

STRATEGIES OF TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS IN SECONDARY ENGLISH
CLASSROOM: AN AUTO/ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Kapil Raj Neupane

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Kapil Raj Neupane* for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English Language Education presented on *26 January 2025*, entitled *Strategies of Teaching Speaking Skills in Secondary English Classroom: An Auto/ Ethnographic Study*.

APPROVED BY

.....
Prof. Laxman Gnawali, PhD
Dissertation Supervisor

.....
Asst. Prof. Siddhartha Dhungana, PhD
Dissertation Supervisor

This dissertation has explored my experience as a learner of 'English Language' in an under-resourced classroom setting and, later, my knowledge of teaching speaking through activities in English class. Being an auto/ethnographic researcher, I reflected upon my own as well as my participants' experiences of learning English and practices of teaching English with various activities to explore their practices.

Through auto/ethnographic introspection of my socio-cultural and pedagogic context, I have tried to answer my question on how secondary level English teachers and I understand, develop and practice activity-based teaching speaking in the classroom.

As the participants of this research, two Secondary English teachers of Bhaktapur and the researcher himself were purposively selected to explore the activities-based methods through data collection methods like observation, interview and field notes. Subsequently, after the transcription of the data, themes were taken out for further analysis and discussion.

Along with the gradual transformation of the teachers from usual to activity-based teaching, the study revealed that the learners benefited in a number of ways from activity-based language teaching. First of all, they could learn English, where there were significantly fewer lectures and more of their involvement physically and mentally. Moreover, activities provided them the platform to enjoy and learn through

performance. They were exposed to various activities and creativity along with the learning of the language. The teachers tried to make their class as full of activities as possible.

The outcomes of the study showed some of its significant implications for English teachers, school management, parents and English language teaching policy makers as a whole. Activity-based language was observed to have visible and productive results over the usual lecture method of language teaching. It seems to be a learner-centered participatory pedagogy.

.....
Kapil Raj Neupane
Degree Candidate

26 January 2025

शोध सार

अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर डिग्रीको लागि कपिलराज न्यौपानेको शोध प्रबंधको शीर्षकः "माध्यमिक तहको अंग्रेजी कक्षामा बोल्ने सीप सिकाउने रणनीतिहरू : एक आत्म/नृवंशात्मक अध्ययन" १३ माघ २०८१ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

प्रा. लक्ष्मण ज्ञवाली, पिएचडी
शोध निर्देशक

उप. प्रा. शिद्धार्थ ढुंगाना, पिएचडी
शोध निर्देशक

यस शोधकार्यले स्रोतको कमी भएको क्षेत्रमा अंग्रेजी सिक्ने मेरो अनुभवदेखि अंग्रेजी कक्षामा गतिविधिहरूको माध्यमबाट विद्यार्थीहरूलाई बोल्न सिकाउने अभ्याससम्म मेरो व्यक्तिगत यात्राको अन्वेषण गर्दछ । अटो/एथ्नोग्राफिक अनुसन्धान भएकाले, मैले आफ्नो अनुभवलाई मात्रै नभई सहभागीहरूको अंग्रेजी सिक्ने र गतिविधि-आधारित शिक्षण अभ्यासहरूलाई पनि प्रतिबिम्बित गरेको छु । मेरो अध्ययनको मुख्य उद्देश्य यो प्रश्नको उत्तर पत्ता लगाउनु होः माध्यमिक तहका अंग्रेजी शिक्षक र मैले कक्षामा गतिविधि-आधारित बोल्ने शिक्षणलाई कसरी बुझ्छौं, विकास गर्छौं, र कार्यान्वयन गर्छौं ?

यसका लागि भक्तपुरका दुई माध्यमिक तहका अंग्रेजी शिक्षक र म आफैँलाई अनुसन्धान सहभागीका रूपमा छानियो । अनुसन्धानमा डेटा सङ्कलनका लागि निरीक्षण, अन्तर्वार्ता, र फिल्ड नोट्स प्रयोग गरियो । डेटा लिपिबद्ध गरेपछि, गहन विश्लेषण र छलफलका लागि मुख्य विषयवस्तुहरू छनोट गरियो ।

अध्ययनको क्रममा, शिक्षकहरूले परम्परागत व्याख्यान-आधारित शिक्षणबाट गतिविधि-आधारित शिक्षणतर्फ क्रमिक रूपमा परिवर्तन गर्दै गएको पाइएको छ । यस परिवर्तनले विद्यार्थीहरूको सिकाइलाई धेरै फाइदा पुर्याएको देखियो । पहिलो, कक्षाकोठामा व्याख्यान कम गरियो र विद्यार्थीहरूको शारीरिक तथा मानसिक संलग्नतामा वृद्धि भयो । दोस्रो, गतिविधिहरूले विद्यार्थीहरूलाई सिक्ने र रमाउने एक खुला मञ्च प्रदान गर्यो । उनीहरूलाई विभिन्न सिर्जनात्मक गतिविधिमा संलग्न गराउँदै, उनीहरूको सिर्जनशीलता र भाषागत क्षमताको विकास भयो । शिक्षकहरूले कक्षालाई सकेसम्म गतिविधिमूलक बनाउने प्रयास गरे ।

यस अध्ययनले नेपालका अंग्रेजी शिक्षक, विद्यालय व्यवस्थापन, अभिभावक, र शिक्षा नीति निर्माताहरूका लागि महत्त्वपूर्ण निष्कर्षहरू प्रस्तुत गरेको छ । गतिविधि-आधारित शिक्षणले परम्परागत व्याख्यान विधिको तुलनामा अधिक देखिने र प्रभावकारी परिणाम दिएको छ । यो विधि विद्यार्थी-केन्द्रित सहभागितामूलक शिक्षाशास्त्रको एक उदाहरण हो । त्यसैले, यदि विद्यालय व्यवस्थापनले शिक्षकहरूको पेशागत विकासमा ध्यान केन्द्रित गर्यो भने यो ज्ञान प्रभावकारी हुन सक्छ । साथै, यो सुझाव दिन्छ कि शिक्षा

मन्त्रालयले अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षणका लागि पाठ्यक्रम र नीतिहरू बनाउँदा गतिविधि-आधारित विधिलाई केन्द्रमा राख्नुपर्छ । यो शैलीले भावनात्मक र मानवीय सम्बन्ध स्थापित गर्ने प्रयास गर्छ, जसले पढ्ने व्यक्तिलाई प्रत्यक्ष अनुभवसँग जोड्न मद्दत गर्दछ ।

.....

कपिलराज न्यौपाने
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

१३ माघ २०८१

This dissertation entitled *Strategies of Teaching Speaking Skills in Secondary English Classroom: An Auto/Ethnographic Study* presented by *Kapil Raj Neupane* on 26 January 2025.

APPROVED BY

..... 26 January 2025
Prof. Laxman Gnawali, PhD
Dissertation Supervisor

..... 26 January 2025
Asst. Prof. Siddhartha Dhungana, PhD
Dissertation Supervisor

..... 26 January 2025
Surya Sigdel, PhD
External Examiner


..... 26 January 2025
Assoc. Prof. Tikaram Poudel, PhD
Head of Department. Language Education

..... 26 January 2025
Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD
Dean/ Chair of Research Committee

I understand that my dissertation will become a part of the permanent collection of the library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

..... 26 January 2025
Kapil Raj Neupane
Degree Candidate

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work, and it has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree at any other university.

.....

Kapil Raj Neupane

Degree Candidate

26 January 2025

DEDICATION

To my devoted family, my inspiring teachers, enlightened mentors, and my well-wishers, who directly or indirectly involved me and showered me with their blessings, faith, unconditional affection, and continuous inspiration to complete my research journey to this point.

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Kapil Raj Neupane
Degree Candidate

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABT	Activity-Based Teaching
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELL	English Language Learners
IATEFL	International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
NELTA	Nepal English Language Teachers' Association
TERSD	Transformative Education for Research and Sustainable Development
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

PROLOGUE

Mentoring in a class is not the act of controlling the noise but the act of connecting the curious voice. Speaking is not an act of perfection but a practice to pace on the path through progress.

Different Activities connect the learners with learning as they carry a deep meaning

A: Action

C: Creativity

T: Teamwork

I: Innovation

V: Vision

I: Initiative

T: Talent

I: Inspiration

E: Energy

S: Success

I recall the time when I entered the classrooms, understanding that teaching wasn't just about controlling the noise. Still, it was about converting the voices of the curious learners into purposeful and expected expression. I could notice the interest in learning in their eyes, but at the same time, could also sense a deeper obstacle, their hesitation, especially those who had limited exposure to English. It made me nostalgic about my struggles as a student, when I thought of speaking as a test, I could never succeed. With time, I understood that talking is not about perfection, but it is a process of progress. It is not the destination, but it is the direction of covering steps, day by day, to feel confident without hesitation. It is changing fear to speak into confidence.

As I remember my bygone days, when I imagine classroom activities, they were more than just tasks; they were opportunities for growth. I claim that the word "ACTIVITIES" is not just an acronym, but a philosophy with a worthy dynamic and

meaningful with Action, Creativity, Teamwork, Innovation, Vision, Initiative, Talent, Inspiration, Energy, and Success. After all, each element plays a part in the lifelong learning journey. Through this lens, I view the classroom as an opportunity for endless possibilities. It is not only about teaching English but also about building an environment where students connect, express ideas, and develop confidence enough to make mistakes with correction.

In any classroom where artifacts were unavailable and English speaking was difficult, I mirrored myself playing a role not just of a teacher, but a guide and a mentor and a convincing colleague. This approach developed as the heart of my mentoring technique, where every participant creates a classroom as a threshold to growth, resilience, and honest communication with confidence.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the context of the study, including the definition of speaking; my teacher's mentoring techniques for speaking, and my own experience of teaching and learning speaking. Likewise, it also includes the problem statement related to the difficulties that the students face while they talk in English. Then, it presents the purpose of the study and research questions. Finally, it contains the rationale and delimitations of the study, dealing with the reasons behind the importance of my research problem.

Scene Setting: Childhood Experiences of a Professional Teacher

My childhood was spent in a scenic rural space in Kathmandu Valley, close to natural experiences and nature-based outdoor activities, like games, fishing, chopping the woods in different shapes and sizes, and several fun activities. It kept me closer to my natural language with freedom of expression. The main essence to me was roaming and wondering with an imaginative and creative thought process, which strengthened my life skills. The tendency to live with nature had a different dimension when I went to school with my parents' support from primary to secondary school.

I grew up in a middle-class family of Brahmins. My grandfather was a Pandit and translator of some Sanskrit religious books, such as the Bhagavad Gita. My grandmother knew different references to Hindu myths. She had a collection of various references to those stories and other hymns of 'gods and goddesses' as my bedtime stories. She used to share all the stories and claim that I could write all of them one day after I studied. My grandfather had several religious books at home, such as The Ramayan, The Mahabharat, The Bhagwat Geeta, etc. Every moment I touched his books, he told me I could be a Pandit like him after studying and performing religious ceremonies such as *poojas and saptahas*. With this childish inspiration, my passion for higher education was deeply rooted in my mind since childhood. Like my cousin brothers, I also completed my education in the village of Bhaktapur from a Secondary school, a morning school. I studied English in the Nepali medium with unnoticeable English artifacts, presentation, and exposure. My curiosity about higher studies dragged me up to the Bachelor's level. After my

Bachelor's, Master's in English literature, again my Bachelor's in Education to be a better teacher of English and MPhil in ELE as the fire within me grew to learn English.

In 2001, after completing my certificate level, I started teaching with a philosophy of wanting to create a difference. Entering the classroom for the first time as a teacher, I was accompanied by both nervousness and excitement, but in a short while, the excitement turned into dissatisfaction and frustration. The learners looked at me with questioning eyes, whispering with their bench partners. Even though I tried to explain the concept of the lesson, I lacked the strategies to teach and learn together simultaneously. Back then, I had little knowledge about teaching speaking effectively. When I began the class explaining the grammar topic Adjective, I created a sentence that said, 'The horse runs fastly.' One of the students in the class stood immediately and corrected me, telling me that the word 'fastly' is incorrect as it is not in the dictionary. I regretted being unable to select the correct word and misusing it.

In those early years, I believed that various actions, such as reading aloud and moving around the classroom, were strategies for teaching speaking. However, I realized that was much required. I enjoyed engaging my students with jokes and stories during my lessons. Luckily, working as an English teacher in a progressive school provided multiple opportunities to attain training and practice various mentoring activities. The school emphasized creative teaching approaches over traditional lecturing methods, which significantly enhanced my understanding of effective strategies for teaching speaking.

Background for Activity-Based Learning

Activity-based learning (ABL) is an innovative education approach involving various real-life activities different from traditional techniques. This practice has proven to increase students' engagement and achievement of learning targets.

The first advantage of activity-based learning is that it increases student participation and interaction. Gulati (2008) stated that students are more interested in participating actively in their education if they are engaged in hands-on activities. This active involvement helps to maintain interest and makes learning more enjoyable. It also develops the understanding of the concept and its utility in the life of the students who engage in activity-based learning and tend to understand and retain information more than those taught through traditional techniques. Research by Prince (2004) claimed that active learning strategies, including ABL, develop

learners' performance on both conceptual and applied aspects. This is only due to applying what they have learned in a practical context, reinforcing the understanding.

The second advantage of activity-based learning is that it motivates and increases the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. As learners engage in activities, they often think critically and decide. This process helps to develop the necessary skills. Bell and Kozlowski (2008) claimed that experiential learning activities are a component of ABL and contribute to developing problem-solving skills. It also adds collaborative activities that the students need to work on. This develops skills such as communication and teamwork. Johnson et al. (1998) focused on cooperative learning, a form of ABL that adds positive interdependence and individual accountability, leading to better communication skills and a deeper understanding of the material. The Ministry of Education (2019) focuses on implementing speaking activities in the curriculum and understanding the value of interactive tasks, such as group discussions, role-plays, and presentations, to increase the communicative competence of learners and confidence in real-life contexts. Some activities are connected with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, which prioritizes meaningful interaction as a requirement for developing speaking skills (Richards, 2006).

The third benefit is adding adaptability to different learning styles, making it an inclusive approach to education. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory suggests that individuals have different learning styles. Learning is most effective when it involves a combination of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. ABL caters to these diverse learning preferences by incorporating a variety of activities.

Rationale of the Study

It is a general truth that every learner likes to learn in a creative and fun environment. Similarly, every teacher likes to see their learners engaged and actively stimulated while learning, and every school wishes to create a progressive environment. Activities have a lot of practical implications in education, in this case, English language education. Along with its creative impact on learning, it improves overall school engagement and academic, social, and cultural learning. Therefore, everyone: teachers, parents, school management, book writers, and researchers will benefit from activity-based language learning in a participatory culture, which is a need of modern education (Kessler & Bikowski, 2020).

Spoken English lessons encourage learners to communicate productively in academic, professional, and social contexts. Long sentences should be shorter, and students should be confident enough to apply English in the classroom setting, in their workplace, and for their social existence and upward mobility (Saraswathi, 2004, p. 84). Learners should be able to use English and display their knowledge as soon as they acquire some competence in speech. Xiaoju (1984) argues, “Communicative competence doesn’t mean the ability just for uttering words or sentences. It involves the ability to react mentally and verbally in a communicative situation. The mental reaction is the root of the verbal reaction.” (p. 59).

Communicative competence cannot be developed just by applying the few knowledge gaps in activities such as role-play, group work, pair work, games, and drama in English classrooms. That’s why the teachers must create a real-life situation where the learners try to achieve their desires and purposes. In the same way, the mentors must design a liberal environment for the learners to understand. The various teacher-centered activities should not stop them from imagination, practice and presentation. So, the expression of language helps the students to acquaint themselves with the language structure. If the situation is provided, it allows the learners to learn and speak the language in class and out of the four walls too (Verghese, 1989). Motivation plays a significant factor in second language learning. That’s why the teacher needs to motivate the learners to communicate, no matter the level of communication they want to reach. Ur (1996) claims, “Learner’s motivation makes teaching and learning immeasurably easier and more pleasant, as well as more productive” (p. 274). So, the rationale behind this study is to research my participants' possible activities and research for teaching speaking through activities as a second language. Learner-centric activities enhance understanding of the ontological premises of English and contribute to policymakers and researchers in education through language teaching strategies.

This research has tried to identify the actual scenario of the classroom atmosphere by examining the speaking strategies from a bird's-eye view. Hence, this research makes a noticeable contribution to all education stakeholders, English teachers, students, researchers in the field of education, activity lovers, and many professionals and non-professionals, even an individual interested in keeping an eye on easy and possible pedagogy. This research paves the way through literature and findings in the field of study by justifying possible outcomes.

Problem Statement

Every unique student enters a single classroom and dives into a single pool of pedagogy; they find it difficult to pace. Many teachers face the same problem regarding language teaching due to one-way methods of mentoring. They feel it is a disappointing challenge to teach the English language. In several traditional classrooms, learners are forced to dive into a single pool of pedagogy where a uniform teaching pattern that believes all learners respond in the same way to instruction, often not realizing their diverse requirements, backgrounds, and learning styles (Tomlinson, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). At the same time, some tools can be implemented to grow interest in learning. I have studied that language teaching is possible in a communicative and activities-based environment because if they communicate, they learn and express better. Still, if this environment is not created, due to the lack of practice, the learners do not get engaged in the classroom appropriately.

Activities lead to confidence while speaking English as a new language. Since the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) 2017 has designed the curriculum of English language teaching at different levels based on communicative design, an English teacher is supposed to teach the subject in a participatory method. Still, the process is not being practiced well. Richards and Rodgers (2014) state that the CLT syllabus is designed to teach language through communication, and a learner learns language by using it to communicate. Classroom activities are supposed to have meaningful communication and interaction. Children learn through activities and communication (Smith & Laslett 2009). So, honest communication comes when there is participation.

Similarly, the School Education Sector Plan (2022/23-2031/32 SESP) focuses on the quality of education agenda and recommends the implementation of child-friendly, learner-centered pedagogy for active learning and the progress of techniques and focuses on experiential learning. It seems to focus on creative and fun activities to ensure learners' involvement, such as various art forms. The objective is to help the learners learn about the subject matter through memorable learning experiences and speaking. Every teacher finds a critical situation to teach in the classroom and spends half of the period connecting with the students, and then only the rest of the period is for teaching. I have experienced difficulties running out various activities and

demonstrating confidence-developing activities in the classroom because of the students' lack of participation and hesitation to speak.

The language teachers complain about insufficient teaching materials and the lack of a favorable environment. Timsina (2000) claimed that most material developers understand the need to help learners develop confidence, but most attempts to do so are through a process of simplification. In this context, it is proved that there is an essence of research in an English classroom where not all students interact or participate. Therefore, as a researcher, I have tried to explore how I and other English teachers perform activities where the students do not show interest in learning and cannot express their feelings in the classroom.

Developing speaking skills in language learning is a great challenge in the context of Nepalese classes. Khan (2020) presented the objective of finding out the strategies adopted by teachers for teaching speaking in large-sized ELT classes. Developing the communicative abilities of the learners simply by classroom teaching is challenging because of the problems connected with teachers, students' materials and the classroom.

Adhikari (2010) concluded that the obstacles to teaching speaking in the context of Nepal are a gap between what should be done and what is happening in classes. The researcher claimed that the lack of participation is a relative issue in developing countries like Nepal. The documents of curriculum development, the voices of experts, and different international researchers mention that participatory learner-centered education is the basis of language learning. We have not been practicing; it needs to be looked at through research as an auto/ethnographic study because other researchers do not include the practice of observing the culture of participants, including the classroom challenges and possible solutions. This research explored the issues by diving deeply into one's own experiences to find applicable, practical strategies for effective English language teaching and learning.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored activity-based teaching and learning practices employed by the researcher and two secondary English language teachers by focusing on their effective practices in teaching speaking.

Research Question

This study was oriented to find out the answer to the given question:

How do secondary-level English teachers and I understand, develop, and practice activity-based teaching speaking strategies in the classroom?

Delimitations

This research is based on speaking activities in the English language classroom that focus mainly on role-play, dramatization, story chain/telling, and presentation as major activities in enhancing speaking skills through mine and my participants' narratives. I have delimited this study with the lens of social constructivism by focusing on the dialogic process to construct realities by studying distinct human behavior. Similarly, Social Cognitive Theory has been adopted by referring to human agency and self-efficacy as a source of decision-making capabilities of me and my teachers to address the issues of teaching and learning speaking.

Chapter Summary

The whole section explained why and how I was motivated to research strategies for teaching English in my learning and teaching career. Besides this, I have formulated a research question to guide my study. I also discussed the purpose of my study, the reasons for carrying out the research, and the delimitation.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explains the theories and earlier studies researched by various scholars. A literature review is a stock-taking work of available literature that deals with different ideas and opinions presented by other scholars in the field of English language education, which is related to my research topic. This chapter begins with a literature review, theories on speaking as a skill, and characteristics of speaking skills. Likewise, it explains what teaching speaking is, the fundamental components underlying speaking effectiveness, different stages of speaking, various activities for teaching speaking, significant problems with speaking, the psychological factors in speaking skills related to research, and ends with the gap I noticed.

English Language Teaching

English Language Teaching (ELT) is the process of teaching and learning the English language to non-native speakers. It is a challenging and multifaceted branch that encompasses language acquisition theories, pedagogical approaches, curriculum design, materials development, assessment, and teacher training (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). ELT can take place in different settings, such as schools, language centers, universities, and online platforms, and it can target different purposes, such as academic, professional, or personal communication. The goal of ELT is to assist learners in developing their linguistic competence in English, including the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as their pragmatic and sociolinguistic knowledge to communicate effectively and appropriately in different contexts (Brown, 2007).

English Language Teaching (ELT) has a long history in Nepal, dating back to the 1950s when Nepal connected to the outside world. English was introduced as a compulsory subject in schools in the late 1950s, and the first English-medium school was established in 1961 (Giri, 2015). Since then, English has become an essential communication in Nepal, particularly in education, business, and government. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Nepalese government emphasized English language education, and the number of schools offering English medium education increased significantly (Sapkota, 2018). The British Council and other international organizations have also significantly promoted English language teaching in Nepal, provided teacher training

programs, and sponsored educational initiatives (Thapa, 2020). In recent years, Nepal has faced challenges in improving the quality of English language teaching. Many teachers lack the necessary training and qualifications, and resources such as textbooks and materials are often in short supply (Hutt, 2015). However, there are ongoing efforts to address these issues, with organizations such as the Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA) working to improve teacher training and support (Giri, 2015).

Teaching Speaking English: Perspectives and Strategies

Speaking is the most crucial among the other language skills since the Speaker of a language refers to those who know a language well, as if all other language skills (listening, reading, and writing) are included in speaking skills (Ur, 1996). While speaking, one can reveal how much they know a language, how much the speaker demonstrates the correct grammar, vocabulary and so forth. Therefore, speaking can cover other language skills, and it is essential to improve them significantly. Speaking skills are the most crucial part of an EFL course. With the improvement of technology and the need for international communication in the current century, language learners take part in language classes to enhance their speaking ability. Those learners who are more effective in their speaking performances are much more successful and effective in school and other areas of their lives (Malmir & Shoorcheh, 2012). Based on Folse (2006), most people believe that knowing a language means the ability to speak a language since speech is essential to communicate in society with other people, but speaking a language for foreign language learners can be very difficult because adequate oral interaction requires the ability to utilize the language appropriately in social communication. Interaction involves verbal communication and paralinguistic elements of speech, such as stress, pitch, and intonation (Fulcher, 2003; Seligson, 1997).

Oral and spoken interaction concerns producing and negotiating language differently, which is used in writing. Speakers and listeners deal with producing and processing language in spoken interaction at the same time. However, these two skills are highly sensitive and greatly dependent on time constraints, which means they must process language without any opportunity to go back, check, and make necessary changes. Speakers must also consider their relationship with others or to whom they are listening and adjust their language based on the meaning they wish to convey (Thornbury, 2007). Among the macro skills of language, speaking is the most

challenging skill to assess, meaning that recognizing oral ability is difficult (Joiner & Jones, 2003). Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Speaking is highly dependent on the context in which it occurs. The participants, their background knowledge, the aim, the subject experiences, and physical and mental circumstances may affect the form and meaning of speaking.

A speaker's skill and speech habits impact the success of any exchange (Van Duzer, 1997). Speakers must anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of specific discourse situations. They also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback, or redirecting (Burns & Joyce, 1997).

According to Luoma (2004), two methods are applied to determine and assess speaking skills. The student's behavior and performance are observed and evaluated immodestly using observation. In the structured approach, the students are required to perform one or more specific oral communication tasks. Then, their performances on the tasks were observed and evaluated. The task can be applied indirectly or in a group. In the present study, the researchers administered a structured approach for interviewing each participant individually (Malmir & Shoorcheh, 2012).

Fluency and Accuracy

While talking about teaching speaking skills, the first concept that usually comes to mind is the fluency/accuracy dichotomy (Solcova, 2011a). Segalowitz (2003) stated that fluency is the ability in the second language to produce or comprehend utterances smoothly, rapidly and accurately (p. 384). It reveals that both concepts are closely related to each other. Two essential aspects can influence fluency: Speed of delivery and regularity, which means a natural amount and distribution of pauses (Bygate, 2009).

Koponen and Rigggenbach (2000) claim that it is impossible to define fluency as a unitary concept" (p. 5). Carrol (2004) notes that in discussions on second language talk, it is not well established what exactly causes the perceived non-fluency" (p. 202). Koponen and Rigggenbach (2000) continue to discuss that within language assessment discussions, fluency is often understood as a lack of excessive breaks in speech (p. 8). Freed (2000) also highlights that the terms competence, proficiency and fluency are indeed commonly used interchangeably, and also given multiple definitions (p. 244). Lennon (2000) states fluency as the rapid, smooth, accurate, lucid, and efficient translation of thought or communicative intention into

language under the temporal constraints of online processing (p. 26). In conclusion, there is no single statement for fluency. For example, Lennon (2000), Wennerstam (2000), Freed (2000), and Carroll (2004) state that pauses, breaks, hesitations, repeats, and other such phenomena do not reveal that the speaker is not fluent.

Prosody

According to Chafe (1994), prosody indicates the pauses, prominences, pitches, and changes in the expression of the voice, which strengthen spoken interaction. Chafe (2006) clarifies that spoken language is developed in prosodic phrases or in a different way, intonation units, regardless of whether read aloud or spontaneously spoken (p. 62). Chafe (1994) explained these intonation units as “changes in pitch or voice quality as changes in the duration of syllables and words, as well as alternating with speaking and a dialogue (p. 63). Hughes and Szepek (2006) note that “turn-taking in a dialogue is heavily influenced by prosody, as interlocutors rely on prosodic cues in addition to syntactic cues when taking their turn as a speaker” (p. 127). Based on the definition it can be said that prosody is likely to affect fluency. Wennerstam (2000) considers the role of prosody in fluency and states that “fluent speakers do use pitch levels to indicate relationships between phrases and to segment their speech into turns” (p. 116).

Grammatical and Lexical Features

Miller and Weinert (1998) discuss spoken language grammar and state that the phrases and clues in spoken language are syntactically simpler than those in written language. In addition, McCarthy (1998a) believes that spoken language deals with certain types of ellipsis, such as auxiliary verbs, subject pronouns, and articles. As regards the lexical aspects of spoken language, Riggensbach (1998) notes that the range of spoken language vocabulary differs from that of written language (p. 63). Regarding casual conversation, McCarthy (1998b) notes that the vocabulary tends to be marked with a relational function to establish social relations between the interlocutors rather than transmitting information.

Corrective Feedback and Evaluation of Speaking

According to Solcova (2011b), error correction or correction feedback is closely related to the concept of accuracy and, thus, to teaching speaking. Those errors that do not change the meaning are usually overlooked in real life. Similarly, those errors of second-language speakers that do not interfere with meaning are typically ignored (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Therefore, it sounds unnatural if

teachers focus on correcting the structures and grammar rather than meaning. Although error correction can be helpful, over-correction of errors may harm further speaking production, especially when the teacher's error correction interrupts the learners' thoughts.

In contrast, the learners try to express their ideas and thoughts (Solcova, 2011a). "Speaking is the process of conveying a message through the use of oral language, which can involve various aspects such as pronunciation, intonation, stress, and rhythm" (Brown, 2007). According to Newton and Nation (2009), speaking skill refers to "the ability to produce spoken language fluently, accurately, and appropriately in social and academic contexts." "Speaking is a complex cognitive and linguistic process that involves the coordination of multiple skills such as selecting vocabulary, organizing ideas, and using appropriate syntax, grammar, and discourse markers to communicate effectively." (Bachman & Palmer, 2010).

Speaking is "the ability to express oneself effectively in spoken language, including the ability to speak fluently, accurately, and appropriately in various contexts" (Brown & Larson-Hall, 2012). "Speaking is an active and dynamic process of encoding and decoding meaning through language. It requires integrating linguistic knowledge, cognitive skills, and social-cultural knowledge to produce and interpret meaningful utterances." (Bygate, 2013). "Speaking is the ability to convey thoughts, ideas, and information orally, using appropriate language and communication strategies in various contexts and purposes." (Al-Fahad, 2018) "Speaking is the process of verbal communication between individuals. It is essential to human interaction and involves using language to convey ideas, thoughts, and emotions." (Language Learning Base, 2020).

Speaking as a Skill

Speaking skills are the ability to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings effectively through verbal communication. It involves using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and non-verbal cues such as tone, facial expressions, and body language. Good speaking skills are essential for effective communication in personal and professional settings and are critical for success in many fields, including education, business, and politics. Developing speaking skills requires continuous practice, feedback, and exposure to diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Speaking skills can improve academic performance, career opportunities, and social relationships (Jones & Leong, 2020).

Speaking skills refer to the ability to communicate effectively using spoken language. This includes fluency, pronunciation, intonation, and the ability to convey ideas clearly and appropriately in various social contexts. Good speaking skills are essential for personal and professional communication success, as they enable individuals to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and confidently. Developing speaking skills requires continuous practice, feedback, and exposure to diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Speaking skills can improve academic performance, job opportunities, and social relationships (Zheng & Warschauer, 2020).

Speaking skills are essential component of effective communication. To be a proficient speaker, one must develop various sub-skills, including pronunciation, intonation, stress, rhythm, and fluency. Pronunciation is the ability to produce sounds that make up a language accurately. Intonation refers to the rise and fall of the voice while speaking, which can convey emotions and attitudes. Stress is the emphasis placed on particular words in a sentence. Rhythm refers to the pattern of stresses and pauses in a sentence. Finally, fluency is speaking smoothly without unnecessary pauses or hesitations. Developing these sub-skills can significantly enhance one's communication ability in a given language (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Nunan, 2003).

Various sub-skills of speaking skills include fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, discourse organization, and pragmatics. Fluency refers to speaking smoothly and without hesitation, while pronunciation is the accurate production of speech sounds and stress patterns. Grammar and vocabulary refer to the knowledge and use of the language's structure and lexicon. Discourse organization involves the ability to structure speech coherently and to use appropriate discourse markers. Pragmatics concerns the proper use of language in social and cultural contexts (Kang & Moran, 2021).

Speaking Skills and Their Dimension in Language Classroom

Speaking skills allow students to practice and develop their ability to communicate effectively in spoken language. This includes developing their pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and grammar and their ability to use appropriate discourse markers and strategies for effective communication. Effective teaching of speaking skills also involves providing students with opportunities to interact in pairs and small groups, engage in real-world communicative tasks, and receive constructive feedback on their performance.

Alqahtani and Al-Shehri (2021) incorporate sub-skills in teaching speaking skills, as Pronunciation is the ability to correctly produce sounds, stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns in spoken language. It refers to how a word is spoken, including the sounds, stress, and intonation.

Fluency is speaking smoothly and with appropriate pacing without undue hesitation or pausing. It includes word combinations and correct grammar. Vocabulary involves using various words and expressions accurately and appropriately in context. It is the central part of communication as it helps the speaker to express.

Grammar is the use of correct grammatical structures appropriately in spoken language. It has branches in syntax, morphology, and semantics.

Discourse markers are the ability to use appropriate markers to signal structure, organization, and coherence in spoken language. These words assist the speakers in organizing speeches systematically. Some examples are, however, in addition, therefore, etc.

Communication strategies: Using paraphrasing, clarification, and repair strategies to overcome communication breakdowns. These are the techniques for conveying meanings.

Techniques of Teaching Speaking in English

Generally, there are different techniques for teaching speaking skills in English, such as role-play, discussions, debates, presentations, storytelling, etc., so there are no hard and fast techniques for teaching speaking. Techniques of teaching speaking skills in English include various practices.

The first can be structured discussions, where learners engage in a group discussion on a particular topic, using appropriate discourse markers and strategies to express their opinions, ask questions, and respond to others (Newton & Nation, 2009). The developed version can be Role plays, where students assume different roles and engage in simulated conversations or interactions, providing opportunities to practice specific language functions and expressions in context (Richards & Bohlke, 2019).

The second activity can be debates, structured arguments in which students present and defend their opinions on opposing sides of an issue, using appropriate rhetorical devices and persuasive techniques (Huang, 2019). The presentations are opportunities for the learners to share planned and prepared ideas on a particular

topic, focusing on developing their pronunciation, fluency, and ability to organize and deliver information clearly and engagingly (Zhang, 2020).

The third method that develops language learning is using digital tools and platforms such as video conferencing, social media, and messaging apps to facilitate communication and interaction in English with peers and speakers of English in real-world contexts (Kessler & Bikowski, 2020). Even though various factors help learners to develop speaking skills, I have selected these as significant components as the base of speaking activities; I have chosen them as the strategies applied by me and by my participants in language class.

Policy Review

A curriculum is a complete version of activities and achievements. A school curriculum is a package of organized school experiences containing teaching methodologies, targeted achievement, competencies and objectives. A curriculum is designed to match a country's needs and is drafted to produce the human resources necessary in the different fields of the nation in the future. According to Monchinski (2008), the curriculum is a political agenda, and how it is delivered carries significant political weight.

Nepal could not remain isolated from the attraction and importance of the English language. As an international language, English is widely used in education, mass media, information and communication technology (ICT), business, tourism, science, medicine, and many other disciplines. The Secondary Education Curriculum, Nepal (2078) acknowledges the widespread motivation to learn English and therefore proves the rationale to include English as a compulsory subject at the school level. English is a mandatory subject in almost all undergraduate programs at the university level.

The fundamental objective of Nepal's secondary English curriculum is to give students the skills to express themselves in English. The curriculum also aims to expose students to the vast treasure of knowledge available in both written and spoken English. However, the competencies mainly include linguistic skills.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2022) created and implemented the School Education Sector Plan (SESP) as a ten-year plan for 2022/2023- 2031/2032, mainly including various techniques and innovative methods to improve students' oratorical skills. It includes enhancing curriculum-inclusive education, which ensures that speaking activities are accessible to all the students,

including special assistance to the mixed-ability learners. In this respect, SSDP is similar to the implementation of speaking strategies.

Social Constructivist Theory

Vygotsky (1978) claims that social constructivism is based on the belief that human behavior is relative to one's actions, leading to experiences. The theory is a framework to study and interpret social structures and phenomena. However, the researcher in this study does not believe in generalizing the findings and applying the cause-and-effect model to human behavior. In this segment, I assess the theory related to my research topic and apply the theory of social constructivism, which is significant to my research. This research aims to construct realities by studying distinct human behavior and interpreting the realities subject to every human being's understanding.

Moreover, classroom activities can be designed based on students' needs, interests, and levels. Different activities are needed to teach any language in a class. It is suggested that pair and group work, including project discussion and presentation, are the significant activities of language learning. The data furthermore emphasizes that a systematic process where participation is compulsory for learning.

Educational Psychology Including Pedagogies

Vygotsky (1978) claims that the use of language by children creates a framework as proof that they are different than animals. Natural participation to control the next learners is the act of participation. The most difficult dialectical technique of the child's speaking process is evaluated from time to time. The unmatching behaviors, as discussed, prove to be magical, as natural participation supports solving problems logically.

Vygotsky claims that learning is a problematic dialectical process that involves internal and external factors. Beginning on the child's first day of existence, learning and growth are linked. Functions that have not yet fully developed but are in the process of doing so are referred to as being in the zone of proximal development. These functions are in an embryonic stage today, but will fully develop tomorrow. Instead of being considered the "fruits" of growth, these functions may be described as its "buds" or "flowers." Mental development is characterized prospectively by the zone of proximal development and retrospectively by the actual developmental level.

Dialectical Process

Vygotsky (1978) views that in young infants, practical intelligence and sign language can function separately; in adults, the dialectical union of both systems is the basic foundation of sophisticated human activity. The examination of human history from a dialectical materialist perspective holds that human conduct varies qualitatively from animal behavior in the same way as human adaptation and historical progress vary from those of animals. While acknowledging that nature impacts man, the dialectical approach contends that man also impacts nature and generates new natural circumstances for his existence through his modifications. The fundamental tenet of the dialectical approach is that to examine something historically, it must be studied while it is changing.

According to Sullivan (2010, as cited in Vygotsky, 1978), we cannot depend on our subjective accounts of awareness since a phenomenon's external appearance is not a basis for categorizing it. The whale is used by Vygotsky as an illustration because, while looking like a fish, it is more like a cow or a deer in nature than a pike or a shark. According to Vygotsky, we grow freer and less dependent on situational restrictions as we become more adept at social life's norms and structures. In other words, comprehending social structures and laws necessitates a comparable remodeling of awareness. It demonstrates that there is a dialectical process from exterior to interior. I have defined the dialectical process based on Vygotsky as the social interaction through which individuals co-construct meaning and develop higher cognitive functions. In the same way, the dialogical process highlights the role of social interaction, communication, and scaffolding in promoting learning and language development.

The dialectical process helps conflict and resolution of different forces as it suggests the growth of individuals in attention and flexibility. It helps to discover how people maintain focus in dynamic, challenging ways. So, to find out the preparedness of English language teachers to teach English related to speaking based on activities, I have to find out how speaking activities are practiced in schools. In the same way, after making professional networks and participating, English language teachers can develop the children's learning outcomes.

Social Cognitive Theory

Sociocultural theory assumes that social learning occurs through interaction between more learned teachers and peers. Hammond (1997) pointed out that the focus

on teacher development and improvement increases student performance. Although few linguistic teachers can provide relevant content knowledge for performing a social and cultural education model, the requirement for dissimilar teacher preparation programs is high. Innovations are necessary to solve teacher education problems (Lytle, 2000, 2005).

Bandura (1989) viewed that no factors underlying human agencies are more fundamental or pervasive than personal efficacy beliefs. Bandura (2002, p. 3) viewed that self-efficacy beliefs control how humans think, behave, are motivated, feel, and make decisions. They influence how successfully people motivate themselves and endure ignored challenges, their imagination, and the decisions they make during pivotal decision-making moments that determine the trajectory of their lives. According to Bandura (1989), development is not a straightforward procedure. The roots of human skills and experience need to be developed and maintained differently. As an achievement, several types and patterns of change are included in human development, including social behavior and mainly conversation. As the researchers have claimed various theories that promote communication skills through activity-based classes, I have focused on the same in my research.

Hammond's social cognitive theory helps to add cognitive processes to students' learning, decision-making, and analytical thinking. Bandura's social cognitive theory carries the theme of the observational learning model, reciprocal determination, self-efficacy, and behavioral capability; they support developing learning speaking through activities.

In the same way, social cognitive learning theory prioritizes learning through observation, imitation, and application in real life. The subjects observe teachers, friends, and parents and pick up the vocabulary, pitch, and language. It is powerful in learning where language is used naturally and contextually in a classroom setting.

Review of the Empirical Literature

Before selecting this topic for the research, the researcher went through different available research. After that, he concluded and chose the topic. Various researchers have found different conclusions in their respective research work. Their findings are cited below:

Lohani (2008) found out the strategies adopted by the teachers in teaching drama or play at a higher secondary level. It targeted teachers' views towards drama teaching in the English language class. Two research tools, a class observation form

and a questionnaire for the fifteen higher secondary school English language teachers, were designed to achieve these objectives. A wildly divergent situation was noticed in the strategy of teaching drama. It varied from mentor to mentor, where the condition of teaching drama to the respective level was satisfactory. Regarding teachers' views towards drama teaching in English language classes, the researcher found that all teachers agreed that teaching drama is necessary for learning English to develop students' communication skills.

In the same way, Adhikari (2011), in research titled "Techniques of Teaching Drama in Higher Secondary Classes," found out the different techniques that the Higher Secondary Level teachers use in teaching drama and analyzed their techniques. The researcher selected twenty higher secondary schools in the Chitwan district and forty teachers (two from each school). All the mentors were requested to fill out the questionnaire that the researcher prepared. The researcher observed the classes of forty teachers while they were teaching drama by applying various techniques and filling out the observation checklists. The data collected from the teachers of higher secondary schools were compared, analyzed, and interpreted to determine the differences in techniques. In this study, various techniques were used to teach drama.

Ojha (2016), in "Novice Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Learner-Centered Techniques in Teaching English," sought to find out the practices of student-centered techniques in teaching English at secondary and lower secondary levels. To collect the data, forty new English teachers teaching in the Nuwakot district were selected using a nonrandom procedure. It was a survey that used qualitative and quantitative methods to interpret the data. The study found that the teachers of lower secondary and secondary classrooms followed student-centered pedagogy. However, in the case of teaching poems, it was also found that they followed an explanation technique, which is the teacher-centered technique.

Dhami (2018), in "Practices of Testing Speaking Skill at Secondary Level," explores the practices and problems of testing speaking skills at the secondary level. Considering the objectives, the researcher selected 20 schools in the Baitadi district using purposive nonrandom sampling procedures. The sample of this study was 40 secondary-level English language teachers who have been teaching at the secondary level. A questionnaire was the primary tool for data collection. The required data were collected using open and closed-ended questions. The data collected from the

field were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive and statistical tools, tabulation, and percentiles. The significant finding of this study was that almost all English teachers faced many problems while testing their speaking skills. Teachers faced problems teaching in large classes and struggled with insufficient teaching materials. Moreover, teachers mostly used their mother tongue in English classes. The teacher found it challenging to handle heterogeneous courses properly. Furthermore, the teachers did not test the students' speaking skills daily or use the multimedia system and other modern ICT tools and technologies for teaching and learning. Teachers were unaware of the teaching materials in the class, and they used textbooks as the primary source of teaching materials.

Khatti (2019), in the study entitled "Teachers' Perception and Practices on Immediate Feedback in Speaking," aimed to find out the teachers' perceptions and practices on immediate feedback in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. A qualitative descriptive design was used in this study. The study was conducted among five secondary-level English teachers in the Baglung district. The sample of this study was selected through the use of a purposive sampling strategy. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. From the study, it was seen that the teachers took feedback positively and focused on immediate feedback. They mostly used immediate oral feedback in speaking lessons. Similarly, they provided corrective feedback on the spot, especially on the mistakes made by students in pronunciation. In the same way, they made use of positive feedback on students' good work with verbal assurances such as "good," "excellent," "great job," "very good," "keep it up," and many more in the classroom. Moreover, they mostly used repetition and clarification requests to provide immediate feedback when speaking.

Yadav (2019), in the study entitled "Teachers' Strategies for and Used in teaching speaking," aimed to discover the teachers' perception of the strategies for teaching speaking and to explore the teachers' methods in teaching speaking. To fulfill the objectives of this study, twenty teachers from Saptari district were selected as the sample through a simple random sampling procedure. A set of questionnaires and observation checklists was the research tool for eliciting the required information for the study. The collected data from the respondents were analyzed descriptively with the help of simple statistical tools like percentiles and frequency. The study's

findings showed that the teachers used strategies like role play, storytelling, discussion, picture description, and narrating while teaching speaking more frequently to develop students' speaking abilities.

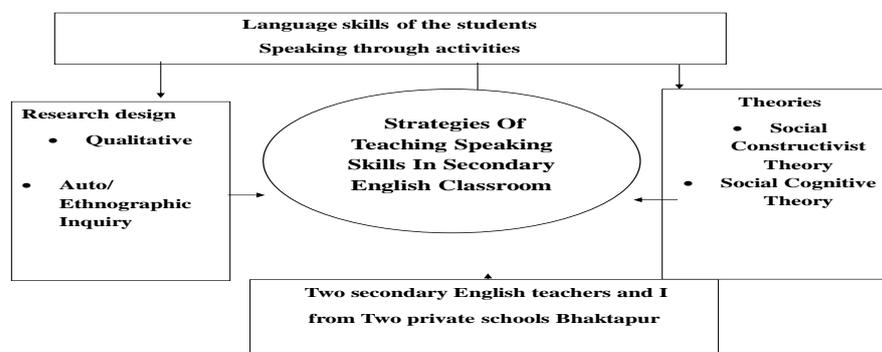
In the same way, the mentors were aware that 55% of activities made speaking convenient. In a research of the Banke district, Sharma (2021), four secondary teachers representing each school were interviewed individually and observed. The data collected through interviews and classroom observation were analyzed and interpreted thematically and descriptively. It was found that teachers used various speaking strategies like simulation, picture narrating, language games, project work, the drill method, and presentation. The study also noticed the use of strip stories to develop the students' communication ability. The study recalled significant differences between the strategies used by public and private teachers with and without activities.

Gap Analysis

I noticed that many scholars presented their ideas about different aspects of developing speaking skills, which were very helpful in exploring the answers to my research questions. Many research studies have been carried out on the issue of developing speaking proficiency through communicative language teaching. After reviewing different research articles, books and policy documents, such as Adhikari (2010), Teaching speaking in the Nepalese context: problems and ways of overcoming them, Ur (1996), A course in language teaching: practice and theory. Cambridge University Press, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) 2022/23–2031/32. In 2022, related to my topic, I understood that speaking is primarily a productive skill through which a learner can express their emotions and feelings fluently in a language. From the discussion, I found that a learner can be fluent in any language if they acquire competence in grammar, discourse, and strategic and sociolinguistic aspects. I got a better understanding that exposure, motivation, and different speaking activities play crucial roles in reducing hesitation or inhibition while teaching and learning to speak; I understood that the teacher should use various supplementary materials as an exposure to enhance speaking skills, besides the textbook. For this, the mentor has to provide sufficient exposure, which is comprehensible input and motivation to the students to cope with their level of hesitation. Different researchers researched speaking skills and the communicative approach to language teaching, and even the

policy advocates for various activities to be followed. However, I could not find any research study that discussed activity-based classrooms based on auto/ethnography. Thus, I decided to study the issue of activity-based language classrooms.

Conceptual Framework



Through the conceptual framework, I have clarified how I explored strategies for teaching speaking skills in secondary English classrooms based on the context of a private school in Bhaktapur. It is based on a qualitative research design, auto/ethnographic research, to share personal experiences as well as cultural contexts. The inquiry is based on Social Constructivist Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, emphasizing language learning through social interaction, observation, and engagement, as the key of the framework is the belief that learners can develop language skills, mainly speaking, more effectively through a participatory classroom. Teachers play a pivotal role in implementing the activities, and the practices are tested within a fixed setting to understand how speaking skills can be developed effectively.

Chapter Summary

The literature review prioritizes that interaction between the teachers and the students can be smoothly stimulated in a friendly environment through activities. This conclusion provides the importance and usefulness of activities, particularly as a process framework for developing speaking skills. The discussed literature made it clear that much research is to be done to prove a complete reason for implementing activities in the classroom. However, with its emphasis on oral fluency with participation, the method can be highly suitable in a nation such as Nepal, where speaking in the targeted language is a concern for learners.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part explains the study on a secondary English language classroom and follows an Auto/Ethnographic study as methodology. It employed different methods of auto/ethnography. It provided the chance to share the researcher's experience and collect data from a group of participants who shared their culture and implemented activities. I observed the practice of a secondary English class to capture the method of preparation for activities and collected data. This part elaborates on the research methodology, selection of research sites and participants, data collection tools, data sources, quality standards and ethical considerations.

Philosophical Considerations

The philosophical consideration of the particular paradigm in research leads to this selection of suitable research design and the complete methodology. Creswell (2007) states that the paradigm used in any qualitative research can vary according to the sets of beliefs and notions because it accepts multiple realities, and it helps to decide the methodology of any study, which is determined based on the worldview and the paradigm. When we discuss paradigms, we are concerned with the question of the nature of reality (ontology), the theory of knowledge (epistemology), and the theory of value (axiology), and different paradigms have different metaphysical assumptions. On the other hand, constructivism or interpretivism believes in no universal truth, so the synonym is designed by humans when they participate in the universe, where they interpret (Creswell, 2012, p.8). Integralism does not follow a single philosophy but assumes that “truth is what works at the time” (Creswell, 2012, p. 10).

Ontology

This study assumes that there are multiple realities, and reality is socially, culturally, and politically constructed. Ontology examines the ‘underlying belief system of the researcher, about the nature of being and existence. My participants represent different social, economic, and gender (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). My belief regarding my research issue is that human knowledge and experiences are relative to the socio-cultural differences. They have multiple experiences based on their

upbringing, with the perception of learning and teaching English and ideological contexts that prepare them.

Epistemology

Scott and Usher (2011) believe all researchers have an underlying epistemology. Epistemology is supposed to answer the question: How do we know what we think we know? I believe that reality needs to be interpreted to discover the underlying meaning. I tried to decipher the actual pedagogical condition inside the English classroom. My epistemic belief is that there are difficulties in speaking a new language both in and out of school. Classroom pedagogy, only as role play, cannot sufficiently contribute to reducing oppression. The continuation of traditional pedagogy does not help to increase confidence in speaking.

The epistemology underpinning this study is interpretivist, recognizing that knowledge about strategies for teaching speaking English emerges through the subjective experiences, reflections, and meanings constructed by teachers within their socio-cultural and institutional contexts. This inquiry emphasized lived, experienced, and shared stories of mentors and my ways as valid and meaningful sources of knowledge. I understand that the techniques we follow to teach speaking English are not only technical choices but also are deeply rooted in the belief in who we are, where we come from, and the periphery where we learn and teach. With the means of several reflections of memory, and two ways of talking with others, I tried to find how our strategies are connected and designed from both personal experience and broader cultural and institutional realities.

Axiology

As a critical researcher, my attempts are, of course, not value-free. I believe that the unjust situation should be altered. My axiology is that an educator is a change agent. Merely teaching the grammatical formula does not qualify one to be a good English teacher, but using critical pedagogy justifiably does. Individuals have the right to know things, and a teacher needs to open up the avenues. My axiological stance is that all students deserve to know the way of the world; however, our curriculum, textbooks, and pedagogy do not sufficiently support them to understand it. Activities can boost the speaking skills of even students with low vocabulary. I believe that one's attempt as a teacher should be to understand the need and allow all to practice the truth and the state-owned curriculum needs to treat all the different groups equally and equitably.

Interpretive paradigm

Aliyu et al., (2014) stated that a paradigm can be seen as a fundamental belief dealing with ultimate or first principles. It represents a worldview that defines for its holder the nature of the “world,” the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts. The interpretive paradigm focuses on acquiring the meaning of any group or even individual to social or human problems. It prioritizes that reality is constructed with an experience of the individual and that understanding is subjective and context-dependent (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Connectedly, I started my research with an interpretive research paradigm in mind.

The interpretive theory helped me to understand participants’ behavior through the perspective of the observation of their actions, interviews, and field notes to generalize the laws of auto /ethnographic research carried out to excavate the researcher and his participants’ journey of becoming activities-based English language teachers, or the transformation made. I drew on interpretive paradigms and used literary genres like poetry, storytelling, and reflections in the meaning-making process to examine my real-life experiences as a learner and practicing teacher. In particular, I excavated and reflected critically on my past experiences and beliefs towards activity-based teaching. I interpreted my participants’ practices collected through their observation, told stories, and reflected through speaking about my past experiences of becoming or transformation (Medina& Taylor, 2011, p.11).

Auto/Ethnography as Research Method

Autoethnography is a qualitative research method that combines ethnography, Biography, and self-analysis (Ellis et al., 2011). It uses data about the self (auto) to understand the connectedness between the researcher’s self and the world around the researcher within the context of the research area (Ngujiri et al., 2010). I know that auto/ethnography research ranges from the researcher’s personal experience to exploring their experiences in the social context (Méndez-López, 2013).

My first interest was using auto/ethnography as a research strategy for teaching speaking. Auto/ethnography as a research method separates in my eyes in the way that it is highly self-expressive. Autoethnography equips me to explore and document unique experiences as an artistic representation of the ‘self’ and participants and is the most artistic research method, which offers the creative freedom to venture into my ‘self’ artistically. I am also aware of the criticisms of

auto/ethnography as a research method for being the least scientific (Ngujiri et al., 2010).

I used auto/ethnography as a research method to explore my experiences in developing speaking skills to understand the motivations through activities. I know that this approach considers the personal narrative of experiences as data that answers the questions the researcher is looking for. A question encapsulates the essence of auto/ethnography very well: "Who am I concerning the research?" (Pitard, 2017). Auto/ethnography builds a storyline in which the philosophical beliefs of the researcher shape the research itself. However, philosophical beliefs do not exist in a vacuum; they do exist when it comes to the knowledge and experiences gained by the researcher. Some other researchers say that qualitative research emphasizes human intentions, feelings, and life experiences, which is auto/ethnography's primary purpose. This qualitative method describes specific life experiences and relationships within a particular group (Adams & Ellis, 2015, p. 21). The methodological choice of Auto/ethnography was also cohesive with my transformative research paradigm. I included self-reflection and narration by being an investigator using my own experience. I, too, included personal stories, including classroom culture that I am used to and that are supported by practices. I used evocative Auto/ethnography, telling the stories to engage the readers and analytical Auto/ethnography of participants' narratives (Luitel, 2012).

Likewise, Ellis and Bochner (2006) demand that "analytic auto/ethnography" should be applied "when the researcher is (1) a full member of the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in published texts, and (3) committed to developing theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena" (p. 438). For this study, analytic auto/ethnography is more appropriate since it integrates the researcher's introspection on past experiences, and the analysis of such stories helps to understand their implications in a context under the umbrella of qualitative research.

In conclusion, analytic auto/ethnography is the vehicle I am taking to develop this study on my changing identity during my professional development process. I have included my activities, including my participants' culture analytic auto/ethnography, which is the proper landing for my research. To recount English language learning experiences in the first person, auto/ethnography as a research method provided me a sense of engagement in what I am researching, doing, existing,

and living. I could not deny that auto/ethnography as a research method for Ellis and Bochner (2000) is where a researcher, their own experiences, and memories become the field of research and data (Brown, 2018, p. 1).

The quality of auto/ethnography invites and accepts the auto/ethnographic accounts written autobiographically and ethnographically. Above that, I witnessed evocative auto/ethnography creating a sense of being intimately connected to the past contexts, persons, and above all, to my 'self.' The new self is trying to accept the old 'self' with much vulnerability of being a weak and defeated self, yet resilient to be a learner in my brokenness. These past experiences are already evocative to me and will undoubtedly evoke my readers to the extent of being my 'self.' Therefore, Ellis and Bochner (2006) rightly maintained that every kind of auto/ethnography is evocative (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 436). Likewise, Anderson (2006) stated that it has, in recent decades, been understood "exclusively" as evocative auto/ethnography (Anderson, 2006, p. 377). As a story creates passions, emotions, and experiences, evocative auto/ethnography relates with the readers in the most "intimate, introspective, and self-reflexive storytelling voice" (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 51). The more I evocatively and auto/ethnographically reflect and write and become reflexive of my English language learning experiences through various circumstances, the more I notice that exclusive quantitative research methodology needs to reconsider some of its principles.

Evocative auto/ethnography is a method used to personalize the research and not only become nostalgic and emotional but also become too self-obsessed to the extent of being narcissistic and solipsistic. And my choice of it is because it provided me with "motivations, emotions, imagination, subjectivity, and action in ways less available from other sources" (Wall, 2008, p. 40). I see myself as the field of inquiry where I, as the researcher, analyzed my own cultural, social, and political personal self-experiences. It felt like I was dissecting myself with all the sharp-edged tools and equipment for a better expression. Moreover, I became the past of mine personally, intellectually, and emotionally when I did it. Furthermore, reciting English language learning events with teachers and friends excited me. My language learning has enabled me to not only relish my past learning experiences but also to explore their motivations, imaginations, and subjective principles of whores I am at present and who I would be transformed into in the future.

Significantly, the auto/ethnographic research embedded in the evocative telling of stories creates “therapeutic” (Ellis, 1999, p. 677) for me as a researcher, participant, and reader. Auto/ethnographic writings are thus personal, “confessional, emotional, therapeutic, creative, and unconventional” (Wall, 2008, p. 12). The adjectival qualities clarify that evocative auto/ethnography is not limited to a way of doing research, method, or paradigm. It touches every experiential aspect of a person sensitive to empathize and rational enough to be logical or scientific. I wanted to be subjectively descriptive to exhaust my heart, head, and body of feelings, emotions, experiences, and logic so that readers feel and become embodied in my narration, meeting themselves as the goal of evocative auto/ethnography (Anderson, 2006, p. 377).

At the same time, I wished the research shares both intellectual and emotional representation, a purgative, and the next therapeutic connection to the content. The sole reason is to provide a meaningful representation (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p. 76). Moreover, this is the purpose of evocative auto/ethnography and my sole aim in the meaning-making research process. In conclusion, auto/ethnography is used by many researchers to find particular educational issues from experiences to precisely determine either the influence or the impact of specific cultural behaviors in a certain group.

Participants

I selected one private school in the Bhaktapur district as a research site. I am the leading participant in this research, teaching in a different school, and two other secondary English teachers were chosen from the same school based on the nature of practice relevant to the research issue for the purposive sampling. Ball (1990) (Cohen et al., 2008) claimed that In several cases, purposive sampling is used to access "Knowledge People, i.e., those who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues, maybe virtue of their professional role, power, access to networks, expertise or experience" (p. 115). The study aimed to identify the strategies teachers used to learn and teach speaking in the classrooms. Thus, I conducted my research in a private school in the southern part of Bhaktapur because I have worked in the same district since the beginning of my profession. Marshal et al. (1989) also have the same opinion: it is better to choose a place where anyone can enter quickly, or it should be where anyone can join (as cited in Maxwell, 1996, p. 54). I have also been teaching

English in a private school for the last twenty years and applying various speaking strategies.

Data Generation Process: Tools and Techniques

To generate auto/ethnographic data, I have ultimately let my participants be observed, analyzed, and reflected upon repeatedly. To enrich the textual representation, I have depended upon my lived experiences and memories, events, and their epiphanies in-depth. I have relied upon my lived stories as data. Therefore, I have profusely used a variety of autobiographical and auto-ethnographical texts in different forms, such as short stories, fiction, dialogues, and artifacts. They are the conscious windows of the present to understand itself, the present, and the future. Using them as data creates cultural-social and educational knowledge that auto/ethnography must represent and do.

I have shared stories of my experiences, memories and flashbacks with thick and rich descriptions embedded with authentic reflection and reflexivity. The research has led me to know myself more through reflection, introspection and analysis as data of my life experiences intimately connected to my English language learning (Dyson, 2004, p. 188). Stories in any form, narration, prose, or poetry, are the tools of my data that helped me to unearth the embedded knowledge and insights. To generalize my individual lived experiences and memories, I frequently moved from the past to interpret the present and future so that my auto/ethnographic accounts resonate with the lived experiences of my readers.

One of the data generation techniques that I depended upon was some of the autobiographical notes that helped me understand that it is a narration with a few reflections on events. On the other hand, I found auto/ethnography as a chronological narration with an in-depth reflection of autobiography, reflexivity and interpretation of ethnography for the meaning-making process. It refers to the epiphany of an individual's lived experience as the epiphany of their group. I found that autobiography is more of a confession, and auto/ethnography is more than a confessional – it is an ethnographic quest to manifest the epiphanies of lived experiences intimately connected to my culture, society, and way of being and doing.

Forsaking the validity, generalizability, and reliability, the rigid three traditional criteria of research, I have flexibly moved from verisimilitude, believability, resonance, and the vulnerability of auto/ethnographic accounts and lived experiences (Allen et al., 2008, p. 6). Similarly, in my evocative

auto/ethnography data generation, I have depended upon the evocation of similar bitter-sweet experiences, feelings, and readers' rationale which s/he experiences while learning English without burying them for that, I involved creating a rich and thick description that resonated with my readers' lived experiences and feelings bringing alive their own experiences and emotions. I have tried to describe the lived experiences narrative autobiographically and auto/ethnographically.

Self-Reflection/Narrative

As an auto/ethnographic inquiry, my research needed data from the self and others. So, while conducting my research, I used multiple tools to collect data: self-reflection, observation, field notes, and interviews. O'Sullivan (2012) claimed that auto/ethnography is transformative research that is the key to raising a higher level of consciousness and developing wisdom (Qutoshi, 2015, p. 2). In the same way, when I remember the past days of my educational journey from the beginning of my research to date, I feel a deeper understanding of myself as a person and a mentor with a deeper awareness of others and their culture. I understand the discomfort of the ways without meaning and wish to explore and apply the comfortable ways of activities-based teaching and learning that are fun and effective for my students. I could evaluate and improve the quality of my own teaching culture (Sahin & Doganthy, 2018, p. 105).

To collect data from my own experiences as a participant in my research, I drew upon both memories and current teaching practices from my English classes, starting from 2001 when I began my teaching career. Alongside these memories, I included vivid expressions of my classroom activities and student work as progress. The artifacts also capture various aspects of my teaching, such as lesson drawings, classroom display boards featuring student work, and students' performances, including various speaking practices, such as thought of the day, word of the day, and situational questions.

Observation

Based on the standard practices of auto/ethnography, I conducted extensive observations of my participants' behaviors and activities at the research site. These observations were documented in an unstructured or semi-structured format, guided by specific questions I had in mind. My role was solely observational; I did not participate but instead focused on recording what I noticed and heard, with the teachers' consent (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, observation became the primary tool

for data collection in my study. Starting in July 2023, I observed thirty classes taught by both of my participants, fifteen classes each. These observations were not continuous and included breaks for weekends, summer holidays, and other events. After resuming the classes, I continued my observations of regular classes.

I recorded all the classes observed along with the interviews of my participants on my mobile phone to transfer them to my laptop at home later and stored them in a file before starting the data transcription. Additionally, as advised by my supervisors, I made sure that my mobile was on silent mode to avoid any calls that would affect the recording. I also ensured that the audio recording would not disturb the teacher and the students. For this, I kept it in a fixed place, on the table behind the teacher's computer, after informing the teacher and the students beforehand. As both the participants' classes were scheduled in the morning from 11:00 a.m. to 11:45 am, I could not do it simultaneously. So, considering this situation, I first observed Mr. Hari's class and then Miss Rani's.

Interview

As an auto/ ethnographic researcher, I held both formal and informal face-to-face interviews with participants. These interviews featured many unstructured, open-ended questions designed to gather their views and opinions (Creswell, 2009). I used two interview practices to collect the required information.

The first one was a semi-structured interview taken after observing a few classes. This interview was targeted to understand the background of the participant teachers. The second type consisted of short, half-hour interviews with two or three questions that were generated during the class observations. These questions tried to answer any doubts that I had not clearly understood or got detailed information on specific aspects of their teaching practices.

Field Notes

Sage Encyclopedia (2008) stated that data analysis is an integral part of qualitative research and it constitutes a stepping stone toward gathering data and linking one's findings with higher-order concepts. The first step in analyzing qualitative research involves organizing the data. Once the data are organized, the researcher can move to the second analysis stage, which is description. The researcher describes the various pertinent aspects of the study, including the setting, both temporally and physically, the individual being studied, the purpose of any activities examined, the viewpoints of participants, and the effects of any activities on the

participants (Best et al., 2006, p. 270). Thus, being a qualitative researcher, I organized the data gathered from the field and the respondents. Similarly, as an interpretive paradigm guides my research, I tried to ensure the actual data. As Kumar (2009) stated, the first step in processing data is to ensure that the data are 'clean' – that is, free from inconsistencies and incompleteness without fabrication (p. 220).

In this regard, Cohen and Manion (2007) state, “Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data, in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities” (p. 461). Therefore, a researcher has to organize and explain briefly according to the participants' views. This process of cleaning and organizing the raw data is called editing. Editing collected data through unstructured interviewing (e.g., in-depth interviews) is more difficult.

I noted down the information quickly within field notes during and after the observations of the participants' classes and mine, notably pictures of the students' work. Nevertheless, formal permission was obtained from the teacher, while the consent of the researcher was obtained at the beginning.

Meaning-Making Process

Saldana (2011, p. 89) claimed that the purpose and outcome of data analysis is to reveal to others what we have observed and discovered about the human condition through fresh insights. As there are a variety of genres, elements, and methods available for data analysis, Analytic choices are most often based on what methods will harmonize with our genre selection and conceptual framework, what will generate sufficient answers to our research questions, and what will best represent and present the research's outcomes.

Hence, while analyzing the data, I considered the three essential steps suggested by Maley (2019), 'input-process-output' of the activities-based methods used by me and other teachers as my research participants. Elaborately, the input was all the activity forms, such as music, drama, poetry, and visuals of many kinds, motivational statements, word of the day, situational questions used in a teaching process to apply to these inputs. Those were the random connections between things not commonly found together, which you put together to make a new meaning, reframing practices, teaching differently, dictation in a different way, and so on. Then, the creativity of outputs was analyzed: what the students could produce,

pictures, poems, stories, artifacts, individual outcomes, how they learned to take risks, work together, approach new things themselves for educational benefits, and so on.

Consequently, after collecting data in my cell phone's recording application, I transferred and saved them in a separate file and transcribed them in another file on my computer. All the files had separate headings: data transcription grade 10, data transcription grade 12, interview transcription Mr. Hari, and interview transcription Miss Rani.

To represent my participants' thoughts, expressions, and discoveries, I have used multi-genres: narrative, story, abbreviation, and multi-logics: dialectical and metaphorical use of art, because the standard-linear linguistic representation did not help. Alternatively, I have also used figurative language, like metaphors, images, drawings, etc, to represent my ideas.

Quality Standards of My Research

It is a general belief that learners are the reflections of some parts of the teachers' concepts, techniques, and philosophy. Therefore, regarding the issue and methodology of my research, it developed and got its initial shape from one of my professors' classes in MPhil that eventually motivated me to carry out; I had chosen to maintain the cohesive quality standards proposed by Luitel (2012).

Incisiveness as Focus of Research

After I realized that the quality standard helps to maintain the focus of the research on significant educational issues, I tried to support it in the sense that it attempted to excavate innovative activities from the practices of my participants. The usual standards of teaching with a lecture or rote learning have been given a new dimension. Hence, it has kept activities as the focus of its exploration, which has been discovered to be a part of the practicing community of English language teaching in Nepal.

Verisimilitude as Lifelikeness

To maintain the verisimilitude or truthfulness, I tried to make my research trustworthy and credible. To ensure the trustworthiness of my study, I undertook prolonged involvement and interaction in the research field with my participants, outside and inside the classroom, formally and informally. I did it to understand their authentic culture and generation of trustworthy experiences. During interaction with them, I compared, learned from, and shared their perspectives and interpretations about the practices of using activity-based methods with mine as a participant

researcher. I visited them many times for about four months, not regularly, until I got the genuine information that assured me that the member-checking process was carried out. I used open-ended rather than closed-ended and spontaneous questions that popped out while observing their classes. It was done to excavate their experiences using activity-based methods in their classrooms.

Transferability as Viability

For transferability, I included a detailed description of practices of using activity-based methods to guide English language classrooms. I ensured detailed descriptions concerning my participants and the viewpoint of existing literature, which could be helpful and thus transferred to their real social contexts, that is, the educational organizations and people. I tried to make it usable and valuable for the related people for their purpose. To guarantee the conformability for assessing its usefulness, I added relevant and accurate references with proper APA so that my research could be tracked and used easily by others for their purpose. Hence, it was the conformity of my study through a data audit to ensure the availability of my data according to the source.

Pedagogical Thoughtfulness as Evoking Readers

While reading and understanding the idea put forth by the proposed research, I also ensured to stimulate thoughtfulness in my participants, including me and the readers of my research, and to be able to reflect on their professional practices. During the study, I prepared questions for interviews, particularly about activity-based techniques used, the objective behind their use, and the impact they had on the pedagogy. However, the questions did not directly include activities; they were types like drawing, storytelling, music, role-play, drama, panel discussion etc. Whenever I saw my participants activating in their classrooms, I enquired in detail and eventually noticed them doing it more often. Hence, it was done to maintain and encourage the quality standard of pedagogical thoughtfulness in my research through its participants. (Van Manen, 1990, as cited in Medina & Taylor, 2011)

I tried to make the participants benefit from the research I undertook using two different methods. At first, I tried to find my participants perception and the ways of preparation of their practices of activity-based methods by asking them questions in the interview and observing that would rhetorically their classrooms which were somewhat different: lively and fun when they taught through activities and secondly tried to find out the advantages of using activities in language learning.

Critical Reflexibility as a Transformative Process

My research is an auto/auto-ethnographic study of the self and others, and it mainly contains my subjective understandings, interpretations, and values. I am entirely conscious of the limitations I have explained at the end of this. Throughout the study, I kept in mind that it was my point of view and tried to make my readers aware of it, too.

Ethical Issues of My Research

As a researcher focuses on morals or ethics in everything one does, ethical considerations in social research are inevitable from the beginning to the end. So, my research was guided by ethics from the data collection process to its analysis.

Representation

I have represented my ideas, experiences, and perspectives as clearly as possible to avoid misinterpretation (Medina & Taylor, 2011). I have maintained the ethics of auto/ethnographic inquiry as a self-narrative that critiques the situations of self with others in social contexts (Spry, 2001). Then, while dealing with my research participants throughout my research, I have considered the following ethics as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2011).

Informed Consent

After the selection of the research site and participants according to the nature, objectives, and requirements of my research, I informed and obtained the consent of my participants formally in writing with clarity regarding the purpose of the visit. I requested my participants for the prolonged observation and interview during my research. Similarly, I made my objective of observation and interview vivid to convince with the logic of my research, but never insisted. During that time, I even assured them that they could withdraw whenever they wanted to in case of any dissatisfaction or difficulty.

Avoidance of Deception

In carrying out my research, I tried to clarify everything to the participants: objectives, process, etc. I assured them that I would be honest in using the data collected from them for academic purposes and that nothing would be used in my research without their permission.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The participants did not want their names revealed, so I used their pseudonyms, Mr. Hari and Miss Rani, to avoid publicizing their views about the

pedagogy. It was practiced to protect the identities of my participants and the research site.

Accuracy

In this matter, I have not fabricated or falsified my participants' opinions and responses, even when they disagreed with my idea; I included them as it ensured the quality of my research.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I primarily discussed the research methodology adopted in this study. I defined the paradigm in which my study was guided. Similarly, I described my research paradigm's philosophical considerations guided by ontology, epistemology, axiology, and views of science in my research. Likewise, I also explained my research methodology, the definition of qualitative research, ways of sampling, data collection tools, quality standards, data collection tools, procedure, and data analysis. Finally, I presented ethical considerations.

CHAPTER IV

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF SPEAKING SKILLS

This chapter contains the analysis and interpretation of interview data obtained from participants and data obtained from observation and interviews of the actual classroom. The chapter is divided into two main sub-sections. The first section deals with the perception and interpretation of my participants' and my understanding of learning and speaking English, whereas the second part deals with the knowledge of speaking English of my participants, including mine.

Understanding of Speaking English to Teaching Speaking English

The Beginning Inspiration Though the role of schools and formal schooling is vital for students' learning, I remember that my interest in the English language seemed to be shaped by the environment at home. Being in a joint family of eight sons of my grandparents, there were already six cousins, brothers and three sisters studying in senior classes. The advantage of a joint family is that we were not cousins but brothers from different mothers. Love, care, and sharing were not different from the offspring of the same parents. At home, our grandparents were disciplined and determined to educate all their grandchildren. I can recall an event when three of my cousins' brothers and I were studying in the yard in the morning, waiting for the results of grade three. I remember my first English activity was a special treat for my family with my elder brothers. Dev Raj, the eldest grandson in our joint family, was chasing Mohan Dai with a thin stick, *"Reading in class four and not even knowing a simple pronunciation! Disgusting! I can't believe my eyes and ears! Do you know the smallest brother of grade two knows how to read the words?"* I felt over the moon, because I was the smallest one he was pointing to. *"Kanchho, come nearer, and open page number five. Can't you read the sentences? Prove it. 'The', I read. 'Great. ' And next kanchho? 'small' I tried. "Very good. "And this?" "cow." "Listen... how he says,"* murmured Dev Raj Dai. Mohan Dai was red with shame, looking at me with worried eyes. A sense of victory arose through my body. An intense interest in looking into the book of grade four arose within me. *"Did you listen, Hujuraama? I read the book for grade four, so I am suitable for class four for the new session. Please ask Dev Dai. He heard my reading of English in grade four. Are you listening? It is ENGLISH, not other easy subject."* The reply was a deep silence. I could not know if

she was accepting my request or still thinking about what was next. No matter what her plan was. I was determined to study in grade four. More than anything, I was lured by the English alphabet of the grade four books because the feeling of success was linked with it. I had a hideous look at Mohan Dai's reading of the English alphabet. It gave me great joy. *"Listen, Kanchha knows these words from the book of four that Mohan doesn't know,"* my grandmother told my grandfather at bedtime. *"Sure, kanchha?"* my father, who was listening to the talk, asked curiously. *"Yes,"* I thought, like running to find Mohan Dai's book and reading it in front of my father. I didn't know then whether I knew the whole word at that time than reading a few standard sentences. Nevertheless, I remember that I was profoundly trying to own the book of Mohan Dai, read it alone, and be lost in the world of grade-four English words after the incident of that day. That was the first moment I grew a deep love and interest in the English world of words.

Returning to the text, I noticed that the two roles of the family seemed important in my learning of English. First, the role of siblings in creating an English learning environment, and second, the role of parents as motivators, praising my success. In a study, Amin (2018) found that parental and sibling roles are essential for growing the sense of learning, and the learners can significantly influence it. So, my home environment seemed necessary in shaping my interest in learning English. In another research, Bridges and Hoff (2014) believe toddlers with older siblings were more advanced in English language development. Similarly, the praise from Dev Raj Dai and my parents was equally causative in shaping my interest. In learning, praise is significantly valued. "Offering praise for students' work and efforts can alter their mindsets so that students can begin to view their intelligence as something that can be developed" (American Psychological Association [APA], n.d.). Had Dev Raj Dai not asked for the English word that day, my interest in English might not have been shaped as it is today?

An application to the Class Teacher

My formal learning of the English language began in grade five. I do not have a vivid memory of grade five English, but the image of Bharat sir with a long bamboo stick in hand ordering us to memorize the entire items page after page is still fresh. Though we did not know the meaning and sense of the utterances, we had to read before him and copy certain pages of our exercise books. If it failed to do so, it was a merciless beating. Apart from my interest in English, I think rote learning also helped

me to improve my knowledge. The anecdote below shows how the effect of rote learning reached its unexpected twist one day.

A Shameful Realization

"*Oee Kapil, come here,*" called Bharat sir, accompanied by many other teachers, smiling and looking at me curiously. "Why didn't you come yesterday?" "Sir, I...I... I had written an app... Application," I replied. Immediately after I completed the sentence, all the teachers laughed. I was flushed with shame when all the teachers laughed at me. "You wrote an application in English. Talented boy! Have you written it yourself?" "Yes." Again, there was a massive round of laughter among the teachers. The act puzzled me. I could not figure out the reason behind the laugh, a sarcastic or respectful one.

"Do not get confused. You are a talented boy. Share the name of the person who helped you. This is in the proper pattern, written formally." "I wrote it from Dev Raj Dai's book." All the teachers laughed again. "Great. You can leave now." I returned, unaware of the reason for the teacher's laughter. On that evening, I heard my parents talking about me. It was the application to the principal requesting to provide a complete free ship. At that time, there was a classroom rule that we had to write an application to the class teacher if any student remained absent. The application meant 'an application, which means any application, but the title should be an application to me. The energy of learning English was deeply rooted inside me. I wanted to prove the standard of my English proficiency by writing an English application to the teacher. I did not think there was an application in my book, but I was sure, "There must be a better application in Dev Raj Dai's book." When I noticed the title application, I thought it was the leave application for me; I copied it in writing as much as possible and sent it to school in the hands of Sabitri, my cousin, sister, and classmate. The application read, "Respected Principal..." I recall thinking I should have written in Nepali, but I wanted to write in English. The answer is that I wish to prove to my brothers, teachers, friends, and everyone that I know how to write an application. This illogical try grew and became deeply rooted in my subconscious mind. It was proof that the English language was taking charge inside me, somehow differently than my friends in the classroom. The incident proved that I was interested in expressing myself to impress others regarding my English learning during my primary-level studies.

The behaviorist school of thought was in effect. In the behaviorist theory of language learning, imitation, memorization, and pattern drilling are widely used to achieve the desired verbal behavior since the learner is regarded as a mere instrument manipulated by an external agency to produce the desired behavior (Sankary, 2013). For Chomsky (1996), even a limited exposure to language can result in an almost unlimited output, revealed in the human child's capacity to produce new sentences. However, as the anecdote reveals, my learning of English did not have comprehensible input, which is emphasized by the mentalist theory. Instead, the behaviorist way of learning was taking place effectively or ineffectively.

English Terms of Mathematics Subjects

Winning a Pustakari

There are many sweet memories connected with English in my life. When I was in grade six, in the absence of the English teacher in our class, the mathematics teacher was a substitute. He said, "English Period only English." He collected the Mathematics assignment and asked my benchmate for a copy. He replied, "I will do my homework in the evening." As I was by his side, I could not stop myself and immediately corrected him, saying, "No ... *do, but complete.*" I asked the teacher if I was right. Maybe he was glad or sad by my question; he said he had a game on his mind only for those who could translate his mathematical terms into English. He opened the headlines and some technical terms with their English equivalent in brackets. Those English words in brackets became Pustakari-winning memories for my attachment to English. The Pustakari is a very famous sweet candy without a wrapper available at that time, and it is still a favorite among all in my society. Ajay sir, the Mathematics teacher, announced that he would ask all the English terms of the Mathematics book the next day and would award a Pustakari to those who could tell all correctly. "*You should answer all the items in English that are given in brackets. Memorize by heart; use a hook or crook. You will get a Pustakari if you answer all the questions correctly.*" My excitement was not bound since I already had maintained a copy of the English terms of Mathematics. I prepared a note copy of all subjects with complex terminologies that were of interest to me. I vividly remember some terms of mathematics:

Addition= Jod,

Subtraction= Gateau,

Multiplication = Gunan,

Division= Bhag,
 Square = Varga,
 Length = Lambai,
 Area = Ksetraphal, etc.

I waited for the next day when Ajay Sir would ask me. It was a challenging reward to prove to me that I knew English. I was confident that the Pustakari would be mine. "Who knows all the words in English of Mathematics?" I raised my hand, and all my friends looked at me with doubt. "Really! Are you sure about the question?" "Yes, yes, sir." "All my friends clapped. The Pustakari is yours if you can," the teacher showed a Pustakari after I answered all his questions. He praised my memory and confidence. After Tiffin's break, the headmaster came to our class and unexpectedly put a pustakari in my hand and said, "You are fond of it; keep working, my boy; the whole packet can be yours. "Ajay sir said you did the best memorization, well. Keep it up!" "Kapil, how have you known all of them?" asked my friends. Hello, boy, "(*Oe keto*), you know all English words, wow," the senior brothers in the school said. I remained quiet and acted not to act. But within me, the happiness was exciting, and I wanted to take a new turn and prove the miracle. I felt that English had a magical power that helped me to be recognized among seniors, juniors and teachers at school. Even my family talked about my studies and especially about my English vocabulary. Moreover, the pustakari that I got that day was the incident that 'Mathematical terminology' rewarded me, which remains a special memory that I still feel proud of.

In the early 1990s, when I was in secondary school, I had the pleasure of learning English from an exceptionally inspiring teacher. This teacher had a remarkable ability to connect with students on a creative level, transforming the traditional classroom setting into a vibrant and dynamic space. His classes were full of fun and education, fostering an environment where learning felt like an exciting adventure rather than a mundane task. One of the most memorable aspects of his teaching was his emphasis on group work and interactive activities. He often organized various word games and collaborative projects that required us to move around the classroom, engaging with our peers in meaningful ways. These lively sessions were not just about learning vocabulary or grammar; they were about sparking our imagination and encouraging us to think creatively.

I recall the buzz of activity during these sessions—the room filled with the sound of animated discussions, laughter, and the occasional burst of applause. Each game and activity was carefully designed to ensure that every student participated, making us feel like integral parts of the learning process. This approach instilled in me the belief that English, and indeed any subject, could be learned most effectively through active participation and collaboration. Those early experiences left a lasting impression on me. They taught me that education is not limited to textbooks and lectures but can be a joyous and interactive journey. My teacher's innovative methods not only helped me develop a strong foundation in English but also nurtured my love for learning and creativity. Looking back, I am grateful for those formative years and the inspiring teacher who made them so unforgettable. Research supports the effectiveness of such interactive and participatory teaching in developing speaking skills. Active learning strategies, including group work and hands-on activities, have been shown to improve student engagement and academic performance significantly (Freeman et al., 2014). These methods encourage students to take an active role in their education, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills that are essential for lifelong learning. The classroom activity helped me to be sure of the importance of activity-based participatory methods for speaking.

My Understanding of Speaking English

I was a shy child from a small village in Bhaktapur, naturally quiet, and found comfort in my thoughts rather than in speaking out. My struggle with English only deepened my silence, as it was a language I hardly understood and rarely spoke. In my village, English was a distant concept, spoken by few and mastered by fewer. In school, my shyness made me struggle with English even more. I sat quietly at the back of the classroom during my English lessons, wishing not to be seen. When I was called, my voice was barely audible, and I stumbled over the words; my whole face seemed tensed with embarrassment. My confident and fluent classmates often laughed at my mistakes, regarding my pronunciation and grammatical errors.

One day, my English teacher in class 10, Mr. Jha, noticed my hesitation and unease. He was a kind and understanding teacher who believed that every student had the potential to succeed with the proper support. After class, he called me aside and spoke to me gently. "Hello, Boy," he said, "*I noticed you're struggling with English, and that's okay. I believe you have the potential to improve. Would you like some extra help?*" I nodded, though I wasn't sure how much I could improve. Mr. Jha

began meeting with me after school, starting with the basics. He encouraged me to read basic English texts and share them in simple and complete sentences. My teacher's patience and encouragement gradually helped to develop confidence. To help me later, Mr. Jha introduced a club at school named the Speakers Club. Initially, I was hesitant, but Mr. Jha persuaded me to join. The club was a safe space where students could speak English on any topic without fear of being judged. I started attending the meetings, listening more than talking at first. Over time, as I became more comfortable, I began participating in the discussions, even if only to ask questions or make brief comments. To improve my pronunciation and fluency, I started watching English movies and listening to the BBC. I shadowed the news readers, hosts, and singers, practicing the sounds and rhythms of the language. This not only improved my speaking skills but also made learning English enjoyable.

One of the turning points for me was a program where students needed to deliver a speech in English. Mr. Jha motivated me to participate, considering it an opportunity to overcome the fear. With his help, I prepared a speech about my favorite book. For this, I practiced relentlessly, standing in front of a mirror and presenting the speech until I was confident enough to show. On the day of the competition, I was nervous but strongly determined. When I walked up to the stage, I could feel my heartbeat. I took a deep breath and began speaking. My voice was shaky at first, but as I continued, I gained confidence. Seeing Mr. Jha smiling encouragingly from the audience gave me the strength to keep going. When I completed, there was a pause of silence, followed by applause. I felt a sense of achievement that I had never experienced before. I faced my fear and spoke in English in front of an audience. It was a milestone in my journey of speaking English. My understanding of speaking English changed as building confidence through teachers' motivating words, self-preparation for speaking in class presentations, and continuous effort in practicing speaking in class could be the starting phase for getting into the process of developing English speaking.

Over time, I developed confidence. I started participating more actively in my class, raising queries and even assisting my classmates with their English. My grades improved, and I began to enjoy speaking the language that was once impossible for me. Judson & Egan (2013, p. 343) focus on pedagogical tools such as games, drama, play, rhythm, rhyme, stories, image creation, personalizing objects, changing contexts, instilling a sense of wonder and mystery, and incorporating both ordinary

and extraordinary elements, which can significantly enhance the learning experience. These tools help make learning a second language enjoyable, facilitate the teaching of new vocabulary, help in understanding complex verbs, and assist with memorization, all while engaging students' imaginations and participation. Finally, my involvement in different activities made my speaking class productive as I developed vocabulary and its uses in context.

Similarly, referring to Wilhelm Von Humboldt's famous words, "You cannot teach a language; you can only create the conditions under which it might be learned," Xerri and Vosallo (2016, p. 100) suggest that English teachers convert their classrooms into art galleries and to surprise their students one day and replace all the 'boring' stuff with colorful posters. They suggest that the teachers make the classroom environment welcoming by providing a platform to speak. Hence, I remember I was informed about nouns and pronouns when the English teacher had turned our classroom into a stage where we performed. Other classmates and I got inspired to do something different; he had awoken the joy and creative expression through the art form 'role-play' for developing speaking skills.

My Understanding of Teaching English Speaking

For the past 22 years, I have been dedicated to teaching English and have reached a significant career milestone. My journey began with reflecting on how I developed a structured, step-by-step teaching approach, connecting each phase of my path. Starting from my own experiences as a learner, moving through my early teaching days, and continuing to the present, I illustrated how those experiences have collectively transformed me from a traditional teacher into an activities-based learning facilitator. Additionally, I explored the journeys of my participant teachers' participation, showing their shift to activity-based English teaching. Through interviews and observations, I explained their professional growth and adaptation paths in the field.

When I first began teaching in the primary grade, I was confident enough to enter the class, but as I started explaining the grammar topic Adjective, I had to make a sentence. I said, 'The horse runs fastly.' One of the students in the class stood and corrected me, telling me the word fastly is incorrect as it is not in the dictionary. I regretted being unable to select the correct word and misusing it. I decided to buy a dictionary and learn pronunciation. At that time, it was difficult for me to read the phonetics, that's why I started listening to BBC Radio. Listening to the radio can

indeed be a powerful tool for improving English language skills, particularly in terms of pronunciation, intonation, and listening comprehension. Vandergrift (2007) focused on the role of listening in language learning, including the exposure to authentic language input, such as listening to the radio. In the same way, Field (2008) and Renandya et al. (2011) claim the importance of using authentic listening materials, like radio, to express learner's natural speech patterns and a variety of accents and dialects and how listening to sources such as radio helps learners to improve their language by consistent and engaging exposure to the target language.

In due course, I got some opportunities for professional development focusing on speaking activities from the school. I remember the twist that I had in my teaching style. One fine month in 2019, I was sent to attend a training conducted by Kathmandu University. I participated in many creative teaching methods: readers' theatre, story cloud and story wheel making. After that experience, I remembered my practices and felt the need to change my previous practice of mind about teaching and develop my capacities to change in my context (Quotishi, 2015, p. 164). I felt the need to transform from my old to a new culture of teaching speaking. As a result, I clearly remember how excited I was to go back to my school and try the story wheel with my grade eleven learners, primarily focusing on speaking activities.

English as the Major Subject: A Step in Learning English

This portion explains how I experienced my English learning in college, mainly at the Intermediate and bachelor's levels. From state translation to bilingualism, I have become more of an independent reader in this chapter with lots of authentic English exposure. I felt my engagement with informal exposures like English newspapers, BBC radio, extra comics, etc., was more than a formal classroom, with my approach as a learner helped me progress my language learning.

Not any profession, but an English Teacher

Passing the SLC was a matter of pride not only for my family and relatives but for the whole village and community. After the result, it did not take me long to understand my interests, which support my career through further studies. I was considerate of my future goals, and it was fixed to study English at any cost. English was my choice, and I settled to study Humanities, majoring in English, which implied that I would be an English teacher in the future or find a career somewhere around the English language.

Intermediate Level

After SLC, I joined the intermediate level in the humanities and social sciences faculty with a major in English. This was the formal foundation of my career as an English teacher. The possibilities of various opportunities shrank in the English world, especially in the teaching of English. It was the seed that has now grown into a mature English teacher. I was supposed to be a genuine English student in class, even at the intermediate level; I cannot memorize any classroom activities and incidents regarding my English potential. One day during my English class, I regretted my English pronunciation. It was the recitation of the poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. I started reciting the poem "Two Roads Diverged in a Wood, and I took a less traveled one. Today, the right decision on the selection of the road has created all the differences. At the time, I pronounced the word difference by exaggerating more than the real need, as deh-fuh-rens, which made my face red due to the unnatural look of my teacher due to wrong pronunciation. The incident again supported my belief that my pronunciation was poor and it needed extra practice for correction and improvement. The lectures, classroom notes, some guides, and guess papers were not sufficient for hitting the target of speaking. However, the subjects of major English were the stronger exposures compared to the high school level. The monotonous lectures and classroom notes could not help me develop my interest in speaking the English language. There was always something that fulfilled my interest in English. The teachers in my class did not contribute at the intermediate level, as they were noted as deliverers. By policy or what, they were not called up to play the diverse role of dynamic teachers. Their role was just the opposite of what Harmer (2007) related about them: "Whether or not we are more autocratic or democratic teachers, we are called upon to play many different roles in a language learning classroom (p.113).

The Time of Bachelor's Study

The time of self-initiated learning started in this phase, as I could not count any experience in the bachelor's in education and bachelor's in humanities and social sciences classrooms. Though I had to study different subjects ranging from literature, sound, and structures to academic writing in English, I doubt how much they contributed to strengthening my English vocabulary. Of course, I missed formal college classes and made frequent transitions. I had not ventured wide and far from my mainstream world of English classrooms. The journey from 2000 to 2009 was

based on a success story. This was the time I had heavily prepared myself, with conscious efforts, in different skills of English. Powerful Influence of 'Better English Pronunciation' by J.D. O'Connor Apart from opening the door for higher studies, the most beautiful gift that a bachelor of English offered me was the red book called 'Better English Pronunciation' by J.D. O'Connor. The book was prescribed as the reference book for the first-year subject 'English Sound and Structure.' I first saw the book in the campus library of Patan Multiple Campus. After I went through the contents, I felt that it was the book that I had been waiting for a long time. This book was a supplement to my 'Oxford Dictionary'. "I must buy this book", I thought. I bought the book immediately from a bookstore. Though I had already begun maintaining the vocabulary diary based on the Oxford Dictionary, the phonetics and pronunciation were still a problem for me. Learners need to be able to pronounce all the individual sounds in the second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).

I enjoyed the opportunity to go through the individual sounds in English. I read the book details for my reasons. I read every word shared as an example of particular sounds with watchful consideration. "Thanks, God! You gave me the book as I required." I read the book with deep interest, which was my first step in correct pronunciation. It lifted my career as it helped to fix my pronunciation differently from my classmates as well as my colleagues. I started communicating with some immediate and notable changes with my students. There were some common changes like the correct pronunciation of simple words and phrases such as blue, sure, OK, good morning, excuse me, the words with ...ough: although, fought, brought, caught, the pronunciation of aspirated sounds:/p/, /t/ and /k/, pronunciation of /f/ sound, etc. "poor me, if there was an audio script too!" I wished. Until that time, my world was unknown about the internet, or the internet as it was not within my reach. The cassette was very famous for playing music. In most houses, with most people, there used to be cassette players and cassettes. Before having a player, I searched for the cassette of the book. The cassette was not available separately. So, I bought the set, a book, and a cassette in Lalitpur, and "Now, I will speak as an Englishman. People will not find out if that is BBC news or Kapil reading news!! "I was emotionally energized. Listening to authentic pronunciation and producing it was my passion. I listened to the cassette with the book till late at night, early morning, and at any leisure time. I mean every night, early morning, and at any leisure time. I mean any time and every time.

At that moment, for me, English meant 'Oxford Dictionary' and 'The Better English Pronunciation.' I could read the words in the dictionary myself, anywhere I liked, with proper pronunciation and stress. I could feel the instant impact when my friends commented, "Kapil, how can you speak good English?" By the time my interest had shifted to stress and intonation patterns. Lightbown and Spada (2011) suggested that the stress pattern created the melody. For them, a second language speaker's ability to make themselves understood depends more on their ability to reproduce the phrasing and stress patterns- the 'melody' of the language –than on their ability to articulate each sound. That red book provided me with the power to be a notable English teacher. This not only provided me with better pronunciation but also aided me in exploring my instincts of the English language and finding and recognizing myself in the world of English.

Developing Vocabulary with 'The Kathmandu Post'

Aligning Myself with Reading "No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting." – Mary Wortley Montagu (1689- 1762)

Before my bachelor's degree, studying was meant to pass the examination, but not to develop any skills. Since my childhood, I have been interested in making lists of vocabulary from dictionaries. A unique column was the pronunciation, which was the most interesting part for me. However, there was less possibility that I would read the whole English book or the chapters for my comprehension, not for any examination. During my intermediate and bachelor levels, I had already read many articles from newspapers and magazines that were rooted in the habit of reading and enjoying English texts. Some seemingly simple incidents do have significant implications in life.

In the late 1990s, I was completing my intermediate studies in Bhaktapur and was a member of a reading club. In the course of the usual practice, the head of Bindabasini Library and Speakers Club invited one of the club members, Ramu, to read the news. He read the title, '*Darshan Finance Found guilty of forging a document,*' and confidently read *forgiving*. He read the title wrong. As we were there to practice reading, we counted Ramu's incorrect pronunciation, and it was my turn to read the news. I read better than others with fewer errors. "*Do you want to read English News?*" *Yup, no doubt,*" I said. "*If yes, take some newspaper as you want,*" he showed it to the pile of English newspapers. Moreover, *we regularly visit this library as we have regular subscriptions to the Himalayan Times and the Kantipur Post; he*

showed me some English magazines." After that day, my evenings were routine in the library. I started reading English magazines that were available in the library. Always interested, I tried to develop the habit of reading English papers. This act took me to pick up English newspapers even after reading Nepali newspapers in the street. Reading 'The Kathmandu Post' after reading 'Kantipur Daily' on the same day was a fantastic experience. Since most of the information and the headlines were similar, I easily understood the contents of the English newspaper. "Yes, I can read, understand and summarize the gist of the English newspaper now. If I buy one every day and read it with the help of the Oxford dictionary, I can do it." Some confidence crept inside me. I began to buy English newspapers occasionally and read them with interest, taking the help of my Oxford dictionary. This interest was further enhanced when one day Mohan Dai came with a piece of 'The Himalayan Times.' "Bhai, you know, this newspaper costs only three rupees. It also has some extra pages," he showed the paper to me. "You mean I can be a regular customer?" I decided to book a yearly subscription and was a regular customer of 'The Himalayan Times' from that day onwards and a regular reader too. Around the year 2012, when I was an English language instructor at an institute in Baneshwor, a group of curious students who were flying abroad wanted me to teach them ways of reading the English newspaper; as a language mentor, I guided them from the headlines and editorials to the mid-page articles. It would be a challenge for me if I were not used to reading newspapers since my completion of the certificate level. Every day, before students brought the newspaper, I had to buy my paper, go through it, consult the dictionaries, and make myself ready to read for my students. I did the duty perfectly for three months to the satisfaction of my students. For my students, it was a simple job that the teachers generally do, but for me, it was a complicated study that was equal to passing my bachelor's degree.

Reading the newspapers and magazines led me to read some excellent self-help books. 'Who Moved My Cheese' a book by Dr. Spencer Johnson, A Change, Think Faster Talk Smarter by Matt Abrahams, 'How to Win Friends and Influence the People', how to Analyze People, The Art of Reading People were some of the international books that I completed for my purpose and joy. Of course, these readings shaped my relationship with English more firmly, improving my linguistic ability. Harmer (2007) agreed that reading is helpful for language acquisition,

provided that the students more or less understand what they read. The more they read, the better they get at it.

Acquisition of English empowered by reading was meaningful since it was slow and gradual, with personal will and interest. It was like adding brick upon brick. If we borrow Krashen's words, it is comprehensible input. Acquisition requires meaningful interactions in the target language with natural communication in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding (Schütz, 2017). My reading was offering me meaningful interaction with the text, making me mature enough to receive new input.

BBC Radio: The First Authentic Listening Exposure

My father was intensely interested in playing the radio louder in my locality. We had an ancient 'National Panasonic' radio that we all considered a living member of our family. One evening, after I completed my lesson plan for the next day, I turned on the radio, switched the band to short-wave frequency, and started searching for some old Hindi music. As I changed the frequency, I listened to the English voice, which was loud and clear. It was the BBC news broadcasting on a program titled 'A Dollar a Day.' "Wow, what real English! This is the most standard English I have ever heard to date." I was touched. "I can understand the sentences! Whether I can understand completely or not, I must listen to this radio. Why didn't I notice it earlier?" I was committed and was impressed with the BBC news. I decided to listen to that radio station regularly and noted down 'BBC London 94.9 MHZ'. I was well-known for the value of authentic listening, but had not had the opportunity earlier. It was a pleasure for me to listen to authentic English without any interruption; the best part was that I could listen to it without payment anytime I liked. BBC Radio station was the best park I could visit anytime, the best friend to whom I could listen anytime. I listened to the radio during my bedtime and in the early mornings since I had a habit of getting up early, around four in the morning. Not only I but my whole village were informed about the 'Royal massacre of 1 June 2001' by BBC London.

Royal Massacre of 1 June, 2001

As I had shared, my regular habit was to wake up early in the morning. That morning, I woke up still in the mood for sleeping and turned on the radio, which was usually on at around 4.30 am. As I turned it on, the first unusual words it was of Nepal I heard were ".....the king Birendra, the queen Ashriwaya, Princess Shrutee and Nirajan are shot dead". "What is this? Are the news readers out of their minds or

drunk? What nonsense? Shrutee and Nirajan are also shot. It means more royals have been killed. How come the king and the queen, as well as the family members? Oh no, it can't be the truth." I was trying to console myself and anxiously waited for the main news to broadcast again. "Oh god, they are killed. They are finished, "I am listening to the radio. "Kanchho, what happened? What made you cry? Is this a dream, or are you unhappy with your sister?" Mum ran to my bed to be sure that dream made me cry. "No, mother, our King, Queen, and almost all the members are killed. No one is alive. They are all killed, mum." My mother was already in tears. "Hay Ram, what is this?" she prayed. The whole day and other days while Radio Nepal was still mourning, I was the only news source, the BBC London agent. From that incident, I was mature enough to search for authentic English sources to impact lives. "While many of my friends, teachers, and the English degree holder uncles couldn't, I could." I was glad and proud of myself and my English.

Tafari (2009), in his research, focused on the importance of radio programs to develop, focused on the importance of radio programs in developing language learning. He explained that besides getting news, information, and entertainment in language classes, the radio plays a pivotal role in improving pronunciation, intonation, the pitch of voice, etc. On the other hand, to connect listening skills with successful spoken communication, listening to texts is a good pronunciation model, and the more students listen, the better they get, not only in understanding speech but also in speaking. Indeed, it is essential to remember that successful spoken communication depends on our ability to speak, as well as the effectiveness of how we listen (Harmer, 2007, p. 133).

From my first encounter with BBC London to the incident of the royal massacre in 2001, I have developed from a basic-level listener to an advanced-level listener of English who listens to the authentic news on BBC London and gets first-hand information. So, in my case, listening to BBC radio energized my motivation for English language learning, taking my listening comprehension to a new height. Harmer, talking about the listening that takes place outside the classroom, mentions, "The motivational power of such an activity increases dramatically when students make their own choices about what they are going to listen to" (Harmer, 2007).

My professional journey as an English teacher began in 2001, shortly after I completed my certificate level majoring in English Literature. Along with my newly completed level, I had an innate enthusiasm to become a good teacher. From the

outset, I believed that a teacher should bring variety to the classroom to inspire students to learn rather than relying solely on monotonous drills, rigorous writing exercises, or dull comprehension tasks (Bhattarai, 1993). Looking back, I realize that this desire was the foundation for my aspiration to become an 'Activity-Based Teacher' to develop speaking. Starting, I hoped that my engaging teaching methods would captivate my students. My passion for working with students took me to the secondary level. In my early days, I centered my teaching philosophy on the students' interests. As a new teacher, I was interested in using my acting skills to keep my students entertained and engaged while learning. This ability likely stemmed from the opportunities I had as a learner in my school days. I would read stories to my students and act out each word and situation, to which they responded positively. I realized that singing, dancing, acting, jumping, and running helped me make the topics more transparent and more enjoyable for the learners. Finally, my involvement in various activities supported me in expressing myself in class.

Throughout my career, I have had various opportunities for professional development. A significant turning point came in 2019 when I attended a training session conducted by a University. There, I was introduced to creative teaching methods of teaching speaking, such as readers' theatre, story cloud, and situational questions. This experience prompted me to reflect on my teaching practices and recognize the need to shift from my old teaching methods to modern practices with innovative approaches. The practice came to its shape when I attended a two-day session in the conference hall of a university related to teaching speaking to conceptualize in any language class. The participants performed various activities. In the seminar, the facilitator demonstrated some lessons through lectures, but many participants did not respond as the facilitator wished. Later, she acted as she changed the activities and entered into a character, accompanied by a hero in the education field, a university professor. After clearing the concept, he divided the role and informed the participants to act on the scenes as assigned characters. Even with insufficient resources, the roles helped the participants to gain confidence and speak. It encouraged the students to develop speaking skills such as discussion, group understanding, interpretation, and inferring (Zhang, 2020). The learners develop communicative skills without expensive educational materials bought from the market. In this way, the self-involvement and observation of the sessions conceptualized the importance of activities for the development of speaking.

My Process in Engaging Myself in Speaking English

I believe that many learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds felt learning and speaking English was a challenge. Even though speaking English is a gateway to better educational and professional opportunities, for me, the journey to proficiency was full of obstacles, which I finally overcame. One of the primary barriers poor students face is access to quality education. Schools with competent English teachers and adequate learning materials are scarce in many developing regions. According to the Global Education Monitoring Report 2024, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), around 250 million children and youth are out of school, with those from low-income families disproportionately represented (UNESCO, 2020). This lack of quality education directly impacts their ability to learn and speak English effectively. Judson & Egan (2013, p. 343) highlight that pedagogical tools such as games, drama, play, rhythm, rhyme, stories, image creation, personalizing objects, changing contexts, instilling a sense of wonder and mystery, and incorporating both ordinary and extraordinary elements, can significantly enhance the learning experience. These tools help make learning a second language enjoyable, facilitate the teaching of new vocabulary, help understand complex verbs, and assist with memorization, all while engaging students' imaginations. Similarly, referring to Wilhelm Von Humboldt's famous words, "You cannot teach a language; you can only create the conditions under which it might be learned," Xerri and Vosallo (2016, p. 100) suggest that English teachers convert their classrooms into art galleries and to surprise their students one day and replace all the 'boring' stuff with colorful posters. They suggest that the teachers make the classroom environment artful. Hence, I remember I, too, was amusingly informed about nouns and pronouns when the English teacher had turned our classroom into a stage where we got to perform. Other students and I got inspired to do something different; he had probably awoken the joy and creative expression through the art form 'role-play' to develop confidence while speaking English. Many agents create obstacles to speaking English. Among them, poor economic background is one that can be eliminated through motivation; converting a classroom into an art gallery can be supportive for engaging them.

Beyond physical resources, there is a significant psychological barrier. Poor students like me often lack confidence in their ability to speak English fluently. This lack of confidence can stem from societal attitudes that associate proficiency in

English with intelligence and social status. Research indicates that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds frequently experience anxiety and self-doubt when using English in academic settings (MacIntyre et al., 1994). Despite these challenges, motivation plays a crucial role in overcoming obstacles. Many poor students recognize the importance of English as a global lingua franca and strive to learn it to better their future prospects. A study by Lamb (2004) found that intrinsic motivation and a clear understanding of English's role in globalization significantly contribute to students' persistence in learning the language, regardless of their socioeconomic status. There are numerous success stories of individuals who despite their impoverished backgrounds, have mastered English and transformed their lives. For example, Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist for female education, learned English under challenging circumstances and used her proficiency to advocate for girls' education on an international platform (Yousafzai, 2013). Her story illustrates how mastering English can empower individuals to become influential voices in global conversations. Students with low economic backgrounds and anxiety can progress through motivation and participation.

Mr. Hari's Understanding of Speaking English: Hesitation to Confidence

In response to the question related to the difficulty level of learning to speak, Mr. Hari revealed that he was afraid to speak with the teacher and found it difficult to talk in English. As he was weak in pronunciation and his teacher taught English in Nepali medium, he could understand it, but due to a lack of practice was unable to express his understanding in English due to the lack of new words in his daily use. He believed that the teacher's voice was the most important tool as it plays a significant and determining role in the management of a successful classroom. Harmer (2008) claims, "The way the teachers talk to students, how they interact with them is one of the crucial teacher skills, but it does not demand technical expertise" (p. 37).

Therefore, the teacher needed to know how to speak and what his voice sounded like, have a crucial effect on his teaching. In a small classroom with 45 students sitting on a mat, some standing and some sitting, Mr. Ajit, an English teacher, had a unique challenge that most of the students did not understand. The class was a combination of students with multiple levels of language proficiency and from economically unsupportive families. Hari was my participant as a student entirely struggling with understanding and speaking English.

'I always hesitated to speak as my vocabulary was poorer than others. I was worried about making mistakes and being laughed at by my friends. He supposed that the different psychological problems, like inhibition, inferiority complex, and lack of confidence, also played vital roles in making his students hesitate in speaking. Harmer (2008) says, "The modern approaches, such as the communicative approach, the content-based language teaching, etc., believe that the teacher should play the role of a prompter, tutor, assessor, mentor, counselor, and as a psychologist" (p. 20). Mr. Ajit, my teacher from Darjeeling, noticed my situation and came near me to ask why I was responding differently. When I explained the reason, he told me to meet him after school and it was familiar to have a problem as many of my friends were in the same boat.

Mr. Hari, one of the research participants, added, *"My teacher began by providing a supportive classroom environment, emphasized that making mistakes is a natural part of learning, and encouraged all students to participate without fear in a regular segment. He made a routine that everyone should speak turn-wise at least twice a week on the assigned topics. He started celebrating the joyous moment of sharing words, sentences, and paragraphs correctly to help build students' confidence. Understanding that he needed extra support, his teacher spent time with me after school. He taught me basic conversation skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary building. My teacher used to make his classes engaging by using role-playing, which included real-life situations and interactive games practically acting as police and thieves, making learning fun where we were encouraged to make mistakes while learning"*.

After two years, when my participant was in class 9, he got encouragement for a culture of peer support in the classroom. For this purpose, his teacher paired students of different understanding levels to work together on speaking exercises. *"This activity not only helped me improve my English but also developed a sense of togetherness among the group participants. We learned to stand by and learn from each other, designing collaborative learning scenarios"*. Slowly, Hari developed the symptoms of improvement as he participated in class discussions and became confident and less hesitant to speak. *'My teacher and peers noticed my growing confidence with each passing day. All the students shared positive and negative feedback for the betterment of the students. While sharing the feedback and answers, the participant teacher tried to address the problem in a sandwich pattern with all the*

flavors of suggestions. Why this? Can you make it a bit different? The discussion concluded with the agreement of all the participants. Based on his responses, the participant teacher believed that the major problem that he was facing while teaching speaking opinion skills in his English classroom was hesitation while expressing the learners' opinions.

The teachers connected real-life scenarios to their language activities, such as ordering food at a restaurant, booking a ticket, buying a book, and asking for directions. *“This practical activity made me see the relevance of what I was learning and motivated me to practice connecting more outside the classroom.”* He further added about a situation in which his school organized a class presentation where all the students had to perform a role play about the profession of their choice. In spite of their nervousness, they gathered confidence and decided to act as a teacher and share their passion for teaching. When it was his turn, he stood up, went in front of the class, took a deep breath, and began to write on the board as a teacher. To his surprise, he played the role of the teacher justifiably, clearly, and confidently, where he demonstrated various activities to make the situation interactive and productive. The whole class applauded his effort, and the teacher was proud to award him the Best Performer award.

Regarding the question on hesitation, while speaking in English, Mr. Hari said, *‘The major problem I found in my speaking class that hinders in developing speaking skill in the students is hesitation’*. He said, *“My students could not express their opinions because of the different psychological problems like lack of confidence, physical problems like cleft lip, stammering, inferiority to pronounce, inhibition, and other household problems”*. He further said that his students hesitated to express their views, answer the questions and explain the topic. Because of their hesitation, his students were uninterested in participating in different communicative activities, though he tried to encourage them in his class. He supposed that the various psychological problems, like inhibition, inferiority complex, and lack of confidence, also played vital roles in making his students hesitate in speaking. Harmer (2008) says, *“The modern approaches, such as the communicative approach, the content-based language teaching, etc., believe that the teacher should play the role of a prompter, tutor, assessor, mentor, counselor and as a psychologist”* (p. 20). So, my participant teacher thought that encouraging the students to emphasize their involvement in the activities and motivating them to participate in the activities could

reduce their level of hesitation. He believed that the prime job of the teacher was to facilitate the students in order to help them achieve the target. The teacher has to find out the students' problems to encourage them. He thought the teacher had to play the prompter and the role of a resource person.

Similarly, he felt the best way to handle those problems was to counsel the students to enable them to achieve the desired objective. Likewise, he advocated that the teacher study and investigate students' cognitive and psychological aspects to treat them properly. If he works as a psychologist, he can teach his students properly (Subedi, 2010). The participant teacher assumes that the significant problems his students have in speaking English are inhibition and an inferiority complex. Ur (1996) says, "Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom, worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts" (p. 121). As a remedial action, my participant teacher believed that the teacher needed to convince the students of what he wanted to do according to their interests. Some students were weakly motivated due to their social and family background (Verghese, 1989). So, the teacher needed to stimulate himself and sustain motivation. He also argued that individual attention to students can somewhat remedy the situation.

Hari's journey as an activity-based teacher was arduous, but his persistence, support, and growing environment helped him overcome his struggles. He became more active in class and started discussing with his friends to solve similar challenges. Hari's story can inspire the creation of a class where students learn through various activities, are not afraid of making mistakes, and learn together. Hari's story highlights the importance of supportive activities. His complete dedication and innovative methods boosted the students to overcome their fear and improve their English speaking skills.

A Journey from the Mountains to the Classroom: The Story of Rani

I am Rani, and I love to share my story with you. I was born in a village in a far western province, a remote village in the mountains of Nepal. The place is beautiful, but life is full of struggles. As she was born into a family with less yearly income, it was difficult to fulfill everyone's needs, and every day was a struggle.

In a question about her day-to-day life, including schooling, she said that living surrounded by snow-capped peaks and lush green valleys provided her with few opportunities for a better life. Her family struggled to make ends meet. They did

not have much, and she often had to help her parents with farming and chores. Despite that, she loved school. She was very shy, though, and speaking up in class was hard for her. She said that there was a deep thirst for knowledge. Books fascinated her, and she would spend hours reading whatever she could find, dreaming of the world beyond the mountains. Even though they could barely afford her, her parents managed to admit her to school. She walked a long distance daily, carrying a few precious books in a worn-out bag. Some of her teachers saw her dedication and encouraged her to keep going, but speaking up in class was a significant challenge. Whenever she was asked a question, she wished to write and show her teacher, as she was convinced that her friends would laugh every time, she concluded a sentence. Due to her lack of word selection capacity, she was always worried.

She further added, "One day, a volunteer teacher from the US representing the Peace Corps came to our village. He introduced us to new teaching methods, including interactive activities and speaking exercises. I was fascinated but also scared to participate. When he noticed my hesitation, he took a deep interest in me. He encouraged me politely, helping me understand that making mistakes was part of learning. With the support of a volunteer teacher, I started to participate in group activities and speaking exercises. The more I practiced, the more I realized it was okay to make mistakes. My classmates were supportive, too, and soon, I started finding my voice. After finishing high school, I was awarded a scholarship to attend college in the capital city. This was a noticeable turning point. Moving from a small village to a bustling city was challenging, but I was determined to succeed. I worked part-time jobs to support myself and studied hard."

In the following question on the reason for being a teacher, she said that she wanted to give back to her community. After completing her education, she returned to her village and became an English teacher at her old school. She introduced new teaching methods, focusing on speaking and interactive activities. She also encouraged her students to express themselves without fear of making mistakes. She claimed that she has been practicing various activities in the classroom and added, *"My classroom was always buzzing with energy and enthusiasm. I used role-playing, panel discussions, chain stories, and storytelling to make learning fun and engaging. My students admired me and saw me as a role model. They started to believe in themselves, just as I had learned to believe in myself"*. Responding to the question regarding motivation from the teachers, Ms. Rani revealed that her teacher

encouraged her to talk. However, it was tough for her to talk without hesitation. Her teacher said, *‘Come on, speak, speak this word. He repeated the word it, but did not show any negative symptoms even though I made mistakes’*.

My Reflection

On the basis of my participants' understanding, the major problem that they face while teaching speaking skills is hesitation when the students are asked to share their opinions. The students hesitate to share their views, answer the questions, and explain their understanding. Due to the hesitation of the learners, they do not wish to participate in any communicative activities; even the participant teachers tried to participate in classes. Harmer (2008) says, “The modern approaches, such as the communicative approach, the content-based language teaching, etc., believe that the teacher should play the role of a prompter, tutor, assessor, mentor, counselor and as a psychologist” (p. 20). So, my participants think that encouraging the students to emphasize their involvement in the activities and motivating them to participate in the activities can reduce their level of hesitation. They believe that the prime job of the teacher is to facilitate the students and enable them to achieve the desired ends. The teacher has to find out the students’ problems to encourage them. They think that the teacher has to play the role of a prompter along with the role of a resource person.

Perception of Teaching and Learning English

While unfolding my socio-cultural pedagogical bases and the support of introspection in my inquiry, I would begin with my growth in a middle-class Brahmin family surrounded by Sanskrit books, religious hymns, and traditional stories implanted for the development of language, narrative, and moral norms and values. My first schooling in my village, where the means of explanations were completely in Nepali medium, shaped my understanding of language limitations and educational inequalities, which later supported my vision toward access, inclusion, and representation in language acquisition. When I entered higher education, especially regarding my M. Phil's level in English language teaching and introspection developed into ways to reflect on how my identity, experiences of culture, and educational gaps pushed my pedagogical options and interest towards research. This inward focus supported me in realizing that I was not only understanding the texts or teaching language but also negotiating a different and higher identity designed by tradition and modernization.

Regarding my queries with my participants, Mr. Hari claimed that stammering was another linguistic disorder that made the learner anxious about their speech. In such a condition, Hari believed that the teacher should avoid creating anxiety concerning minor speech errors. His idea of not creating anxiety is similar to that of Pokhrel (2007). Hence, based on his views regarding hesitation in speaking English, he seemed to have used different techniques like motivation and activity-based instruction to encourage his students. Thus, it can be deduced that the participant teacher agreed that his students hesitate to speak in the English classroom because of different psychological problems, responding to the question regarding motivation from the teachers.

Ms. Rani, speaking on the same question, replied that the hesitation of the students to say was the most challenging problem, too. She further added that the hesitation of students to speak was the most difficult problem for her. She claimed that her students hesitate to say, thinking they would make mistakes, feel inferior to others, and a lack of exposure was the central problem of hesitation. She added that to cope with these challenges, she had always been encouraging the learners, saying everyone can speak because language is for communication. If our friend and I understand each other's views, we use acceptable language.

In such a way, she added that she used positive behavior towards the speaking of learners, even if they were making some errors. Similarly, she said that she always motivated her students by providing a topic of their interest so that they could share their views. Both of my participant teachers believed that hesitation was the most challenging problem faced while teaching speaking in an EFL classroom. When Ms. Rani tried to get involved in the interactive activities, the students felt inferior and inhibited from being involved. She believed that the learners hesitated to share their ideas, thinking that there would be some errors in the spoken sentences. That is why she frequently encouraged the learners to be optimistic regarding their errors. She expressed that she motivated her learners to go with the flow of speaking patiently. In this regard, Zhendong (1987) opines, "The teacher should have patience, confidence, imagination, enthusiasm, humor, and creativity. She should be friendly, sympathetic, and on good terms with the students, and she should have an affirmative attitude towards the students and encourage them" (p. 320). She also added that a teacher needs to meet the students and should try in some way to get to know their interests and find some interesting topic for discussion so that the students may feel that the

teacher is interested in their speech. This may be done by asking each individual to give a short talk or by describing a questionnaire, in which a teacher can get brief ideas about the students' attitudes and their problems with speaking. She also argued that Krashen's (1982) correction does not contribute to the real acquisition of the language but only to the learner's conscious 'monitoring' of speech. Hence, the main activity of the teacher should be to provide comprehensible input from which the learner can acquire language based on various real-life activities, not to correct (as cited in Ur, 1996, p. 224). Thus, it can be understood that my participant teacher knew very well about the remedial condition for the hesitation of her students and how to motivate them in those conditions.

I have included mine and participants' own experience based on our Socio-cultural background, where I grew up in a traditional and religious Brahmin family with powerful roots in storytelling, artifacts as Sanskrit books with spiritual values, where I experienced being limited with English exposure in Nepali as a medium of instruction. Both participants also represent different socio-cultural backgrounds and have various religious beliefs. In the same way regarding my process of learning the English language, I have included how learning English was a struggle and how the difficulties promote my interest in adopting more reflective, student-centered teaching practices. Finally, I have explained how Auto/ethnographic reflection linked my identity and culture to my English teaching approach, from a traditional teacher-centered modern student-centered approach based on activities.

Dialogic Process of Shaping the Perception

This research is based on Vygotsky's (1978) theory regarding social constructivism, which values social interaction in the growth of cognition and perception. Vygotsky claims that learning is a social process where individuals co-construct meaning with the help of dialogic involvement with others and their surroundings. Human understanding is not achieved in isolation but is developed and shaped through cultural and social circumstances.

My narrative connects closely with this theoretical perspective as my upbringing in a middle-class Brahmin family, where I was immersed in the oral practice of Hindu mythologies, developed my understanding through bedtime stories of my mother and success stories of my grandfather, who was a Pundit and translator of Sanskrit religious books. These dialogic encounters were my basic pictures of meaning-making when I tried to understand the world not completely through what

was shared through words, but through the shared cultural frameworks and values connected in those bedtime stories. The religious books, such as The Mahabharata, The Ramayan, and the Bhagavad Gita, were not merely the texts but bases of dialogic spaces where belief systems, ethical reasoning, and interpretive practices took shape in my language learning process.

Through my educational journey till the last point, this dialogic process continued and will continue till the end of life. My experience of studying in the village school, where English was explained through a Nepali medium, my learning was developed with the cooperation of my friends, subject teachers, and the limited but deeply contextual availability of resources. My perception of English slowly became meaningful through interaction, translation, and collaborative interpretation. Today, as a student at Kathmandu University, my involvement with theoretical texts in English is no longer a solitary task. Still, it is dialogic, which is shaped by the framework of the classroom through discussions, peer debates, and reflective writing.

Thus, the dialogic process of sharpening and shaping understanding is both a personal and theoretical reality in this research. It considers that knowledge is not only static but also continually negotiated through interaction. In the context of English language education in Nepal, this perspective agrees that students develop linguistic and cultural competence through meaningful anticipation and cooperation with collaboration, including the feeling of a winning situation and competition, not through a passive reception. By positioning the classroom as a dialogic space, this study prioritizes practices, such as group work, project-based learning, presentation, panel and reflective discussion, which support how my participants and I learnt language and paced ourselves from hesitation to confidence. This also shows how different stages of the dialogic process helped learners in becoming co-constructors of the meaning-making process. I will discuss the perception in the upcoming chapter. I noticed that the pedagogical strategies are not only the techniques but are manifestations of a more profound theoretical commitment to see the language learning process.

Chapter Summary

The exploration of my participants' and my journeys of learning English was the answer to my first sub-research query. So, in this chapter, I explored the lore, the story of our growth. I began by examining my journey, connecting the activity-based teacher as a storyteller in the classroom. Then, I explored my participants' journeys of knowing and connected their narratives and expressions taken during the interview and how they changed their perception into practice.

CHAPTER V

STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES OF TEACHING SPEAKING

After collecting the data, the researchers need to conclude. The researcher decided to analyze the data according to the research objectives, study type, and feasibility. This segment focused on the scrutiny and interpretation of data obtained from secondary-level grade teachers (grades 9-12) in the Bhaktapur district.

Becoming an Activity-Based English Teacher

Before the insight into the efficiency of activity-based classes, I had experienced many students in the classroom engaged in personal discussions. However, I convinced and forced them to concentrate, but they could not. Whenever I shared some interesting incidents of my life, the students tried but could not focus on their studies due to the one-sided lecture. Finally, when I touched their hearts and minds emotionally, they remained dumb and folded, but could not concentrate, and the lesson's objective was not achieved. So, I decided to research strategies to find a convincing method for teaching speaking.

In course of time, after my enrollment in MPhil course, my participation in conferences, seminars, webinars, and other professional development activities as speakers club, book club, including books and articles related to ELT, has given me an overview of how the classroom provides a perfect platform for students to participate in speaking. Teachers, educators, researchers, and academicians have talked and written about its relevance in the teaching-learning process through participation. Many books, articles, research studies, workshops, and presentations at teacher conferences have been written, carried out, and conducted around the world. Even in Nepal, I have heard people share practices on teaching speaking with different activities as a significant tool.

During my time as an MPhil (ELE) scholar at KUSOED, I was exposed to many new ideas and methods that questioned my previous teaching practices. I realized the need for fresh strategies in my classroom and began experimenting with new approaches, observing their positive impact. During this period, I felt a shift in my teaching philosophy. Though I lacked a clear direction, the idea of transformation started to break through my old habits. The contrast between my traditional methods

and the innovative techniques I was learning created a significant tension, prompting me to reassess the core principles of my teaching and life (Taylor et al., 2012, p. 1).

Additionally, Broemmel et al. (2019) highlight that for the past four decades, researchers have studied teachers' reading habits, recognizing their direct impact on student learning and achievement. As a scholar at KUSOED, I immersed myself in books and journal articles related to English Language Education (ELE) for several daily assignments and presentations. This scholarly work, which included writing research-based papers and essays, introduced me to various trends and issues in ELE and grew my interest in creative teaching. I felt the need to transform my teaching methods and identity as a teacher.

After exploring the journey of knowing activities, the researcher is now curious to explore the journey of practicing participation by himself as the insider and his participants as an outsider to find out what transformation they have brought in them as English language teachers, if any. He wanted to view it through the lens of other cultures. He revealed what and how they were adopted in teaching contexts parallel to other practices. Moreover, it explored various methods practiced by self and participant English teachers in their classrooms and how they supplement their process. The evidence derived from the researcher's reflection of the 'self' as one of the participants and observation of the participant English teachers has been analyzed thematically. However, the researcher liked to explore this part of his journey as a sub-plot of his story. As a subplot, it has only three elements: it begins with an exposition, climbs up to its rising action, and rises higher to the climax without its falling action leading to its resolution. The exploration experience made him realize that the process of becoming is a continuous one that will never end. Lastly, the researcher explored this part of his journey, believing that teaching is like performing an activity in which the classroom is the stage, and the teacher performs or enacts the curriculum in front of a student audience. Some may stand at the podium reading from lecture notes, others move around, gesture to power points, and call on students, but all must translate the goals, objectives, and lessons on the syllabus into the performative realm of time and space (Chemi & Du, 2017).

Throughout my career, I have had various opportunities for professional development. A significant turning point came in 2020 when I attended a training session conducted by a university; various activities were demonstrated to teach speaking English, like readers' theatre, story cloud, and story wheel making. This

experience prompted me to reflect on my teaching practices and recognize the need to shift from my old methods to more innovative approaches (Quotishi, 2015, p. 164). I felt the need to transform my teaching culture and eagerly returned to my school, excited to try the story chain with my grade eleven students to develop speaking skills.

Hesitation to Confidence of Participants

To discover the facts about the hesitation in speaking in the EFL classroom, I observed different classes of my participant teachers. For instance, I observed Ms. Rani's classroom on 10th May 2024. The day was gloomy and a little bit cold. I waited for my participant teacher until the bell for 2nd period rang, sitting in the staff room. As soon as the bell rang, we entered grade 10 together. There were 44 students in that class. The class was narrow, and I felt pretty suffocated inside the class. The teacher introduced me to the students and asked me to sit on the back bench, where I observed everything in the classroom. The teacher started her class with a warming-up question like, *'How are you? Are you fine?'* Turn by turn to the students. Then, she asked the students to turn to the page of the speaking chapter. She asked the students to look at the pictures and discuss the images. Some students asked the teacher to translate the Nepali words into English.

While discussing, they often used Nepali words, like *'Ho ra, (is it ?), Ani (and), Ke-re (what), "Yeso bancha hola hoena (It is said like this, no).'* They seemed to hesitate to spell and pronounce the words. The students seemed puzzled. Most of them were asking in Nepali with their friends, *"oe Yo k ho? (Hello, what is it?).'* The participant teacher helped the students go to every bench, guiding them in understanding English words. She asked one of the students to volunteer to describe the picture, but none were ready to speak. Though the teacher motivated and forced them to share, most students rejected as they felt shy, hesitated, and tried to hide their faces from the teacher. Then, she again tried to motivate the students by showing the picture writing questions, *"Who is this? What is he doing?'* But the students were involved in unrelated talks and gossip. Though the teacher asked English questions, students answered in Nepali.

In the next step, Ms. Rani divided the students into groups to discuss and promote learners' autonomy. Harmer (2007) says, "Group work promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to make their own decisions in the group without being told what to do by the teacher" (p. 116). Harmer (2007) says, "Teachers should

foster learner autonomy through the use of group work and pair work and by acting as a more resource than a transmitter of knowledge” (p. 108). The teacher involved her students in interaction while explaining the picture. Thus, I found a connection between her interview data and the data I obtained from her classroom observation. As she claimed that she followed different communicative activities like “five-minute activities,” which was about the ice breaker for the lesson before starting her class, she was found following the same in practice. She seemed as if she understood the importance of engaging the students, mainly through various activities for the development of their speaking skills. For this, she created a friendly and favorable environment where students felt free to share ideas in groups, and the class seemed connected and excited because of the various activities, resulting in interaction in English. I found that she played the role of a supportive and positive advisor, answering students’ questions calmly with leading performances. Her ideas of advising and assisting students to enhance communication are interrelated with the concept of -Freeman (2000). The participant teacher was noticed as well prepared and organized about what she was trying to teach in the classroom. The teacher made some pre-concepts and presented confidently while instructing the content, including the activity. She involved her students in the discussion and provided proper information to begin with. In the same way, I noticed that the students had enough input to improve their English speaking.

After the motivation and interaction, the students were ready to spell the words in English, even if the spelling was incorrect, as it was their first speaking class. Therefore, the teacher provided sufficient information based on activities that focus on the firm to develop speaking skills in the classroom.

The experience of being a learner, a teacher, and then a research observer boosted me to recognize that drawing is an uncommon activity to support English learners. I noticed that most of my students like to play with colors, too. Sharing the importance of drawing as a universal language, Walker (2013) shares a meaningful story of an artist who once reached into a cottage at a distance as he had neglected to eat his meal before the journey. When a woman of the house opened the door, the artist desired a cup of tea, to which he received a reply, 'Dim Sasenach ' (No English). After pleading request and meeting with the same determined and settling answer, 'Dim Sasenach,' he thought of his pocket sketch-book, and he immediately sketched of a cup of tea and showed it to the confused woman who understood his desire,

instantly opened wide the door, beckoned him into the cottage and offered a chair. In an unknown language, two children, who had concealed themselves behind their mother, were hastily dispatched and soon returned, one with a bundle of sticks and the other with a can of spring water. In no time, the kettle was boiling, and cakes were baked on something like a Scotch ' griddle 'hung from a chain in the chimney. Soon, the artist was enjoying himself, and the remembrance of the noisy cackling amidst which he was introduced suggested to his mind the possibility of making his repast more substantial by the addition of a few eggs, so he politely but thoughtlessly asked his hostess if she could oblige him with an egg or two. The inevitable ' Dim Sasenach ' soon showed him his mistake, so, using his pocket sketch-book, he sketched some of them, where the good woman went to a cupboard and immediately returned with a large, clean, wooden bowl, filled with eggs, of which the rough sketch will give an idea. Satisfied, refreshed, and again ready for work, the artist prepared to depart, but not before he ascertained the power of his hostess to understand, without any sketch, the value of English silver (pp. 2-4).

The story above illustrates how drawing supported an artist in expressing his desire for a cup of tea, as it was the medium of communication and expression between two people of different languages. The artist used drawing as a tool of expression to make the woman understand what he needed because the woman spoke a different language that was incomprehensible to him. Consequently, the following section will explore how my participants (including me) use this powerful art form in their classrooms. Formosa and Zammit (2016, p. 31) believe that drawings are amongst the most expressive media we use to convey meaning. Even the worst drawing tells a story. This activity can be done by using both reading and listening texts. Ask students to read or listen to a text and draw their interpretation of what they 'see' while reading or listening. How do they interpret the authors' thoughts and meaning through their drawings? Please encourage them to explain their drawing to the class as feedback.

During the observation of my participants' classes and reflection on my experiences of using drawing, I noticed that they used drawing most frequently, and it was a standard form that the participants used as a tool to support the learners to share their understanding through their imagination. In the same way, drawing was also used as a tool for interpretation in order to make the learners comprehend the lessons better and in a fun way. Hubbard (1989, p. 157) stated that drawing is not just for

children who can yet write fluently, and creating pictures is not just part of a rehearsal for actual writing. Images at any age are part of the serious business of making meaning as partners with words for communicating our inner designs.

On the mornings of 29th and 31st May, the tenth and twelfth classes, I observed Mr. Hari and Ms. Rani working with their students to imagine, share, and write as inputs and create and draw their inner colorful poetry in their notebooks as the final output. The teachers questioned the students about the poem, and the students replied. The teachers wrote all the points they answered on the board.

After that, Miss Rani encouraged the students to imagine and write a poem together. She began by asking the students to put on their thinking caps and imagine a poem. She said that they would be writing eight lines, and everyone would get a chance. She added that they should think of a sentence or a line that came to their mind.

Miss Rani asked who would like to share a line or sentence. The class remained quiet. Then, Prashin started the first line, 'My small dog loves to sleep on a wooden log.' Ms. Rani wrote the first line on the board for further discussion. Then, the next student was supposed to add the second line related to the first line, and that should make some sense to be related to the frog or the log. Amar tried, 'The dog eats meat on the log.' The Teacher asked to avoid the word log. It would be different to try with another word; log rhymes like a log-dog, or it could be a hog.

Shree tried, '*The log is beside a dog?*' The teacher agreed and suggested adding one more word there as 'The log is beside the lazy dog and the students laughed. She also explained that the words log and dog rhymed. She further asked the student, Alvina, to add one more line. Alvina added, 'The dog was scared by the frog?' 'But the teacher said that it would be better to use another word than repeating the word, 'dog,' and she also told them not to worry as the words need not rhyme with log or dog. It could be something related to the previous two lines. In this way, she moved on with the help of the students to create a rhyming poem. I saw that most of the students participated, and those who were encouraged to think by calling out their names.

When the poem was formed, Miss Rani suggested that the students recite the poem together. The students did as instructed a few times; every new time was better than the previous attempt. The teacher compared the poem that was composed in the room, including the features they had discussed earlier. She informed the students to

search and suggest a suitable title. The learners brought different titles such as 'The Dog, 'The Dog on a Log,' 'The Imaginative World,' and 'After. 'After the lengthy discussion on the title of the poem, Ms. Rani suggested the learners write the poem in their copy. The students copied down the poem. The teacher informed them about the fifteen minutes they had to finish the work, as they would be going to an art exhibition at 11:45 a.m. The next activity was that Ms. Rani helped those confused learners, and they finalized the words to use. At the same time, feedback was given on the assignment from the last day. She suggested that the punctuation marks played a crucial role in the making of a sentence, so they should not be avoided. To make the writing formal and attractive, the students should mention the date and draw the margin as well as underline the main points with a pencil and scale. In the next day's class, the teacher made the students write a poem on their understanding of the given topics with a drawing connected to the poem; she revised the rhyming words.

Miss Rani's class observation of those few days clarified the use of two different activities, writing stories, poems and drawing, as the tools to encourage students to discuss, think, and express their thoughts through a poem while also addressing the vocabulary building; language structure and creation of something that they could own and be proud of at last when they read it. I also noticed that most students liked drawing Godini and Rajuan (2018). After writing the poem, they willingly and happily started drawing and coloring. While drawing, most of them looked involved and did the task with complete interest and determination. They expressed each word of the poem through pictures, and in doing so, they learned language skills, too. For example, when some students wrote a poem entitled 'A Beautiful Day,' I observed that they drew sunny days and cheerful people. In the poem "My Winter Plan," each one drew their plan for a vacation. Good or better, all of them enjoyed drawing and coloring the pictures, which made their creation in their notebooks artful and creative. It differed from the usual way of writing a poem with plain text.

According to Adoniou (2012), drawing is a supportive strategy in writing classrooms. Parallels between the writing and drawing processes make drawings potentially potent sources of mediation in language classes (p. 14). In Mr. Hari's class, drawing also helped the students focus on their work, think creatively, and write their poems with interest. Drawing was a regular task in Mr. Hari's class.

In my observation of his class, I noticed him using drawing as an activity to help him learn to speak in many ways. For example, I witnessed that the morning class started at 10 a.m. After a short discussion on the formation of good habits and the techniques of improving handwriting in the assembly, generally known as the idea corner, he had a discussion on the assignment with possible errors to be corrected. He claimed that it was his regular practice, which he called the fusion of revision and pre-reading activities. Until that day, grade 12 students had read the story titled 'A Devoted Son' by Anita Desai and was assigned homework. They had to imagine that they were 'Rakesh,' the main character of the Story, and draw his picture. Then, around the image, they had to use as many words as they could think of to describe the character that they had assumed themselves to be. While collecting the work, he reminded the students to check their handwriting, spelling, and neatness. He then started checking the spelling of the words and the adjectives that the students had used to describe the picture. For example, he reminded one of the students, 'There is a single l in the word, 'smiling,' not double.'" The students took some time to check their work, added possible qualities and corrected the errors. In other words, the setting was very natural, as if they were doing it in their homes; talk and laughter accompanied their work with noticeable confidence of expression.

Castillo (2007) claimed that when a drawing is used in the classroom, teachers constantly elicit students' ideas, knowledge, experiences, and suggestions that can foster their imagination and creativity to produce language. (pp. 2-3). Similarly, I observed that Mr. Hari made his students draw basically for four things: a. knowing the main character better; b. visualizes the character, c. uses language to write about the character and. uses descriptive vocabulary like adjectives. If the drawings were not part of the writing, then perhaps there would be an absence of fun for the students while doing it. Hence, drawing was used as a tool to teach describing words as well as imagining and internalizing the character's attributes.

The following two days' classes were devoted to storytelling in partners. The students created funny and logical stories. The four words were written as characters on the board and set in creative ways. The most fun part of the lesson was when the students shared their stories in front of the class with the title and moral of the stories. They enjoyed sharing and listening to one another's stories. Moreover, the final class was devoted to writing. The students had to write the stories they had created on one side of their notebooks.

Hence, I use story writing and storytelling with my learners as a focus for social interaction and kinetic activity (Coates & Coates, 2015, p.12). The way of teaching story writing has evolved in me as I have been exposed to many ways of doing so. I remember when, as a beginner teacher, I used to read a story and tell my students to write similar stories, with the pre-assumption that they might know how to do it. Then, as I learned further, I taught them to write stories using the selected words on the board with suitable titles and morals. Then, finally, the exposure to the activity form has supported me in making my classroom lively and engaging compared to. Further, Coates and Coates (2015) highlighted that, as an area in its own right, it receives little attention in the literature and thus found through research that it can be an effective teaching-learning tool in many ways.

Stages of Teaching Speaking

Speaking is a difficult skill because of its vast network. No one is entirely familiar with its network at random. In order to develop the teaching of speaking skills, systematic progression from basic to advanced levels needs to be practiced, which targets comfort in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In the same way, the learners can also decide the time to speak, the topic to say, and the linguistic expressions to use while speaking (Richards & Rodgers, 1980). According to Ur (1996) and Richards and Rodgers (1986), the teaching of speaking mainly includes the first is Introducing new language stage, the second is preparation/ Practice stage and finally the experience and communicative activities stage or the reflection period. The following stages are followed by my researcher participants, as noticed in classroom practices while teaching English, which are also accepted by other researchers.

Introducing New Language Stage/ Preparation

This stage is also called the pre-production stage. At this stage, ‘students participate in the language activity without having to respond in the target language’ (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 187). For example, students can act out physical commands, identify students’ colleagues from the teacher’s description, point to pictures, and so forth (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Littlewood (1981) described that through pre-communicative activities, the teacher isolates specific elements of knowledge or skill that compose communicative ability and provides the learners with opportunities to practice them separately. The learners are thus being trained in

the art of skills of communication rather than practicing the total skill to be acquired (Littlewood, 1981, p. 85).

Harmer (1998) suggests that the teacher gets the students interested in the topic, and the students do the task while the teacher watches and listens. They then study any language issues that the teacher has identified as problems. The activities and materials in this stage are games, discussion, dramatic stories, guessing, etc. Likewise, the teacher presents new language items by creating a situational context. Then, the teacher tries to elicit new items from the students. After presenting sufficient examples of the new items, he draws learners' attention to the prominent examples of the latest items for them to use as models. This is done to check students' understanding of the form, meaning, and function of the items by providing similar situations and asking them to produce similar sentences.

Practice Stage/ Experience

This stage is also called the early production stage, where students respond to either-or questions, use single words and short phrases, fill in charts, and use fixed conversation patterns. E.g., how are you? What's your name? (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 187). Harmer (1998) says that the teacher uses this stage as an ideal opportunity to suddenly decide opportunistically to bring forward some new language for study because it "seemed like a good idea at the time." The students practice the newly learned items to internalize their structure. They use dialogue, role-playing, blank-filling exercises, etc., as techniques. Dialogues and role-playing are efficient techniques to practice learning to speak naturally (Ur, 1996, p. 124).

Communicative Activities Stage/ Reflection

This stage is also known as a speech-emergent phase, where students involve themselves in role-play games, contribute personal information and opinions, and participate in group problem-solving (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). In this stage, the learner has to activate and integrate their pre-communicative knowledge and skills to use them for the communication of meaning (Littlewood, 1981, p. 86). He further says that in functional communicative activities, the learner is placed in a situation where he/she must perform a task by communicating as best as he/she can with whatever resources are available to them. On the other hand, the learner is also encouraged to take into account the second context, which is socially appropriate to specific situations and relationships. At this stage, students use the items freely to interact with each other. This stage helps them to develop creativity, self-confidence,

and fluency in speech, as this is unguided, and students use their resources rather than the idea and logic of the teachers (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

Regarding Activities for Teaching Speaking, obviously, students cannot go through life listening and nodding meaningfully. At some point, they must communicate with others. Therefore, the development of speaking skills should be a goal of every session (Hjet & Stewart, 1988). To develop fluency, learners need as much practice as possible. Most of the speaking activities that we get our students to engage in should be communicative. Some of the widely used speaking activities are listed below.

Discussion

In order to develop speaking skills in learners, the teachers make them discuss a topic in pairs or groups. Discussion ranges from formal to informal. Harmer (2008) claims, "Discussion ranges from highly whole-group staged to informal small-group interaction" (p. 350). Discussion can be managed in different ways, such as buzz groups, instant comments, formal debates, unplanned talks, and reaching a consensus (Harmer, 2007). Cross (2003) states there is absolutely no need, though, to restrict debate to the topic of the printed passages. Anything worthy of thought and discussion can be the basis of a communication session. The debate can be introduced at any time and last for just as long as interest persists. Almost daily, there are events in the local or international press that can be taken up for discussion (p. 282). For efficient group discussion, it is always better not to form large groups because quiet students may avoid contributing in large groups. The teacher can assign the group members, or the students may determine it by themselves. However, the group should be rearranged in every discussion activity so that students can work with various people and learn to be open to different ideas.

Lastly, in class or group discussions, the students should always be encouraged to ask questions, paraphrase ideas, express support, check for clarification, and so on. Ur (1996) assumes, "Discussion is taken as one of the techniques of teaching speaking. A wide range of activities can be included in discussion in the classroom for teaching speaking, such as describing pictures, picture differences, and things in common, shopping lists, solving problems, etc." (p. 125). That is why the teacher needs to do a discussion as a speaking activity to develop learners' autonomy and allow them to express their views freely and independently.

Even shy students like to speak with their friends because they feel it is easier to talk to their friends than to talk to their teacher.

Topic Talk/ Prepared Talk

In this activity, students are invited to share an idea or a talk on an assigned topic. It is a beneficial and popular activity where a student shares a presentation on a topic of their choice. Harmer (2008) states that teachers need to invest some time in the procedures and processes in which students are involved. Teachers need to give them time to prepare their talks and to rehearse their presentations. Likewise, Harmer (2008) says that teachers need to provide feedback on tasks whenever the learner makes a presentation. Cross (2003) says, “The range of topics should reflect learners’ interests as well as examination topics. A list of six or more topics can be agreed on by the class, after which the students, groups of four to six, depending on seating, and each member of the group chooses a different topic” (p. 282). Ur (1996) suggests, “A good topic is one to which learners can relate using ideas from their own experience and knowledge. The ability of grouping is appropriate for most of the school children, school teachers, or young people whose school memories are fresh for learning”. A topic-centered discussion can be done as a formal one, where a motion is proposed and opposed by prepared speakers, discussed further by members of the group, and finally, voted on by all (Ur, 1996). So, it is an important speaking activity that students who have shared a presentation get an opportunity to analyze what they have done and then repeat it in another setting so that they can do it better.

Project Presentation

Cross (2003) says, “A project is an in-depth study of a topic of interest to the individual students. They collect all the information and data themselves and build up a document of some sort, usually with text, diagrams, and pictures, but perhaps supported by a poster, brochure, radio, or even a cassette recording” (p. 202).

Drama

Drama is an excellent way to get students to use the language. It essentially involves using the imagination to make oneself into another character or the classroom into a different place. Cross (2003) says, “Drama activities can be tightly controlled, perhaps as a lingual development of a dialogue in the textbook, or it can be relatively free with considerable scope for imagination and creativity” (p. 282). Holden (1981) defines drama as any activity that asks the participant to portray himself in an imaginary situation or to portray another person in an imaginary

situation. Drama is thus concerned with the world of “Let’s Pretend”. It provides an opportunity for a person to express themselves through verbal expression and gestures using their imagination and memory. Drama, according to Maley and Duff (1978), releases imagination and energy, and this could be considered an educational objective. Fernandez and Coil (1986) stated that drama encourages students to exercise their sensitivity and creativity and thus makes learning more realistic and meaningful.

Role Play

Ur (1996) says, “Role play is used to refer to all sorts of activities where learners imagine themselves in a situation outside the classroom” (p. 131). Venkateswaran (1995) defines “Role play as an activity that can be used to make the learners use language and thereby develop spoken skills. It offers enjoyment and also a mental escape from the classroom. Livingstone (1983) sees role play as a class activity that gives the students the opportunity to practice the language aspects of role behavior and the actual roles, they may need outside the classroom. Doff (1988) believes role-play is a technique that can be used with large classes and shows how role-play can be based on topics and situations in the textbooks. Role-playing as a teaching strategy offers several advantages for both teachers and students.

First, students’ interest in the topic is raised. Research has shown that “integrating experiential learning activities in the classroom increases interest in the subject matter and understanding of course content” (Poorman, 2002, p. 32).

Secondly, there is increased involvement on the part of the students in a role-playing lesson. Students are not passive recipients of the instructor’s knowledge; instead, they need to take an active part in the classroom. Poorman (2002) observes that “true learning cannot take place when students are passive observers of the teaching process” (p .32). Role playing is thus an activity that requires a person to take on a role that is real or imaginary. It involves the spontaneous interaction of participants as they attempt to complete a task.

Use of Reference Material in Speaking Class

The use of reference materials while teaching refers to incorporating additional resources such as textbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and online sources to supplement the primary teaching material (Education Reform, 2013). In this study, the researcher tried to find out the reference materials used by respondents

while teaching speaking skills. After collecting the data, the researcher needed to conclude.

The observation and interview supported that while activities were performed in theory and policy, their real implementation in classrooms changed hesitation into confidence to speak English and could be used in real-life situations. At first, the researcher thought that teaching speaking only needed some activities from the textbook. With the flow of time, he understood that to create an environment for speaking exposure, emotional support, and student motivation play a pivotal role in learning to talk.

Theoretical Discussion: Human Agency in Developing the Speaking Practices

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1989, 2002) advocates a strong framework for understanding how human agency promotes the development of speaking skills, especially in contexts where language learning is shaped within limited exposure and social modeling. Based on this theory of self-efficacy, an individual's assumption of their possible capacity to achieve various tasks is required. Bandura claims that the assumption influences how language learners imagine, feel, act, and behave in learning environments. In the periphery of English language education in Nepal, focusing on rural areas where I grew up, self-efficacy mainly acts as the unnoticed component that decides whether a learner speaks or remains quiet.

Identifying myself as part of a Brahmin family in rural Bhaktapur, I had limited access to English-speaking possibilities. My classroom environment was based on the textbook and pedagogy was teacher-centered, where we had a few opportunities for active speaking. In spite of the bounded circumstances, I developed a strong affirmation that I should learn to speak English not to access advanced instruction, but because of my desire for progress within me. I read the sentences aloud at home, mimicked different phrases that I heard on the radio, and also tried translating stories told by my mother and grandfather into English. These were beginning symptoms of agency, which are unnoticeable but essential because these acts developed several roots in the self-efficacy. Bandura (1989) claimed that self-efficacy determines how people think, feel, and act in everyday activities. This internal feeling drove me towards a belief in my ability. It always allowed me to engage with language more actively, as well as laid the groundwork for formal academic discussions, which I might encounter in higher education in the near future.

As Bandura (2002) stated, self-efficacy is shaped not only by internal belief but also through social modeling such as observing others performing tasks and gaining the confidence to do the same at the same time. My enrollment in the MPhil class at Kathmandu University provided me the opportunity to witness fluent English speakers for the first time. I observed my peers share their ideas in class, listened carefully to how professors articulated their understanding on several dimensions in classrooms and presentations, and slowly began to participate myself. This observational learning proved to have a transformative effect. Bandura's model of reciprocal determinism claims personal beliefs, behavior, and environment continuously force one another to make an apparent change in my experience. I was not only listening and absorbing language passively, but I was actively constructing it through observation, participation, and daily self-reflection as my assignment.

Today, as a teacher, I claim these dynamics are practiced in my classroom. My students are from a similar background, especially first-generation English learners with limited exposure outside the school. Many of the students hesitate to speak, due to less exposure, not due to a lack of knowledge. I focus on Bandura's theory to create environments where students can observe group communication, engage in several interactive tasks, and receive feedback in the sandwich model for the reduction of errors and promotion of practice. By creating speaking activities that include group presentations, role plays, and collaborative discussions, I encourage the learners to develop their linguistic competence and the belief that they can talk. When the learners notice their peers are almost in the same boat, they believe in their creative potential, just as I had passed through.

In essence, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory states that developing speaking skills is about cognitive input and grammatical knowledge. Also, it is about the human agency learners bring to the process related to their confidence, motivation, and capacity to act according to the situation. For curious learners like me, and many others, it is this sense of self-efficacy that connects the gap between silence and sound, understanding and expression, expectation and experiment. Empowering students to believe in their capacity to communicate is one of the most creative and powerful beliefs that a teacher can develop within the learners, which is an insight that remains at the heart of Bandura's theory and in my experience.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I thematized the data obtained from the observation and interviews with my participant teachers of their real classrooms. I explained the teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching speaking skills and the level of gravity of hesitation while speaking English in light of various English literatures. Likewise, I concluded that the significant factors hindered the learners from speaking in English and the remedies for those problems were participation and interaction.

CHAPTER VI

KEY INSIGHTS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND MY REFLECTION

This chapter deals with a summary and conclusion of the research based on the collected data. It also consists of some pedagogical implications for the policy level, practice level, and further research on the basis of the findings of the study. Based on the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, the researcher has come up with the following findings:

For language development and as a regular teaching method, the explanation method was found to be used mainly by both teachers. Both participants initiated the classroom by asking students to open the related pages or make presentations and share logical ideas on the related topic without any proper motivation. I observed fifteen different classrooms with various activities. Among them, role play, picture description, finding the difference, short speech, classroom presentation, panel discussion, ending the incomplete story and storytelling in narratives were the activities used by both of the teachers. They briefly explained the topic and the process of classroom activities and directly started calling the students' names. Some of the students in the classes regularly refused to participate in any classroom activities or speaking. Hesitations, shyness, lack of regular administrative support, the low focus of individual students, prior less knowledge on grammatical rules, insufficient time to practice and present, and limited platform for English speaking were found to be the significant problems of students in confidence and development of fluency. Teachers tried their best to overcome the speaking-related challenges by addressing the reading of students, helping with pronunciation, translating in Nepali, and giving ample hands-on practice. Teachers responded that classroom activities make learners active, assist in capacity development, and build interaction skills. However, it is a challenge to apply in every class because it takes much time, which can hinder course completion.

Key Insights

The study was carried out in the Bhaktapur district, which is just a few kilometers away from the capital city. It is the place where the country's leading educational institutions are located. This study was started and continued with the aim of finding techniques for teaching and learning to speak English in the classroom. In

order to explore the existing reality and collect actual data, I applied two different tools: an interview with two participant teachers and classroom observation. The multiple tools used to collect data helped me to find out the possible reasons for hindrances in speaking English, which are presented below:

Data from the interviews revealed that my participant teachers shared the common understanding that teaching speaking is a vital way for learners to express their feelings, ideas, and thoughts without any hesitation. They had a common concept of teaching speaking, and after their class observation, they were found to prioritize speaking skills.

Regarding the characteristics and components to be focused on while teaching speaking, both of my participants emphasized developing confidence in interacting with other speakers. One of my participants (T1) was found to focus on the learners' emotions and feelings, whereas T2 emphasized the five different components of teaching speaking, such as the production of stress and intonation pattern, connected speech, and communicative skill.

This study revealed that both of my participant teachers focused on the pronunciation skills of their learners. T1 believed that the learners should be taught different vocabulary and pronunciation. T2 said that the learners should be given the concept of the phonetic symbol of the words, and they are also to be involved in chorus drills. He uses the Oxford Advanced Dictionary and repetition drill, whereas T1 focuses on handy drilling, loud reading, and teaching intonation and stress of the words. Both of the participant teachers understood the importance of teaching pronunciation skills in English classrooms. They have ideas of common strategies like role play, drilling, intonation, stress, dialogue, and using a speaker. They were theoretically and practically capable of applying those techniques. However, they were found not to use those techniques to facilitate the students' speaking skills by teaching pronunciation skills regularly in reality.

Regarding the use of a communicative language teaching approach, T1 and T2 revealed that they use language games to arouse interest in students. They also showed that they use drilling, dialogue, interviews, games, drama, etc. T2 revealed that he had implemented the “Spoken Compulsory English” strategy to overcome the hesitation problem.

Regarding the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, T2 revealed that he uses the Nepali language as well as the English language to make the students

understand the text. T1 advocated that she was requested to use the mother tongue of the learners because the background of the students was very weak. During the observation, this study confirmed that my participant teachers use the GT method, which is known as an old and outdated method in the present condition. Both the participant teachers were found trying to involve the learners using different communicative activities through some Nepali words. The participant students felt shy and hesitant while speaking and answering the questions. This study found that the excessive use of the mother tongue of the learners in EFL classrooms and the use of the GT method are the major causes of the problems that hinder the learners from speaking.

The lack of practical training for teachers, as well as professional development, stops effective English language learning and teaching. In the same way, cultural factors based on students' limited exposure outside of the classroom to the target language are also an obstacle to reaching fluency in speaking. Finally, education systems based on memorization underestimate the practice of communicative language teaching as they focus more on rote memorization than the practice of real-world language.

My Reflection

This study found that the speaking proficiency of the students of private secondary schools, especially 9-12 graders in the Bhaktapur district, is satisfactory and adequate to meet the specified objective of the secondary-level English language curriculum of the CDC.

Speaking skills enable the learners to generate and articulate ideas, arouse feelings, and give a chance to be heard, convinced, and persuade others. It is not simply transforming language into spoken discourse. However, it is also a thinking process in its own right; among the four skills of language learning, speaking is the most spontaneous ability. It is not the permanent record of one's thoughts and ideas, but a form of expression that is natural to the native speaker of the language. It is an art that gives one a chance to be heard and influence others, demanding responses at the same time. Speaking skills are a must when one takes part in interviews, international relations, and social interactions. In order to meet the specific objective of the present curriculum, CDC, MOE, and other related bodies have emphasized communicative language teaching approaches to enhance speaking skills by prescribing different reference books along with textbooks and teacher training,

despite the efforts made by MOE and CDC. The findings, conclusion, and implications of this study have gifted me new inspiration to implement those strategies to ultimately wipe out learners' psychological problems ultimately. The words thesis and dissertation were frequently talked about and discussed in the canteen of my university as soon as the third semester started. It became the hot cake for all the students of the school of education. When the research methodology class started, I thought that it would be difficult for me to complete my dissertation because the terms and terminologies in the classes were unfamiliar and challenging to understand. However, it became easier for me to write my proposal because of the student-friendly courses taken by our respected tutor and my research supervisors, who guided me in every step of continuing my research study, providing their time. It took me about five months to prepare a proposal and to defend it.

During my involvement in activity-based teaching pedagogy, the perception has made a noticeable and remarkable change. Firstly, I assumed that traditional teaching methods are characterized by direct instruction and are enough for teaching and learning a language. However, as I delved deeper into the concepts of active learning and student-centered strategies, I felt the weight of engagement through activities. Activity-based strategies develop speaking skills and promote their critical analysis, creativity, coordination, collaboration and problem-solving. This approach helped my practice and students' perception to connect new knowledge to their own lives, making learning more meaningful, personal and practical.

Before the research, I thought activity-based pedagogy was only a set of techniques that typically added speaking tasks to textbook lessons. I was sure that limited activities change the class setting into an interactive and productive but later with the means of observation and interview related to reflection and classroom engagement, I understood that activity-based strategies is more than techniques, it is the basic mindset in student engagement, interaction, and meaningful communication leading to win-win situation. I noticed that classroom participation in various activities includes the development of emotional, cognitive, and social involvement of students.

In this research, not only did the research participants share the unique practices of the pedagogical practice, but also interpreted and proved that they applied differently based on self-beliefs, training, and classroom realities. I am able to change my belief from a common fixed mindset to the best practice for a growth mindset,

appreciating flexible, context-driven approaches to teaching speaking. This Auto/ethnographic inquiry has provided an opportunity to explore not just what others do but how I think, feel, and grow as a teacher-researcher. This whole research supported me to understand that Activity-based strategies is not a fixed method but a responsive, reflective, and learner-centered approach to education, leading to the development of confidence in language learning.

Implications

The earlier sections of this chapter, like reflection and insights, have established that the whole process of my study, starting from the conception of the issue to proposal writing to evidence collection to writing, has been a transformative learning experience. The experience has thus had a significant impact on me as the researcher and the research primarily, and I have a sense that it has implications for my professional circle as well. Hence, this part of my research has highlighted the impact of my research on me, the secondary level English teachers, and future researchers who would like to pursue research in similar areas.

Implication to Myself

The auto/ethnographic transformative research on strategies has implications in some crucial ways. First of all, as a researcher, I was informed about the techniques applied by my participants, who were the secondary English instructors in Nepal. The course of the research has assisted me in changing my plan in the sense that I thought it was only a technique. Still, my research helped me envision the comfort that Activity-based learning can lead to the English language teaching pedagogy of Nepal and, thus, the significant need for it. That has transformed me into an activist who now believes that Activity-based teaching is a student-centered strategy to hit the target in language learning in numerous ways.

Next, the exploration, discoveries, and learning have transformed me personally and professionally. I have become aware of the world around me, and professionally and academically, I have witnessed the significance of professional development and research in the life of an English language teacher. Similarly, the value of creative Activity-based methods has enlightened and thereby motivated me to continue becoming a creative Activity-based teacher for the welfare of my learners and the English language community of Nepal as a whole. The learning will support my future academic and professional endeavors.

Furthermore, the knowledge gained during and after the research has offered me many professional opportunities. I am theoretically and practically informed to eventually be able to see much scope for my professional advancement. I have started sharing my knowledge related to activity-based teaching practices on different professional development platforms like conferences, webinars, training, and workshops with ELT associations and organizations like NELTA and KUSOED, and it has even uplifted me to become a curious learner and a better teacher. I have evolved into a professional who understands the numerous values of continuous professional development; bridging the generation gap between teachers and their students is the most important. The recent course that I undertook for my professional update and application of new trends of ELT with my learners was the TESOL course of 'Best Practices of Online Practices' and Content-Based Instruction sponsored by RELO of the US Embassy, and I have shared that knowledge with my fellow ELT professionals. I have developed a culture of learning, sharing, and sharing with the community to grow together.

Implications for Early-Grade English Teachers

Having talked about giving back to the community through various media, as the implications of the research in my own personal and professional life, I see the implications of my study and its insights to the ELT professionals, particularly the early grade English teachers. The experiences, narratives, and practices of teachers discovered by my research could help them make their classes engaging. The significance of the professional development platforms and the passion to develop could also make them think about reaching out to various platforms and adding themselves to the list of becoming an activities-based language teacher.

Implications for Future Researchers

The issue of activities as an innovative teaching strategy discovered by my research through auto/ethnography as a transformative research design might be relevant to future researchers. They might be stimulated to study and explore similar issues or contradict my discovery. Future researchers might see the gap in my research that I could not address, too.

Limitations of this Study

The limitations of any particular study concern potential weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher's control and are closely associated with the chosen research design and other factors. Likewise, my study also has certain limitations,

which are the reasons why it is the way it is today. Those limitations are related to the time constraints, limited to only four months, participants, only two and the research site. This Auto/ethnographic inquiry requires a deep reflection and extended engagement, but I only had four months, 15 classes each for both participants. I couldn't explore as deeply as I might have desired.

Despite my desire to dive deeper, the academic nature of my research, which was conducted to meet specific requirements, prevented a more extended exploration as true auto/ethnography would entail. This limitation suggests the potential for exploring other methods used by my participants and others. Additionally, the choice of participants was another constraint. I had selected two teachers on purposive sampling because they represented different perspectives as a male and a female, various social and cultural backgrounds, a participant from the Kathmandu valley and next from the remote hills of Gorkha. This is a reasonable method, but it has limits because two people cannot capture all possible experiences. More participants might have revealed different ideas or helped to confirm patterns. However, I recognize that involving multiple teachers might have provided different insights.

The following limitation was selecting a private school as the research site, where I conducted and concluded my study in a private school, which is a specific type of context. The way of teaching English in government schools or any schools affiliated with social trust might involve new or unnoticed resources; students might be of different backgrounds with different challenges and applied teaching strategies.

By not including more diverse settings, my findings are context-specific; they are applicable well to the private school, but they might not be relevant to others. If my research had included multiple schools or a government school, it might have offered different angles of exploration and discoveries. These various limitations are inherent in my study.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided a summary of the findings and conclusions. Lastly, I shared my reflections and experiences throughout this study and suggested several techniques that can be effectively implemented as strategies for speaking English. Long story short, activity-based learning offers multiple benefits, including enhanced engagement and motivation, improved understanding and retention, development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, improved collaboration and communication, and adaptability to different learning styles. By incorporating ABL

into educational practices, educators can create a more dynamic and effective learning environment that caters to the needs of all students.

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