ICT to enhance the quality of classroom teaching as well as widening access to education. We expect that all these articles will be interesting and valuable to our valued readers. As an informed professional, we anticipate that you will provide constructive feedback on these papers so as to make the future issues even more professional.

We are very grateful to all the authors and reviewers for their support throughout the process. We are equally grateful to NELTA Central Committee for their continuous support. Thanks are also due to the designer, Mr. Gambhir Man Kapali for elegant design of this volume.

Happy reading!

Prof. Dr. Vishnu S Rai
Dr. Laxman Gnawali
Dr. Christina Manara
Dr. Binod Luitel
Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey
Balaram Adhikari
Madhu Neupane

Table of contents

Six Ways of Looking at Context. <i>Alan Maley</i>	1
Contextualized Culture Integration through Project-Based Learning in EFL Classrooms in Vietnam <i>Elvira Sanatullova-Allison and Thanh Do</i>	5
Surviving in Difficult EFL Classroom: Teachers' Perspectives and Coping Strategies <i>Shankar Dhakal</i>	16
Information and Communication Technologies and Teacher Educators of English in Nepal <i>Prem Prasad Poudel</i>	27
Learner Role in CLT: Practices in the Higher Secondary Classrooms <i>Md. Abdur Rouf & Khanam Nargis Sultana</i>	34
"Reading" ability of students in Nepal <i>Kumar Shrestha</i>	41
Developing Communicative Competence of ESL Learners through Learning Strategies <i>Purna Kandel</i>	51
Changing Scenario of Language Classrooms in the Present Day World <i>Arun Nepal</i>	63
Content and Language Integrated Learning for Nepalese EFL classes <i>Tara Sapkota</i>	71

Six Ways of Looking at Context

Alan Maley

Abstract

This short article is an attempt to specify more clearly what we might mean by the term 'context'. I examine six aspects of context: Physical, material and economic; Socio-political and religious; Linguistic; Philosophical and educational; Family and peer group; Psychological, relational and affective. I discuss each of these relating to the classroom teaching and learning of English.

Language learning and the context

Learning involves a 'something' to be learned and a context of circumstances in which it takes place. It is this rich texture of factors, ranging from the material to the ethereal, that I want to reflect on in this article. Clearly these factors intersect and overlap in complex and not always predictable ways, but I shall nonetheless attempt to separate out the following six strands for discussion:

- ~ Physical, material, economic factors:
- ~ Socio-political and religious factors:
- ~ Linguistic factors:
- ~ Philosophical /educational factors:
- ~ Family and peer group factors:
- ~ Psychological, relational, affective factors:

Physical, material and economic factors.

On the face of it, it appears obvious that material circumstances have a massive influence on the effectiveness of learning. In the 1960's I worked with primary schools in Ghana. Many of them, particularly in rural areas, lacked even the most basic facilities: no desks or chairs, few books, blackboards pitted like battlefields...Classes were crowded into classrooms as hot as ovens. Children had sometimes to walk long distances to school after performing early morning chores such as foraging for wood and collecting water.

Many were under-nourished or suffering from malnutrition.

Poverty, disease and malnutrition are the daily reality in many educational settings worldwide, including parts of Nepal and India. They are certainly not confined to West Africa. Neither are they the exclusive reserve of rural communities. However, I want to suggest that such deprived material settings can sometimes - all too rarely but sometimes - be overcome by affective and relational factors. I have seen some of the most joyful and creative educational moments of my career in just these kinds of classrooms: an improvised

puppet show using old newspapers to make the puppets and a table on its side as a stage, with the kids performing a play they had themselves written; an art exhibition of collages made from the clippings of the seamstresses stalls in the market... I do not suggest for a moment that such deprived environments are in any way desirable, but we should not assume that material circumstances are everything. I have seen some of the most lacklustre, deadening lessons given in classrooms with ergonomic furnishings, designer lighting and with all the technical equipment one could desire. The material circumstances are important but not always decisive.

Socio-political and religious factors.

These factors can exercise a negative influence on learning when, for example, the belief systems in place exclude (or downgrade the importance) of women in education. There are also cases where certain sections of the population are given privileged access to education to the detriment of other sections, as, for example in Malaysia or India. Or the system may take a non-scientific stance towards science, as in the Creationist approach in the US, or view science as a fixed body of expertise to be used for political objectives rather than as an open-ended practice of inquiry. They clearly affect the way geography or history are taught. Even the Mercator projection, which forms the basis for many maps, has a lot to answer for. Politics can affect language learning too, as in cases of post-colonial resistance to the language of the colonisers, or in views of one's own language as being inherently superior to the one being learned. Factors such as these are more influential and more stubborn than even material factors, partly because those who hold such views are often unaware that they do so.

Linguistic factors.

The linguistic environment can have significant effects on language learning in particular. Is the society monolingual (the exception), or plurilingual, where it is common for people to switch between several languages, and where they do not regard learning another language as difficult? Is the target language being learned in a country where it is in use outside the classroom, or not? How distant are the mother tongue and the target language, and what effect does this have? (Curiously, languages which are close to one's own are not always the easiest to learn.) What difference does it make if the language being learned is high prestige or low prestige? Because English is the major international language, are native speakers of English disadvantaged in their learning of other languages? How do folk beliefs about language impact on learning? ('French is the language of culture', 'Italian is so musical', 'German sounds harsh', 'Greek sounds really masculine.' etc.). And how do attitudes toward the target language affect the learning of it? Do I resent having to learn this language, or do I embrace the opportunity? Are my most cherished values put at risk when I acquire this language?

Philosophical and educational factors.

Some societies accord greater prestige to education than others and this clearly affects the educational environment. Of course, it may also have a negative impact on some members of the society, who may be excluded or who simply drop out of a race they feel certain they can never win. There are also clear differences between broadly elitist systems and 'democratic' ones. Sadly, it is often the case that equality of access to education may not guarantee equal quality of provision however. But there are winners and losers in all societies,

and to teach or learn in an environment of 'losers' is all too often a guarantee of failure, leading to more failure in a downward and irreversible spiral.

Other factors include the overall beliefs about how learning should be conducted. Broadly conservative or traditional beliefs place a high value on discipline, effort, competition, memorisation and testing, and tend to view learning as something difficult and painful. By contrast, more liberal or exploratory approaches view learning as a pleasurable, creative and cooperative enterprise where the emphasis is on the quality of the process rather than the short-term product in the form of examination results. I am aware of the dangers of stereotypes, of course, but it is nonetheless true that generalisations can sometimes usefully be made. There are societies where the form is more important than the substance, the word more important than the deed. It is important however to avoid attributing such beliefs to whole societies, ("the Chinese are all influenced by Confucian values", etc.). There is often more variation within societies than between them. Things change, and one complaint increasingly heard about young 'nouveau riche' Chinese students abroad is precisely that they do not conform to the expected disciplined and obedient model!

Family and peer group factors.

The family, and in particular parental influence, is still paramount in the environment of most learners. Parents can exert positive influence through active involvement in their children's education, by non-coercive encouragement, by supporting them in moments of crisis and through their example as role-models. This is perhaps nowhere so apparent as in the development of literacy. Those children whose parents read to them at bedtime, who provide reading material of compelling interest to their kids, who show themselves

to be avid readers themselves – those children become readers, and reading is the best predictor of academic success that we have. Children whose parents are not like that will have a struggle ahead to achieve even minimal standards of literacy. Most people learn more from their parents – for better or worse – than they ever do from their teachers.

Arguably, they also learn far more from their peers, both positively and negatively. The pressure to conform to group norms has never been stronger, supported as it is by an aggressively consumerist ethos and by the social media. How they look, what they own, how they speak, how quickly they can adjust to the latest change of fashion – all are subject to the unforgiving judgements of their peers. But they also learn how to be with other people, to respect and be respected by them, to give and receive understanding...and much else. We sometimes forget just how much kids learn outside school: arguably more than they ever learn inside it. And this too is part of the wider learning environment, especially when so much information is so readily available on the Internet.

Psychological, relational, affective factors.

An article of this length can scarcely do justice to the multitude of personal factors which pervade the learning environment. All I can do is remind myself, and you, of some of the stronger currents running beneath the surface of the learning-teaching surface. Hormones, hangovers and hyper-activity can cause havoc in any learning group. The moods, expectations, aspirations and attitudes of both teachers and learners also form an important part of the learning environment. Just how the skilful teacher manages to harness and orchestrate the energies and tensions of a group, and direct them in productive directions remains one of the greatest

pedagogical mysteries. As teachers, we have all experienced classes which went like a dream, and those which felt like endless nightmares. How to achieve the 'flow' experiences of the former, where both teacher and class are lost in the 'effortless effort' of the moment is elusive, though Jill Hadfield's book, *Classroom Dynamics* gives valuable signposts. Nancie Atwell, in *The Reading Zone*, also gives some guidance in how to harness the energy of a group in the shared and powerful experience of reading. And the 'flow' bible is, I guess, still *The Inner Game of Tennis* by Timothy Gallwey. As teachers we need to be 'present' in the fullest sense, yet simultaneously absent, so that we leave space for the individuals and the group to enact their learning. I have a particular conviction that it is the teacher's voice quality which is a key to this, though I have only anecdotal evidence to support my case (Maley, 2000). But is certain that teachers' voices remain with us for good or ill throughout our lives. The immediate chemistry of a class, requiring split-second decisions by the teacher is unlikely ever to be completely anatomised, yet it is this which ultimately overrides virtually every other factor I have discussed. (Underhill and & Maley, 2012) Good luck!

References

- Atwell, N. (2007) *The Reading zZone*. New York: Scholastic.
- Gallwey, T. (1974) *The Inner Game of Tennis*. London: Pan Books.
- Hadfield, J. (1992) *Classroom Dynamics*. Oxford: OxfordUniversity Press.
- Maley, A. (2000) *The Language Teacher's Voice*. Oxford: Macmillan/Heinemann
- Underhill, A. and Maley. A. (2012) Expect the unexpected. *English Teaching Professional*, Issue 82, Sept. 2012 .

Author's bio

Alan Maley's career in ELT began with The British Council in 1962. Since retiring from Assumption in 2004, he has occupied many visiting professorial posts at many Institutions. He was a founder member of the Extensive Reading Foundation, and co-founder of The C Group. He is a past-President of IATEFL, and was given the ELTons Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012.

Contextualized Culture Integration through Project-Based Learning in EFL Classrooms in Vietnam

Elvira Sanatullova-Allison and Thanh Do

Abstract

Integrating culture into language contexts in EFL classroom has been an issue of substantial concern for years. Different methods or approaches have been introduced for the integration of culture and language learning. Recently, project-based learning (PBL) seems to be a favorite choice among methodologists. This paper analyzes the syllabi of a drama project and a cultural project to address cultural aspects in PBL in EFL classrooms. The findings show that PBL provides opportunities to enhance and improve students' language skills and soft skills. More importantly, a wide range of knowledge of different cultural perspectives may be collected during the projects.

Key words: Project-based learning, cultural project, cultural awareness

Introduction

Through the growing trends in communication and integration across countries, the need to learn foreign languages is increasingly important for large and growing numbers of people in the world. Although English is not the most widely spoken language in the world, it is an international language. Teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in non-English speaking countries is growing increasingly common. At the same time, the notion that English language learning is merely confined to mastering vocabulary, grammar, or language proficiencies is becoming outdated. The goal of learning English in EFL classrooms today is to equip learners with cultural knowledge in order to communicate successfully with people in different cultures. Thus, the integration of teaching culture into EFL curriculum becomes extremely important, and the selection of

appropriate methods to incorporate cultural awareness in English classes becomes an interesting issue to explore.

In the recent years, the integration of cultural aspects within the context of English language learning at the School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University in Vietnam has been implemented in a number of ways. PBL implemented at this university has gained noticeable attention for identifying cultural knowledge and understanding in EFL classrooms. This paper focuses on the cultural issues in PBL in EFL classrooms at Thai Nguyen University.

Culture in EFL Classrooms

Culture is defined and addressed in numerous fields of study such as communication, education, cultural studies, and sociology. In the study of integrating culture into Vietnamese

university EFL teaching, Nguyen (2013) reviews definitions of culture and summarizes five core themes. He then proposes his own definition of culture as “a system of patterned beliefs, values and norms that shape and guide the observable behavior of members of a community, created and transmitted by the members in social interactions. Such a community is considered a cultural group” (p. 19). This definition is used as the basic definition in this paper.

There is a large body of literature that explores the connections between language and culture. According to Brown (1994), “A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (p. 165). Culture should be included in EFL context in providing learners with necessary knowledge to communicate effectively. In addition, the importance of integrating culture in EFL classrooms has been pointed out in a number of research papers. Turkan and Celik (2007) state that integrating culture into EFL teaching will help EFL learners “act flexibly and sensibly” when they interact with “the lines of cultural norms.” On the other hand, insufficiencies of cultural knowledge may lead EFL learners to miscommunicate or misunderstand the target language (Tran, 2010). Interestingly, in Dema and Moeller’s study (2012), they discuss the interrelation of the components of culture (products, practices, and perspectives), which will help teachers design cultural contents in EFL lessons. Similarly, in the recent research Frank (2013) again analyzes the three components of culture to emphasize how to integrate culture into EFL classrooms. He describes the model of culture as follows:

- Perspectives: what members of a culture think, feel, and value

- Practices: how members communicate and interact with one another
- Products: technology, music, art, food, literature, etc.; the things members of a group create, share, and transmit to the next generation)

He considers *products* to be easier to identify than *perspectives* and *practices* because *products* tend to be ingrained in a society.

The need of teaching and integrating culture into EFL classrooms is highly recommended by Liton and Madanat (2013). Their study shows that students’ intercultural competence and effective cross-cultural communication skill which is a must in this era of globalization. This leads to a question of how to integrate culture into language contexts effectively. The utilization of PBL in EFL classrooms may serve as one of the appropriate methods to incorporate culture into language contexts. This paper focuses on this issue.

Methodology

Given the information for the cultural aspects in PBL in EFL classrooms, this paper employs a content analysis approach to examine the syllabi of two projects – Drama and Culture – in the School of Foreign Languages at Thai Nguyen University. These projects offer students important opportunities to enhance language skills through the integration of cultural learning. The projects follow the proposed framework (Moss & Van Duzer, 1997) as presented in the following section. While the scope of this paper is limited to analyzing the opportunities to learn as revealed through the syllabi, other research (Tran & Do, 2014) shows students’ improvements in cooperating, planning, communicating, and obtaining knowledge of various kinds through PBL.

Project-based learning in EFL classrooms

Solomon (2003 as cited in Simpson, 2011) provides an explanation of PBL as a learning process where students work collaboratively to solve problems that are “authentic, curriculum-based, and often interdisciplinary” (p. 10).

The Arlington Education and Employment Program in the resource manual for teachers (Moss & Van Duzer, 1997) developed a project-based learning framework as described below:

FRAMEWORK FOR PROJECT WORK

A project:

- builds on previous work.
- integrates the four skills areas - speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- incorporates collaborative teamwork, problem solving, negotiating and other interpersonal skills.
- challenges learners to engage in independent work.
- challenges learners to authentically use English in new and different contexts outside the class.
- develops life-long learning strategies.
- involves the learners in choosing the focus of the project and in the planning process.
- engages learners in activities where they need them to acquire new information that is important to them.
- has clearly articulated outcomes.
- incorporates self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation.
- enhances the development of real-life skills.

Figure 1: Framework for Project Work (Moss & Van Duzer, 1997)

As is evident in the framework, students will have the opportunity to develop various types of skills such as language competence, interpersonal working skills, and soft skills.

The application of PBL in EFL classrooms has been considered an effective pedagogy for over twenty years although it is not a new method in language learning (Beckett, 2006). This approach in English language learning can be understood as students involved in doing a project themselves, from choosing a topic, solving problems, and generating products in the form of meaningful solutions. Poonphon (2011) indicates that learning through PBL not only enhances English proficiencies, but also helps learners improve communicating abilities in real life contexts. For further information, Poonphon summarizes some of methodologists’ evaluations of PBL as the combination of interdisciplinary practices and integrated skills, a student-centered approach where the teacher’s role is a facilitator or coach. Moreover, adopting PBL “enables teachers to bridge academic instruction with real-life experience in communicating across cultures” (Kean and Kwe, 2014, p. 191).

In the progress of language learning and teaching, the School of Foreign Languages at Thai Nguyen University has implemented the PBL approach to help students achieve communicative competence and experience cultural issues in the target language.

Drama Project

Drama is defined as any activity which asks the participant to portray himself in an imaginary situation or to portray another person in an imaginary situation (Holden, 1981, as cited in Sam, 1990). The drama

project can be considered as a typical sample for PBL because it provides a person's opportunity to express his imagination in verbal expressions and gestures.

This project is required for freshmen during their first or second semester, and it is divided into the following stages:

Stage 1: Grouping and assigning tasks. In the first week, students will join in groups of 4-6 members. Formally, a teacher/instructor will provide the project's guidelines and requirements in order that all students are able to complete their project.

Stage 2: Locating materials and writing scenarios. Students spend 4 to 5 weeks to complete this stage. Students are instructed to find popular literary work (such as a novel, or a short story) from English speaking countries. After deciding their favorite work, students have to write scenarios based on the chosen material. This stage is extremely difficult because students need to create a screenplay from the story or literary work. The students, as screenwriters, are responsible for their scripts and the formats of their plays that need to be consistent with the original version.

Stage 3: Assigning roles and learning scripts. Students will choose or be assigned one or more different roles in their play relating to their abilities. They have to learn the characters' lines and practice reading aloud every word in the scripts.

Stage 4: Practicing and acting. Students practice reading scripts and acting in scenes. Two language skills (productive

and receptive) will continue to be improved through the repetition of scripts. Students, in this stage, learn to act naturally to express their characters. Following lines, expressing character's emotions, designing costumes and props, and reacting with other students' role in the drama are all important during this part of the project.

Stage 5: Performing. This final stage will be a show of students' products. Each group will perform their scenes and will be assessed by two instructors. Students in different groups will also participate in evaluating other groups' performance.

To evaluate students' efforts and achievements, there are different assessment rubrics for the stages of this drama project (see Appendix A). Each of the assessment rubrics provides numerous criteria to appraise students' work.

From the information in the implementation of this project and the assessment rubrics, it can be understood that in order to have a drama product, the issue of culture needs to be considered for two main reasons. First, students have to choose a literary work from an English speaking country, this means that there will be cultural values reflected in the document. Students will need to examine any cultural aspects in the content of their choice, which will assist them in developing scripts and scenes for their drama. Second, designing costumes and props earns extra points in this project since these things will be representative examples of distinctive cultures.

In brief, after considering the above-mentioned highlights in the drama project,

PBL approach could be an effective tool for incorporating culture issues into EFL contexts. Students will be motivated in exploring underlying cultural values in each product presented.

Cultural Project

This project aims to provide students a chance to explore their motherland’s culture, and approach some basic features and cultural perspectives of English-American countries. In this course, students will nourish their love for their motherland, and they will be encouraged to discover beautiful cultures from English speaking countries.

Students will work in groups of 4-5 to choose a cultural region to produce a brochure and organize an activity to introduce the culture in realistic context. The project is divided into two stages in accordance with two semesters.

Stage 1: My homeland - a study of cultural perspectives of a typical cultural region in Vietnam. The final products will be shown in a practical event called “A real museum visit” in the last weeks of the course. Students work as guides in the Museum of Ethnics in Vietnam to introduce their region. Some faculty members, staffs, foreign teachers, and students may be invited to join this visit. The information gathered will be presented in a brochure. The assessment rubric for the brochure is shown in Appendix B.

Stage 2: The city I love - a study of a famous city in an English speaking country. For the final product, there will be an in-class presentation event, “Travel Exhibition.” Students work as guides to the cities; each group member is in charge of one perspective. The exhibition will be

advertised to staff and students in the college for the public attendance. The assessment rubric for the presentation is displayed in Appendix B.

The timeline for this project is displayed in the following table:

Table 1: Culture Project Timeline

WEEK	THEMES	OBJECTIVES
	introducing the project introducing <i>My Homeland</i>	introduction to the project grouping decision of groups' cultural regions
	field work	visit to the <i>Museum of Ethnics</i> in Vietnam
	cultural regions: a snap-shot introduction of the cultural region	writing; description presentation by two group members
	clothes	writing; description
	food and drink	writing; process/recipe
	cooking class	instruction to make a typical dish with real objects: the whole-group work
	arts and architecture	writing; description
	place to visit	presentation by two members
	traditions and customs	writing; narrative
	folk game festival	each group introduces and holds a typical folk game of their region
	brochure production	the whole group gather the writings and edit a brochure on <i>My Homeland</i>
	field work	another visit to the museum to prepare for the guide
	field work	preparing for the museum guide
	museum visit	working as guides in the museum, each group introduce their region, each group member is in charge of one perspective
	reviewing <i>My Homeland</i> introducing <i>The City I Love</i>	reviewing the achievement of stage 1, drawing lessons introducing stage 2
	introduction of the city	writing; description
	introduction of the city	presentation by two group members
	people/clothes	writing; description
	people/clothes	presentation by two members
	food and drink	writing; process/recipe
	cooking class	instruction to make a typical dish with real objects: the whole-group work
	arts and architecture	writing; description
	place to visit	presentation by two members
	traditions and customs	writing; narrative
	folk game festival	each group introduces and holds a typical folk game of their region
	spiritual life	writing; description
	brochure production	presentation by two members
	preparation for the exhibition	preparing for the exhibition
	exhibition	working as guides to the cities, each group member is in charge of one perspective

For each stage, each group chooses a cultural region (stage 1) or a city (a typical one in an English speaking country) to produce their final products. A number of topics were recommended in this project:

- introduction of the cultural region (geographical feature, transportation)
- people (life, life style, work)
- clothes

- typical food and drink
- arts, architecture (attractive destinations)
- customs, traditions, festivals, folk games
- spiritual life (music, literature, folk songs)

To sum up, on the basis of the culture project's syllabus, students will experience culture in diverse contexts. This project will benefit students in acquiring cultural knowledge from their homeland to the outside world.

Conclusion

From the outcome of analyzing the syllabi, it is possible to conclude that PBL is a method that helps ensure the integration of culture in EFL classrooms. The paper demonstrates that students will become involved in the process of real experience and good knowledge of culture, just as the spirit of the Chinese proverb: "Tell me and I will forget, show me and I will remember, let me do it, I'll understand." PBL changes the traditional methods of teaching culture and language with book and chalk. Hence, students can express their creativity and eagerness in examining different cultural values in EFL classrooms. Once again, cultural aspects included in EFL contexts through PBL help students learn the language effectively and develop communicative competence.

References

Alan, B., & Stoller, F. L. (2005). Maximizing the benefits of project work in foreign language classrooms. *English Teaching Forum*, 43(4), 10-21.

Beckett, G. H., & Miller, P. C. (Eds.). (2006). *Project-based second and foreign*

language education: Past, present, and future. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Dema, O., & Moeller, A. J. (2012). Teaching culture in the 21st century language classroom. In T. Sildus (Ed.), *Touch the World: Selected Papers from the 2012 Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages* (pp. 75-91). Eau Claire, WI: Crown Prints.

Frank, J. (2013). Raising cultural awareness in the English language classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 51(4), 2-11.

Kean, A. C., & Kwe, N. M. (2014). Meaningful learning in the teaching of culture: The project based learning approach. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 2(2), 189-197.

Liton, H. A., & Al Madanat, T. A. (2013). Integration of culture into ESL/EFL classroom: A pedagogical perspective. *English for Specific Purposes World*, 14(39), 1-13.

Moss, D., & Van Duzer, C. (1997). *Project-based learning and assessment: A resource manual for teachers*. Arlington, VA: The Arlington Education and Employment Program.

Nguyen, T. L. (2013). *Integrating culture into Vietnamese university EFL teaching: A critical ethnographic study* (Doctoral dissertation). Auckland University of Technology.

Poonpon, K. (2011). Enhancing English skills through project based learning. *The English Teacher*, XL, 1-10.

Sam, Y. W. (1990). Drama in teaching English as a second Language - A communicative approach. *The English Teacher*, XIX.

Simpson, J. (2011). *Integrating project-based learning in an English language tourism classroom in a Thai university* (Doctoral dissertation). Australian Catholic University.

Turkan, S., & Celik, S. (2007). Integrating culture into EFL texts and classrooms: Suggested lesson plans. *Novitas-ROYAL: Research on Youth and Language*, 1(1), 18-33.

Tran, T. H. (2010). *Teaching Culture in the EFL/ESL Classroom*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Los Angeles Regional California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Fullerton, CA.

Tran, N., & Do, T. (2014). Learning foreign language through drama: Implementation at School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University (in Vietnamese). *Journal*

of Science and Technology (Thai Nguyen University), 118(04), 109-112.

Authors’ bios

Elvira Sanatullova-Allison is an Associate Professor and Program Director in Foreign Language/ESOL Education in the College of Education at Oklahoma State University-Stillwater, U.S.A. She holds a Master of Arts in Modern Languages and Literatures and a Ph.D. in Administration, Curriculum, and Instruction from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, U.S.A.

Thanh Do is a Ph.D. student in Curriculum Studies at the College of Education at Oklahoma State University-Stillwater, U.S.A. She holds a Master in English from Vietnam National University in Hanoi.

Appendices

Appendix A

Scenarios Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Quality			
	Excellent (9-10)	good (7-8)	Fair (5-6)	Unsatisfactory (below 5)
Preparation	The scenario is well-written which shows that the students have read about the story very carefully and have some creativity	The scenario is quite well-written with some adjustment to meet the students’ level of proficiency	The scenario is suitable for the students’ level with few adjustments and creativity	The scenario is just the copy of the original one without any changes or creativity and is too simple
Language requirements	The scenario contains a good number of words just beyond the students’ word stock and is challenging enough to develop students’ competencies	The scenario contains some words just beyond the students’ word stock and is quite suitable to develop students’ competencies	The scenario has no new words but can help to improve some language skills	The scenario is too simple and easy or so complicated that it is of no help to improve any language skills

Other comments:.....

Rehearsing Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Quality			
	Excellent (9-10)	Good (7-8)	Fair(5-6)	Unsatisfactory (below 5)
Attitude	Prepare for the play carefully and thus fulfill the role satisfactorily; be self-confident	Prepare for the play carefully; be quite self-confident but unsmooth in some utterances	Do not prepare for the play carefully so forget some words; be quite timid and embarrassed	Do not prepare for the play so forget a lot of words; cannot fulfill the role
Acting skills	Play the role naturally; have good communication skill with suitable body language	Fulfill the role quite naturally; communication skill is quite good but still unsmooth in some details	The role is fulfilled but body language is not used sufficiently, which does not make the scene interesting enough	The whole role is boring because of no gestures, insufficient body language
Pronunciation	All the words are pronounced clearly and correctly	The pronunciation is good with few errors	Have a number of errors in pronunciation	Have lots of errors in pronunciation
Intonation	All the utterances are said in correct intonation, which can convey the speaker's feeling and attitude and which can make the conversation interesting	Most of the conversation is completed naturally but few utterances are produced with irrelevant intonation	A number of sentences are uttered with incorrect intonation, which cannot express some states of emotion	The whole scene is boring because of incorrect intonation

Other comments:.....

Performance Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Quality			
	Excellent (9-10)	Good (7-8)	Fair(5-6)	Unsatisfactory (below 5)
Acting skills	Play the role naturally; have good acting and communication skill with suitable body language	Fulfill the role quite naturally; communication skill is quite good but still unsmooth in some utterances	The role is fulfilled but body language is not used sufficiently, which does not make the scene interesting enough	The whole role is boring because of no gestures, insufficient body language
Pronunciation	All the words are pronounced clearly with correct stress position and final consonant clusters	The pronunciation is good with few errors of stress position and consonant clusters	Have a number of errors in pronunciation	Have lots of errors in pronunciation
Intonation	All the utterances are said in correct intonation, which can convey the speaker's feeling and attitude which can make the conversation interesting	Most of the conversation is completed naturally but few utterances are produced with irrelevant intonation	A number of sentences are uttered with incorrect intonation, which cannot express some states of emotion	The whole scene is boring because of incorrect intonation
Fluency	All the utterances are said smoothly and naturally with normal speed and without any hesitation or being stuck	All the utterances are said smoothly without hesitation or stuck but more slowly or faster than usual	Some utterances are said with much hesitation or being stuck	Much hesitation and being stuck make the role difficult to understand and cannot convey the ideas clearly enough

Appendix B

Brochure Assessment Rubric

Criteria	1 – 4	5 – 7	8 - 9	10
Information	The writing contains some information; but most of it is redundant or unnecessary; information has low accuracy and is not updated	The writing contains a lot of information; but a lot of it is redundant or unnecessary; information has adequate accuracy and is quite updated but there is a lot of wrong information	The writing is rich of information; some redundant or unnecessary information; information has high accuracy and is updated but there is some wrong information	The writing is rich of information; none or little redundant or unnecessary information; information has high accuracy and is updated
Content	Most of the articles focus on the main topic of the brochure; content is too long or too short	Most of the articles focus on the main topic of the brochure; content is longer or shorter than expected	All the articles focus on the main topic of the brochure; content length matches the description of the project	All the articles focus on the main topic; content length matches the description of the project; new and interesting real life information added
Language use	Inappropriate writing style in most articles; repetitive and limited vocabulary with a lot of mistakes; a lot of grammatical mistakes	Inappropriate writing style in some articles; varied and accurate vocabulary, a lot of mistakes when it comes to difficult terms; correct grammar with some mistakes	Appropriate writing style in most articles; various and accurate vocabulary, some mistake when it comes to difficult terms; correct grammar with a few mistakes	Appropriate writing style in all articles; various and accurate vocabulary; correct grammar
Design	Clear and suitable design; most of pictures are incorrect and/or of low quality	Clear and suitable design; a lot of pictures but some are incorrect and/or of low quality	Clear and suitable design; a lot of demonstrative pictures	Clear, creative, and suitable design; a lot of clear and highly demonstrative pictures
Improvement	No improvement at all during the semester, repetitive mistakes	Some improvement during the semester; make a lot of mistakes but improve some of them	A lot of improvement in writing during the semester; make some mistakes but improve most of them	A lot of improvement in writing during the semester; make no mistake or some mistake but improve all of them

Presentation Assessment Rubric

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Organization	The presentation is logical and well designed; it is easy to follow from the beginning to the end	The ideas are logically arranged but it is not very attractive	The ideas are quite logically arranged but the speakers should have been able to make it better	The presentation is difficult to follow and understand
Non-linguistic techniques	The presentation shows mastery of non-linguistic techniques, such as gestures, eye-contact, etc.	The presentation shows a good command of non-linguistic techniques but it is still not professional	It is acceptable but lacks the use non-linguistic techniques	Lacks the use of non-linguistic features
Visual aids	They know how to use visual aids and examples and the presentation shows careful preparation	Visual aids or facts support their ideas but they still do not know how to use it sometimes	It is acceptable but they do not use many visual aids or examples	There is no visual aids used
Vocabulary	They show a wide range of vocabulary	They show a wide range of vocabulary but there are still few minor mistakes	They seem to have made an effort to prepare proper vocabulary but they mostly use routine words	They have a poor vocabulary and make numerous mistakes
Grammar	Speakers make no grammatical mistake and they use varied structures	Their grammar is correct and structures are varied	It is acceptable but there are still some grammatical mistakes made; they could have done better	There are too many mistakes and the structures are too simple
Pronunciation	Really excellent at pronunciation, nearly like native speakers; no mistakes are found	Pronunciation is good; only a few mistakes are found	Pronunciation needs to be improved as mistakes are found	It is difficult to understand what they say as their pronunciation is unintelligible
Fluency	They speak in a natural, vivid and striking way; the level of fluency they show is higher than expected	They speak fluently most of the time	It is acceptable but they need to improve their speaking skills more	They speak like a-b-c learners; it is not acceptable for a tertiary level

Appendix C

Culture Project Photos



Surviving in Difficult EFL Classroom: Teachers' Perspectives and Coping Strategies

Shankar Dhakal

Abstract

English language teachers often encounter with the situations in which they are faced with defiance, aggression and multiple verbal and physical abuses in their classroom. Moreover, they have pressures of unrealistic expectations and blamed for complex failures of students and the whole system, which makes their survival in difficult classroom even more difficult. So, this is a small-scale research study that investigates EFL teachers' experiences and the perspectives on the difficult classroom situations. The study reveals that teachers are not the only responsible persons for students' unexpected behaviours; but there are several other reasons to contribute to it.

Keywords: Difficult classroom, survive, disruption, reward

Surviving in Difficult EFL Classroom: Teachers' Perspectives and Coping Strategies Scene Setting

To retrospect my teaching career as an EFL teacher for about a decade, I did not always have crystal stairs to walk through. I had so many pleasant and unpleasant times during those days. It was in 2008, when I shifted to a new private school, one of the higher secondary schools in Lalitpur, as a secondary level English teacher. In my first class, I had a difficulty even to spend forty-five minutes in the classroom, when I went to grade X to teach English. I had a problem even to survive in the classroom, although I was not teaching them the subject matter but simply trying to warm them up with activities and language games. Students often shouted at friends and ignored the

activities that I conducted in the class, which abominated me a lot. I repeatedly asked them to follow my instructions; however, they deafened towards it. Many students were shouting in their mother tongue i.e. Nepali. At the same time, I asked them, "Could you please be quiet and respond me in English when you are asked to do so?" "*We have always been using Nepali language to communicate in our classroom since grade one, then, why start in English now?*" one of the students said. I was much frustrated. Nevertheless, I tried my best to control the class but all my attempts went in vein in the initial days.

Next day, I decided not to take the job, but the school director requested me not to give up. Then, I went to the class the next day, yet, the same situation repeated. Unexpectedly, the situation changed after

long and tiresome efforts that I made to improve the classroom environment. The students who disappointed and kept me boiling all the time became very co-operative and supportive with great enthusiasm for classroom participation. After all, I succeeded to survive well and worked about five years in the same institution with high dignity. The miraculous change in students' behaviour and the classroom environment made the life of all other teachers and the school administration comfortable. Finally, I was in the vital position in the same school when I resigned.

Many teachers might often encounter similar problems to properly survive in their classrooms, as they find their students not ready for learning or they try to disturb the class intentionally. Such disruptive students do not let the teachers survive easily and efficiently fulfilling their targeted objectives, which is a big problem. These circumstances keep the position of the teachers in jeopardy. So, it is good to develop skills enough to tackle with the problems without any sense of loss and bring our classroom into a right track.

In this exploratory small-scale research study, I mainly focus on the situations of the classroom disruptions and the strategies that the teachers adopt to make their learners ready for learning and also contribute and participate in the learning process, so that it helps for better survival and eases the life of teachers to promote learning. When we are supposed to teach the students of different levels, then, at first, we are expected to have a proper planning of the lesson. Not only that, we need to act as we plan. For this reason, this study tries to investigate how EFL teachers perceive the phenomenon of difficult classroom and what strategies they adopt to make their classroom conducive to learning.

Difficult Classroom: An Introduction

Teachers' job is not always easy. Sometimes, we might be able to drive the cart easily, whereas the other times we may have bumpy roads, which might even jeopardize our whole career. Teachers are often demotivated with the classroom situations when they find their position vulnerable as it is difficult for them to survive easily because of the problems like misbehaviours of the students, poor attention towards study, poor motivation and so on. Highlighting the multiple cases of difficult situations inside the classroom, Rachel and Daniel (2012) state that student misbehaviours such as disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to teacher, defiance and hostility, ranging from infrequent to frequent, mild to severe, is a thorny issue in everyday classroom and they are intolerable.

Every teacher knows that it only takes one bad egg to ruin the dozen. The reality is that most teachers have dozens of students to contend with and more than one misbehaved student per dozen. For novice teachers, an early experience with disruptive students can get them out of the profession. So, the strategies to tackle with such problems will assist them to build up confidence and continue their passion in teaching. Hence, in the situations mentioned above, "the priority here is to act quickly in order to get the class to revert to smooth routine as fast as possible. Often it is preferable to take a decision, even if not a very good one, fast, than to hesitate or do nothing" (Ur, 2008, p. 266). So, there are several ways to handle those problems.

Strategies to Cope with Difficult Situations

When we have students with behavioural problems, at first, it is advisable to determine the actual cause of their behaviour. It is said that no student acts up just to act up. There are always some factors behind it. There may be some problems at home; the student may also have poor self-concept, a different learning style, or the student may be nervous or may be avoiding an intimidating task. In the same way, the student may be seeking attention, the student may simply be fighting to control the class, or the student may be bored. So, diagnosing the problem can be the very first step. It is better to think 'cause' rather than 'symptom'. Then, after we diagnose the real causes of students' behaviour, then it is advisable to start treating the problem. The steps we take to address vary from student to student and from situation to situation. In those situations, a more humanistic approach can be adopted, by understanding and appreciating their feelings and emotions. As Head and Taylor (1997) say, "Humanistic education is fun" (p. 45).

However, there are habitually disruptive students who disrupt the class constantly, repeatedly and intentionally. Generally, these students disturb the class and the teacher, regardless of the measures that teachers implement. Many of these students create problems in the classroom several times during the class period and tend to have problematic lives outside the school too. In most cases, parents and the school administration may also be unable to discipline these students, as they do not respect the limitations or restrictions that they have to set. So, in such circumstances, it is difficult for teachers to handle the situation properly and survive himself/herself in happy and prosperous manner.

According to Blum (1998), "To create an effective learning experience in any classroom (whatever the school) the teacher has to be able to create a purposeful and calm atmosphere in which the 'momentum' for learning can be built" (p. 11). So, the teacher, whatever the behaviour of the students and the classroom situation is, might always develop strong degree of internal self-motivation to make the classroom teaching purposeful with the ingredients needed. If they encounter with the problems with students' behaviour, then first, it is better to determine the actual cause of it. Moreover, "you will survive and succeed in difficult school if you are steadfastly enthusiastic, plan carefully and communicate colourfully when you get the chance. You must try to stay calm in the face of constant provocation and confrontation." (Blum, 1998, p. 16) So, in every lesson, teachers can pursue positive behaviour management strategies energetically to create an environment for student motivation. It helps a lot when the teachers make their classroom teaching effective through practice. In this regard, Ur (2008) says, "...most of our effort should be invested in practice; in making the task in hand as attractive as possible, and encouraging our students to engage in it, invest effort and succeed" (p. 276).

When the teacher finds his/her students having no profound interest in learning and this kind of behaviour often leads to classroom distraction, then the teacher has to adopt certain measures. First, it is helpful if the teacher fights for control in the classroom using his/her own style and positive behavioural systems, which will dramatically impact on the behaviour and motivation of students that ultimately will form the teachers' own personal crusade to survive. When we are struggling with a difficult class, we can make liberal use of the smiley face, as it is most important to galvanize the attention of the students in

that critical time when the students are ignoring the teacher and talking among themselves. We do not need to harsh ourselves because of the problems we face. "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. Courage faces fear and thereby masters it; cowardice represses fear and is thereby mastered by it. We must constantly build dikes of courage to hold back the floor of fear". (Martin Luther King, as cited from Blankstein, 2010, p. 29)

Motivation Strategies

The letter of praise and positive reward either to a particular student or the whole class may be useful to the teacher in difficult situations. In the word of Blum (1998), "... reward will often stop the most malignant individuals from spoiling the atmosphere by talking or mucking around" (p. 21). But some teachers have the habit of punishing the students for the terrible acts of verbal abuse, bullying, fighting and lesson interruptions that occur every day. Punishment does not work and is not the solution to improve those students. Instead, "to survive and to succeed in difficult school you must change the way you think. Reward, reward and reward. The most difficult class, the more rewards" (Blum, 1998, p. 32), We should always remember that prevention is more effective than cure in tough situations. So, reward is an effective prevention but punishment is not an effective cure.

Emphasizing the importance of positive remarks to the students, Baker and Westrup (2000) state, "A comment is more helpful than just a grade. Be positive, but truthful and encouraging- Good, but.....better than last week" (p. 130). Hence, being positive even in difficult circumstances and providing encouragement and reward to

the students might be helpful for the teachers to overcome the possible disruptions in the classroom.

Teaching Strategies and Professional Growth

In a very difficult class, there are some other strategies to best help the teachers for their survival. Sometimes, teaching strategies might help the teachers to survive easily. So, we need to change the strategy so as to get the learners' attention and as per need, being up-to-date with the recent teaching techniques and also continuously developing ourselves professionally. Moreover, teachers can learn themselves from their own practices year after year. In the same line, Geert (2004) states that teachers continue to develop in their job. They keep on 'learning from practice' and become 'more experienced' with every passing year in the career. Similarly, we can also entertain the learners relating their learning to their experiences or life stories. At the same time, teachers may try to encourage good practice by rewarding them rather than by constantly punishing bad or incompetent practice, which will ultimately de-motivate the learners.

Additionally, teachers are benefitted a lot if they keep themselves up-to-date with the recent trends of language teaching and enhance their professional skills and practice in the same in the classroom situations, which will sometimes help to confront the situation well. Similarly, teacher training and teacher development also contribute to a teachers' improved performance. At the same time, we might transform ourselves changing our classroom roles as well. As Karn (2007) says, "Language teachers have to play the role of facilitators in the classroom, not the authorities." (p. 63) Sometimes classroom

activities and interaction might help the teachers to get success in classroom teaching by getting the students' attention and their active involvement. When teachers make their classroom more participatory by involving students in the learning process, it helps to distract them from being disruptive. To make the class livelier, student-centred and more of participatory, "there should be lots of activities, where students get chance to involve themselves." (Dhakal, 2012, p. 11)

Creating Awareness in Stakeholders

In difficult moments, school management may also help the teachers to survive. They can help teachers treating troublemakers and support as the teachers try to settle a class. Sometimes, parents of those students might help them to avoid the problems. In this context, Blankstein (2010) says, "It is clear that the proper support and the involvement of students' families and community at large is fundamental to students' achievement in schools" (p. 192). So, progress up the ladder is possible if the teachers not only try to avoid the situations on their own but also get enormous assistance from all the stakeholders like other teachers, school management, parents, community and so on, as Knezevic and Scholl (2002) say, "Collaboration is a powerful vehicle for exposing and developing knowledge of teaching" (p. 79). In this way, in most difficult situations, teachers can collaboratively work with other stakeholders to resolve the problems.

Additionally, when there is a problem, it is required to develop our zeal, dedication and commitment towards avoiding the problem rather than being an incompetent, lazy and malicious teacher. It is better to be consistent on our effort and keep working hard until we get success, disregarding the fact that we may have to spend a long time.

Objectives of the Study

The principal aim of this study was to examine the situations of classroom disruptions to identify whether the EFL teachers face any behavioural problems inside the classroom. In addition to this, this study also aimed at investigating EFL teachers' strategies for maintaining good classroom atmosphere. It also examined the role of stakeholders to improve the classroom environment.

Research Methodology

This investigation adopts an interview-based descriptive and exploratory qualitative research. I used informal conversational interview, as Rossman and Rall (1998, as cited in Richards, 2003) state: "Interviewing is the hallmark of qualitative research" (p. 47). "A popular approach in educational research, the one-to-one interview, is a data collection process in which the researcher asks the questions to the participants and records answers from only one in the study at a time" (Creswell, 2011, p. 218). In this regard, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) opine that interview is a powerful instrument for qualitative researchers. So, for the authenticity and confidentiality of the study, I have collected data through interviews, by interviewing three in-service teachers about the difficult moments they faced in their classroom during their teaching career. I also asked them about the measures they adopted when they had hard times to survive in their classroom. Moreover, they were asked who they think are responsible for such issues and would help the teachers for better survival. In this study, the interview was semi-structured, where "the interviewer is free to follow up a question with additional questions that probe further" (Perry, 2005, p. 119). There was no predetermination of questions, rather the researcher prepared some guidelines or interview themes before interview.

Data Analysis Procedure

For this small scale investigation, I interviewed three in-service EFL teachers from Kathmandu valley teaching at secondary and higher secondary level and analyzed the information subjectively. To mask their real identity, I have identified to the teachers as T1, T2 and T3. The data gathered from the interviews were coded and categorized under different themes. These codes were organized around research objectives, and there appeared three main themes: (1) Students' behavioural problems that teachers encounter inside the classroom; (2) Teacher strategies for maintaining good classroom atmosphere; and (3) Role of stakeholders to improve the classroom environment.

Finding and Discussion

After interview, a clear image evolved with regard to their experience on the topic. So, for discussion and interpretation, I schematized the information related to the objectives of my topic, and presented the findings under the themes as given below.

Students' behavioural problems inside the classroom

I interviewed the teachers teaching English from school level to college level, and having experience of more than a decade. When I asked them about the problems regarding students' behaviour they encountered inside the classroom, I found the responses of all the participants almost similar, even though they, at first, hesitated to share their personal experiences or the happenings. When I asked them to recall the day when they were misbehaved by the students in the class (if any), they said that the most unexpected behaviour was disrespecting teachers in terms of disobedience and rudeness and verbal

aggression. In the same vein, T2 shared an interesting story. He said,

"I don't easily get angry. Considering my profession, I think I am pretty patient compared to my friends. I don't scream or yell in my classroom although I frequently hear it in other classrooms. As a matter of fact, I rarely have to raise my voice. But, there is one thing that boils my blood, it is disrespect by students. One day, while I was correcting the papers of the students, one boy sprinkled ink in my jacket. I was infuriated in such a way that I slapped him several times....."

In addition, teachers reported that most common and disruptive problem behaviour was talking out of turn followed by non-attentiveness. So, from the discussion, it was revealed that students create problems when they talk out of their turn. According to them, 'talking out of turn' mainly refers to students chatting among themselves on irrelevant topics that disrupts the lesson, calling out and making remarks on somebody or something without teachers' permission. Apart from them, some students even ridicule teachers showing disrespectful behaviour, rudeness, talking back and also confronting with teachers. Recalling similar experience, T1 said,

"Students sometimes dispute against the teacher. Once, a student gave an irrelevant answer to my serious question and gave a casual answer. When I commented, the student became enraged and hostile, and then disputed against me."

After the discussion with the participants, I came to know that they faced several behavioural problems from their students, mainly in the beginning of their teaching career and in the institutions where they were new to the students. The problems they faced are like classroom bullying, making

unnecessary noises as the size of the classroom was big, reluctance to participate in the classroom activities and various behavioural problems like creating disturbances, ignorance to the teachers, not being attentive in the class, being negligent towards the activities that teachers conduct, and so on. They said that sometimes they found no eagerness and enthusiasm in students for classroom participation. Interestingly, T3 said, "Especially in class 11 and 12 it takes about 15 minutes to manage classroom environment before teaching".

Strangely enough, another participant said that when his students created the problems in the classroom, he felt like changing his job to something else, other than teaching. Additionally, the teachers revealed that students' disruptive behaviours retard the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching and also impede the learning of the students. As they reported, students' misbehaviour not only escalated with time, but also lowered academic achievement and increased delinquent behaviour. So, from the experiences of the participants, I came to realize that many teachers confront with the situations when they have difficult time even to survive in their classroom teaching. They face various problems created by the students in the classroom, which really make their journey of teaching troublesome.

Teacher strategies for maintaining good classroom atmosphere

While interviewing the participants, I asked them about the strategies they adopted when they found the students disturbing the class and not being ready to learn. They responded that, whatever their effort, all

went in vein in the beginning. But, gradually they started succeeding in the classroom getting the attention of the students by asking them what the problem was and trying to solve them, if possible. They responded that there might be some reasons behind the disruptive nature of the students. T2 said,

"There may be several causes of misbehaviour. Consider that we might have done something to incite a student to act inappropriately. Perhaps a student is bored and is causing a disruption because of our poor lesson planning, or maybe the student is angry and causing a disturbance because of a sarcastic remark we made".

Similarly, answering my question about the strategies they adopt, T1 and T3 responded that they plan more than usual, when they have a problem in a particular class. T1 said,

"My number one classroom management strategy is solid and tight lesson planning. I found that the students who are engaged in a lesson and have specific goals are working towards having a lot less time to be distracted and get-off task".

In the same way, they said that they made the students play games and do the activities of their interest under their control for several days to divert the attention of the students towards learning. They tried a lot to convince and motivate them and to involve them in the learning process with recreational activities, language games and even punished them giving additional assignments and asking questions to especially the troublemakers frequently. Regarding the strategy to control disruptive students in his class, T3 said,

"We should make our students positive towards school environment, teachers and their friends. What I experienced is that when they are bored and are negative towards their teachers and school, then they often disturb the class in different ways. Once, when I asked the students to prepare the examples after I taught them simile and metaphor, one student shared an unexpected example to the class- 'School is a jail, classes are the cells, teachers are the security guards and we are the prisoners.'"

In this way, making students positive plays a crucial role to avoid their disruptive nature. They further added that they told stories and shared their real life experiences to the students for controlling their misbehaviours. They focused on activities involving the learners in the learning process directly rather than only focusing on lectures.

In addition, the participants reported that sometimes a student misbehaves simply because he/she may need special support in learning or express feelings or may be trying to fulfil the needs that he/she does not know how to handle otherwise: The need for attention, power, revenge or an avoidance of failure. Inevitably, teachers need to respond to minor disruptions that prevent the misbehaving student, and perhaps his/her classmates from learning. We might respond to these often unintentional interruptions by using one or more of the following techniques: proximity, individual signals, physical cues, touch, ignoring and silence. T2 said that when we have a problem, we must do something consistently and respectfully, providing the student with some control over the outcome and an opportunity to achieve a fresh start. He further added that we should also communicate to the student that his/her choice to violate the rules represents, perhaps, an unwitting choice to

accept the consequences for breaking those rules, and that the ultimate consequence of misbehaviour is interrupted learning. So, we should also consider our own plans for any major incidents that might arise in our classroom, whether due to student behaviour or other outside factors.

From the entire discussion with the participants, it can be concluded that motivation, various classroom activities, language games, stories and anecdotes, sharing real experiences and knowing the students well, understanding their feeling, interest and emotions best help the teachers to manage the classroom environment and make their survival comfortable rather than punishing them physically.

Role of stakeholders to improve the classroom environment

When I asked my participants who they think was responsible for the classroom problems created by students and who they think would help the teachers to better survive in the problems, then the responses were very close to each other. They responded that, not only the teachers, but also the society, parents, school administration, friends and students themselves are responsible for the problems. In this regard, T2 said that, they all play the pivotal role in improving the situation. Accentuating this, he added,

"When problems become severe, then the teachers cannot solve them alone. In such situations, we have to work in partnership with the school administration, family and the community to form the school rules and counsel the students because, in most of the cases, students' behaviours are highly influenced by their parent's role at home or their home conditions and the community, as they learn their behaviours from them".

Similarly, a study conducted by Domina (2005) also showed that when parents volunteered at school and supervised students' homework, students' behaviours improved. Correspondingly, T3 reported,

"In our context, the role of parents and the community is basically ignored; but, I think, when we engage families and the community partners, this helps to make a difference in helping students develop good behaviour and make them well cultured".

Moreover, they said that teachers themselves are also responsible as they sometimes fail to understand the feelings and emotions of the students. "Teachers have to act as per the wish and desire of the students", T1 said. In the same way, bad behaviours of the students are associated with their family environment and the influence of television, movies and the other cultures they adopt. At the same time, students act in an undisciplined manner simply to show themselves different from others, according to them.

In this way, based on the perspectives of the teachers I interviewed, it can be concluded that there is not a single factor to the disruptive behaviour of the students in the classroom. There are many factors contributing to make the life of teachers difficult in classroom teaching. More importantly, the students' behaviour in school also affects other students' attitudes about school and overall learning. A well-behaved and well-managed classroom is a productive place for learning. So, if students' behavioural problems are solved in time, it helps to create conducive environment for learning; and for this, the students, teachers, parents, school administration and the community should work together to improve the situation; as Sheldon (2009) states that family and the community are to be seen as the partners

of the school in children's education and development.

Conclusion and Implications

There are many EFL teachers who face multiple behavioural problems in the classroom. Difficult classroom situations mainly refer to the problems like disruptive students, poor motivation, lack of enthusiasm, readiness of the learners in the learning process, and various disciplinary acts inside the classroom. These problems affect the teachers quite a lot and make their classroom survival difficult, which might create demotivation in the teachers. Of course, these problems may not be created in every teacher's classroom. Nevertheless, when the problems arise, it is better to be ready to tackle and overcome the problems rather than running away from them.

The findings of this study suggested that in the situations when teachers find their classroom survival diabolical, they need to widen their role by not only being a classroom teacher, but also being a changing agent by motivating the students, change the pattern of classroom instruction, making an effective plan and classroom strategies and creating awareness in the stakeholders as teachers themselves are not only responsible for the problematic situations. Apart from them, the study revealed that teachers have to learn to tolerate and have to do their best for their pupils by being more efficient and effective trying to make 'impossible things possible'. In this context, Blum (1998) says, "surviving in difficult school is similar to surviving life as a foot-soldier in the first

world war trenches, where the strategists, ten miles far from the front, have an unrealistic grand plan for winning the war" (p. 140). So, in order to survive in the classroom instruction effectively, the baseline goal as a teacher is to establish good relationship with all the stakeholders and build constructive relationships with them.

References

- Baker, J. & Westrup, H. (2000). *The English language teachers' handbook*. London: VSO.
- Blum, P. (1998). *Surviving and succeeding in difficult classrooms*. London: Routledge.
- Blankstein, A. M. (2010). *Failure is not an option*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6thed.). London: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. (2011). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4thed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Dhakal, S. (2012). *Teachers' perceptions and practices of participatory teaching in ELT*. An unpublished M.Ed. dissertation, Kathmandu University, Dhulikhel, Nepal.
- Domina (2005). Leveling the home advantage: Assessing the effectiveness of parental involvement in elementary school. *Sociology and education*, 78, 233-239.
- Geert, K. (2004). CPD for professional renewal: Moving beyond knowledge for practice. In C. Day and Sachs, J. (Eds.). *International handbook on the continuing professional development of teachers* (pp. 217-237). England: Open University Press.
- Head, K. and Taylor, P. (1997). *Readings in teacher development*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Karn, S.K. (2007). Current trends in ELT around the globe. *Journal of NELTA*, 12, 60-66.
- Knezevic, A. and Scholl, M. (2002). Learning to teach together: Teaching to learn together. In D. Freeman and J. C. Richards (Eds). *Teacher learning in language teaching* (pp. 79-96). Cambridge: CUP.
- Perry, J.F. (2005). *Research in applied linguistics*. New York: Routledge.
- Rachel, C. F. and Daniel, T. L. (2012). Student classroom misbehaviour: An exploratory study based on teachers' perceptions. *The scientific world Journal*, 1-8. Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong. Available: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1100/2012/208907>.
- Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative Inquiry in TESOL*. New York: Palgrave, Macmillan.

Sheldon, S.B. (2009). Improving student outcomes with school, family and community partnerships: A research review. In J.L. Epstein et. al. *School, family and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (pp. 40-56) (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Ur, P. (2008). *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Author's bio

Shankar Dhakal is an MPhil (ELE) scholar in Kathmandu University. He has worked as an EFL teacher for more than a decade and a teacher trainer for about five years. He has conducted mini-researche studies on various EFL issues in Nepal. He is a life member of NELTA. His research interests include critical pedagogy and issues related to large EFL classes.

Information and Communication Technologies and Teacher Educators of English in Nepal

Prem Prasad Poudel

Abstract

Nepal's teacher education is witnessing a number of hurdles and the case has been deteriorating further. It is imperative to improve the existing situation with no delay. Regarding Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), I have tried to figure out the present situation of knowledge, practice and expectations of the teacher educators of English working in both public/community and private teacher education institutions of Nepal. A survey was conducted using a questionnaire. A total of twenty-five informants fully responded to the questionnaire. It was found that they were aware of the need for including ICTs in classroom instruction but due to the resource constraints, lack of trainings and lack of readiness in the administrative systems, they have not been able to make use of ICTs in classroom instruction.

Keywords: teacher education, information and communication technology, ICTs policies

Introduction

Nepal's teacher education programme has a history of almost seven decades. Within this period, teacher education in Nepal seems as if it is continuing in the same or similar pattern. There were and are a number of challenges piled up in front of it. One of them is the case of utilization of ICTs. Since the turn of new millennium, there have been visible impacts of global expansion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) almost in all parts of the countries in the world. There have been rapid transformations. Due to such inevitable happenings, the teachers, students, and teacher education institutions have faced numerous new problems, challenges and uncertainties. In the context of developing countries, ICTs

are often seen as empowering tools which provide people with access to opportunities and choices that were hitherto not available (Shrestha, 2011). In the present context, there is a huge demand from the general public that there should be integration of ICTs in classroom instruction and the service providing institutions should create an ICTs friendly teaching and learning. It is an additional quality demand on teachers; and cultivating such knowledge and skills is the responsibility of teacher educators and the institutions they work in. In such changed contexts, teacher roles and responsibilities have to be redefined and accordingly the curricular changes have to be made. One of the crucial challenges for English language teachers and teacher educators (similar is the case with all other subject teacher educators) at present is the

use of ICT in teaching learning process. Cheng (2005) writes,

In such a rapidly changing context, how teachers can be empowered and prepared to take up new roles and perform teaching effectively to meet the challenges and new expectations from education reforms is a crucial concern in policy making, reform and practice of teacher education. (p.39)

It is true that well-prepared and well-equipped teachers can help learners adjust to rapidly changing socio-economic conditions and digital technologies. We know that our societies expect our education systems to go beyond simple transmission of subject knowledge. To enable our learners to adjust to the changing needs of the labour market and everyday life, we need to facilitate them obtain new competencies, viz. digital technologies. It is mandatory now that the teacher education programmes must be prepared to cope with ICTs challenges. We have seen that throughout the world, schools expect to recruit new teachers having the ability to adopt ICTs in their teaching and learning situations. There are opportunities and challenges posed by digital technologies in delivering quality education for all. If the digital technologies can be used properly, there is a chance of profoundly improving the quality and efficiency of our education programme. Due to the paradigm shift from traditional site-bound learning to modern triplized learning (Cheng, 2001b), the quality and role of a teacher in the new century is completely different from the traditional one.

In order to address this challenge, teacher educators themselves should be able to exhibit this competency. Lee and Sparks (2013) found that teachers lack technology integration skills. Nepalese teacher

education programmes also suffer from such a problem. It is high time to make Nepalese teacher education more competitive, comprehensive and as a whole qualitative on a par with the global trend. Quality education can be a reality only when there is sufficient investment in teachers. Preparing quality English teachers comes under the responsibility of teacher educators of English. A report presented by EFA Global Monitoring Report team (2015) in Oslo Summit declared to ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems. So the teacher educators of English should not only think of developing pre-service teachers' knowledge of English and its pedagogy, but also the skills in using ICTs for better classroom delivery as demanded by the 21st century socio-cultural context.

Objectives

The objectives of this survey were two-fold:

- To find out the existing knowledge and skills in ICTs of English language teacher educators in Nepal and
- To find out the needs of those teacher educators regarding the use of ICTs in the classroom

Methodology

In order to get a broader picture of the existing knowledge and skills of English language teacher educators teaching in public/community and private teacher education institutions in Nepal, a questionnaire format was adopted. A total of twenty-five teacher educators of English from ten teacher education institutions

(both public/community and private) located in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Kaski, Surkhet, Dadeldhura, Chitwan, and Butwal were selected purposively as the respondents. The informants whose views were sought were all involved in teaching English at Bachelor and Master levels in the constituent and affiliated campuses of Tribhuvan University. These campuses selected represent the major teacher education institutions in the valley and other regions of the country. It ruled out the possibility of clarifying face-to-face wordings of the questions and precise meaning of the responses, though I could make short interactions informally with the colleagues in my workplaces and also through telephone contacts.

Results and Discussion

There was a time when society believed that teachers were born, not trained. But today, teachers are made by continuous input through training and refresher courses. This is necessary in order to keep pace with the developments in the related areas and to work as the maximum efficiency level.

ICT policies at national and institutional level

Government of Nepal (GoN), Ministry of Education some years ago through its National Curriculum Framework included a provision of ICT as a subject and as a tool for instruction in school education (ICT Master Plan, 2013-17). In line with this, Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Education developed a separate course in ICT education. This reveals the fact that the government as well as the universities have initiated to introduce the courses in ICT; but still there is a huge gap in understanding that instead of encompassing ICT as a subject, it is more imperative to adopt it as a tool for

instruction and learning. For instance, English language teacher educators are to be enabled to use ICT tools and resources in their classrooms so that they can prepare better teachers who in immediate work places can implement national policies of ICT-based teaching and learning. When inquired, a huge majority of Teacher Educators of English (TEEs) were aware of the existence of the national policies for ICT in education, however, a few of them could justify the influence of the policy in their institution and their behaviour in the class as a whole. They claimed that there had been no any professional initiative for empowering them from the institutional level even though it has been years since the ICT policies were developed.

ICT knowledge and practice among TEEs

In order to transform the society to tackle with the 21st century challenges, teachers must be more informed and empowered in the latest developments. In doing so, teacher preparation courses are to be so competitive that there is no stone unturned regarding their knowledge and skills so that they can better provide good input to the future teachers. Competency in ICT is one of the obligatory aspects on the part of their expertise. In the survey of English language teacher educators teaching in the public/community and private teacher education institutions in the country, it was found that more than half of them were unable to handle basic computer programmes necessary for and useful in classroom delivery.

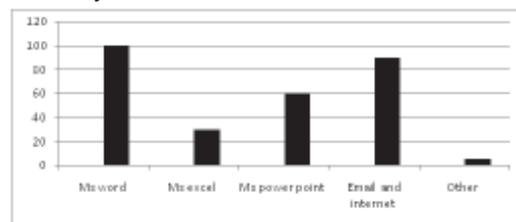


Figure 1: TEE's knowledge of computer programmes

Figure 1 shows that all the teachers consulted for data collection had the knowledge of using Msword. Very few of them could use Ms excel well, i.e. only 30 percent of them. Similarly, 60 percent had the knowledge in power point and 90 percent of them claimed that they know how to use email and Internet. Very few, almost negligible, teachers had knowledge of other programmes such as BB Flash back, PRO 4 recorder, etc. This provides us with a picture that English language teacher educators at present need further input in using ICT comfortably.

Use of computer and the Internet for classroom instruction

Technology in general and information technology in particular is affecting the education system all over the globe in a revolutionary way. Both learners and teachers cannot be untouched by its effects. Srinivas (2004) writes that technology is affecting education in revolutionary ways and the momentum towards these changes is irreversible. TEEs have felt the need for using the Internet as one of their most feasible tools for finding out the most useful resources for necessary content and methodologies. All of them responded that there is high importance and necessity of using ICT tools for classroom instruction. There is a satisfactory situation that the teachers visit websites for the resources. On average, the TEEs surfing and using computer for classroom teaching were found in majority.

They claimed that they would accumulate the content and develop skills for using ICTs.

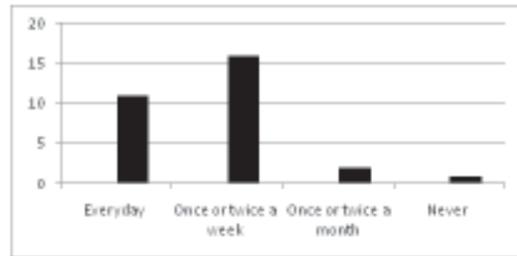


Figure 2. Frequency of internet surfing amongst TEEs

This shows that TEEs use the Internet for downloading or consulting the resources for teaching and learning. This situation is not embarrassing since Nepal’s teaching profession has not been modernized yet as expected. However, it is a good signal that teacher educators have the readiness for adopting the requirement of ICT. Utilizing this existing potential of TEEs, we can make a great shift from traditional forms of teaching to modern methodologies.

Trainings and professional development activities

For the success of any institution, its human resource should be competitive, skilled, proficient, willing, and professional. To be professional, they are to be able to adopt new innovations in the respective fields. In teacher education as well, the Internet, web technologies and digital-based electronic information are exerting pressure on the traditional systems. In this survey, it was attempted to find out how often the teacher educators get opportunities while identifying training needs for using ICTs in their classrooms. It was found that they are rarely involved in the process of need analysis in using ICTs by the governmental organizations, their university and the campuses they work in. The teachers responded that they had never got training opportunities organized or sponsored by the concerned institutional and administrative system. However, it was found that they had obtained trainings (mostly basic

computer course) through their own initiation in out-of-campus situations. On average, they had attended trainings of 5-15 hours. Very interestingly, they are not sure of the effect of such training in their career advancement because the institutions they work do not demand the mandatory and proper use of such knowledge and skills. One of the TEEs responded,

'I am sure that the institution I work doesn't know the level of ICT skill I have and how the students would have been benefitted from my competency in classroom delivery. It is very important in our subject that the pre-service English teachers are to be exhibited or at least familiarized with the procedures of using ICT in teaching English and the activities they can design while doing so with the resources available.'

This is a reflective image of the English language teacher education situation in Nepal. It is common to both public/community and private institutions. Teachers have the similar plights since more than 90 percent of the classroom deliveries are made through the use of the traditional transmission and 'jug-mug' type of teaching methods.

ICT obstacles, needs and expectations

In the teacher preparation courses in Tribhuvan University and Purbanchal University of Nepal, there are a number of courses that deal with English language teaching methods; however, no space has been given to the type of course for the development of the ICT skills on the part of the teachers. There are some chapters that deal with the theoretical topics such as CALL, OHP, multimedia projector, etc. However, learning these concepts develops awareness towards ICTs but not the skills

in using them. Very frequently, teachers are asked to learn new methods of teaching such as communicative language teaching, reflective teaching, TBLT, etc. but there is less discussion and concern made about greater challenges of rapidly increasing technological changes.

In the survey, they were asked about the main barriers or problems and needs for them related to the adoption of ICT-based instruction in English Language Teacher Education (ELTE). The data elicited were coded and grouped into the following major obstacles.

- a. **Resource constraints:** It is true that, considering the situation of resources and technology, both in-service and pre-service teacher education programmes are run in crisis. There seem to be both institutional and individual concerns and problems. Some institutions want to have some or limited resources but they do not push their teaching staff to make maximum and most effective use of the available resources. On the other hand, some institutions do not have such resources at all. The majority of the institutions under the university system are under-resourced. Some of them have internet WIFI, but this is slow and irregular due to frequent power-cuts.
- b. **Low motivation amongst TEEs and poor collegiality:** It was frequently reported that the TEEs themselves are not motivated as expected towards the learning process. They claimed that they do not participate in the rarely available ICT learning opportunities due to the administrative biasness they had been experiencing for long. Some of their colleagues are well-familiar or

skilled in using the ICTs but due to the lack of the culture of sharing or collegiality, others have not been benefitted from those learned ones.

- c. **Poor access and competency in using ICTs:** Many of the respondents reported that they use mobiles and their own personal devices such as laptops, PCs for surfing the Internet. When they search the valuable and most significant learning materials useful for their classroom delivery, they cannot get access to them. The access facility has not been made available to them through the libraries or administrative system of the institution they work in. The case is further miserable in students. Many students do not respond to the web-based resource sharing done by some teacher educators. From my own experience, I can strongly claim that the access and competency of the teacher educators and their students is very poor. Hence, lack of access and poor competency are the common problems for both teachers and students.

With these obstacles, TEEs have been working for long. They know and are aware of the value of ICTs as a part of their professional and personal life. They want to make changes, but they also expect some changes or provisions made in the institutions they have been working in. Some of the expectations are:

- *Inclusion of ICTs as one of the core areas of English language teacher education programmes:* The course developers and academic institutions should develop positive attitude towards value of ICTs in teacher education.
- *Training packages to be developed and delivered to all the teacher educators of*

English: In-service teacher education would be more effective in adopting the latest innovations in using ICT in classroom instruction.

- *Management of resources in the classroom and within the premises:* TEEs expect their classroom to be well-equipped with ICT resources and availability of the high speed Internet facility in the premises of the institutions where they work.
- *A visionary leadership:* There was a strong voice to have the leadership a good vision to reshape English language teacher education. Only a well-informed and dedicated leadership can make changes in adopting innovations and execute for the best use of the resources available.

Conclusion

Information and communication technologies have been indispensable tools for the effective teaching leaning systems. To prepare the teachers for the 21st century, the teacher education programmes and teacher educators are to be much more competitive, competent and skillful. In order to do so, the inclusion of ICTs is a basic requirement in teacher education programmes. In the same line, through the survey, I would like to conclude that Nepalese teacher educators of English are not competent enough in using ICTs in classroom instruction. They need trainings, resources and support in order to be capable of adopting ICT-based instruction and prepare more able, competent and professional teachers of English to tackle with the 21st century global challenges of teaching English.

References

- Ayers, W. (1993). *To teach: A journey of a teacher*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.
- Cheng, Y. C. (2001a). *Educational relevance, quality and effectiveness: Paradigm shifts*. Invited keynote speech presented at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and School Improvement held in Toronto, Canada, 2001, January, with the theme 'Equity, Globalization and Change: Education for the 21st Century'.
- Cheng, Y. C. (2001b). New education and new teacher education: A paradigm shift for the future. In Y. C. Cheng, K. W. Chow, & K. T. Tsui (Eds.). *New teacher education for the future: International perspectives* (pp. 33-88). Hong Kong & The Netherlands: Hong Kong Institute of Education and Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Cheng, Y. C. (2005). Three waves of teacher education and development: Paradigm shift in applying ICT. In Mohamed Chaib & Ann-Katrin Svensson (Eds). *ICT in Teacher Education: Challenging Prospects*. Jonkoping : Jonkoping University Press.
- EFA Global Monitoring Report Team (2015). *Investing in teachers is investing in learning: A prerequisite for a transformative power of education*. A background paper presented for the Oslo Summit on Education for Development. Oslo: Author.
- Lee, J.C & Sparks, P. (2013). *Three hurdles in technology integration: A case study of technology integration in Bungamati*. Journal of NELTA, 18 (1-2), 105-114.
- Ministry of Education (2013). *Information and communication technology in education master plan 2013-17*. Kathmandu: Author.
- Shrestha, P. (2011). *The potential of mobile technologies for (English) language learning in Nepal*. Journal of NELTA, 16 (1-2), 107-113.
- Srinivas, K. (2004). *Globalization and challenges for education*. New Delhi: Shipra Publications.

Author's bio

Prem Prasad Poudel, M. Ed. and M. Phil, is a faculty at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He has been carrying out research studies in English Language Teaching and Teacher Education and has published in various national and international journals. He is a teacher trainer, textbook writer, translator and Master Trainer of Critical Thinking Methodology.

Learner Role in CLT: Practices in the Higher Secondary Classrooms

Md. Abdur Rouf & Khanam Nargis Sultana

Abstract

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a learner-centered approach for language teaching and learning. In the CLT context, learner's role changes from that of a passive receiver to an active participant engaging in diverse classroom activities that promote communicative competence. Again, L2 learners are supposed to learn the language by using it for different tasks, and taking part in pair work, group work, role play, and discussion inside classrooms. This study aims to find out gaps, if any, between learner roles as advocated in CLT theory and as practiced by learners in the higher secondary classrooms in Bangladesh while teaching/learning English following this approach, and its relation to poor 'learning outcomes'.

Keywords: Learner role, CLT, higher secondary classrooms, practices, learners

Background of the study

In Bangladeshi secondary and higher secondary educational institutions, Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) was followed for teaching/learning English for a long time. Teaching and learning of grammatical rules and sentence structures was the key target in EFL classrooms. There was no effort to engage L2 learners in meaningful communicative tasks. The shift in the paradigm from GTM to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) occurred in the 1990s. The rationale was to make L2 learners competent in communication so that they can use the language in practical situations and become linguistically equipped for the globalized world. Unfortunately, it was not properly

planned, and readiness of English language teachers and other stakeholders for CLT has been a much-talked-about issue since then. Again, there is a growing consensus in Bangladesh that 'learning outcomes' have been really poor. Many L2 learners have failed to achieve the expected academic result because of poor command over the English language. More and more people are questioning the appropriateness of introducing CLT for teaching and learning English in Bangladesh. In this context, this study aimed to find out gaps, if any, between the learner roles as advocated in CLT theory and as practiced by learners in higher secondary classrooms in Bangladesh while teaching/learning English following CLT, and its relation to poor 'learning outcomes'. Two related issues should be discussed here.

The traditional learner role

Before the introduction of CLT in secondary and higher secondary educational institutions, the role of learners in a language class was restricted as classes were utterly teacher-centered. Learners were supposed to follow their teachers blindly. Jug and mug practice of learning was followed for learning/teaching English where the teacher was the full jug, and teacher's job was to pour knowledge from the full jug to the empty mug-learners.

Thus, 'functional aspect' (Halliday, 1970, p.145) of language use and 'communicative competence' (Hymes, 1972, p. 281) were totally ignored. There was very little oral work and a few written exercises (Richards & Rodgers, 2002). Again, learners' needs, learning styles, preferences, learning goals were not taken into consideration during material selection. They did not have the scope even to suggest the contents of classroom activities. New language materials were introduced by the teacher all the times. Byrne (1986) commented that the teacher was the center of activity at this point.

Then, student practice was strictly controlled by teachers in GTM. There was no or very limited student-student or student-teacher interaction in a class. Learner activities were confined to basically 'presentation and study of grammar rules' (Richards & Rodgers, 2002, p.6). As a result, entire teaching/learning process of English language was rather boring and monotonous.

Learner role in CLT

At the very core of CLT philosophy is Hymes' (1972) theory of what constitutes 'communicative competence' (p. 281). In

CLT, learners have a major role in L2 teaching/learning. The functional aspects of language can be achieved when learners engage themselves in meaningful communicative tasks inside a classroom. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) suggest that learners create language 'through trial and error' (pp. 91-93). American poet Walt Whitman said 'he most honors my style who learns under it to destroy the teacher' (as cited in Mclean, 2012, p. 32). Criticizing the dominant role of teachers, Mclean (2012) explains that 'only when the teacher's authority recedes can the learner be thrown back on his own resources' (p. 33). Thus, CLT advocates 'teacher-directed student-centered' (Rance-Roney, 2010, p. 20) L2 teaching and learning.

Again, most of the classroom activities in CLT are carried out around learners. The teacher is supposed to direct the learner-centered class, and work as a guide, a facilitator. Learners often complete different tasks assigned by teachers to engage themselves in real communication using authentic materials and realia. They work in pairs and groups to get these tasks done. Larsen-Freeman (1986) suggests that teachers must make sure that students interact a lot in the classroom among themselves and with teachers. Teachers in communicative classrooms talk less and listen more; consequently, they will be active facilitators of students' learning.

Then, CLT does not target mastery of language forms rather it emphasizes the processes of communication; consequently learners find themselves in different roles in a L2 class (Richards & Rodgers, 2002). Explaining the role of learners, Breen and Candlin (1980) comment as follows:

The role of learner as negotiator – between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning – emerges from and interacts

with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way. (p. 110)

Finally, a teacher-directed learner-centered class scenario is advocated in CLT where learners' role is 'to construct meaning and interact with others in authentic contexts' (Rance-Roney, 2010, p. 20). Cooperative learning is another key feature of CLT where learners work in teams to build knowledge and achieve tasks through mutual interaction (Rance-Roney, 2010). Thus, in a climate of trust and support in the classroom, learners are expected to contribute (Belchamber, 2007).

Thus, it is apparent that as far as the role of L2 learners is concerned, GTM and CLT advocate totally opposite directions; GTM is teacher dominated while CLT is a teacher-directed learner-centered approach. In this context, this study aimed to find out whether Bangladeshi higher secondary L2 learners carry out their expected roles in classrooms.

Research question

- What roles do L2 learners actually play in the higher secondary classrooms while learning English through CLT?

Research methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted for this study. The data collected with the questionnaire has been analyzed quantitatively. Based on the literature reviewed a questionnaire was used to collect responses from the higher secondary students for this study. While

preparing the questionnaire, utmost attention was paid to the roles of learners as advocated by CLT. The questionnaire consisted of fifteen (15) questions. Again, the student participants who answered the questionnaire were higher secondary students of different colleges of Bangladesh. This sample group consisted of eighty (80) students both male and female. The student participants were in the age group of 15-20. They came from both rural and urban areas of Bangladesh. Finally, it could have been more satisfactory to work with a larger sample size. There is doubt as well whether all the respondents could comprehend the questionnaire appropriately.

Data presentation, analysis, and findings

Research question

- What roles do L2 learners actually play in the higher secondary classrooms while learning English through CLT?

Responding to qn.1, only few learners (16.25%) said that their teachers always or very often asked them what they wanted to learn in English language classes; many learners (38.75%) told teachers sometimes asked; however, a major portion (45%) of the learners reported that teachers rarely or never asked them what they wanted to learn. Thus, many learners have *no say* in the selection of content in L2 classes. In reply to qn.2 on communication in English in classrooms, not a single student (0%) claimed that they always communicated in English with their classmates/teachers; only very few learners (6.25%) very often did that; 23.75% of the learners sometimes communicated in English. On the other hand, most of the participants (70%) informed that they rarely or never communicated in English with their

classmates/teachers. Thus, learners' inadequate use of the target language inside a classroom remains a serious hindrance for effective L2 teaching/learning. CLT advocates that L2 learners should use the target language most often.

Then, replying to qn.3 on class activities/tasks, only 1.25% of the participants reported that they did their L2 class activities/tasks in pairs; again, only 6.25% of them worked in groups; interestingly, 92.5% told that they did their class activities individually. As such, the bulk of the learners do not get opportunity to interact with their classmates. Qn.4 asked whether learners were given enough opportunities to use English in the class. Less than one third (30%) of the respondents told they always or very often got enough opportunities to use English; many learners (38.75%) sometimes did so; however, 31.25% of the learners said they rarely or never got enough opportunities to use English. So, very often learners are not given enough opportunities to use English in the class. Responding to qn.5 on participation in role plays, only a small portion (10%) of the learners said that they always or very often took part in role plays in the English class; 18.75% of the learners sometimes did that; but most of the learners (71%) rarely or never took part in role plays. This proves that in spite of vast significance of role play in CLT, many learners do not get the opportunity to practice it.

Again, answering qn.6 on sharing their opinions with classmates, a certain number (30%) of learners responded that they always shared their opinions with their classmates; 28.75% of the learners very often did so; 30% of the learners sometimes did that; more than 11% learners rarely or never shared their opinions with classmates. Thus, learners are eager to share their opinions with their classmates; teachers have to properly structure this

sharing. In reply to qn.7 on participation in group activities, a meager portion (10%) of the participants told that they always or very often took part in group activities in the English class; 26.25% of the learners sometimes did so; however, many learners (more than 63%) rarely or never took part in group activities. This again depicts the fact that many learners are deprived of interactive classroom activities in L2 classes.

Moreover, in response to qn.8 on giving feedback on classmates' work, more than 16% of the learners told that they always or very often provided feedback on their classmates' work; 32.5% of the learners sometimes did so; however, more than 51% of the participants rarely or never gave feedback on classmates' work. Peer feedback is very helpful for engaging the learners in real communication in the target language, and building confidence among themselves but many teachers ignore this. Answering qn.9 on contribution in the English class, more than 51% of the learners said that they contributed in their English class; 40% of the learners sometimes did so; about 9% of the learners told that they rarely or never contributed in English class. Learners' contribution is one major feature of CLT. If given opportunities, most of the learners would like to contribute in their L2 class. Qn.10 asked whether learners practiced writing in their English class. About 49% of the learners said that they always or very often practiced writing; 28.75% of the learners sometimes did so; about 23% of the respondents rarely or never practiced writing in English class. In a CLT class, learners are supposed to practice the four skills of a language in an integrated way. This is a positive development that many learners practice writing in their L2 class.

Next, replying to qn.11 on materials preparation for the English class, only

3.75% of the learners told that they always or very often prepared materials for their English class; 6.25% of the learners sometimes did so; an overwhelming majority (90%) of the learners informed that they rarely or never prepared materials. Thus, most of the learners have no role in preparing class materials. If students are involved in materials preparation for their L2 classes, it would certainly increase their motivation and interest for L2 learning. In answer to qn.12 on teachers' delivery of lectures, the bulk (95%) of the respondents told that teachers always or very often delivered lectures in their English class; 3.75% of the learners said sometimes teachers did so; only 1.25% of the participants said teachers rarely or never delivered lectures. If teachers deliver lectures in L2 classes, learners would never get the opportunity to practice the target language; again, there would be no interaction among the learners; it would, therefore, certainly lead to poor learning outcomes.

Finally, responding to qn.13 on nature of learning, half of the learners (50%) told that learning in their English class was collaborative; other half opined that it was individualistic. If the class is not collaborative, L2 learners would not get the scope to perform the roles as advocated in CLT. Thus, learners would behave as 'island' in their L2 classes leading to more and more isolation among them. Answering qn.14 on in-class talking time (TT), only a tiny portion (6.25%) of the learners told that most of the talking in English class was done by students; on the other hand, a major portion (93.75%) of the participants informed that teachers did most of the talking in their English class. Hence, teachers do not let learners interact and communicate in classes making it virtually teacher-dominated. In reply to the last question, the bulk of the learners (92.5%) told that their English class was teacher-

centered; only a meager 7.5% of the participants reported that it was student-centered. This fact confirms that many teachers still have the mindset of dominating L2 learners inside classrooms.

The gaps between CLT theory and practice

The data analyzed above shows some gaps between learner roles as advocated in CLT theory and as practiced in higher secondary classrooms in Bangladesh while teaching/learning English following CLT. Firstly, most of the learners (about 84%) have little or no say in the selection of contents/learning points in L2 classes. A significant number of learners (70%) rarely or never communicate in English with their classmates/teachers to develop communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Then, instead of working in pairs and groups, the bulk of the learners (92.5%) do their class activities individually. A notable portion of learners (31.25%) rarely or never get enough opportunities to use English in the class. Again, most of the learners (71%) rarely or never take part in role plays. Similarly, more than half of the learners (63%) rarely or never take part in group activities as recommended by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983). Next, half of the learners (51%) rarely or never give feedback on classmates' work.

Again, almost a quarter (23%) of the learners rarely or never practice writing in the English class. Further, an overwhelming majority (90%) of the learners rarely or never prepare materials for their L2 class. The bulk of the learners (95%) reveal that teachers always or very often deliver a lecture in their English class. Half of the learners (50%) claim that learning in their English class is collaborative; on the other hand, other half opines that it is individualistic. According to a major

portion (93.75%) of the participants, teachers do most of the talking in their class which contradicts with the idea of Larsen-Freeman (1986). Finally, most of the learners (92.5%) confirm that their English class is teacher-centered.

Implications for L2 teaching and learning

To begin with, teachers need in-service training on their role and learners' role in L2 classes as advocated by CLT. Learners must know what they are supposed to do in a communicative English class from their teachers. While selecting class contents, L2 learners' preferences and suggestions should be taken into consideration. Then, learners must be encouraged to use the target language as much as possible inside a L2 classroom. To ensure use of the target language, interaction among the learners has to be given high priority. So teachers should create enough opportunities for learners to use English in the class (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Again, learners must take part in role plays and group works (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983). Thus, learners' eagerness to share their opinion with their classmates can be properly structured. Then, the nature of activities in L2 classes has to be interactive (Rance-Roney, 2010). Moreover, learners should get the opportunity to provide peer feedback on classmates' work. Learners have to be involved in preparing class materials. In any case, teachers should not deliver a lecture in a language class. A collaborative classroom environment would motivate the learners for language learning (Belchamber, 2007). Teachers-talking-time (TTT) has to be reduced (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Therefore, teachers have to make the class learner-centered (Rance-Roney, 2010).

Conclusion

There were a lot of expectations when CLT was introduced in L2 classrooms in Bangladesh leaving behind Grammar-Translation Method. Apparently, it has failed to fulfill those expectations. One of the probable reasons might be, as supported by the findings English language teachers have ignored or have not appropriately comprehended the CLT-advocated role of learners in L2 classes. As a new approach CLT demands a new mindset from all the stakeholders. However, the preceding approach of GTM has been still at work particularly regarding role of learners inside L2 classrooms. As a result, learners are not allowed, to a great extent, to perform their expected roles in L2 learning/teaching. The learning outcomes, not surprisingly, have been poor. For changing this dismal scenario, in L2 classrooms learners have to play more active roles.

References

- Breen, M. P., & Candlin, C. N. (1980). The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching. *Applied Linguistics*1(2), 89-112.
- Byrne, D. (1986). *Teaching oral English*. Harlow: Longman.
- Belchamber, R. (2007). The advantages of communicative language teaching. *The Internet TESL Journal*, XIII (2). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Belchamber-CLT.html>
- Finocchiaro, M., & Brumfit, C. (1983). *The functional-notional approach: From theory to practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1970). Language structure and language function. In J. Lyons (Ed.), *New horizons in linguistics* (pp. 140-465). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J.B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp.269-293). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (1986). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McClean, A. C. (2012). Destroying the teacher: The need for learner-centered teaching. *English Teaching Forum*, 50 (1), 32-35.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2002). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Delhi: Replika Press Pvt. Ltd.

Rance-Roney, J. A. (2010). Reconceptualizing interactional groups: Grouping schemes for maximizing language learning. *English Teaching Forum*, 48 (1), 20-26.

Authors' bios

MD. Abdur Rouf, M.A. in English Literature, is an Assistant Professor, Jagannath University, Dhaka. Now he is pursuing his Ph.D in Malaysia. His areas of interests include teaching methodology, syllabus design, materials development and American literature.

Khanam Nargis Sultana, M.A. in English Literature, is an Assistant Professor of English at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Dhaka. She has participated and presented papers in national and international conferences. Her areas of interests include technology based ELT, syllabus design, materials development and the interface between literature and language teaching.

Appendix A

Table 01: Data collected from the respondents with the questionnaire

Qn. No	Questions	Percentage of Learners' Responses				
		Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	Your teacher asked you what you want to learn in your English class...	2.5%	13.75 %	38.75 %	27.5 %	17.5 %
2	In your English class you communicated in English with your classmates/teachers	0%	6.25%	23.75%	25%	45%
3	You were given enough opportunities to use English in the class.....	22.5%	7.5%	38.75%	20%	11.25%
4	You took part in role plays in English class.....	1.25%	8.75%	18.75%	27.5%	43.75%
5	You shared your opinion with your classmates.....	30%	28.75%	30%	8.75%	2.5%
6	You took part in group activities in English class	3.75%	6.25%	26.25%	12.5%	51.25%
7	You gave feedback/evaluation on your classmates' work.....	2.5%	13.75%	32.5%	17.5%	33.75%
8	You contributed in your English class.....	32.5%	18.75%	40%	7.5%	1.25%
9	You practiced writing in your English class.....	27.5%	21.25%	28.75%	16.25%	6.25%
10	You prepared materials for your English class.....	2.5%	1.25%	6.25%	20%	70%
11	Your teacher delivered a lecture in your English class.....	88.75%	6.25%	3.75%	1.25%	0%
12	Learning in your English class was	Collaborative/cooperative		Individualistic		
		50%		50%		
13	Who did most of the talking in your English class?	Students		Teacher		
		6.25%		93.75%		
14	Your English class was	Teacher-centered		Student-centered		
		92.5%		7.5%		
15	In your English class activities/tasks were done...	In pair	In group	Individually		
		1.25%	6.25%	92.5%		

“Reading” ability of students in Nepal

Kumar Narayan Shrestha

Abstract

Reading is the main means of exposure for English as a second or foreign language learner. The present study aimed at finding out the reading comprehension ability (RCA) of the master level students, majoring in English at Tribhuvan University (TU), Nepal in relation to IELTS academic reading test. Administering a sample test and analyzing its data, it was found that the RCA of the master level students is not adequate in terms of IELTS standard since their RCA is 41% and the IELTS score is 3.70 band. This shows that they are at ‘Extremely Limited User’ level for the admission policies in IELTS recognised countries and not eligible to get the admission in the IELTS recognised Universities. The implication of the study is that there is a need for reading skills development programme incorporating the enhancement of inferential, predictive and interpretive skills.

Key words: Reading Comprehension, Reading Skills, IELTS, IELTS Academic Reading

Introduction

Reading is one of the basic skills of language. Among listening, speaking, reading and writing; reading is the third but a vital skill required for developing language. It is an active receptive skill. Reading is to grasp information from graphic representation of language (Lado, 1962). It is the most common and the easiest means of receiving printed information. Similarly, it is the sole means of frequent exposure to language for the second or foreign language learners. It is the combination of both the visual and mental experience. The visual process is to look at the text in the meantime the mind decodes it for comprehension. The mental process needs interaction of the visual input with the prior knowledge of the reader for comprehension.

In any text, information is presented in the written form, but the way of obtaining the information may require different skills and sub-skills of reading. Harmer (2008) points out that the readers should acquire some reading skills: scanning, skimming, reading for pleasure and reading for detailed comprehension. Using these skills, a good reader can obtain the required information. The information may refer to our intellectual, factual, emotional contents and so on.

Sadoski (2004 as cited in Althiemoolam & Kibui) claims that comprehension is pivotal to reading as it occupies the central place on the continuum where input from the print and the reader is in central balance. Reading comprehension is a process of obtaining the required information from a written text as efficiently as possible. That

is to say, it is thorough understanding of a message in a text. Comprehension does not simply mean to decode the words in the text. Even after the individual words have been identified, the other skills are also necessary to perceive the underlying meanings. The meaning of an individual sentence, paragraphs and sometimes other higher unit(s) of the text should be assimilated to obtain the main idea of the text. Therefore, the reader has to actively strive and work to get the meaning out. As Nuttall (1996) mentions that a good and competent reader grasps the significant value of the written text. Similarly, Goodman (1976) and Smith (1978) (as cited in Awasthi et al.) have pointed out that information is richly available on the printed page, and there are a number of ways of determining the identity of a letter or a word. The ways of determining meanings from the texts need reading skills and the skills of the readers may have to stretch from the lower level to the higher levels of language for better comprehension. This involves understanding the writer's presuppositions sufficiently to recognise what he means by a particular statement, not just what he says, but why he says it. That is to say, the lack of understanding of the common intentions between the reader and the writer may make the reader's comprehension incomplete.

Similarly, for Chall and Stahl (2009), reading comprehension comprises a series of sub-skills, such as understanding word meanings in context, finding the main idea, making inferences about information implied but not stated, and distinguishing between fact and opinion. It means reading comprehension includes many sub-skills such as deriving meaning in context, getting gist, making underlying inferences and recognizing fact and opinion. Hui-lung Chia (2001) believes that reading comprehension is an interaction between a

reader's prior knowledge and the information encoded in the text. Basically, reading comprehension needs the mastery of two interrelated skills. Firstly, to perceive the specific relationships between the written symbols and its meaning and secondly, understanding the meaningful representation of the basic grammatical structures in the given context. Similarly, reading comprehension is also necessary for the better learning of a language. As Nation (1997) concluded, "Success in reading . . . makes learners come to enjoy language learning and to value their study of English" (p.16).

The learning and mastery of English language in Nepal poses more complex challenges because the classroom is the only environment where the learner can hear, learn and try to speak it. In the context of this study also, the participants have limited exposure and reinforcement outside the classroom. Therefore, reading is one of the prominent means of exposure to learn English. In this regard Gebhard (2000) points out that in English as a second language setting there are fewer opportunities for learners to apply what they study to communicative situation outside the classroom since the only comprehensible English some of these learners hear and read is in the classroom. Furthermore, in the modern society the learners are confronted with various material in their daily life that need to be read, analysed, interpreted and understood. More precisely, the craze for international degree in the youngsters has made English and standardised English language test vital. Therefore, reading comprehension is necessary for a purpose other than learning the language itself.

This study is on IELTS based reading comprehension ability of graduate students at TU. It deals only with academic reading of IELTS. The participants in the research

project speak Nepali as their mother tongue. The acquisition of English, however, is quite different from Nepali as it is only learned in schools and colleges where it is taught as a subject. It means that the participants of the research hardly practise English after school/college because Nepali language is used in their homes and outdoors.

What is IELTS?

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is designed to assess the language ability of candidates who need to study or work where English is used as the language of communication. IELTS test is independent of any curriculum or teaching method, the proficiency level of any test taker can be compared with that of any other students, regardless of academic background or English training. IELTS is probably the most often used examination in the admission process of foreign students to colleges and universities in British, Australian, Canadian, New Zealand and American education institutions. It is also recognised by professional bodies, immigration authorities and other government agencies.

IELTS is a proficiency test administered at the authorized centres throughout the world. It has two modules of the test: Academic Module and General Training Module. The Academic Module is meant for the candidates taking the test for entry to undergraduate or postgraduate studies or for professional reasons in the universities and colleges in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. And the General Training Module is meant for the candidates taking the test for entry to vocational or training programme in these countries. IELTS covers the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. It comprises 2.45 hours full length test.

The IELTS academic reading test is of 60 minutes. Listening, Reading and Writing are completed in one sitting. The Speaking test may be taken on the same day or up to seven days before or after the other tests. All test takers take the same Listening and Speaking tests, while the Reading and Writing tests differ depending on whether the test taker is taking the Academic or General Training versions of the test. IELTS is designed to assess the language ability of candidates needing to study or work in the countries where English is used as the first language both for communication and for medium of instruction. IELTS result consists of a score in each of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) which is then averaged to give the Overall Band Score or final mark. The performance of candidate is rated in each skill on a scale of 9 to 1 band(s). The minimum score accepted for a course ranges from 5.0 to 7.5 depending upon course and depending upon courses and institutes. The most common requirement is a band score of 6.0 to 6.5. Mostly undergraduate programmes require minimum IELTS scores of 5.5 and graduate programmes require a minimum score of 6.5. IELTS scores are valid for maximum two years. The researcher has selected IELTS not other international test system because of its increasing popularity.

Main Aspects of IELTS Academic Reading

The topics in IELTS are of general interests but they are related to an academic subject. They often deal with global issues, such as the environment, language, conservation, tourism, etc.

Although the topics may seem unfamiliar to examinees, none of the passages contains technical information or specialist vocabulary that is not explained or cannot be understood by an educated reader. Sometimes, however, the examinee will

need to ignore unknown words or guess their meaning.

IELTS tests a range of reading skills that a learner needs for study purposes. According to Jakeman and McDowell (2006, p. 31), these are following main skills that IELTS tests:

- reading quickly to get a general idea or finding a particular word
- finding detail or factual information
- understanding themes and main ideas
- identifying views, arguments and claims
- identifying the overall theme of the passage.

The Study

This study was a survey done among the students at TU. The subjects were the graduates in English and studying Master degree at TU. The data was collected from learners representing four colleges namely University Campus (UC) Kritipur, Mahendra Ratna Campus (MRC), Tahachal, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus (RRC), Exhibition Road and Patan Multiple Campus (PMC) Patandhoka of Kathmandu valley on the bases of three comprehension passages given as a sample test in ACTION PLAN for IELTS (see appendix I). The details of the study are briefly presented here:

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the research were to find out English reading comprehension ability of the graduate students in IELTS test and to suggest some pedagogical implications.

Methodology

The study was entirely field based. It was conducted using quantitative research methodology. Mainly two types of sources of data were utilized; primary and secondary. The researcher visited the different four colleges of TU. and administered the sample test paper to the students of M.A. and M. Ed. Among them, two were colleges of Humanities and Social Sciences and two were colleges of Education. The responses were interpreted and analysed using simple statistical tools. Similarly, different books related to IELTS, web sites, journals and articles, etc. were consulted to back up the obtained data.

Population

The population of this study consisted of eighty-eight master's level students of TU. They were from four different campuses as mentioned above. They were selected as the population of the study since the researcher was interested in knowing their reading comprehension level in comparison to IELTS academic reading test. So, the study area and the population were selected purposively. Then, the students were selected randomly from among the interested students.

Research Instrument

The tool used in the research was a test which was a sample test paper of IELTS taken from ACTION PLAN for IELTS. It consisted of three sections with forty questions. There were three texts, which are taken from journals, magazines and newspapers. The texts were the topics of general interests. At least one text contained detailed argument.

A variety of question types was used, including multiple choice items, identifying information (True/False/Not Given),

identifying writer's views /claims (Yes/No/Not Given), matching information, matching headings, matching features, matching sentence endings, sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, flow-chart completion, diagram label completion, short answer questions.

Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher analyzed the reading comprehension ability of students with reference to IELTS score and with reference to the evaluation scheme of TU. The evaluation scheme of TU categorizes the marks into four different categories. While analyzing the data, responses were assigned marks. At master level, TU has following marking scheme:

· Third division or pass division	40%
· Second division	50%
· First division	60%
· Distinction	75%

On the contrary, IELTS has different system of marking. It has certain criteria to assign the band score (see appendix-II). Its result consists of a score in each of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) which is then averaged to give the Overall Band Score or final mark. Performance is rated in each skill on the scale of 9 to 1. According to Jakeman and McDowell (1996), the nine overall Bands and their statements are as follows:

• Expert user	9
• Very good user	8
• Good user	7
• Competent user	6
• Modest user	5
• Limited user	4

• Extremely limited user	3
• Intermittent user	2
• Non user	1
• Did not attempt the test	0

While analyzing the data, the responses were assigned allocated marks. For one correct response, one mark was given. The researcher determined the students' responses correct or incorrect on the basis of answer sheets provided by IELTS. The band score was provided following the IELTS band score table. The band score increases as the number of correct responses increase. Out of total 40 questions, one correct response equal to 2, 4 to 9 correct responses equal to 3, likewise the marking scheme goes on more or less in the same way till 9 band score (see appendix-2).

The Total RCA of the students as a whole

The total RCA of the students can be shown in the table as follow:

The total RCA of the students can be shown in the table as follow:

This table shows that out of 9 band score, the students of University Campus obtained 4.13 band, i.e., 45.89% and MahendraRatna Campus obtained 3.90 band, i.e., 43.39%. This indicates that the RCA of the graduate students of the Faculty of Education of TU is not so satisfactory. Regarding IELTS policy for the admission, 4 band score is levelled as 'Limited User'. So, the students

S.N.	Campuses	Band score	Percentage score
1	University Campus, Kritipur	4.13	45.89
2	Mahendra Ratna Campus	3.90	43.39%
3	Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus	2.86	31.72
4	Patan Multiple Campus	3.90	43.33
5	Total (RCA)	3.70	41.01

Table 1: Total RCA of students

of Faculty of Education do not meet the required level of reading proficiency in IELTS for entry to academic programmes in IELTS recognised countries.

Similarly, their score is third division/pass division in terms of evaluation system of TU since their percentage is 44.64% in average. So, we can conclude that the proficiency of the students of Faculty of Education of TU is below the expected level of proficiency.

Likewise, out of 9 band score, the students of RatnaRajyaLaxmi Campus obtained 2.86 band and the students of Patan Multiple Campus obtained 3.90 band. This data shows that the students of Patan Multiple Campus have higher RCA than those of Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus. According to IELTS system, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus is levelled as 'Intermittent User' due to their 2.86 band likewise Patan Multiple Campus is levelled as 'Extremely Limited User' due to their 3.90 band. In total, their average score is below the pass division if we analyze from the point of view of the evaluation system of TU.

The table above also shows the overall RCA of the graduate students of TU. on the basis of IELTS. The students obtained the overall band score of 3.70, i.e. 4.01% as a whole in IELTS. This means that the overall RCA of the graduate students of TU in the English language is not adequate. The research further shows that the average RCA of the students of the Faculty of Education is 7.05% more than that of Faculty of Humanities on the basis of IELTS.

However, there is not fixed pass mark in IELTS; the institution where the students want enrolment decides whether the score is appropriate for the demands of the course of study or training they want to

undertake. As a general result, scores below band 5 in any one skill are considered to be too low for academic study; scores above band 6 are deemed to be adequate to good. Overall band scores of 5 or 6 are borderlines and may not be acceptable at many Universities. In this study, out of 9 band as full band, students securing more than 6 band scores were not found.

Out of the total population of the study i.e. 88, only 16 candidates i.e. 18.18% obtained the score between 5 and 6 band scores. Most undergraduate programmes require minimum IELTS score of 5.5 band and graduate programmes requires a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 band. This shows that only 5.68% students scoring 6 band are acceptable for undergraduate programmes. But some of the institutes also accept 5 to 6 band score for graduate and post-graduate programmes.

On the other hand, 72 students out of 88 obtained the scores ranging from 1 to 4 band scores. These students' academic level is relatively quite unsatisfactory than those of the earlier group on the basis of IELTS. Even though, some of them deserve pass division marks on the basis of TU evaluation system.

Table 2: Text-wise Analysis of the Proficiency

S.N	Reading Passages	Average Score	Percentage	Remark
1.	Reading Passage 1	6.11	47%	Highest
2.	Reading Passage 2	3.19	24.54%	
3.	Reading Passage 3	1.35	9.64%	Lowest

The order of the passages are of increasing difficulty on the topics of general interest and related to academic subjects such as the environment, language, conservation,

tourism, etc. It is the general convention of the IELTS.

The table 2 shows that RAC of the students on the basis of the type of text. The different texts contain different subject matter (theme) i.e. the Reading Passage-1, is related with 'Egyptian Civilization', the Reading Passage-2 is related with 'insects having sticking power' and the Reading Passage-3 is related with 'the attributes of natural and social sciences'. The students have obtained different scores in different texts. They have performed the highest score in the Reading Passage-1 i.e. 47%. Their RCA in Reading Passage-2 and Reading Passage-3 is not satisfactory since their scores are 24.54% and 9.64% respectively. It shows that the students have performed better in the easy passage than that of difficult ones. To be more specific, since the activities of the Reading Passage-2 and the Reading Passage-3 need thorough understanding of the text, their performance is comparatively low. Therefore, it can be said that the students lack inferential, interpretive and analytical skills.

Table 3: Item-wise Analysis of the Proficiency

S.N.	Test Items	Average Score	Percentage	Remarks
1.	Sentence Completion	1.18	39.33	Highest
2.	Labelling a Diagram	2.49	62.25	
3.	True/False/Not Given	2	40	
4.	Multiple Choice	0.44	44	
5.	Pick from a List	1.64	32.8	Lowest
6.	Finding Information in Paragraphs	0.47	11.75	
7.	Sentence Completion with a Box	1.08	27	
8.	Paragraph Headings	0.32	5.33	Lowest
9.	Summary Completion	0.19	4.75	
10.	Classification	0.85	21.25	

The table 3 shows the item-wise performance of eighty eight students in Sentence Completion, Labelling, True/False/Not Given, Multiple Choice, Pick from a list, Finding Information in Paragraphs, Sentence Completion with a Box, Paragraph Headings, Summary Completion and Classification. As the table shows, the students showed the very good performance in Labelling a Diagram i.e. 62%. On the other hand, the students showed only satisfactory performance in True/False/Not Given and Multiple Choice items. It means they obtained 40% and 44% in these items respectively. But in Sentence Completion, Pick from a list, Finding Information in Paragraphs, Sentence Completion with a Box, Paragraph Headings, Summary Completion and Classification, they deserved, 39.33%, 32.8%, 11.75%, 27%, 5.33%, 4.75% and 21.25% respectively which are satisfactory. It gives the impression that students are more proficient in Labelling a Diagram i.e. 62.75% and least proficient in Summary Completion i.e. 4.75%. In other words, the respondents are more proficient in factual reading than in inferential reading. It shows that a number of learners were unable to identify context clues in the reading texts.

Findings

This research has shown that the graduate students of TU specializing in English do not have adequate RCA, since their average RCA is 41.11% and the IELTS score is 3.70 band. This has shown that they are at 'Extremely Limited User' level as per the admission policies in IELTS recognised countries and do not get the admission in their universities. Only 16 students i.e. 18.18% obtained the scores between 5 to 6 band. It shows that only 18.18% students have ability to get admission in the colleges in IELTS recognised countries. These findings further show that the RCA of

Nepalese graduate students is lower than that of IELTS recognised countries. The research shows that the average RCA of the students of the Faculty of Education is 7.05% more than that of Faculty of Humanities on the basis of IELTS. On the basis of texts, the RCA of the students of both the faculties is 47% in Reading Passage-1, 24.54% in Reading Passage-2 and 9.64% in Reading Passage-3. There is significant difference (57.5%) between the most difficult items i.e. Summary Completion and the easiest item i.e. Labelling a Diagram.

Discussion of findings

The study revealed that the graduate students at TU do not have wide knowledge of world and the English. Since the texts were not literary in nature they failed to perform well. More specifically the students from arts faculty deserved (37.52%) lower score than students from education faculty (44.64%). It showed that their course does not include varieties of content areas and they do not have proper skills of reading. Similarly, the students had the best performance in 'Labelling a Diagram' which could be directly picked out from the text. On the other hand, their performance is the poorest in 'Summary Completion' which needs thorough understanding of the text. This showed that they know the dictionary meaning of the words but fail to understand the message. In other words, they are good at factual reading and skimming but not in inferential reading. In reading comprehension, only dictionary meaning of the words is not adequate. In this regard Schackle (2009) in Ferreira (2009) says that for learners to read successfully they need a combination of decoding and understanding where they are able to use their knowledge of letters and words to make sense of when they read. It means the readers should be able to infer or deduce

the underlying meaning of the text for comprehension.

Similarly, Compton (2005) in his study on word recognition, transfer, and reading acquisition found that skilled comprehension readers are rapid at word decoding than less skilled readers. He also found that the establishment of decoding skills through structured intervention acted as a boot strapping mechanism to improve reading skills, such as word recognition skill, reading fluency, and comprehension (as cited in Althiemoolam&Kibui, 2012, p.11). From this it is evident that skilled readers use their reading skills for connotative reading rather than denotative one. Therefore, reading comprehension is not a mechanical activity. It needs various skills of reading and other sub-skills. According to Althiemoolam and Kibui (2012), "Reading for meaning depends upon vocabulary knowledge, syntactic integration, inferences, and other higher order overlapping skills that make demands on the same mechanism responsible for converting and the printed code into the language code" (p.11). This suggested that reading comprehension depends on the knowledge of vocabulary, syntactic integration, inference and other higher skills.

Likewise, in a study on the role of comprehension of meaningful language input in young adults' second language learning by Paribakht, and Wesche (1992) indicated superior gains in the comprehension-based class in text comprehension and discourse processing, despite smaller gains in grammatical knowledge. It shows links between comprehension of meaning and acquisition of vocabulary. That is to say explicit grammar instruction is not needed to enhance comprehension skills, but vocabulary knowledge is necessary.

The most of the studies aforementioned highlighted the significant role of vocabulary as a means to analyse the text. In addition to this, vocabulary also provides the context clues to the reader to derive the meaning of the author. Instead of vocabulary, the readers also need the knowledge of morphology, syntax and discourse as a whole. Furthermore, the knowledge of genres, content areas and style of writing are equally crucial to infer the meaning of any text.

Implications of the findings

The study shows that the learners need the exposure to adequate vocabularies through varieties of text, genres, and contents areas. While teaching language, they should be made familiar with all the skills that are required for effective reading comprehension including inferential, predictive and interpretive skills. Furthermore, poor proficiency can be addressed through appropriate curriculum and modern approaches of teaching.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the graduate students at TU are experiencing difficulty in reading comprehension. Some reading difficulties experienced by the learners within the context of this study could include lack of background knowledge, reading skills, the style and complexity of the language, inadequate experience and exposure to the varieties of texts. One of the causative agents behind these difficulties is poor and traditional teaching method. Therefore, the teachers should use modern teaching methods that would improve their learners' reading skills. The teachers should enhance their learners' interpretive, critical, predictive and analytical skills through their teaching.

Similarly, the learners should be exposed to varieties of authentic texts. As Guariento and Morley (2001) believe that using authentic text is an important way to maintain and increase learners' motivation in language learning. That means the authentic texts motivate the learners and help them acquire the foreign language naturally. Along with authentic texts, simplified texts also help learners accelerate the process of language learning. As McGregor (1989) found that, whenever learners face difficulty in comprehending a reading text, their problem can be remedied if the text is presented to them after simplifying it by using the high-frequency words, as learners understand the more frequent ones (Wang & Koda, 2005, p. 89)

Finally, as Nuttall (1996) observed, "Reading is caught, not taught" (p.229). The students should be self motivated for reading. They should be aware that reading is not an overnight activity. A sustained reading effort makes a good reader in a long run.

References

- Athimoolam, L., & Kibui, A. (2012). An analysis of Kenyan learners' proficiency in English based on reading comprehension and vocabulary. *Journal of NELTA*, 17, (1-2), 1-13.
- Awasthi, et al. (Eds.). (2009). *New Generation English*. Kathmandu: Vidhyarthi Prakashan.
- Chall, J.S., & Stahl, S. (2008). *Reading. Microsoft® encarta® 2009 [DVD]*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.
- Chia, H. (2001). Reading activities for effective top-down processing. *English Teaching Forum*, 39 (1), 22.

- Gebhard, J.G. (2000). *Teaching English as a foreign or second language: A teacher self-development and methodology guide*. Michigan, U.S.A.: The University of Michigan Press.
- Guariento, W., & Morley, J. (2001). Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal* 55, (4), 347-353.
- Harmer, J. (2008). *How to teach English*. London: Longman
- Jakeman, V., & McDowell, C. (1996). *Cambridge practice tests for IELTS 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jakeman, V., & McDowell, C. (2006). *Action plan for IELTS*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lado, R. (1962). *Language teaching*. London: Longman.
- Nation, P. (1997). The language learning benefits of extensive reading. *The Language Teacher*, 21(5), 13-16
- Nuttall, C. (1996). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Heinemann.
- Paribakhat, T. S., & Wesche, M. B. (1992). A methodology for studying the relationship between comprehension and second language development in a comprehension-based/ESL Program. Retrieved on January 25, 2012 from <http://web28.epnet.com>
- Sadoski, M. (2004). *Conceptual foundations of teaching reading*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Schckle, E. (2009). Strategies and practices for effective reading. In A Ferreira (Ed.), *Teaching language* (pp.133-146). Gauteng: Macmillan.
- Wang, M. & Koda, K. (2005). Commonalities and differences in word identification skills among learners of English as a second language. *Language Learning*, 55 (1), 71-78.

Author’s bio

Kumar Narayan Shrestha, M.Ed. and M.A., is an English faculty at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. He has been associated with the field of teaching for sixteen years. He has taught to nursery to tertiary level students. His professional interests include ELT, translation and literature. To his credit, there are some co-edited books and translations.

Appendix-1

IELTS Band Score Tables for Reading

S.N.	Scores Band (Correct Responses)	Scores
1.	1	1
2.	2 to 3	2
3.	4 to 9	3
4.	10 to 15	4
5.	16 to 22	5
6.	23 to 28	6
7.	29 to 35	7
8.	36 to 39	8
9.	40	9

Developing Communicative Competence of ESL Learners through Learning Strategies

Purna Bahadur Kadel

Abstract

Learning strategies are special behaviors and actions which are employed to develop communicative competence of learners (Oxford, 1990). Second language learners can communicate their ideas, feelings, and emotions through learning strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, social, affective etc. as well as communicative strategies in the process of developing communicative competence. Learning strategies and communicative strategies work as a panacea to develop communicative competence. The researcher conducted an exploratory research through survey to collect data using questionnaire, semi-structured interview and classroom observation to find out the existing learning strategies in developing speaking skills and to discover the attitude of secondary level teachers towards learning strategies and communicative strategies in developing communicative competence of learners. He selected 30 secondary level teachers as sample population of the study. The findings of the study were: a) the teachers did not use collaborative learning and scaffolding techniques to help the learners develop speaking skills, b) they were unable to employ collaborative learning, group discussion, and peer talking owing to overcrowded classes and time-constraint; most of the teachers taught speaking skill without using language functions, c) there is positive attitude of secondary level teachers towards learning strategies and communicative strategies to develop communicative competence of learners.

Key words: learning strategies, self-regulated, cognitive, metacognitive, compensate, multidimensional, milestone, communicative task, communicative strategies, collaborative learning, motor-perceptive skills, paramount importance

Background of the Study

Communicative competence and performance are hardly practised during the classroom interaction despite the fact that they are prescribed in the syllabus. Listening and speaking skills are primary whereas reading and writing skills are secondary. In the past, reading and writing skills were considered useful rather than listening and speaking skills. Communicative tasks entail comprehending, interpreting, interacting, discussing etc. The communicative tasks

are communicative-oriented whereas non-communicative tasks focus only on the exercises of grammar. The mastery over speaking skill is essential to communicate ones' feeling, emotions, and ideas to others. Learning strategies play a crucial role to develop communicative competence without which interpersonal interaction cannot be launched properly.

If the learners develop their speaking skills, they can attain communicative competence. So speaking skill and

communicative competence should have deep relationship with each other to enhance second language learning. The role of speaking is of paramount importance to facilitate the learners in enhancing communicative competence.

Learning to speak a foreign language requires more knowledge and skill than knowing its linguistic rules. The speakers should have mastery over both linguistic knowledge and language skills in order to develop their speaking skills. The knowledge of language refers to competence in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation whereas the knowledge of language skills is related to interactive and negotiation skills which help accomplish communicative activities successfully. The speakers can attain the language skills through rigorous practice, role play, simulation, narrative, descriptive, instructive, comparative, and decision making activities.

Most of the students who have passed from government-aided schools have very poor communicative competence due to the lack of trained competent teachers implementing learning strategies among learners.

Bygate (1987) argues speaking as a skill which is made up of two skills: motor-perceptive skills and interactive skills. Motor-perspective skill refers to perceiving, recalling, and articulating in the correct pronunciation and structures of the language. He argues that "this is relatively superficial aspect of skill which is a bit like learning how to manipulate the controls of a car on a deserted piece of road far from the flow of normal traffic. It is the context-free kind of skill.... (p. 5)."

The role of motor-perceptive skill is of paramount importance to develop communicative competence of the learners.

Statement of the Problem

Communicative competence is essential for learners to interact with peers and to have query with the teachers in the class to clarify the ambiguous stuff in the class. The pass outs from government-aided schools have very poor communicative competence owing to so many factors, such as inadequate teaching learning materials, lack of adequate teaching methods, strategies and techniques, lack of professionally sound teachers, political interference etc. The adequate learning strategies have not been employed in the English classroom in most of the government-aided schools despite the fact that most of the teachers are more qualified than in private schools of Nepal. However, the teaching and learning activities have not been running smoothly vis-à-vis privately owned schools due to the lack of concrete policy of the government. The SLC graduates from government-aided schools are unable to communicate accurately, fluently and appropriately in comparison with those who have passed out from the private boarding schools. If the teachers are skillful and competent in employing learning strategies and they have positive attitude towards learning strategies of developing communicative competence, the secondary level learners can develop communicative competence properly.

Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

- to find out the existing learning strategies that are being used at secondary level to enhance communicative competence,
- to find out the attitude of teachers towards using learning strategies to develop communicative skills,
- to suggest some pedagogical implications from this study.

Research Questions

- What are the existing learning strategies that the learners employ in the classroom to enhance communicative competence at secondary level?
- What attitude do the ESL teachers have towards using learning strategies to develop communicative skills?

Significance of the Study

This study would be a building block of knowledge in the field of teaching and learning specifically for teachers. More importantly, the finding of the study would be impetus for professional development of English teachers regarding the role of learning strategies in developing communicative competence. In addition, it would help the syllabus developers, researchers, subject experts, professionals, policy makers, particularly to pre-service and in-service teachers etc.

Review of Related Literature

Learning strategies are special behaviors and actions which are to be employed to develop communicative competence of learners (Oxford, 1990).

Learning Strategies

Learning strategies are any behaviors, thoughts or actions that learners adopt in the process of learning. They can succeed to store, integrate, and retrieve new knowledge and skills in the long-term memory for future use through learning strategies. On the other hand, learning strategies help them to be aware of learning process of new information. They help the learners internalize new techniques and skills in enhancing learning proficiency in the target language.

They are also procedures which facilitate the learners to accomplish learning tasks successfully. Any complicated tasks can be solved through learning strategies. In

addition, they are very useful to examine whether the learners have administered appropriate learning strategies in the process of learning and whether less successful learners succeed to employ effective learning strategies in their learning.

According to Oxford (1990), there are six types of learning strategies, such as memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. She categorized these strategies under direct and indirect strategies. Memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies are direct strategies whereas metacognitive, affective, and social strategies are indirect strategies.

The taxonomy of learning strategies is presented as below (Chamot and O’ Mally 1990, pp. 198-199):

- 1) **Metacognitive Strategies:** Some of the metacognitive strategies are given below.

Metacognitive strategies	Description
Advance organisation	Previewing the main ideas and concepts of the material to be learned, often by skimming the text for the organising principle.
Advance preparation	Rehearsing the language needed for an oral or written task.
Organisational planning	Planning the parts, sequence, and main ideas to be expressed orally or in writing.
Selective attention	Attending to or scanning key words, phrases, linguistic markers, sentences, or types of information.
Self-monitoring	Checking one’s comprehension during listening or reading or checking one’s oral or written production while it is taking place. Self-evaluation Judging how well one has accomplished a learning task.
Self-management	Self-management Seeking or arranging the conditions that help one learn, such as finding opportunities for additional language or content input and practice

Source: Chamot & O’Malley (1990)

2) Cognitive Strategies: Cognitive strategies play a vital role in the process of second language learning. Cognitive strategies are presented concisely below:

Cognitive Strategies	Descriptions
Resourcing	Using reference material such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, or textbooks
Grouping	Classifying words, terminology, numbers, or concepts according to their attributes
Note taking	Writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic or numerical forms.
Summarising	Making a mental or written summary of information gained through listening or reading
Deduction	Applying rules to understand or produce language or solve problems
Imagery	Using visual images to understand and remember new information or to make a mental representation of a problem
Auditory representation	Playing in back of one's mind the sound of a word, phrase, or fact in order to assist comprehension and recall.
Elaboration	Relating new information to prior knowledge, relating different parts of new information to each other or making meaningful, personal associations with the new information.
Transfer	Using what is already known about language to assist Comprehension and production
Inferencing	Using information in the text to guess meaning of new items, predict outcomes, or complete missing parts.

Source: Chamot & O'Malley (1990)

3) Social and Affective Strategies:

Social strategies help the learners to learn through sharing ideas and experiences with their peers and teachers publicly. Likewise, affective strategies help them to cultivate their learning by reducing anxiety, tension, fatigue, and boredom to some extent. There are some affective strategies, such as questioning for clarification, cooperation, and self-talk. In addition, music, songs, rewards, incentives, and self-appraisal are affective strategies which play a vital role to gear up motivation, attitude, and belief towards learning. Affective strategies are essential to brush up intrinsic motivation for enhancing learning.

Social and Affective Strategies	Descriptions
Questioning for clarification	Eliciting from a teacher or peer additional explanation, rephrasing, examples, or verification
Cooperation	Working together with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, or get feedback on oral or written performance
Self-talk	Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel to do the learning task.

Source: Chamot & O'Malley (1990)

4) Memory Strategies: Memory strategies are also called mnemonics which plays a vital role to store the knowledge and to retrieve the information from the long term memory. Memory strategies fall into four sets: creating mental linkage, applying images and sounds, reviewing well; and employing actions. Memory strategies are very effective to use metacognitive strategies like paying attention, and affective strategies like reducing anxiety through deep breathing (Oxford, 1990). Memory strategies are needed while ordering things, making association, and reviewing.

5) Compensation Strategies: Compensation strategies enable the learners to use the new language for comprehending and producing language. Compensation strategies are guessing and inferencing using wide variety of linguistic and non-linguistic clues. They can be categorized into guessing intelligently and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing. Overcoming limitations refers to switching to more languages, getting help, using mime or gesture, avoiding communication partially or totally, selecting topic, coining

words etc. (Oxford, 1990). In addition, guessing intelligently refers to using linguistic clues and non-linguistic clues.

Purpose of Language Learning Strategies

The main purposes of learning strategies are enhancing learning, performing special tasks, solving special problem, and making the learners self-directed.

1) Enhancing Learning: Second language learning is a bit more complicated than first language since second language learners are frequently intervened by their prior knowledge of first language. So second language learning is exclusively conscious learning which cannot be accomplished effectively in the absence of learning strategies. The setting of second language learning can be made natural and subconscious learning through employing appropriate learning strategies.

2) Performing Special Task: Language learning strategies help them to solve cognitively demanding tasks easily. The learners would fail to encounter with problem-solving task without learning strategies. In order to perform special task, the learners should deploy task-appropriate strategies. Particularly, the high proficiency learners are efficient to employ appropriate learning strategies to carry out their tasks (Green & Oxford, 1995). On the contrary, low proficiency learners cannot grade and employ appropriate learning strategies with tasks accordingly. Language learning strategies make the learners aware of employing different types of strategies viz. top-down, bottom-up, and interactive strategies accordingly (Abbott, 2006).

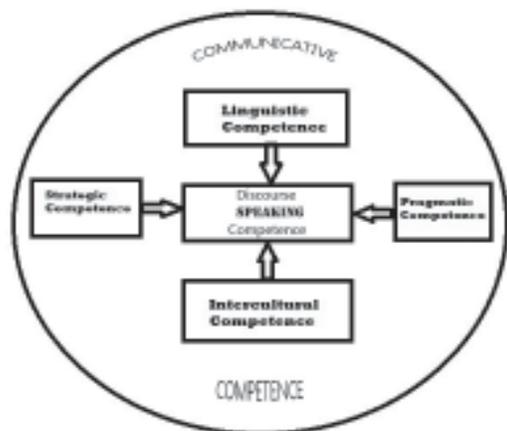
3) Solving the Specific Problem: Language learning strategies are in vogue in second language learning due to their multidimensional specific plans and procedures to solve specific problems. The

second language learners are made ready to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in learning and thereby managing instructions of learning strategies to encounter learning problems through learning strategies for example, metacognitive strategies are about monitoring learners' own ability and progress of learning second language through using different types of learning strategies. In fact learning strategies make the learners self-regulated and autonomous.

4) Making Self-Regulated and Autonomous Learners: One of the main purposes of language learning strategies is to make them self-regulated. The successful learners usually employ cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies in developing learning. The learners can be facilitated to be self-directed for successful language learners through employing learning strategies in their learning. There is a significant relationship between learning strategies and self-regulated learners. If the learners adopt some special techniques and procedures of learning strategies to encode and decode the text, they can acquire language skills and linguistic structures effectively.

Communicative Competence

Hymes (1972) argues that Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance did not pay attention to the aspect of use of language and related issues of appropriacy of an utterance to particular situation. Thus, Hymes (1972) devised the term 'communicative competence' to refer to the language use in social context and appropriate situation. Communicative ability can be developed through linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, intercultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.



Source: Alice Martinez-Flor, Esther Uso-Juan and Eva Alcon, 2006

1) Discourse Competence: Martinez-Flor, Uso-Juan and Alcon (2006, p. 147) argue that “the proposed communicative competence framework has at its heart the speaking skill since it is the manifestation of producing spoken discourse and a way of manifestation of the rest of the components.” Discourse competence involves speakers’ ability to use a variety of discourse markers to attain the unified spoken text. The discourse features are the knowledge of discourse markers. The management of the second language learners must have knowledge of discourse competence to connect the intersentential relationship. In discourse, the role of cohesion and coherence is very paramount to hold the communication in meaningful manner. The speakers should have a substantial knowledge of discourse markers to express their desired ideas and opinions in the process of interaction. The speakers are to be concerned with the linguistic form and appropriacy. Moreover, they should be competent strategically in the course of speaking.

2) Linguistic competence : Linguistic competence comprises grammar, vocabulary, and phonology. The speakers

should have a sound knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary to produce accurate discourse in speaking. The speakers should have acquired grammatical system and a wider variety of vocabulary in order to make communication successful. Moreover, the speakers must acquire the syntactic and morphological rules of the target knowledge to enhance linguistic competence which in turn corroborate to accelerate speaking skill.

Additionally, the speakers should have the knowledge of suprasegmental, or prosodic features, such as rhythm, stress, intonation etc. for accuracy in pronunciation in the target language.

3) Pragmatic Competence : The speakers should develop pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge to develop the pragmatic competence for a successful oral communication. EFL learners should have a broad knowledge in sociolinguistic aspects of target language to communicate appropriately in the society. Language is developed with social conventional norms and rules. So the speakers are to be sensitized with social norms and rules of the target language to make communication interactive since there is symbiotic relation between language and culture. The speakers should be aware of paralinguistic features. Brown, (1994, p. 238) states that “adult second language learners must acquire stylistic adaptability in order to be able to encode and decode the discourse around them correctly”. The sociolinguistic knowledge is concerned with style, register, appropriateness and so on.

4) Intercultural Competence : Intercultural competence refers to the knowledge of how to produce an appropriate spoken discourse within a particular sociocultural context. The

speakers should have knowledge regarding non-verbal communicative factors and the cultural knowledge to avoid communication breakdown. The speakers should have knowledge of non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial expressions, eye contact etc. to make the spoken discourse successful since paralinguistic, body language, and socio-cultural perspective have symbiotic relation with one another.

5) Strategic Competence: Strategic competence embraces speakers' knowledge of both learning and communication strategies. Confirmation check, comprehension check, clarification request, and repetition requests are also the strategies to make oral communication successful.

Learners can enhance speaking proficiency through inferring, predicting, guessing, paraphrasing, circumlocution, repetition, planning and so on. Moreover, they can follow the cognitive, metacognitive, compensation, social, affective, and memory strategies to make the communicative interaction successful and effective. The speakers should have immense knowledge of how to start and how to end the communication with the interlocutors effectively through the use of learning strategies.

Methodology

The following procedure was adopted to carry out the research addressing the objectives and research questions.

Design

This is an exploratory study through which the researcher has collected the data using survey method. He has carried out this research qualitatively.

Sample Population and Sampling Procedure

The researcher has selected 30 secondary level teachers from Kathmandu district for administering questionnaire. Ten secondary schools were selected for collecting data. Three teachers were selected from each school purposively. Out of the 30 teachers, classes of 10 teachers were observed. He selected 30 teachers using purposive non-random sampling procedure. The researcher administered semi-structured interview and informal interview to 10 teachers who were selected randomly regarding the use of learning strategies.

Data Collection Tools

The researcher used questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and classroom observation checklist as tools to collect data to carry out the research. The researcher observed the classes of 10 teachers to find out whether they used learning strategies to develop communicative competence using classroom observation checklist. He also employed informal interview to collect the data regarding the attitude of teachers towards using learning strategies and existing learning strategies that teachers use in developing communicative competence in the classroom.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher administered questionnaire to 30 teachers. Subsequently, he conducted classroom observation of 10 teachers. Furthermore, he gathered the data through informal interview with 5 teachers.

Analysis of the Data Collected through Questionnaire and Semi-structured Interview

A majority of respondents stated that most of the learners used memory strategy to develop speaking since the learners felt difficulty to use metacognitive, cognitive, compensation, social and affective strategies. A minority of respondents stated that they prioritize metacognitive, cognitive and compensating strategies to develop communicative competence of learners. A majority of respondents strongly agreed that visual pictures and images help the learners to guess the meaning and encourage discussion with peers and in group regarding the information given in the picture. However, they are unable to teach them through using visual images and pictures to develop communicative performance and competence owing to overcrowded classes and lack of overhead projectors etc in the classes. Most of the respondents agreed that they sometimes asked the students to summarize and convert the text verbally in their own words in the classroom. However, a large number of respondents asserted that they usually do not ask to revise and summarize the lesson verbally after teaching due to the lack of time and reluctance of the students to speak in front of their friends and teachers. There was positive response regarding the guessing of meaning while holding conversation to avoid the breakdown in communication when there is doubt. Approximately, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that collaborative learning and scaffolding help the learners to develop speaking skills; however, they are unable to employ collaborative learning, group discussion, and peer talking due to overcrowded classes and time-constraint. Most of the respondents agreed that practices of carrying out communicative tasks rather than merely focusing on grammar oriented exercises facilitate the learners to develop communicative

competence, but they have to teach grammatical forms more than language functions because the textbook contains more grammatical structures than language functions. A majority of the respondents agreed that communicative strategies play a significant role to develop the competencies, such as asking for clarification and repetition, formulaic forms, negotiation of meaning, etc.

Analysis of Data Collected through Classroom Observation Checklist

From classroom observation, it was found that teachers used lecture method while teaching in the classroom. Most teachers did not help the learners in employing learning strategies due to overcrowded unmanageable classes, lack of modern technology and power in class, and pressure of finishing course in time etc. Most of the teachers help the learners to self-check their utterance before speaking. Most of the learners use dictionary, textbook etc. to find out the meaning of difficult words and to carry out the tasks. They also check their answer before communicating with their peers while talking in the group. They are very careful regarding the accurate use of tense, vocabulary items, and correct use of pronunciation while speaking and before uttering in the class. Most of the learners use memory strategies such as retrieving ideas from the long term memory. The researcher found that most of the learners do not like to work in group and with peers in the classroom. The learners like listening the lectures from teachers passively. Moreover, the teachers are unable to conduct group discussion and peer talking due to the overcrowded class and unmanageable classroom dynamics.

Conclusion

Language learning strategies are inevitable to develop communicative competence in

the multilingual classroom. The learners can be autonomous and self-regulated learners through the learning strategies. It was found that a majority of teachers used memory strategy to develop speaking strategies. A minority of respondents stated that they use metacognitive, cognitive and compensating strategies to develop communicative competence; for instance, learners learn through guessing the meaning from context; self-evaluation of their learning, and thinking critically . A majority of respondents (60%) strongly agreed that visual pictures and images help the learners to develop speaking skills; however they are unable to help them using visual images and pictures to develop speaking skills owing to overcrowded classes and lack of overhead projectors, computer and power supply in the classes. It was revealed that teachers do not use collaborative learning and scaffolding techniques which may help the learners develop speaking skills. More importantly, they are unable to employ collaborative learning, group discussion, and peer talking owing to overcrowded classes and time constraint. Secondary teachers have positive attitude towards learning strategies to develop communicative competence of learners since learning strategies help the learners to learn through peer and group talking, thinking some issues critically, self-monitoring their own pace of learning, and creative production.

References

- Abbott, M. L. (2006). Reading strategies differences in Arabic and Mandarin speaker test performance. *Language Learning*, Vol. 56(4), 633-670
- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language*

Pedagogy. New York: Pearson Education Inc.

- Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chamot, A. U. V. and O'Malley, J. M. (1990). *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Green, J. M. and Oxford, R. L. (1995). A closer look at learning strategies, L2 proficiency and gender. *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 29(2), 261-297.
- Green, J. M. and Oxford, R. L. (1995). A closer look at learning strategies, L2 proficiency and gender. *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 29(2), 261-297.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In Pride, J. B. and J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Martinez-Flor, A., Uso-Juan, E. & Alcon E. (2006). Towards acquiring communicative competence through speaking. In Alicia Martinez-Flor and Esther uso-Juan (Eds.). *Current trends in the development and teaching of the four language skills*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What every teacher should know?* New York: Newbury House/Harper & Row.

Author's bio

Purna Bahadur Kadel teaches at Central Department of English Education, Tribhuvan University. He earned Ph.D in ELT from The English and Foreign Languages University Hyderabad, India. There are half a dozen of articles to his credit in national and international journals. He has presented a number of papers in conferences home and abroad.

Appendices

Appendix I

Questionnaire for the Teachers

Teachers' profile

Section A

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Sex:
4. Place of Resident:
5. Name of school presently working at:
6. Academic Qualification:
7. Teaching experience (in years)

- 1) Level taught:

Section B

Please tick against appropriate answer below that best suits your choice.

1. Which learning strategies do you adopt while teaching in developing speaking skills?
 - a) cognitive
 - b) metacognitive
 - c) memory
 - d) compensation
 - e) social
 - f) affection
2. Visual images and pictures play significant roles to develop speaking skills of the learners.
 - a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree
3. How often do you ask your students to summarize recently taught text at the end of each lesson?
 - a) Always B) Often c) Sometimes D) rarely E) Never
4. Guessing of the meaning is very necessary to make the conversation successful and effective.
 - a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree

5. The interlocutor/listener should ask question for clarification to avoid the breakdown of conversation.
a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree
6. How often do you employ collaborative learning and assisting to develop communicative competence?
a) Always B) Often c) Sometimes D) rarely E) Never
7. Do you think that peer talking and group discussions help the learners to enhance their internalizing the meaning and using it properly
a) Yes b) No
8. Which of the following strategies help the learners to speak in class?
a) The students are rewarded when they speak well.
b) Ask them to explain main theme of the song when they have listened it.
c) Ask them to review the paragraph verbally.
9. The students can develop communicative ability through audio visual movie.
a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree
10. The students can develop communicative competence through using of language functions contextually rather than focusing on the linguistic structures.
a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree
11. Do you believe that group discussion and peer talking can develop communicative competence?
a) Yes b) No
12. Which of following communicative strategies are essential to develop speaking skills?
a) Using fillers
b) asking for clarification
c) adopting formulaic expression
d) using non-verbal expression
e) all of the above
13. Negotiation of meaning between speaker and interlocutor is very impotent to make the interaction meaningful.
a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree
14. The paralinguistic features compensate the speakers to avoid breakdown of communication.
a) Strongly Disagree b) Disagree c) Neutral d) Strongly Agree E) Agree
15. Do you think that learning strategies help to gear up the communicative competence of learners?
a) Yes b) No

Appendix II

Classroom Observation Checklist

Checklists	Very good	Good	Normal	Poor	Very poor
Well -organized of the ideas					
Self-checking of the utterance of the ideas					
Note-taking and note making to understand the text in the classroom					
Use of resources form dictionary, textbooks, Google etc.					
Guess and predict the meaning and ideas contextually while conversing with the peers					
Work in groups and with peers to solve the tasks in the classroom verbally					
Involve in explaining and analyzing the task with peers to solve the problem in the classroom					

Appendix III

Questions for semi-structured Interview

1. Do you use learning strategies to develop speaking skills?
2. Do you believe that visual images and pictures play significant roles to develop speaking skills?
3. How often do you ask to your students to summarize orally at the end of lesson?
4. Do you make the learners aware clarification questions should be asked to avoid breakdown of communication?
5. Do you believe that peer talking and group discussions help the learner to develop their communicative skills?
6. Do you think that group discussion and collaborative learning avoid shyness, hesitation, and nervousness of the learners?

Changing Scenario of Language Classrooms in the Present Day World

Arun Nepal

Abstract

The success or failure of language learning and teaching primarily depends upon the activities largely done by teachers and students in classrooms. Moreover, modern educational experts and scholars indicate the need for creating new kind of classroom scenario considering the various factors that differ from one context to another or from one classroom to another. The difference can be in the field of linguistic and cultural background of the students, their needs and interests, and other explicit or implicit areas. This article highlights eight different factors that contribute to creating successful and enjoyable language learning environment addressing the demand of changing scenario of language classrooms in the present day world. Finally, the article justifies the need for new kind of language classrooms providing some crucial evidences.

Key words: Classroom, humanistic, success, diversity, enjoyable

Introduction

A classroom is a combination of many things, including the students and teacher as human being. In addition, the room itself, furniture, board, multimedia, internet and other different materials that decorate the classroom, etc. are the physical things. The management of all these physical features and the arrangement of the furniture in the classroom affect the learning and teaching of language to some extent. The effect of such physical setting is easily noticeable, predictable, explicit and visible – which includes the considerations such as: Whether there is necessary light or not; the furniture are comfortable or not; the room consists of modern technology such as internet, multimedia, etc or not; and so on. However, the activities done by the students

and the teachers in the classroom seem subtle, unpredictable, implicit, and largely invisible. The influence of such activities differs from one person to another. My own experience of learning and teaching English also shows that majority of such activities performed by students and teachers are indirect and contextual. The body language and facial expressions of the students and teachers convey different meanings in comparison with the literal meaning of the utterances. Zeichner and Liston (2014) point out that classrooms are fast-paced and unpredictable environments where teachers must make hundreds of spontaneous decisions each day (p. 13).

I have realized the fact that only a little is explicitly known about the activities that possibly happen in the classroom. In line

with this realization, Van Lier (1988) has quoted the following three sayings of three different scholars to prove the fact that we know very little about what goes on in classroom. One, '...our understanding of classroom and what goes in them is still very limited' (Stenhouse, 1975). Two, '...Our ignorance of what actually happens inside classroom is spectacular' (Stubbs, 1976). Three, '...the ethnography, the society, the social psychology and the educational psychology of the bilingual classroom are all little more than gleams in the eyes of a few researchers' (Fishman, 1977 as quoted in Van Lier, 1988, pp. 77-78). The spirit of all these quotations still exists in many language classrooms even in the present day world. We need to bring about a change in our behaviors in the classroom contemplating the different factors that may play crucial role to make language learning and teaching more effective, enjoyable and successful mainly in the context of Nepal. Hence, the article advocates the need of considering much implicit factors that actually occur inside classrooms. The authentic sources of such factors are the ideas of different scholars and my own English language learning and teaching experience for many years. The claim is that the factors identified through available literature and experience can create an enjoyable atmosphere in the language classroom to make the language learning process more effective, enjoyable and a great success in the days to come. The various factors to be considered in the new kind of language classroom are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Complex Nature of the Classroom

The physical and explicit nature of the classroom seems very simple. Many of us believe that well-furnished room with modern technologies and multimedia largely facilitates language learning and teaching. Such a class is more comfortable

where successful and enjoyable teaching-learning take place. However, such external part of a classroom seems to be secondary. The primary part of a classroom is more implicit and the success or failure of teaching and learning is greatly determined by the behaviors or activities that performed by the students and teacher in the classroom. Such activities empower students in a way that cannot be predicted easily. Canagarajah (as mentioned in Norton & Toohey, 2004) argues that classroom discourses and cultures are more complex than we have imagined (p. 135). Such discourse and cultures deserve unpredictable power to bring about a drastic change in the life of students. Osulaand Ideboen (2010) treat classroom as 'the most powerful space on earth'. They claim that the revolutionary objectives of such classroom have the power to transform culture, deepen citizen awareness, and cultivate skills and knowledge whether the classroom is large or small, rich or poor (p.1). Moreover, Dornyei (2001) considers classroom rather as intricate microcosm where students spend a great deal of their life by acquiring skills; learning about the world; making friends; and even falling in love (p. 13). Besides these real life activities, students can be more responsible and autonomous in such classrooms. Dix (2014) advocates creating classrooms where students are keen to accept responsibility and take more control for themselves. He clearly points out the change in traditional classroom scenario where teachers teach and students only listen without taking any responsibility (p. 18). Thus, the nature of the classroom has shifted from the traditional beliefs, norms and values to the modern ones in various ways. Tsui, A. B. M (as mentioned in Carter & Nunan, 2001) summarizes the extremely complex processes that have been shifted from prescription to description, and from evaluation to awareness raising (Carter &

Nunan, 2001, p. 125). The ethnographic research can identify the complex nature and real power of the classroom that sharpens the whole life of the students who can achieve a great success in an enjoyable way in such a modern classroom. Complex nature of whole life of the learners in the classroom can be treated through humanistic perspective as discussed below.

Humanistic Classroom

Changing scenario of the classroom requires a balanced treatment of students from humanistic perspective. The students are treated as human being in a humanistic classroom. The features of human being like relaxation, encouragement of group dynamics in the class, interpersonal aspects (Thomas 1987); self-esteem (Arnold 1999); ability to speak at least one language, individual differences, different social and cultural background, age (Edge & Garton 2009); genuine dialogue-discussion, learner's needs, creativity, flexibility (Gowda 2010) are considered largely while teaching in such a classroom. Gowda (2010) argues that humanistic teaching avoids all the manipulative techniques such as rewards, punishments and reinforcements that degrade humans. Instead, he suggests for encouragement and guidance that believe in human dignity and individual freedom (p. 213). Teacher should consider the common humanistic features of all learners found in the classroom. Edge and Garton (2009) describe such features as the learners' names, their knowledge, experience, intelligence, skills, emotions, imagination, awareness, creativity, sense of humor, problems, purposes, dreams, hopes, aspirations, fears, memories, interests, blind spots, prejudices, habits, expectations, likes, dislikes, preferences, ability to speak at least one language and everything else that goes with being a human being (p.3). The balanced treatment of such implicit humanistic features creates an enjoyable

atmosphere in the classroom that makes the learners more successful. The treatment of humanistic features creates a social life in the classroom where all the learners enjoy different linguistic and cultural norms, beliefs and other various behaviors that happen in a society.

Social Context in the Classroom

A classroom is like a small society where the social norms and values can be shared through social like interaction. Creswell (2012) focuses on the studies of single classroom as small societies and subculture groups who share their behavior, beliefs, and language or a combination of all these features (p. 470). Van Lier (1988) further treats classroom as the social context in three senses. One, learning as interactive, hence social activity; two, classroom as a social setting; three, the place of the classroom as one aspect of social life (p.77). In this way, a social context can be created in a classroom where the learners can enjoy social life in a social like setting doing different social activities by sharing their ideas and beliefs in a natural way. The learners participate actively in such activities hoping that they will be successful persons in the future. Expectation of being successful leads them to be more creative and active learners.

Expectation of Success in the Classroom

Everybody wants to be a successful person in his/her respective field. The desire of being successful is an attribute of human being. Dornyei (2001) argues that 'there is no better recipe for building someone's confidence than to administer regular dosages of success.' He further clarifies that 'success breeds success' (p. 89). Furthermore, Osulaand Ideboen (2010) strongly suggest the teachers to change the

classroom as 'hope zone' communicating the hope of being success there in. Communicating hope is the springboard to lasting change in the classroom. Such success requires a connection of the students' head and heart. The transformational classroom, where the students are committed to connect their head and heart in a consistent way, leads the students to achieve a great success (pp. 9-156). Such success can be achieved through two-way communication. Lynch (1996) forwards the idea of being flexible in the negotiation of the meaning creating tasks for two-way communication as key to successful language learning practice (p. 102). Two-way communication inside the classroom plays vital role to achieve success in language learning and teaching. Stevick (1980, as cited in Arnold, 1999) opines that 'success depends less on materials, techniques, and linguistic analysis, and more on what goes inside and between the people in the classroom' (p. 26). Expectation of being success; communicating hope of being success in the classroom; the connection of head and heart to negotiate meaning for two-way communication among the diverse students; and the activities that happen inside the classroom seem more challenging to address in the classroom where diverse students learn language. The challenge can be addressed only by considering the different backgrounds, levels, needs and interests of diverse students.

Diversity in the Classroom

As mentioned earlier, a classroom reflects a social setting where all kinds of learners expect to be successful persons in some way. Leung, Harris, and Rampton (1997, as cited in Burns & Richards, 2009) state that learners bring multiple identities to the classroom (p.43). Similarly, Mani & Deepthi (2010) indicate that a diverse classroom consists of different kinds of students who

may be fast and slow; older or younger; male or female; visual, auditory and kinesthetic; extrovert or introvert; teacher dependent or autonomous; and so on (p. 70). Edge and Garton (2009) further add educational, social, and cultural backgrounds as other diversities in the classroom (p.3). Teacher should be able to take as many advantages as possible from such diversities found in the classroom. Osula and Ideboen (2010) highlight the benefits of diversity in the classroom. They point out that diversity addresses the strengths of each individual; cooperation; positive interaction between cultures, personalities; and individual narratives (p. 162). Addressing the needs and interests of diverse students naturally leads to create a learning centered classroom where the teachers and the students need to change their traditional roles.

Learning Centered Classroom

Learning centered classroom is the cry of the day. Active participation of students in an enjoyable way is the basic requirement of such classroom. Mani and Deepthi (2010) point out five different features of learning centered classroom that can contribute a lot to make the learning and teaching process a great success. The first feature focuses on the learning process as an end in itself instead of being the means. The argument is that learning occupies the centre of the teaching-learning process and both teachers and learners concentrate on making the process effective and meaningful. The second belief is that a learning-centered classroom is highly purposeful and goal oriented in which learners know what they are going to learn and they achieve the goal being involved in learning process according to their own abilities, strengths and desires. Different learning styles, multiple intelligences and learner needs replace the traditional mode of content delivery by teachers through

monotonous lectures. A teacher only provides the learners with opportunities to explore the world around them and learn on their own. Thirdly, a learning centered classroom encourages higher-level thinking skills through a curriculum based on inquiry, critical thinking and problem solving. Such a classroom places a lot of emphasis on activities that involve logical reasoning, discussions, debating, etc. with the objectives of resolving problems or taking decisions. Similarly, involvement of students in peer learning, collaborative work and group tasks is the fourth feature of learning centered classroom. Finally, the evaluation system of learning centered classroom differs from the traditional one. The varied forms of evaluation include written examinations, group presentation, interpretations of drama, films, art, etc. that help learners display their personal strengths and focus on their learning rather than on a finished product in the form of an exam paper (pp. 39-40). A teacher can create an enjoyable learning centered classroom by linking these five features with the class size and the classroom culture that suit the local environment. Lynch (1996) emphasizes that teacher should create interaction opportunities with careful planning and selection of the classroom activity that is appropriate to the class size and more suitable classroom culture with the local environment (p. 68). The emphasis on learning process, learning styles, multiple intelligences, learner needs, critical thinking, reasoning, debating, collaborative work, group presentation, etc. requires devising cognition and metacognition in the classroom.

Cognition and Metacognition in the Classroom

Cognition and metacognition play crucial role with regard to language learning and teaching. Richards and Schmidt (2010) define the term 'cognition' as 'the various

mental processes used in thinking, remembering, perceiving, recognizing, classifying, etc.' (p.90). They also clarify that metacognition refers to knowledge of becoming aware of own mental processes while being involved in different kinds of learning (p. 361). Students need to be engaged in different conscious and subconscious mental activities to develop their unique abilities and intelligences. Unique abilities and intelligences of different individual students in a diverse classroom can achieve the expected success only being involved in different creative works. Such works require much cognitive or mental activities and metacognitive activities in the classroom. Pritchard (2014) suggests creating opportunities for cognitive or mental activity that leads to deeper engagement with ideas and increases the possibility of effective and lasting learning. Deeper understanding is possible through discussion between pair and group works by creating meaningful contexts in the classroom. Furthermore, teacher encourages the students to review and remind the knowledge related to the new topic by scaffolding the thoughtful learners (pp. 35-36). Similarly, Dix (2014) points out the activities that students can do in the metacognitive classroom. He argues that metacognition is at the heart of all learning theory. Metacognitive activities lead teacher and students to think about the way of planning the given learning tasks; negotiate success criteria; monitor comprehension; and evaluate progress (p. 42). Moreover, Oxford (1990) focuses on both cognitive and metacognitive processes that take place in the classroom. She places the cognitive strategies as more practical activities that involve the students in practicing; receiving and sending messages; analyzing and reasoning; and creating structure for input and output. Similarly, she suggests being involved in different metacognitive strategies that go beyond purely cognitive devices. The metacognitive strategies include centering

the learning; arranging and planning the learning; and evaluating the learning by the learners themselves (pp. 58-136). Cognitive and metacognitive activities seem more challenging that require much thinking and brainwork on the part of both teacher and students. It seems very difficult to change the habit of the students who have already formed the habit of mechanical learning. Teacher should change the classroom atmosphere where students can do cognitive and metacognitive activities in an enjoyable way lowering their anxiety that generally exists in the diverse classroom.

Anxiety Free and Enjoyable Classroom

Active participation of students in different cognitive and metacognitive interactions requires low classroom anxiety or an anxiety free and enjoyable classroom environment. Richards and Rodgers (2001) argue that low personal anxiety and low classroom anxiety are more conducive to second language acquisition (p.183). Similarly, Brown (1987) suggests creating anxiety free classroom environment by involving the students in singing; laughing with them; sharing their fears in small groups; promoting cooperative learning among students; getting them to set their own goals beyond the classroom goals; and so on (pp. 128-131). Such anxiety free environment requires an active participation of the students in the classroom. Dornyei (2001) suggests a way of enjoyable learning through creation of classroom situations where students become active participants. Students usually enjoy a task if they play an essential part in it (p. 77). Teacher can create an effective and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom in different ways. Oxford (1990) suggests three different ways to make the class more effective and enjoyable. The first way is to change the social structure of the classroom to give students more

responsibility. Secondly, it is necessary to provide the increased amount of naturalistic communication. Finally, learners use affective strategies such as lowering anxiety, taking emotional temperature and encouraging themselves for learning (pp. 140-141). Dornyei (2001) suggests reducing the fear of social comparison, competition, mistakes, and tests while turning the language classroom into 'anxiety free zone' (pp.92-94). The anxiety free and enjoyable classroom where diverse students participate actively in different cognitive and metacognitive activities to gain expected success and other factors discussed above clearly indicate the need for changing the existing scenario of the language classroom in the present day world.

Need for Changing Classroom

The factors mentioned in the preceding paragraphs clearly indicate the need for new kind of classroom where the students can learn in an enjoyable way to achieve the expected success. Such success requires conducive classroom setting where all students are treated considering the complex nature of the classroom as mentioned above. Duncan (as cited in Zeichner and Liston, 2014,) argues in favour of bringing varieties in the classroom that is beyond a 'one-size-fits all' model (p.82). A shift from such a model has become necessary in the modern classrooms. Dornyei (2001) emphasizes the shift from more examination-oriented, monotonous and boring classroom setting to more process-oriented and enjoyable classroom where students get involved actively (p. 72). Dornyei and Murphey (2003) further suggest bringing about change in the traditional classroom setting by changing the partners as necessary; changing the seating arrangements; maintaining the classroom temperature and lighting; decorating the classroom;

using songs and music in the classroom; and giving the sense of ownership in the classroom (p. 89). The sense of ownership creates a safe and secure environment where students can take part in different communicative activities without any hesitation like in the natural setting. Ellis (2008) points out the need for an ideal communicative classroom that leads to successful L2 learning. Such setting examines the key theoretical issues in specific classroom contexts that promote L2 acquisition in a natural way (pp. 824-825). This short discussion provides some crucial evidences to the urgent need of changing the existing classroom scenario.

Conclusion

This article is the result of the need and realization of the new kind of classroom setting in the present day world that differs from traditional forms of the classroom (primarily the 'one-size-fits all' models). The realization is to bring about a drastic change in the traditional classroom setting considering the various factors that were less emphasized in the past. An enjoyable and successful language learning and teaching depend largely on the various factors that are still known little. The article is an attempt to search the implicit factors that play very indirect and crucial role to address the complex nature of the classroom.

The complex nature of classroom requires treating the students from humanistic perspective. Natural characteristics of human being should highly be respected in the language classrooms. People enjoy different kinds of activities in the society according to their need, interest, and desire that have close relationship of being successful persons in their real life. The expectation of success in diverse students requires much learner-centered classroom

where different cognitive and metacognitive activities take place. Students can enjoy being involved in such cognitive and metacognitive activities only in anxiety free classroom setting where they can communicate freely. Creating an anxiety free, enjoyable and natural-like communication atmosphere indicates the need for new kind of classroom.

The changing scenario of the language classroom can address the universal desire of human being to become successful in an enjoyable way to gain internal satisfaction. The new kind of classroom is expected to give such internal satisfaction to both students and teachers that is possibly an ultimate objective of almost all people. The students will be internally satisfied if they can achieve expected success in language learning and the teachers will gain such satisfaction if they find their teaching more effective and successful. Hence, the changing scenario of the classroom places primary emphasis on the behaviors and the activities of both students and teachers that take place in the classroom. The claim of this article is that if the students and teachers become ready to apply the above mentioned factors and the like in their practical life, the deteriorating condition of learning and teaching will be improved in a dramatic way.

References

- Arnold, J. (Ed.). (1999). *Affect in language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, H.D. (1987). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (3rd Ed). Englewood Cliffs, CA:Prentice Hall Regents.
- Burns, A. and Richards, J.C. (Eds.). (2009). *The Cambridge guide to second language teacher education*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Carter, R. and Nunan, D. (Eds.). (2001). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cresswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational research* (4th Ed.). New Delhi: PHI Learning Private Limited.
- Dix, P. (2014). *The essential guide to classroom assessment*. UK: Pearson.
- Dornyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dornyei, Z. and Murphy, T. (2003). *Group dynamics in the language classroom*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Edge, J and Garton, S. (2009). *From experience to knowledge in ELT*. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd Ed). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gowda, M.S. (2010). *Learning and the learner: Insight into the processes of learning and teaching*. New Delhi: PHI Learning Private Limited.
- Lynch, T. (1996). *Communication in the classroom*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mani, P. and Deepthi, S. (2010). *English for teaching for secondary school teachers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norton, B. and Toohey, K. (Eds.). (2004). *Critical pedagogies and language learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Osula, B and Ideboen, R. (2010). *10 winning strategies for leaders in the classroom: a transformational approach*. New Delhi: SAGE.
- Oxford, R.L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Pritchard, A. (2014). *Ways of learning: Learning theories and learning styles in the classroom*. (3rd Ed.). London & New York: Routledge.
- Richards, J.C. and Rodgers, T.S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd Ed.). United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J.C. and Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4th Ed.). Great Britain: Pearson Education Limited.
- Thomas, A.N. (1987). *Classroom interaction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Van Lier, L. (1988). *The classroom and the language learner*. London and New York: Longman.
- Zeichner, K.M. and Liston, D.P. (2014). *Reflective teaching: An introduction* (2nd Ed.). New York: Routledge.

Author's bio

Arun Nepal, M.Ed. in English, is a Lecturer at Tribhuvan University. His research interests include ELT methodology, language learning strategies, and reflective practice. Currently he is a PhD scholar exploring learning strategies.

Content and Language Integrated Learning for Nepalese EFL classes

Tara Sapkota

Abstract

A common understanding of teaching English in Nepalese context implies teaching the prescribed textbook lessons and learning means following the teachers' instructions. The school on the one hand, grades the students' achievement according to the score they have scored. The parents, on the other, evaluate their children's learning according to how beautifully they have written on their notebooks and how fluently they speak in English. This traditional practice of teaching and evaluating learners has paralyzed our system of teaching and learning. Therefore, it is high time we shift our practices to a more productive approach to teaching. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) meets the present needs. This paper deals with the ways CLIL is useful to the Nepalese context. In addition, it also puts light on the materials used in CLIL lessons, teacher's and students' roles and assessment in CLIL.

Key words: Content and language integrated learning, content subject, curricular content

Unconsciously... but CLIL

When I was in grade seven, one morning, the principal who also taught us English came into our class as a substitute teacher. He wanted to continue with his lesson but we disagreed. Instead, we requested him to take us to the library it was a best place to be in whenever our teachers were absent. But rather than letting us go to the library, he led us upstairs, to an unoccupied room. Some of us went inside to arrange the tables and chairs and others stood outside until everything was fixed. They had joined the tables and chairs and formed six clusters. We stood in front of the class. He, then, divided our class into six groups according to our roll number. Before having started the day's activity, he named the room 'Language Lab' and told that we would be going to the 'Language Lab' once a month.

We were given six different topics under 'Infrastructures of Development'. One of which that our group worked with was 'Water'. There was a common framework for all six groups. We were supposed to carry out the project with common steps though our contents were different. All of us discussed in our respective groups. We could go to the library to get additional information or use internet if it was available. We had to introduce the topic, present the situation in past and present, the benefits, the problems in its lack, preventive measures and conclusion. After writing, each group had to make a presentation orally. Finally, it had to be presented on the wall magazine in the best possible way. This experience of mine shows how a chapter from social studies ('Water' was one of the chapters on 'Infrastructures

of Development' in grade seven) is incorporated in English class through the use of classroom dynamics. Thus, it makes the basis for this paper.

What is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)?

A very simple answer to the big question above, literally, would be, one of the ways of teaching language that is based upon some content. Introducing CLIL, Dalton-Puffer (2011) "CLIL is an educational approach in which curricular content is taught through the medium of a foreign language" (p. 183). My understanding about CLIL and one of its bases that it works on is written by Richards and Rodgers (2001), "language skills should be taught in the content subjects and not left exclusively for the English teacher to deal with" (p. 205). Larsen-Freeman (2000) has a similar idea that content based instruction is integrating learning of language with learning of some other content, often academics. According to her, such academics provide the language learners with natural content for language instruction. Perhaps, it was one of the reasons behind my low score in IELTS exam where I was told to speak on music for a minute. Afterwards, I was told to tell something on an advertisement that I found interesting. I thought it went well as I was familiar among my peers and teachers for the English I had to communicate with them. Surprisingly, I got least score in the speaking test whereas other skills were done well. I did not believe I had the score I had, but later I realized that it was not communication aspect of English (language) that I met the standard set but the understanding of the content I was given to. One of the reasons might be I had very little content to convey or I might not have conveyed anything.

When I was teaching in a private primary school, I used to hear similar complaints from parents that their child does not speak/ communicate in English fluently, hence her learning is dissatisfactory. They told their child was good at other subjects (taught in English) but English merely was below their expectation. I regret not having told that being able to speak fluently is not only the sign of their child's language development; their child learns language learning the other subjects, therefore, being good at social studies, geography or environmental science was also learning English subtly. It is because according to Nuffield (2000) CLIL programs raise the competence of the pupil in foreign language and also affect attitude to content learning and language learning (as cited in Wisemes, 2009). Similarly, in one of the studies Burger and Chretien (2001) found that the students in L2 English content based course gained significant overall competence and syntax that those students who attended three-hours English lecture (as cited in Gallardo Del Puerto, Lacabex, Lecumberri, 2009, p. 63). Had I met these scholars' ideas, perhaps, I would have scored better in IELTS speaking test too.

What materials for CLIL classroom?

I personally claim that English language as the medium of instructions in our schools, both public and private, has made use of CLIL more contextual in our context. In addition, the textbook we use in our schools are printed in English. CLIL is not exclusive to promotion of English as world language but embedded in the socio-economic, political and cultural traditions of different nations (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). Therefore, English would not have been an obligation for us if we were not teaching English as a second language in our schools.

The benefit is, we can also use the authentic resources (from diverse culture, tradition, languages, geography and so on) translating them into English wherever necessary. The festival celebrated the other day (national, religious, local and so forth), an interesting or a relevant news article published on the newspaper, a visit to a cultural site, the international days celebrated worldwide (i.e. Environment day, Water day, AIDS day, International Labour day, Education day etc), current issues (for instance, earthquake, epidemics, flood and landslide etc), personal hygiene, maps (local, regional or world map), germinating seeds by the students, parts of a plant and so on could be the materials for CLIL classes; because, according to (Naves and Munoz, 1999) there are not enough materials available to teachers to meet (as cited in Naves, 2009). The teachers need to embed them to their school curriculum themselves. They not only serve the immediate need of the materials but also break the monotony of the regular textbook exercises and link "save time and give status to the foreign language" (Krisch, 2008, p. 97). Moreover, they provide the students with the content that they are already used to with; hence, they can use those materials in any way (for reading, writing or speaking exercises), that "enhance children's learning" (Proctor, Entwistle, Judge & McKenzie- Murdoch, 1995, p. 58). The tasks, thus designed, meet the content subject concepts (input) and the process that explicitly shows how understanding is expressed (output) (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010, p. 87) of the students. The inclusion of such local materials into the classes makes the classes easy to run as the students understand them more than those that are brought from some other contexts.

Student and teacher role in CLIL

The teacher I referred elsewhere used to make us sit in groups. Every month the

teacher used to assign us a short project that had to be presented in group as an issue in the of wall magazine. The title of the project used to be related to different subjects, not merely from the English, but also from social studies, environment science, moral values etc. He used to instruct us and we used to do the tasks. At the end of the month we used to be ready with a colourful wall magazine pasted our classroom wall.

While getting on with this paper now, after years, I feel I experienced CLIL a long ago. The role of the teacher and students in CLIL is also clear. A CLIL module may includes "group work, short presentation of the group-work results, longer student's presentation, observation of small scale science experiments and whole class discussion" (Dalton-Puffer, 2009, p. 202). The students produce the required product with clear instructions of their teacher. Similarly, the selection and gradation of the materials to be used in the class is also on the teacher's part. According to my experience, the teacher and students need to negotiate from very beginning of CLIL lessons until they end. When the teacher and students negotiate the complete process of the lesson they are working with teaching learning becomes successful. The negotiation includes both teacher's and students' role during the lesson. Similarly, it also clarifies the content the students focus on, the process in which the students work, form of the output and evaluation criteria. The clearer roles lead to better performance of integrated skills.

Assessment in CLIL

In grade seven classes the teacher used to award the best performing groups with 'merit cards'. He used to visit every group when we were discussing and making notes and provide with the necessary feedbacks.

Similarly, he used to grade both oral and written presentations. The group scoring the highest deserved 'merit cards' that were like the prizes we used to get in other terminal tests.

After learning activities are implemented in classroom, we need to make assessment of the learners in order to find their level of learning. Tests of a kind or others are necessary in order to provide the information of the achievement of groups of learners without which rational educational decisions are difficult to be made (Hughes, 1989). Regarding assessment, Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) opine that "no matter what is taught and how it is taught, the mode of assessment determines the learner's perception of their teacher's intention and also shapes performance data" (p. 112). Therefore, it is necessary to assess the learners which not only help the learners but also the teachers themselves in finding out how well they make their teaching comprehensible.

In CLIL, assessment might be an issue because it includes both content and language. The prioritized content element is taken as the dominant element and language is intended to be learned securely alongside the content's concept and skills. Assessment could be collaborative, peers or self. We have purposed to use CLIL as an approach to be used upon EFL students; therefore, the teachers need to be clear both why they are assessing language as opposed to content and how they wish to do it (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010).

Why CLIL in Nepalese EFL classrooms?

I begin with the usefulness of CLIL with reference to the change that has recently taken place in Nepalese public schools. The public schools have greatly been attracted

towards English medium culture. Despite problems, as shared in the training sessions I visited, they are trying to make it a success. At this changed context, CLIL will function as one of the best approaches. There are three major challenges; first, the system's obligation that different subjects have to be taught in the frame of given syllabus, second, the difficulties in making the learners used to with English language which they are not competent at, in fact, they need a very serious instruction, and third, these two challenges have to be faced by the teachers who, in themselves, are not competent in English. However, we, English language teachers need not get hopeless because we have such challenges, CLIL would help us to a great deal, if used appropriately because according to recommendation of British government commission in the mid 1970s as Richards and Rodgers (2001) write that there needs focus on reading and writing in all subject areas in the curriculum, not merely in the subject called language arts" (p. 205). When language comes in integration with other subjects regularly, it will help both teacher and students to manipulate the language better.

The students in private schools may greatly be benefitted by this approach since they are used to using English and "CLIL promotes ability to communicate in the ways that traditional teaching does not" (Dalton-Puffer, 2009, p. 197). It may be used widely in all subjects where the students need to communicate in English as that had been done in Singaporean Primary Pilot Project in the 1970s where classroom texts had integrated science, math and language study (Richard & Rodgers, 2001, p. 206) because CLIL is to integrate that has been compartmentalized (Soetaert & Bonamie, (n.d.).

Of course, comprehensibility of the English language used while instructing the

students may be an issue when English is made the language of delivery of the contents other than English. Harmer (2001) writes the best activity might be a waste of time if students fail to understand what teacher meant, the instructions need to be kept simple and logical" (p. 4). The simple the instructions are the better understanding in the learners that leads the learners towards producing the output. Naves (2009) cites Naves (2002) "On-hand tasks, experiential learning tasks, problem solving tasks and so on" (p. 34) and activities that match with the objective of the lesson direct the class towards achievement. CLIL may be waste of time and resources if the teachers fail to build a strong link between their plans.

Tucker (1999) says that many children throughout the world are educated in second or foreign language for at least part of their formal education than exclusively in their mother tongue (as cited in Naves, 2009, p. 22). Nepal is one of those countries where despite many mother tongues, English is used as the medium of instruction. Though public schools had been using Nepali as the language of instruction in the past, they are shifting towards English. The private schools are already inside English language system. Such schools follow strict English language culture depending upon the availability of the manpower. The language of high education is English since a long time though the students have no choice regarding the language they want to use. Therefore, we need to find out a way which helps to overcome, if not possible, minimize our language problems. Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) propose; CLIL plays a role in providing pragmatic response towards overcoming linguistic shortcomings, and in promoting equal access to education for all school- aged students including those with additional support needs" (p. 7).

The teachers, while teaching the subjects other than English, integrate their subject and language plans together in such a way that both of the objectives are addressed, hence, language competence develops in them gradually.

Conclusion

CLIL is relatively a new approach in Nepalese context where we have been practicing communicative language teaching (CLT) since a long time. However, CLIL could be the sought approach that addresses our requirements; all round development of language skills. CLIL provides authentic materials and setting for language learning. A conscious teacher, through a consciously planned lesson is able to develop all skills and aspects of language along with the content to a considerable degree. To make CLIL a success, the joint effort of educational authorities, parents and teachers at both the district and school level are actively involved in planning the policy to implement (Naves & Munoz, 1999, as cited in Naves 2009, p. 31) however, there must be urgent and significant change for teacher education to be fit for the purpose.

References

- Coyle, D, Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dalton-Puffer, C. (2009). Communicative competence and the CLIL lesson. In Y. Ruiz de Zarabe, & R. Maria Jemenez Catalan, *Content integrated language learning: Evidence from research in Europe*. Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

- Dalton- Puffer, C. (2011). Content and language integrated language learning: From practice to principle. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, 182- 204.
- Gallardo Del Puerto, F., Lacabex, E. G. & Lecumberri, M. L. G. (2009). Testing the effectiveness of content integrated language learning in foreign language contexts: The assessment of English pronunciation. In Y. Ruiz de Zarabe, & R. Maria Jemenez Catalan, *Content integrated language learning: Evidence from research in Europe*. Toronto: Multilingual Matters.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *How to teach English: An introduction to the practice of English language teaching*. England: Longman.
- Hughes, A. (1989). *Testing for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krisch, C. (2008). *Teaching foreign languages in the primary school*. London: Continuum.
- Larsen- Frreman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2nd Ed.). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Naves, T. (2009). Effective content and language integrated language learning (CLIL) programmes. . In Y. Ruiz de Zarabe, & R. Maria Jemenez Catalan, *Content integrated language learning: Evidence from research in Europe*. Toronto: Multilingual Matters.
- Proctor, A., Entwistle, M., Judge, B. & McKenzie- Murdoch, S. (1995). *Learning to teach in the primary classroom*. New York: Routledge.
- Richards, J. C. & Rodgers, T. S. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Soetaert, R. & Bonamie, B. (n.d). *New rules for the language and content game: From CBLT/CALL to CLIL/TILL*.
- Wiesemes, R. (2009). Developing theories of practices in CLIL: CLIL as a post-method pedagogies'. In Y. Ruiz de Zarabe, & R. Maria Jemenez Catalan, *Content integrated language learning: Evidence from research in Europe*. Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

Author's bio

Tara Sapkota is an M. Ed in ELT and an M.Phil. scholar at Kathmandu University. She has published articles and presented papers in ELT. She has been teaching English for last seven years and more recently training teachers. Her professional interests include action research, homegrown materials and teacher learning.

An activity for a CLIL Lesson for Grade 8

Festivals

Aims

Content: Festivals ('MagheSakranti Celebrated across the Country')

Language

Vocabulary: Festival

Grammar: Passive Voice (Simple Present and Simple Past)

Skills: Reading (reading comprehension)

Preparation

Prepare two sets of worksheets for students.

Procedure

- Provide each student with a copy of the passage 'Maghe Sakranti Celebrated across the Country'
- Tell the students to read the passage. Tell them to underline the words if they are difficult for them.
- Ask a student of the class to read the text aloud for the class.
- Discuss the meanings of difficult words with the students if there are any.
- Provides the students 'Worksheet 1'. Tell the students to write the answers in one sentence.
- Write the answers to the question on the board so that everyone can check. Underline the passive verb phrases. Tell the students to underline the verb phrases accordingly.
- Discuss Passive Voice (Simple Present and Simple Past) with the students.
- Provide the students 'Worksheet 2'. Tell them to write ten sentences on 'Dasain' or 'Tihar'.
- Ask any three students to read their sentences aloud for the class.
- Provide feedback on their tasks.

Variation

The teachers may ask more than one student to read the passage allowed.

The teachers may ask the students write answers on their exercises books if the arrangement of the worksheets is difficult.

Maghe Sakranti Celebrated across Country

Post Report

Kathmandu, Jan 15

Maghe Sakranti was observed across the country on Friday with much fun-fare. The festival celebrated on the first day of Nepali month Magh marks the end of winter when friends and families feast on ghee, *chaku*, yam, *sel roti*, sweet potato, sesame *ladoos* among other, delicacies.

“Maghe Sakranti marks the beginning of spring season. It is the time to celebrate good health,” said renowned culturalist Satya Mohan Joshi.

On this day, devotees throng the rivers close to their homes and take holy dip, also known as *MakarSnan*. Doing so, it is believed, frees one from various diseases and brings positivity and purity.

Maghe Sakranti is similar to solstice festivals in other religious traditions. Maghe Sakranti is also known as MakarSakranti, because it is believed that the sun enters the astrological sign of Makar from Dhanu on this day.

The Tharu community celebrated Maghe Sankranti as Magi festival, their new year. The Tharus, who traditionally worked as bounded laborers, used to observe Maghi as the day when the indenture with their employers was renewed.

After the bonded labour system was outlawed, the Tharu community started observing the festivals as the day of their emancipation.

The Tharu people in Kathmandu organized a fair in Tundikhel to celebrate Maghi. They showcased their cultural dances like Maghauta, Jhumara, Lathi, Hurdangwa and Mahutiya.

The Newar community in Kathmandu valley call Maghe Sakranti “Ghyo-ChakuSanun”, the day celebrated by eating ghee and chaku. On this day, married daughters are invited at their parental homes to celebrate the festival together.

WORKSHEET 1

Write answers to these sentences in one sentence.

1. When was Maghe Sankranti observed?

2. What was eaten in Maghe Sakranti?

3. What is believed to happen if people take holy dip?

4. Why is Maghe Sakranti known as Makar Sakranti?

5. What is Maghe Sakranti celebrated as by Tharu Community?

6. Traditionally, why was Maghe Sakranti celebrated by Tharu Community?

7. What was organized in Kathmandu by Tharu Community to celebrate Maghi?

8. What was showcased in Tundikhel by Tharu people in Kathmandu?

9. Who are invited at parental home to celebrate the festival?
