

THE REVOLUTION IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS OF NEPAL: FROM CHALK-AND-TALK TO INTERACTIVE WHITEBOARDS

A REVOLUÇÃO NAS SALAS DE AULA DE INGLÊS DO NEPAL: DO MÉTODO DE GIZ E LISTRAS ÀS LÂMINAS INTERATIVAS

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Arun Kumar Kshetree*

*Tribhuvan University (Butwal Multiple Campus), Butwal-3, Lumbini, Nepal

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9658-9308>

arunkshetree@gmail.com

Tilak Bhusal*

*Tribhuvan University (Butwal Multiple Campus), Butwal-3, Lumbini, Nepal

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6691-7896>

tilakbhusaltu@gmail.com

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Abstract

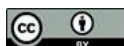
In Nepal, English language teachers are the ones who have to suffer because of the way they teach English, whether they are the primary level teachers or the university professors. The teaching of English in Nepal has been criticized from many angles for being ineffective and unsuccessful. The way they taught English in past and the way the English teachers teach at present are very much different. This paper shows how the English classes and classroom practices have been changed. It also focuses on the ways the teachers need to change themselves to survive in the 21st century English classes based on the observation of secondary level English classes of Lumbini Province and the interviews with the teacher trainers, head teachers and teachers themselves. It suggests that the teacher training programs for English teachers need to focus on developing Nepali English teachers to become more competent so that the ELT situation can be more successful and effective in Nepal. The findings of the study can be helpful to improve the English language teaching and teacher training in Nepal as the study was comprehensive enough to cover different geographical locations of Lumbini province as well as different types of schools there.

Keywords: Classroom Practices. ELT Activities. Training Skills. 21st-Century Skills. Need-Based Training. Punishment Culture.

Resumo

No Nepal, os professores de inglês são os que mais sofrem com a forma como ensinam inglês. sejam eles professores do ensino fundamental ou universitários. O ensino de inglês no Nepal tem sido criticado sob diversas perspectivas por ser ineficaz e malsucedido. A maneira como o inglês era ensinado no passado e a maneira como os professores de inglês ensinam atualmente são muito diferentes. Este artigo mostra como as aulas de inglês e as práticas em sala de aula mudaram. Também se concentra nas maneiras pelas quais os professores precisam se adaptar para sobreviver nas aulas de inglês do século XXI. com base na observação de aulas de inglês do ensino médio na província de Lumbini e em entrevistas com formadores de professores, diretores e os próprios professores. Sugere-se que os programas de formação de professores de inglês precisam se concentrar no desenvolvimento de professores de inglês nepaleses mais competentes para que o ensino de inglês como língua estrangeira (ELT) possa ser mais bem-sucedido e eficaz no Nepal. As conclusões do estudo podem ser úteis para melhorar o ensino de inglês e a formação de professores no Nepal. visto que o estudo foi abrangente o suficiente para cobrir diferentes regiões geográficas da província de Lumbini, bem como diferentes tipos de escolas.

Palavras-chave: Práticas em Sala de Aula. Atividades de Ensino de Inglês como Língua Estrangeira. Habilidades de Treinamento. Habilidades do Século XXI. Treinamento Baseado em Necessidades. Cultura de Punição.



1 INTRODUCTION

The English language teaching and learning in Nepal has a relatively short history; however, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to enhance its effectiveness. Several projects have been introduced to provide teachers with professional training and education, to improve instructional practices and, consequently, student achievement in English. Despite these efforts, the overall status of English language education in Nepal remains unsatisfactory and has been widely criticized from various perspectives.

The effectiveness of teacher education and training programs has been a central focus of such critiques. Research indicates that the transfer of training into classroom practice is notably weak, especially within English language teaching at the school and university levels. Studies examining teacher training, the transfer of skills, and classroom practices of trained teachers have consistently concluded that English language teaching and learning in Nepal have not reached the expected standard, primarily due to teachers' classroom practices across different educational levels.

In Nepal, different Universities have been trying to educate the interested individuals who want to be in the field of teaching with bachelor's, post-graduate level, and master's level, as well as M. Phil and Ph.D. level in the education stream with different names. All the universities and their education programs basically aim to produce quality teachers to fulfill the national requirement, and their curricula have been designed that way. Not only this, the government of Nepal has also invested much through many projects of teacher training to improve the teaching and the school education, and the Universities and the University Grants Commission have also invested much by financing educational research to study the teaching and learning at the school level and college levels in Nepal.

Though the teacher preparation and education programs have been going on and on to produce educated and trained human capital for the education sector, and the government of Nepal has been investing a lot of resources to improve the teaching and learning situation, the outcomes are not as expected as the research results concluded. Whatever changes are seen after the training programs have not been regular practices of the teachers, and the trained teachers soon forget those. The most severe case is the teaching and learning of English, which has been most criticized. In the case of English

teaching and learning, the teachers are criticized most as the students cannot communicate well in English even after completion of a master's degree majoring in English, studying English as a compulsory subject and primary subject for more than eighteen years. The evaluation of teaching effectiveness can be approached through multiple dimensions, such as examining students' academic achievement, assessing teachers' career progression, and considering improvements in classroom practices and the overall school environment. Additionally, societal perceptions play a subtle yet influential role in judging school performance. Among the available methods, classroom observation remains the most valid and widely accepted approach, as it enables evaluators to directly examine how teachers strive to facilitate student understanding during actual lessons. Although the specific criteria—such as the focus of evaluation and the number of lessons to be observed—may vary, a common practice has been established. Both announced and unannounced observations are generally regarded as providing sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of teaching and training.

Several researchers have examined classroom activities involving both teachers and students, arriving at varied conclusions. In this regard, the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID, 2002) reported that the classroom practices of trained teachers largely remained teacher-centred and heavily dependent on textbooks. The study identified some dominant instructional behaviors, which included: teachers requesting students for a copy of the textbook if they themselves had not brought one; teachers confirming the lesson sequence by asking students about the page or lesson number and directing them accordingly; teachers reading the text aloud or assigning a student to read, often supplementing with paraphrased explanations; the use of chorus repetition in lower grades and rote memorization of questions and answers in higher grades; and the predominant reliance on the translation method, particularly in English language classes.

Different kinds of training programs are provided to the teachers with the sole aim of improving classroom practices, which means the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the actual classroom situation. Unfortunately, the classroom practices are not in accordance with the aims of those training programs and education programs. The academia, society, and the teacher trainers and the researchers in this area are of the view that the teaching and learning of English is very weak and dissatisfactory, which requires

reform as soon as possible to receive the expected results in English. In such a situation, we want to study the classroom activities of the English teachers, focusing on how the classes are started, conducted, and concluded by the trained English teachers teaching in the basic level classes of the government-aided schools of Nepal.

At present, Nepal has been trying to develop in every sector of development, including education. Unless and until the teaching learning environment is changed in Nepal, the expectation of improving education will be almost impossible. The teachers are supposed to develop the 21st-century skills for their survival as good teachers, some of which are, as Norris (2019) puts forward, critical thinking, creativity, meta-cognition, problem solving, collaboration, motivation, self-efficacy, conscientiousness, and grit or perseverance. Although Silva (2009) describes that there are hundreds of descriptors of the skills set, including life skills, workforce skills, interpersonal skills, applied skills, and non-cognitive skills, the teachers need to adapt to the skills gradually. In fact, 21st-century education necessitates the gaining of skills to learn and maintain (Kavaklı Ulutaş, 2023). The present research paper hopefully supports the mission of the government to improve education by suggesting that teachers, teacher trainers, policy makers, and researchers, through the study and analysis of the English teachers' classroom activities in the secondary schools of Lumbini Province. Thus, the main objective of the paper is to analyze the changes in the classroom practices and teaching activities of English teachers.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

For the accomplishment of any research work, the role of the study related to the research work in the field concerned is vital. For this paper, as well as some of the research works were studied to get insights for preparing the research tools, selecting an appropriate methodology, and the ways of analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. Many researchers in Nepal and abroad were found to be interested in studying the classroom practices of the teachers in general, but the English teachers' teaching activities, as well as their classroom practices together, were not common. Thus, this research paper seems worth accomplishing. The classroom practices here refer to classroom management, teachers' attitudes, their ways of dealing with different kinds of

students, and the problems in the class. On the other hand, the teaching activities refer to the activities of teaching English.

In a research report submitted to the Education Support Advisory Team of Danida, Wagley et al. (2003) observed that trained teachers were generally unable to demonstrate significant positive changes in their classroom instruction. According to head teachers, the teacher training initiatives had not been sufficiently rigorous to enhance teachers' professional capacity and were often perceived as ritualistic rather than transformative. Classroom observations conducted to assess the transfer of training into practice revealed a clear gap between the content of training programs and the realities of classroom teaching. The report further noted that the training curricula failed to adequately address key classroom challenges, including large class sizes, student heterogeneity, difficult working conditions, and the effective use of locally available materials. District Education Officers (DEOs) emphasized that teacher trainees themselves needed to possess a certain level of competence before participating in training. They also reported widespread criticism of the training programs, as there appeared to be little observable difference in the performance of trained and untrained teachers. This ineffectiveness was attributed to four significant shortcomings: the lack of a comprehensive approach to training, the absence of need-based design, insufficient emphasis on practical application, and the absence of systematic or scientific monitoring of teachers' application of newly acquired skills.

Likewise, a report submitted by Full Bright Consultancy Pvt. Limited in 2006 in the name of 'A study on Effectiveness of Primary Teacher Training in Nepal', basically tried to identify the effectiveness of the primary teacher training programme in Nepal. After a systematic analysis of the various aspects of primary teacher training in Nepal, the report listed out the findings, which included, among others, the transfer rate of primary teacher training being only 50 percent, and the proper and more effective training could only solve the problem of lack of knowledge, skill, and attitude. The report presented that the overall impression of classroom observation of trained teachers was just moderate. That meant the teachers were following the criteria as mentioned in the evaluation sheet. However, there was room for improvement in many criteria. Indeed, the trained teachers' performance was better than that of untrained teachers. The report further described that, as trainers were not effective and efficient in using resources, teachers

were also less competent in this area. Most of them did not show creativity in using teaching aids. The content of primary teacher training was found relevant. It also revealed the fact that the students were happy with their teachers, and they expressed their satisfaction with their teachers' performance. Corporal punishment still existed in school, which was not encouraging children to go to school.

In 2007, the Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) conducted a study titled *Classroom Transformation for Better Conditions of Pedagogical Processes and Student-Centered Learning*. The study aimed to identify effective pedagogical practices across various innovative programs and to outline the requirements for classroom transformation, including the role of local stakeholders. Regarding the prerequisites for transforming classroom practices, the report highlighted several key elements: the development of a shared vision and common understanding through training or orientation; an incremental approach that allows teachers to master and build upon smaller skill sets; focused training that combines demonstration, practice, and clarification of underlying concepts; the integration of instructional materials within training sessions and their active use; alignment between curriculum, teacher instruction, and learning activities; and ongoing refresher training, monitoring, and technical support with feedback and demonstration classes as needed. The report also presented observations from classrooms supported by various donor agencies, identifying positive changes in teaching and learning practices. These included improved classroom displays, with student work showcased in approximately 25 percent of classrooms; flexible seating arrangements, including carpeted floor seating; increased teacher-student interaction, allowing most students to respond to questions such as "Who are the members of your family?"; and diversified classroom activities, where teachers avoided enforcing a single assignment for all students.

Banstola and Corrie (2023) conducted a study to explore the English Language Teaching (ELT) practices adopted by student teachers during their teaching practice at Janapriya Multiple Campus in Pokhara, Nepal. They found that the student teachers were punctual, dedicated, and responsible in their teaching practice. They employed various teaching strategies to engage students, including interactive activities and the use of teaching aids to make their classes more effective. Despite their sincere efforts to make the classes more effective, the student teachers faced challenges such as managing

classroom dynamics and addressing diverse student needs. This shows that effective teaching requires well-experienced practice in the classrooms, not just the knowledge of all these ideas. In the same way, Bhattarai and Basnet (2022) also explored the pedagogical practices of Nepali school teachers, highlighting the dominance of traditional, teacher-centered methods. They argued that such practices hinder the adoption of constructivist, student-centered learning, emphasizing the need for approaches that promote shared understanding and scaffolding to enhance students' learning experiences. The traditional practices not only make the teaching and learning conventional and teacher-centered but also hinder the development of students through student-centered techniques of teaching English. In a study, Aryal (2024) examined the importance of reflective teaching in Nepali classrooms and assessed teachers' awareness of such practices. The study found that incorporating reflective practices can significantly improve teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Thus, it suggests a variety of techniques to be implemented in the ELT classes to make them effective, which is supported by the study by Dipesh and Sangden (2021), which suggested the integration of learning-through-play approaches in Nepali classrooms. Their experiences as facilitators and participants highlighted the benefits of incorporating playful methodologies to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

In the same way, Giri and Davies (2018) compiled a comprehensive overview of the state of English language teaching in Nepal, reflecting on various research studies and practical experiences. They suggested that Nepal's linguistic diversity presents both opportunities and challenges in ELT, necessitating context-specific approaches. They indicated that there is a need for ongoing professional development to equip teachers with modern pedagogical skills, and the curriculum should be adaptable to local contexts while meeting global standards.

Poudel (2020), on the other hand, conducted a study on enhancing English language education in Nepal, noting that the government has designated English as a core component of the school curriculum. Despite this policy, the teaching and learning of English in Nepalese schools face numerous challenges. The study highlights key issues in ELT pedagogy and suggests principles to enrich learners' English proficiency. He observed that many ELT professionals and practitioners continue to rely on traditional, teacher-centred methods, predominantly lectures, both at the school and university levels.

Nevertheless, over the past three decades, English language teaching in Nepal has seen significant improvements in educational structure, pedagogical approaches, and higher education institutions. Pandey (2020) published a paper entitled *English in Nepal: A Sociolinguistic Profile*, which outlines the contemporary sociolinguistic landscape of Nepal with particular attention to the status and functions of English in society. Although Nepal falls within the *Expanding Circle*—where English traditionally holds no official status—the language has assumed significant economic, educational, and social roles, resembling its use in *Outer Circle* contexts. The study highlights the growing presence of English across various domains, particularly education. It traces the history of English in Nepal from the 17th century to the present and further examines the users and uses of English in contemporary society. The paper documents how English fulfills interpersonal, instrumental, administrative, and creative functions, while also demonstrating processes of linguistic adaptation and innovation within Nepali society.

Likewise, Fenyi and Owusu (2021) also published their research conclusions in a paper entitled ‘Classroom Management Practices of English Language Teachers: A Study of Senior High Schools in Agona West Municipality’. This paper is the outcome of a qualitative research study using class observations and interviews with 22 randomly selected language teachers from all four Senior High Schools in the Agona West Municipality. The study aimed to ascertain the classroom management practices of language teachers, the challenges in implementing the management practices, and the importance of classroom management to language pedagogy. After the analysis of the data gathered, these were analyzed thematically, and the results were presented thematically. They found that teachers were aware of the relevance of classroom management in language teaching, and they employed good student-teacher relationships, deference, physical organization of the classroom, and professionalism in managing the class despite challenges such as insufficient and ineffective teaching/learning resources, indiscipline, and large class size, among others.

Thus, there is a vast literature to review on the classroom practices, teacher training transfer in the classrooms, or teaching skills of the teachers to teach English. The study of the research reports and papers gave the idea of conducting a survey study on the classroom practices and English teaching activities together in the changing Nepali context.

3 METHOD

As this research paper is a part of comprehensive research, it is a survey of the classroom practices and teaching activities of the English teachers in the four districts of Lumbini province. The participants were as in Figure 1, and the research sites were as in Figure 2. The schools were two private English schools and two government-aided schools from each district; there were 16 high schools: eight government-aided and eight private schools. The research participants were 16 head teachers, 16 English teachers, four teacher trainers, 400 students, and eight senior English teachers teaching in the campuses. The data gathering tools were questionnaires, FGD guidelines, interview guidelines, and a class observation checklist for this study. The sampling procedure was purposive as we had to select the schools running grade XI and XII in two districts of the Tarai and two districts of the hilly region of the province. We visited the schools with all the required research tools after contacting the head teachers or principals of the schools. We first observed the classes of the English teachers without informing them previously. Then, at the same time, we distributed the questionnaire to the students and the English teacher after the class. At the same time, one of the research team members interviewed the head teacher or the principals. This way, the one who observed the class filled the checklist and prepared a report of the class observation, and the data were gathered.

4 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

After systematically analyzing the gathered data, the findings and conclusions were drawn, and some of these findings and conclusions are presented in this paper in the following subtopics.

4.1 The head teachers' views on ELT classroom practices

The views of stakeholders regarding the classroom practices of English teachers need to be studied to conclude the changing practices of the teachers. So, we thought that the most critical views would be from the head teachers of the teachers we have selected to observe their classes. Thus, we have interviewed the head teachers of all sixteen sample

schools, where we have followed the courses of the English teachers, and the views about the classroom practices of the ELT teachers have been presented in this section.

We asked them to rate their English teachers; the head teachers were found to be positive about their English teachers' performances, and thus, 12 head teachers said that their English teachers were excellent and working nicely and honestly to improve the students' English. They said that the teachers in their schools were trying their best to improve their performance by attending seminars, conferences, and training programs by different organizations. They said that the schools provide training to the English teachers regularly, and the teachers come with some positive changes in the classroom practices. They also noted that the schools provided opportunities to attend seminars and conferences organized by NELTA and other such agencies, and the teachers can benefit from such programs to improve their classroom performance, which ultimately benefits students' learning. The head teachers were satisfied with their English teachers' attempts to develop over time. Three of the head teachers were neutral about the English teachers. They said that they were common like other teachers and did not work very hard nor use any new technologies in teaching English. They said that the teachers were unable to develop their performance with time, nor their teaching skills, though they were sent to the teacher training programs regularly. They were given opportunities to attend seminars and conferences related to ELT. On the other hand, a head teacher was found to be very negative towards the English teacher there and said that the SEE results were bad and the student satisfaction was also at a very low level, as the teacher was not developing his teaching skills even after returning from the training programs. The head teacher said that he was hopeless about the English teacher, as he could not find any sign of development with time. However, the English teacher got opportunities to attend training programs like TPD training, seminars, and conferences related to English language teaching.

We also asked the head teachers about why the English teachers need to change their ways of teaching and need to improve the teaching of English and the head teachers told us that the teaching of English need to be up to date in the sense that the students need to be good at using English to study other essential things and to get skillful in computer and ICT skills they need to be good at English. More importantly, they need to survive in the age of global competition, being good at English. Though Shaikh et al. (2023) pointed out that traditional digital language learning technologies are

computer/software programs, and the teachers need to go further in the 21st century. The internet and new technologies are not very costly nowadays, and teachers can easily use them for their teaching and learning process, as Bozdoğan and Ekmekçi (2023) claimed that technology is now more accessible and affordable compared to the past, which increases the places it occupies in the field of education. The value of integrating technology into language teaching becomes evident as a result. If the teachers do not improve their teaching, the students will not be able to develop their ICT skills. They will be unable to benefit from the online resources available in the English language. The head teachers said that the English teachers need to focus on improving their pronunciation of English, fluency of speaking, and development of vocabulary skills, as well as help students develop the habit of reading texts in English, as we are very weak in English reading skills. Thus, the head teachers were found to be optimistic about the English teachers' classroom activities, which were slightly improving with time, students' needs, and the development of ICT skills, as well as the social change. They were found to be satisfied with the changes in the English language teachers' activities in the class and their changing behaviour as well as attitudes towards students and English language teaching and learning.

4.2 Teachers' classroom activities as they respond

During the research data gathering process, we asked the teachers teaching English to rate their classroom activities, which can reflect whether what they were doing in their class was due to a lack of knowledge or due to carelessness in implementing their understanding of language teaching skills in the actual classroom situation. In our sample, there were sixteen teachers: eight from the private schools and eight from the government-aided schools. In the same way, the informants were permanent teachers (7), contract teachers (8), and school Source teachers (1), and among them, nine of the teachers were teaching for 6 to 10 years. In contrast, six teachers were teaching for more than ten years, and only one teacher was found to have started training less than five years before.

The first set of statements was related to the activities associated with the initiation of the English classes, and the teachers were asked to evaluate their activities with some statements. Those activities are listed here with the average of the evaluation by all sixteen

participant teachers in their classes while starting their English courses. The first statement was about the revision of the previous lesson before beginning the lesson of the day, and the average responses reflect that most of the teachers give importance to this activity, as the average score was 7 out of 11 levels of evaluation. In the same way, the other statement was about asking students about their submission of the homework before starting the classes, which was intended to find out how much importance the teachers give to the homework, and to know whether the students were doing the homework. In this respect, the teachers were also found to place importance on learning about the homework, as the average rating score was seven for this statement. There was one teacher who replied that he did not give importance to homework as the students need to do whatever they need to do in the schools in their classes when the teachers teach. Likewise, the other statement given was about linking the previous topics with the current topic, before describing the topic of the day, as linking content horizontally and vertically is very important to students to understand things easily. In this respect, the teachers were not found to have given much importance, and thus, the average rating scale was only five. In the same way, motivating the students to ask questions about the previous topic before starting the new topic is also a significant activity of teaching English to link students' memories of earlier classes with the topic to be taught. But the average rating scale showed only five out of eleven points of the rating scale, which showed that the teachers do not give importance to the activity of motivating students to ask questions related to previous lessons taught. Another statement provided to the English teachers to rate their activities in the classroom, was about replying to the questions asked by the students about the previous topics taught. The result showed that many teachers said that they frequently answered the questions asked by the students, as it could easily link up the prior knowledge of the content with what is being taught. The teachers also replied that they themselves also frequently asked questions related to the topics taught to them previously, so that it can remind them about the content they already studied and link such knowledge with the one being taught. Thus, the evaluation of the activities to initiate the English classes shows that the teachers have a good practice of starting the English classes, as the average overall rating of the activities was found to be six, which, though not very satisfactory, is not inadequate as well.

We also asked the English teachers about their use of teaching materials as well as the preparation of the lesson plans, and it showed that the situation of teaching materials use, as well as the preparation of the lesson plans to teach English, was poor, as the overall result showed. We found that the overall average rate of the use of teaching materials and preparation of the lesson plan was slightly more than three. We asked them about the use of textbooks to teach English, and the average rate of use was six, which showed that some teachers thought that the use of textbooks to teach English was not a good idea, and in some situations, it was necessary.

There were 22 statements related to the teaching activities during content delivery and practice in the English classrooms, and the teachers evaluated their activities in the rating scale. The first question they asked was about the sequence of the contents they presented in the classes. Usually, there are various ways of sequencing the contents, like simple to complex, whole to part, known-to-unknown, etc. The teachers' responses in this aspect were that they did not believe that the sequence of the contents needs to be from simple to complex, as the average rate was found to be only four. This means that the English teachers teach things as they come without putting them in the proper sequence from simple to complex. The following statement was about the mobility of the teachers inside the class during teaching English, which ensures everyone in the class works and becomes attentive due to the movement of the teacher. The average rate in this statement was five. We found some teachers making movements here and there in the class, and some teachers remaining static in front of the podium as if they were reading the news on television. In fact, the teachers' movement in the class can be beneficial for the teachers as the students remain alert as the teacher moves towards them.

We also tried to know the views about the teachers towards giving assignments or homework to the students, and we found that the average rating scale reached eight, which means the frequency of providing assignments or homework was also common among the teachers we visited. In fact, the provision of assignments or homework is beneficial to the students as it helps students revise whatever was taught and whatever they understood, and when things are written, the concepts are clear. Those things remain permanent in the students. In the same way, the average rating scale remained only three in the statement, which we wanted to know whether the teachers suggested some web sources to the students for getting more knowledge and understanding the concepts better.

Suggesting online resources and other beneficial websites to the students who need extra expertise or to those who cannot grasp things easily is very important. The teachers need to suggest some other sources of knowledge to the students, maybe online resources, books or some other ways of shadowing, so that different levels of students can develop according to their needs and necessities.

4.3 The english classes observed

For the present research study, we have also observed the classes of the English teachers whom we have interviewed and about whom we have asked with the students they taught. For any research to make it more reliable and yield valid conclusions, information from various sources needs to be interpreted and analyzed. The research team observed the English classes and gave an observation report based on which this part of the research report is interpreted and presented here.

The initiation of the English class is essential as the whole impression depends on how the class is started as what everyone says morning shows the day. Thus, five activities for starting the class were mainly focused on, and the result is presented here.

Thus, as presented in Table 1, we can say that the start of the English classes was not found to be very effective in the schools we visited. In fact, the teachers were experienced and were supposed to be good teachers. The SEE results in English were also good, as the head teachers evaluated, and the teachers knew that they needed to teach effectively and start the class effectively to make the teaching effective and impressive to the students. But the way they started the class was not as their head teachers evaluated and as they themselves described.

We have also tried to observe the situation of using teaching materials and lesson plans by the English teachers and the problem was still not much satisfactory which means that the lesson plan as we observed was not constructed and used by the teachers at all which shows that the teachers have not prepared well to teach the particular lesson of the day and the teacher randomly entered into the class to teach whatever the students told them to teach. In fact, Cabrera et al. (2025) write that a lesson plan is a valuable tool for both undergraduate and novice teachers. It provides a compilation of theoretical and

practical materials and methodological procedures, ideas, and examples covering a wide range of up-to-date topics concerning lesson planning in ELT.

Thus, we observed that only four or 25% teachers use the real materials to describe the meaning of different difficult words in English. We also observed two teachers who used a chart of the number of students appearing in the SEE and the pass percentage of each batch of students. The teachers were criticized for not being well prepared to teach before they entered the class, as they go there without a book and see what to teach, asking the students what they studied in the previous class. Then the preparation starts by asking one student to another. But we observed a different situation in the classes we observed, as we found 13 teachers entering the class with a textbook, as Table 2 shows. This shows the changing situation in the English classes.

Regarding the core content presentation activities of the English classes, we have also tried to rate the teaching of English and the teachers' presentation in the class. We focused on specific activities, which are presented here. The first thing we observed was related to the initial presentation of the English teachers, and we found that the effective presentation was made by only three of the sample teachers out of sixteen teachers we observed. Most of the teachers did not present the content effectively in the English classes. Likewise, the vertical and horizontal linkage of the contents by the English teacher is also significant, as this can help the students understand the content easily, and the teachers may also feel at ease teaching. But unfortunately, we found only one teacher trying to link the topic with what they had already studied in the previous grade, and the students remembered the situation and easily started to talk about the things to be taught that day. All other fifteen teachers were not found to be trying to link the content with what they had already taught the students in the earlier grades.

We have also studied the closing of the English classes while observing the courses in the sample classes of the schools we visited. We basically tried to observe the class organization or management for the topic to be taught, time management of the teacher, teacher movement in the class, overall content presentation of the teacher, remedial teaching, as well as suggesting the ICT sources for their study and assigning some homework to the students. This part is the overall impression of the observer team members after the observation of the English class.

Table 3 presents the closing activities of the English classes, which include the overall impression of the total class. We tried to observe if the whole class was well organized according to the topic being dealt with in that class. The result showed that only 19 percent of the teachers were found to have a well-organized class according to the topic taught. Class organization is essential in the sense that things done or the variety of activities of teaching in the English classes need to be done at the appropriate time. We realized that only three teachers tried their best to conduct different activities in the proper way and at the relevant time. One thing we found very well was the time management of the English teachers, as the table shows that 75 percent of the teachers were found to have concluded the class in the given period. The remaining 25 percent of the teachers could not last till the bell rang, and they left the class five to eight minutes earlier. There was another activity that we found to have been used by many teachers, which was the movement of the teachers inside the class. In fact, the teachers' movement in the class makes every student aware and alert in learning and doing the things to be done in the class. The passive students also start being active due to the movement of the teacher around the class. The observation found that 62 percent of the teachers were moving in and around the class, which was beneficial for the students' learning of English.

4.4 Teacher trainers' views on teaching activities

For the present research, we also interviewed the English teacher trainers about the teaching and learning activities in the English classes, and the ideas and views of the teacher trainers are summarized in this part of the study. For the interview, we focused on ten areas of teaching English in Nepal and the teachers' activities. The gist of what the teacher trainers think about the teaching activities of the English teachers is presented in this section.

The teacher trainers believe that English teachers are changing and developing very slowly. Although school curricula demand changes, the school environment and classroom situation remain the same. They think that the teachers are unable to identify the changes in the students' situation and assume it was when they were students. At the same time, the teachers blame the problem and escape from taking newer steps. They also feel that the English teachers are changing and developing through training by

consulting different reference books and using ICT. Not only this, but the trainers were also found to be of the view that most English teachers are aware of recent changes in ELT and are trying their best to keep themselves updated with recent trends, mainly the integration of ICT in ELT. They take part in conferences, training, workshops, and webinars to get insights into the contents and pedagogy of English. They also need to learn the use of cell phones in their teaching, as Althunibat et al. (2021) write, people have access to portable gadgets like cell phones thanks to technological advancements, and the COVID-19 epidemic era increased people's usage of smartphones and other mobile devices. They also think that training helps teachers to be motivated, helps them learn and become familiar with the new methodologies, current trends, needs of the learners, use of ICT in the classrooms, action research, etc. Such training programs provide a platform for teachers to share and learn from their success stories. Because of such activities, teachers can bring about positive changes, and they become confident and committed to their profession. Not only this, but the training also provided to the teachers helps them with positive changes in the sense that they become aware of their roles and responsibilities, realize the fact that learning is life-long, and thus the training makes them self-confident, committed, and motivated in their profession. Therefore, the teacher training changes the hostile attitude in teachers into a positive one, and they are encouraged and motivated by the trainer providing the new methods and techniques so that they become positive for the teaching profession. However, a few teachers, who seem reluctant to participate in training activities, complain about their school environment and reject the possible application of training skills.

The trainers were also found to be of the view that the English teachers need to be equipped with different materials and sources like e-resources, curriculum, teacher guide, specification grids, textbooks (PDF copies), virtual classes, different Apps like Mero Siksha, Midas E-classes, free internet, and many other online dictionaries in the school. Various organizations support the professional growth and development of English teachers in Nepal, including MOE, NELTA, RELO, and British Council, etc. which organize various ICT-based training programs for English teachers. They also informed that the teachers have many resources at present, and they need to use them all, like MOE has designed and published web-based materials and virtual classes from which teachers can benefit, which provide the ICT training. CDC has launched the e-library, and virtual

classes have been conducted by many other organizations. NELTA also has various programs for English teachers, like training, publication, and the British Council has many teacher support programs in different parts of Nepal, a trainer added. The trainers were found to be of the view that the teachers have not received ICT-integrated training much; a few groups have received fundamental skills training, which does not have much impact on their teaching. During COVID-19, the teachers have learnt to operate Zoom, but after COVID-19 is over, the teachers turned back to the traditional whiteboard method. They said that the ICT integration in teacher training programs for English teachers is helpful. Many valuable and practical materials for English teachers are available, and these help teachers find out and use such portals.

5 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The present study was carried out with the general objective of suggesting ways of improving the English language teaching-learning situation by providing ways of improving it to the policy makers, educationists, teacher trainers, teacher educators, and researchers of Nepal.

The specific objectives of the present research were to analyze the classroom practices of English teachers of government-aided and private schools, to explore the causes of positive and negative changes in English classes, and to analyze and assess the English language teaching activities.

Studying and analyzing the ELT classroom activities and practices is not an easy task, as this requires stakeholders from different angles. Thus, according to our specific objectives of the present study project, we gathered information about the English teachers' classroom activities and practices. For this we have consulted the teachers themselves, their views about what is good ELT practice and asked them what they do, their head teachers' opinions related to the activities of English teachers, their students' views about what they do in the English class and their teacher trainers' opinions about what they have given and what they expect from the teachers about their English teaching activities and practices as well as what we found there in their actual classes while teaching English. In research, such practice is called triangulation, and it increases trustworthiness in the research findings and conclusions. Moreover, the present research

work gathered information from 400 students studying in grades XI and XII, 16 English teachers (8 from government-aided schools and eight from private schools), 16 head teachers, four teacher trainers, and about 30 other teachers, experts in ELT, and head teachers who participated in the FGDs as well as the class observation. With the views of the stakeholders regarding the ELT classroom activities and practices of the teachers, we came to some conclusions on the changing classroom activities and practices.

The teachers in their schools seem to be trying their best to improve their performances by attending seminars, conferences, and training programs by different organizations, as they come with some positive changes in the classroom practices. Private schools provide opportunities to attend seminars, training programs and workshops, and conferences organized by NELTA and other National and International agencies, and the teachers can benefit from such programs to improve their classroom performances that ultimately benefit students' learning. Some government-aided schools also give such opportunities. It is seen that the English teachers' attempts to develop with time help them change with time and the needs of the students and society, as change is an inevitable part of teaching, which ensures development, and the changes in the classroom practices have been clearly visible in the present-day ELT classes of both types of schools.

The English teachers nowadays try using more English in their classes, and they try using different kinds of language games in their classes, which help students learn different language skills at the same time, with fun. The teachers in the past used to take a cane stick to punish the students in the class, and punishing the students for not knowing things or for doing something bad was a fundamental part of the culture in the schools. Still, the teachers' attitudes towards punishment have drastically changed. Today, the teachers do not use any physical punishment unless they find something terrible in the class. The English teachers have changed, and they have developed their skills of teaching, preparing well. In the past, the teachers would not prepare anything they were teaching; they did not even read the topic or lesson they had to teach, and they used to enter classes without a book. They would ask for the book from a student and start asking what they studied the day before, and then they would begin to describe things in Nepali after reading the text for some time. This way, the English teachers in the past ruined the aims and objectives of teaching and learning English. But nowadays, the teachers have

developed the culture of preparing the lesson, and some teachers prepare the lesson plan as well. Some of the teachers use teaching materials, including ICT resources, for teaching English, and they have started using the PowerPoint projector while teaching English in some schools.

The most significant change about the English teachers is that the teachers nowadays have started developing themselves and have developed the tendency of learning new ways of teaching effectively. It is great that the teachers themselves evaluate their skills and performance of teaching and participate in training programs, seminars, workshops, and conferences related to English language teaching and learning. Another significant fact about the teachers' changes over the last five years was that some of the teachers teaching English had published research articles in the local and national journals. Some of the English teachers observe the classes of other teachers and try to mentor novice teachers which is really good practice in the development of teaching skills for the novice teachers

6 CONCLUSION

With the analysis and evaluation of the views of different stakeholders of the school education, English teachers, head teachers, students, and teacher trainers, and based on the class observation of the English teachers of Lumbini Province, we came to some conclusions related to the activities of the English teachers there.

The situation of English language teaching in the schools has been slightly changed, though it is somewhat better in the private schools than in the government-aided schools. The English teachers are changing and developing through training by consulting different reference books and using ICT. Not only this, but most English teachers are also aware of recent changes in ELT and are trying their best to keep themselves updated with recent trends, mainly the integration of ICT in ELT. They take part in conferences, training, workshops, and webinars to get insights into the content and pedagogy of English. Although school curricula demand changes, the school environment and classroom situation remain the same. The teachers seem to be unable to identify the changes in the students' situation and just assume it is as it was when they were students. At the same time, the teachers blame the problem and just escape from taking newer steps.

In most of the government schools we visited, they did not have English newspapers nor had any sound library with books and journals related to ELT methods and teaching and learning of the English language. Still, most of the private schools have managed to have at least English newspapers and some journals. In such a situation, it may be difficult for the English teachers to manage the things to read and develop their knowledge, and this hampers the development of the students as well.

The school environment and the other teachers are the main factors that prevent the English teachers from performing well and effectively teaching English. When the English teachers in the government-aided schools start teaching, developing, and collecting varieties of teaching materials in the English classes, the other teachers start laughing at them, and they criticize the English teachers about the different activities that they use in the English classes after they return from the training programs. One of the essential things is that the English teachers need to continue performing the activities in the English classes, as they learned the skills and activities during the training programs. The English teachers' classroom activities are slightly improving with time, students' needs, and the development of ICT skills, as well as the social change.

Paker (2023) is of the view that the 21st-century skills can easily be adapted into the second/foreign language teaching and learning process. As the purpose of language teaching is to attain communicative competence in the target language, the activities and materials can be designed and practiced by considering 21st-century skills. Teacher training helps teachers to be motivated, helps them learn and become familiar with the new methodologies, current trends, needs of the learners, use of ICT in the classrooms, action research, etc. Such training programs provide a platform for teachers to share and learn from their success stories. Because of such activities, teachers can bring about positive changes, and they become confident and committed to their profession. Not only this, but the training also provided to the teachers helps them with positive changes in the sense that they become aware of their roles and responsibilities, realize the fact that learning is life-long, and thus the training makes them self-confident, committed, and motivated in their profession. Therefore, the teacher training changes the hostile attitude in teachers into positive, and they are encouraged and motivated by the trainer providing the new methods and techniques so that they become positive for the teaching profession. However, a few teachers, who seem reluctant to participate in training activities, complain

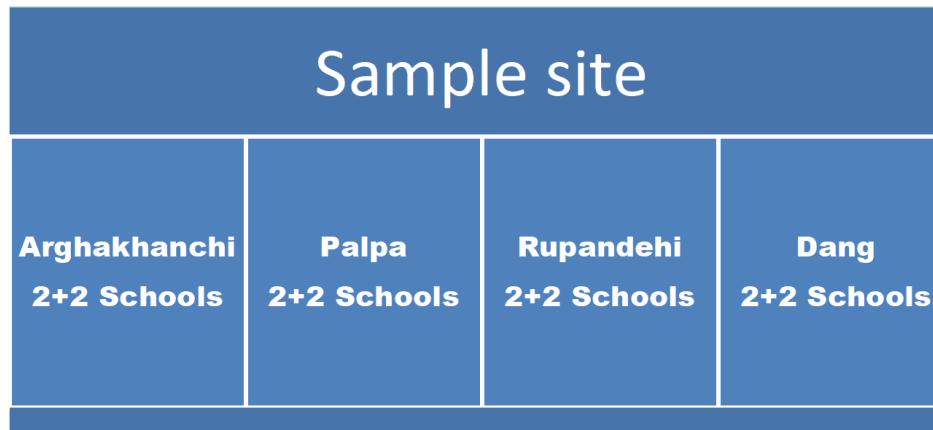
about their school environment and reject the possible application of training skills. The only major conclusion from this research is that the changes in the classroom practices and language teaching activities have been gradually changing, and we should be hopeful that soon the whole situation of ELT will be satisfactory in Nepal as well.

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ANNEX

Figure 1*Study Participants***Figure 2***Sample Site***Table 1***Initiation of the Class*

Activities	Yes	No	Remarks
Revision of Previous Lesson	7	9	
Asking about Homework	6	10	
Linking Previous Knowledge to the Topic of the Day	4	12	
Any Questions Asked Before Class	1	15	
Asking about the Previous Lesson	1	15	

(Source: Field Study 2024)

Table 2*Use of Teaching Tools and Lesson Plans*

SN	Activity	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Teaching Materials Used	2	14	
2	ICT Related Materials (Mention)	1	15	
3	Real materials and other Materials	4	12	
4	Textbook used (Time and Situation)	13	3	
5	Lesson Plan or any Planning Proof	0	16	
6	Lesson Plan Structure	0	16	
7	Classroom Display Materials	2	14	

(Source: Field Study 2024)

Table 3*Closing Activities of the English Class*

SN	Activity	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Well-organized class for the topic to teach	19	81	
2	Timely conducting the lesson	75	25	
3	Teacher movement inside the class	62	38	
4	Content presentation from known to unknown	31	69	
5	Any remedial teaching done in the class	6	94	
6	Suggested ICT sources for their study	0	100	
7	Any task given to the students as homework	12	88	

Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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