

# English Language Teaching Problems in Nepal: Teachers' Perspectives

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## Abstract

This paper, using the narrative inquiry method, explores English language teachers' perspectives on English Language Teaching (ELT) problems in Nepal. For this purpose, four English language instructors from four community schools located in the Rupandehi area were purposively chosen. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews, and the analysis of the data was made using thematic analysis. The findings show that the mixed ability classrooms, unprepared and over-loaded teachers with low payment, poor infrastructure and resource limitations and lack of implementation of the education policy were the major challenges teachers face in ELT practices. The study implies that it can contribute to a better understanding of English teachers' teaching problems in Nepal to minimize problems and enhance a better learning environment.

**Keywords:** *issues in ELT, ELT in Nepal, class management, heterogeneous class, student-centred teaching, technological instructional materials*

## Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) in Nepal encounters various obstacles, such as diverse student abilities, insufficient infrastructure, inadequate teacher preparation, limited access to technology and resources and low salaries for teacher educators. Additionally, political interference, ineffective policy implementation, and a lack of support systems further undermine the success of ELT (Timsina, 2021). This study examines the challenges that hinder effective English teaching from teachers' perspectives, shedding light on the major barriers to enhancing English education in Nepal. In this regard,

Harmer (2008) discusses many issues that teachers encounter while teaching English as a second or foreign language in the tutorial room. Teachers encounter several challenges in teaching English that hinder their ability to provide quality education. These challenges include an inadequate learning environment, limited language proficiency in students, a heavy workload for the teachers, and insufficient support from the administration issues are connected to a big diverse capacity class, the practice of one's first language, problems with students' collaboration, and problems with student conversation. Nepal's education system has undergone numerous

policy adjustments and structural reforms, particularly with the implementation of the School Sector Reform Plan (2009–2015) and the *School Sector Development Plan* (2016–2023). These initiatives sought to enhance English language instruction in public schools. However, their success was hindered by a lack of adequate resources and the shortage of qualified teachers to effectively implement the changes. ELT in Nepal is not still satisfactory though training courses have been revised and modified from time to time.

This study is significant as it identifies the real ELT challenges in providing insights for stakeholders to address gaps in infrastructure, teacher support, and policy implementation to improve and ongoing reforms in English language teaching in community schools of Nepal.

### Literature Review

In the literature review section, some empirical studies related to the study are presented. Several studies have been undertaken to examine teachers' perspectives on ELT issues in a range of circumstances. Due to space constraints, only the most noteworthy and closely connected studies that addressed the issues encountered by English instructors in their classes are presented in the following section.

The study conducted by Çelik and Kocaman (2015) has indicated that middle school children struggle with vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Language acquisition and growth in the school system are negatively impacted by instructional elements such as instructors' technique, teaching and management abilities, teachers' understanding, and affective factors. It may thus be claimed

that university teacher education should place a high emphasis on linguistics to close the language gaps identified in the research. Similarly, Beckerman's study (2017) revealed that school performance appears to be more influenced by areas that need greater levels of focus, such as grammar. Because of this linguistic reality, language instructors need to be trained so that language does not hinder a learner's academic and social development. Any interruption in school and lack of education leads to pre-literacy or extremely low literacy levels, as well as other difficulties in mastering English grammar. The study by Songbatumis (2017) showed that student issues were connected to a lack of language knowledge, poor attention, a lack of self-control, boredom, and speaking difficulty. Educators, on the other hand, struggled with their lessons owing to a lack of training, poor knowledge of teaching approaches, unacquaintedness with information technology (IT), a lack of professional growth, limited facilities, resources, and time constraints. The instructors were experimenting and implementing alternative instruction methods and strategies during the lesson, using accessible resources and facilities while seeking to improve it.

Likewise, Machrus (2019) discovered that teachers have challenges while educating hyperactive children. They then advise teachers to ensure need analysis before instructing and adopting a role model, especially when teaching speaking skills. In line with this, Mutar (2019) in Iraq has found six difficulties that instructors encountered in teaching English as a foreign language in schools. They are inactive in developing their career, shortage of tools and amenities, instructors' relationships with one another in which they do not share and discuss the

common challenges they face with pupils, problems in instructive observation, problems in school textbooks and curricula.

Similarly, the study by Timsina (2021) in Nepal found that teachers face challenges both in the classroom and outside, including challenges related to language, curriculum, textbooks, and government policies and Utami et al. (2021) pointed out that instructors' concerns were connected to their English competence, teaching techniques and media, and students' capacity to learn. In the same way, Rahimi and Samadi (2022) conducted a study to explore English teachers' opinions on challenges faced in teaching English as a foreign language. They revealed that teachers experienced difficulties due to a lack of authentic resources and mixed-ability pupils in the same class. Another significant problem is the learning environment, as well as the teaching-learning process.

After analyzing the existing literature and the related research papers at home and abroad thoroughly and analytically, it is found that a few researchers have explored English language teachers' perspectives on ELT problems in Nepal. The reviewed studies assisted the researchers in identifying the topic and designing the research questions. ELT problems in the Nepalese context have received little attention. Therefore, researchers attempt to address these issues and explore them in this paper.

This study attempts to explore ELT problems perceived by English language teachers in Nepal. The study has addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the major challenges that teachers perceive in English language teaching (ELT) in Nepal?

2. In what ways do infrastructure and resource limitations impact English teaching practices in Nepali schools?

## Methodology

This study has adopted an interpretive inquiry research design in collecting data by using semi-structured interviews to explore English language teachers' perceptions of ELT problems in Nepal. Four trained English teachers (two males and two females) teaching in four community schools in Rupandehi, Nepal were selected purposively to get in touch with those who had detailed knowledge about specific problems (Cohen et al., 2007) by choosing the participants who have at least five years teaching experience and expertise in ELT. The in-depth interviews in Nepali were conducted to obtain substantive information from them as it is the best and most efficient procedure to provide detailed information covering the subject planned by the interviewer with straightforward communication with each other (Morris, 2015). Each English teacher was interviewed for about 20 minutes to half an hour to elicit the ELT problems that they perceived without giving them any assumptions about the ELT problems. The four participants were Arun, Kamal, Gita and Bindu (the pseudonyms). Pseudonyms were given to the participants to maintain privacy. Face-to-face interview data was descriptively transcribed and translated into English from Nepali. Thematic analysis was employed for data analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) methodology. According to the authors, thematic analysis as a qualitative analysis method helps researchers identify and present recurring patterns or themes in data. Themes are developed through careful reading and interpretation of the data. The data that emerged from interviews were

coded and categorized in different themes and finally, analyzed and interpreted thematically.

## Results and Discussion

Based on the interview information of the participants, ten themes concerning the ELT problems have emerged. The ELT problems perceived by English language teachers are analyzed, discussed and interpreted as follows.

### *Linguistically, Culturally and Economically Heterogeneous Classes*

Nepal is a country of linguistic and cultural diversity. English classes are linguistically, culturally and economically heterogeneous Aryal et al, 2016). Individual variations between students are frequently overlooked in school textbooks. Arun stated, *“In my class, there are learners with different language, culture and economic backgrounds so it is quite difficult for the teacher to deal with such learners with English textbook”* He reported that due to the varied languages, cultures, and economic backgrounds of the learners in his class, he finds it tough to deal with them with prescribed English textbook. Educators have significant problems owing to the region’s unique linguistic, cultural, and social background, so teaching English might be challenging (Neupane & Joshi, 2022).

Arun stated heterogeneous classes have discipline (unruly behavioural) problems, correction of written tasks, resources for efficient learning, individual involvement and so on. Regarding this, Gita asserted, *“My students have different achievements and proficiency in English. Bright, average and poor learners can’t work together therefore, only a few of them achieve success. Some can speak English fluently whereas others can’t.”*

Gita’s experience exposed that due to mixed-ability learners, teaching English is difficult. Her view is in harmony with Harmer (2008), who stated that teachers face problems in classes due to diverse levels of students. Some have extremely good English; some have poor English while others are just getting started.

Kamal mentioned, *“It is quite difficult to deal with learners of different cultural, economic and language backgrounds.”* The primary concerns found in Nepalese schools include treating diverse children, focusing mostly on the deductive technique, poor language teacher preparation, and exposing Nepali language in English lessons. Teachers may worry about the thorny issue of mixed-ability classes (Karranjit, 2017). Some learners love learning through interaction and others through teaching by the teacher. In such situations, teachers face problems with planning, knowledge of the language, intelligence, learning preferences and active participation of students is very low.

### *Inadequate Infrastructure and Poor Class Management*

In many community schools in Nepal, physical facilities are very poor. The classes open at the walls are not suitable for language classes. Regarding the physical facilities of her school, Bindu shared, *“The noise of neighbouring classes disturbs to maintenance peaceful environment. Moreover, there is often not enough furniture for the students and teachers. There are not enough doors, windows, proper boards and fans in the class.”* From her expression, it is clear that due to noise and poor management of furniture, she cannot handle the class. Some classrooms are under-equipped and students and teachers hardly

have access to minimum physical facilities in the classrooms and the institutions.

A well-managed class is inevitable for effective teaching and learning activities. It motivates learners to learn. Classes in most community schools seem to be crowded and teachers cannot handle the classroom activities smoothly. Gita reported, “*Since some of the learners do all the work and others sit there without doing anything.*” In large classes, it is tough for the instructor to create particular attention with the pupils in the rear, and it is challenging for the pupils to request and get personal attention. Her experience is inconsistent with Ugwu (2022). He discovered in his research that some schools with overcrowded classes are difficult for instructors to handle. It may seem to be impossible to organize dynamic and creative teaching and learning in such a class (Harmer, 2008). Students and teachers can’t move easily from one place to another. Instructors can create a more personalized and responsive learning atmosphere in big classroom circumstances by understanding their students’ characteristics (Bhatt, 2023). Due to discipline problems, communicative activities can’t be used. The only technique in the class is a lecture in which the teacher can’t give attention equally to all the students.

In this line, Kamal believed, “*Effective face-to-face interaction, particularly with the students at the back benches seems to be difficult. Maximizing individual work may be difficult until and unless I give individual attention to the students*” To provide students talking time, big classes must be managed properly. Instructors may find it difficult to keep track of the pace of instruction in a large class since students’ learning styles and behaviours fluctuate greatly (Farhanah & Hadina, 2022). Some language experts claim

that bigger classes will be more fun because with more students there would be more ideas as well as division of labour. Regarding class management, Arun maintained, “*It is very difficult to conduct project work, group work and many other classroom activities in adequate-sized and less spacious rooms. Moreover, very rarely, teachers have classrooms with facilities for using electric devices such as slides, multimedia, videos, etc.*”

The above remarks showed that poor class management creates difficulty in conducting teaching-learning activities easily. The size of the class has a direct impact on student success and conduct, with bigger classrooms frequently suffering more disciplinary issues (Aryal et al., 2016).

In this line, Arun recalls, “*My students cheat in the examinations because of the poor management.*” His narrative made it clear that students cheat in the examinations because of the loose management of the examination system. So, organizing learning is more important than organizing the class and a seating arrangement. In this context, Bindu mentioned, “*To manage effective classroom activities, we have to manage the classroom space. Then we can see whether students are working in groups or not.*” From the above narration, it is clear that good class management supports running classroom activities effectively. Her view is in harmony with Harmer (2008). He mentioned that how we communicate with children and who speaks the most throughout the lecture is another important component in classroom management.



### ***Insufficient Teacher Training Programmes and their Ineffective Implementation***

The inadequate teaching training programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers is another problematic area in ELT which seems to have been a failure in training the teachers and developing professionalism in them to adopt communicative methods. Teacher preparation courses cannot provide instructors with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to properly teach the topic in class. Regarding this, Arun narrated his story,

*Training is irregular, inconsistent, inefficient and still traditional. Teacher training does not address the practical need of the teachers to update them with the current approaches to teaching, meet the aims and objectives of the national curriculum and for productive learning outcomes.*

His experience exposes training is sporadic, inconsistent, ineffective and remains conventional. Teacher training does not address the real-world demand of instructors to keep up with the latest techniques to teaching, fulfil the objectives of the nationwide curriculum, and give dynamic learning results. He further recounted,

*Although I teach in a community school, I am not provided with need-based training according to the changes in methodologies regularly. So, it is difficult for me to transfer the required skills to my students. Theoretical training sessions are still large which makes the training very ineffective.*

His experience indicated that he did not get training regularly according to the changes in methodologies and updated with the latest teaching techniques. His experience is in

harmony with Awasthi (2010). He noted that teacher educators and trainers receive refresher training on a very frequent basis. He also remarked that the government's position on teacher training has always been inconsistent since it is sometimes considered indispensable and sometimes voluntary. The government authorities do not offer regular refresher training for English teachers. So, the teachers cannot transfer the required skills to the students. Training in B Ed and M Ed programmes is not conducted as they are expected to be. Bailey (2010) states teaching strategies that acknowledge and appreciate mature students as autonomous learners involve creating learning experiences in which they have as much influence as possible over the planning, process, and assessment of their learning.

### ***Unprepared Teachers, their Lack of Self-efficacy and Negative Attitude***

Teachers who teach the English language themselves do not seem proficient. They are not competent enough in using technology to teach English because they lack expertise and abilities in teaching English. Bindu asserted, "I cannot use technology for teaching purposes." From the above narration, it is clear why teachers are incompetent in their teaching. She added, "I usually use the lecture method and encourage my students for rote memorization." Bindu's experience showed that EFL instructors in Nepal generally practice lecture-based rote a memorization-based teaching style. Good instructors consistently aid low-achieving students, are less critical of students' erroneous answers, and manage time more efficiently than ineffective teachers, who devote more time to non-academic activities and fail to direct pupils to appropriate replies (Chacon, 2005).

In this line, Arun shared, “*SLC-passed teachers are also recruited to teach English. But such undergraduate teachers should not be allowed to teach English.*” He showed his perception that English teachers need to be graduated in English. Even SLC-passed teachers are also asked to teach English. English language learners experience successful teaching when teachers have the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to interact with them and assist them in accessing the information (Fenner 2014). A teacher is also professionally incompetent if he or she cannot even keep order in his or her classroom. According to Gultom (2015), the success of TEFL in Indonesia is heavily dependent on the teacher’s skill. Gita narrated, “*As a teacher, I cannot create a positive atmosphere in the classroom and employ a variety of strategies to help my students develop their four language skills.*” Her lived story reflected that she could not maintain a good classroom environment and apply a range of strategies to assist her students in developing their four language skills. Feiman-Nemser (2018) discovered that instructors are unlikely to educate well unless they have a choice of efficient and continuous learning opportunities throughout their professional lives. The fundamental challenge of English language teaching in Nepal is the absence of appropriate English language ability of the English language instructors who teach from the basic to university level (Awasthi, 2010).

To be effective language teachers, they require procedural language such as how to teach, how to utilize the target language and interact with the target language culture to enhance their learning. Some instructors speak the target language effortlessly but with numerous mistakes, whereas some are competent but not fluent.

Teachers are less driven to further their professional growth, and they do not prepare effectively or do their hardest to conduct classroom research. Attitude is a style of thinking that leads someone to feel and act in specific ways (James, 2010). Creating a positive and supportive culture in the classroom is another issue of ELT. Arun believes, “*The profession of teaching is being considered to have very low status and value in the context of Nepal.*” This indicates that until and unless they have positive attitudes and feelings, hopes, desires and dreams about their work, they are unlikely to enhance areas of their academic practice and learn about new teaching strategies. He added, “*Since teachers have negative attitudes toward their profession, they do not spend time to improve their teaching quality.*” Because of the negative feelings, concerns, doubts and worries about their professional practice, they spend very little time on professional reading and do not take the initiative to improve the present situation of ELT which requires time, toil, commitment, and preparation. The inactivity and negligence of trained teachers are also supporting for low quality of English teachers and students.

### ***Less Access to Technological Support***

Most of the English teachers in Nepal have hardly access to technological resources in schools. With the fast progress of technology, internet incorporation into education has grown. However, Internet connectivity is not reliable. Cell phones, television, computers, tablets/e-readers, and multimedia projectors are examples of commonly used technology resources (Barksdale et al., 2021). Access to technology complicates the implementation of new teaching tools and methodologies. These technological tools offer various advantages, including expanded access to education,

more rapid information; better interaction, collaborative learning, and economical access to instructional resources are all good influences on English teaching. Gita mentioned, *“We hardly have reliable access to internet-based communication in English language classrooms such as smartphones, video, computers, multimedia and self-access centres. Besides, textbooks, teacher’s guides, teaching manuals etc. are not available easily to provide target language samples.”*

The above narratives revealed that the lack of authentic technical materials and limited access to the students prevented them from getting target language samples. This is in harmony with Bista (2011). He found that a shortage of audio and visual assistance, inadequate physical amenities, and a lack of contemporary technological tools and materials force teachers to use ineffective translation methods in English language education.

Tape, video, magazines, journals etc. would be the foundation for both native and non-native models. They assist non-native instructors in strengthening their language skills. Bindu shared a similar view, *“My school does not have an e-library with reference books such as dictionaries and encyclopedias. Without implementing web-based technologies via powerful internet connections, I cannot increase student autonomy and motivation.”* Bindu’s life story justified why she could not provide authentic materials to the students and could not develop student autonomy and motivation. English language instructors face difficulties integrating due to a lack of technical resources, teachers are using technology in their classroom curriculum. Inadequate access to equipment such as cassettes, CDs, projectors, and other audio-

visual aids substantially hampers effective English language instruction in classrooms (Adhikari, 2019). Likewise, Hedge (2008) suggests that the use of textbook materials emphasizes the learning process, which can lead to instructor overload and student under involvement. Using realistic speech and writing specimens could also assist non-native teachers improve their language skills. Teachers raise their target language exposure by speaking out and utilizing such resources which opens up the possibility of better intake.

### *Exam-oriented                      Teacher-centred Teaching*

The practice of exam-oriented teaching, in which students are asked possible test questions from the start of the courses and teachers strive to focus on them as well, cannot support student-centred teaching. If students go to the teacher with every little problem they run into, then they will never be able to learn the language on their own. But they learn English from the examination point of view.

In this context, Kamal narrated, *“I use grammar translation and lecture methods while teaching English. My students do not seem motivated to learn. Sometimes I punish them if they do not memorize the given materials.”* Kamal’s lived story indicated that lack of student-centred teaching and a comfortable atmosphere, teaching is not learner-centred in the school. Understanding the significance of student-centred and inquiry-based methods encourages ELL students to connect with their classmates and scaffold their learning (Lucas et al., 2018). He added, *“Most of my learners feel English is a difficult subject so they learn it only to pass the exam because of parental*



pressure.” Teachers’ love and respect for their students creates a harmonious situation in class which assures a better learning atmosphere. Enquiry-based and interactive learning is essential to involve them in every activity. Rather than simply asking them memorizing, we may encourage students to question, explore, create, solve, interpret, apply, and argue. However, there is absence of critical thinking practice in teaching and learning in the classroom.

### **Overloaded Teachers with Low Payment**

English teachers are demotivated within their profession as they are underpaid and are forced to have a second job or start a company. Some of the identified causes include low and irregular wages, heavy workloads, fewer opportunities for advancement, and job instability. As a result of this, most English teachers in our country rush around the town on bikes from dawn to dusk restlessly. They don’t have time to attend libraries, seminars, workshops and trainings. Bindu claimed, *“There are a lot of out-of-school duties for teachers. Most of us teach everything with the old notebooks that we prepared five or ten years ago. We hardly check and return our student’s homework and test papers on time.”* She reported that English teachers do not update their pedagogy and discharge their duties sincerely.

Despite the high stress of long hours of teaching, teachers are paid low salaries and they have no incentives for their hard labour. Teachers are underpaid and are forced to have a second job. As a result, they are less driven to further their professional growth and do not prepare enough for classroom research.

In this vein, Gita stated, *“I had to prepare*

*students for extra-curricular activities, check homework, mark exam papers weekly, monthly and tri-monthly, monitor and mark project work and prepare results but I was never paid extra benefits.”* This shows that she had to get ready students for extracurricular activities, check assignments, mark tests regularly, supervise and check tasks and compile results, but she was never paid any further advantages. In this concern, Gita mentioned, *“The salary is not enough to solve our bread-and-butter problems, so we are compelled to be involved in more than one institution in a day or do side business besides teaching and enter the class being lethargic and fed up.”*

Gita’s life story revealed that besides teaching, due to her low salary, she was involved in a side business and entered the class being tired and fed up. Energetic exposure cannot be expected from such teachers. Thus, they must be active, up-to-date, fresh, optimistic and enthusiastic towards their profession to discharge the given duties and responsibilities. This is consistent with Anderson and Lindkvist (2000) who found that instructors are not teaching the way they would like due to a lack of facilities, a scarcity of acceptable teaching materials, and a poor salary.

### **The Low Profile of Students and Excessive Use of L1**

Some pupils struggle to meet the basic standards for their grade level, indicating low accomplishment in lower classes. Teaching English is difficult for teachers because students’ English language competency is low, and teachers struggle to develop their language abilities. Teaching English comes to be very difficult in situations where the language is not spoken regularly. Bindu asserted, *“In my view, the brighter learners*

usually enrol for medicine, engineering and other technical subjects whereas the weaker ones usually enrol in education faculty and become teachers.” The smarter students frequently study medical, engineering, and other technical subjects, whereas the weak students studying in education faculty and eventually become teachers. She added,

*Since the students have a low profile in English, most of them do not understand when I teach them in English. So, I am compelled to use L1 as a medium of instruction. They are not competent enough because they hardly listen to their teachers speak English and read English texts themselves.*

Bindu’s narrative revealed that her students had a low profile due to less exposure to English. Students who do not read sufficient materials in English are unlikely to be competent in English. In this context, Gita shared, “*The basic challenge of ELT is to foster learning and improve communicative competence in students with high energetic exposure.*” This indicates limited L2 input available to learners does not seem to improve their competency and keep them learning English easily.

L2 learning varies from L1 learning in that almost all pupils fail to reach an advanced level. How pupils are handled seems to be a key factor in L2 achievement: the teaching style used, the language they perceive, and the setting in which they engage. In the same vein, Kamal reported, “*The purpose of teaching in one sense is to provide optimal samples of language for the learners to profit from the best ‘input’ to the process of language learning.*” From his view, we revealed that the purpose of teaching is to provide input to the students. His opinion is in harmony with Cook (2008).

He stated what the instructor does is allow the students to practice the language in class. By encouraging learners to read various genres in English and increasing their participation in classroom interactions, their profile problem can be minimized.

One of the major problems of ELT is the excessive use of L1. Students learn another language best when they’re forced to use it in class. In many of the English classrooms in Nepal, the teachers frequently shift to Nepali while teaching English to make students understand and students also love using it. They fail to acquire, prepare, and apply relevant instructional materials during classroom activities. To avoid these obstacles, they utilize a translation process that they find simple to use.

Regarding the use of L1, Bindu declared, “*In my English class, my students also communicate in their mother tongue because they feel easier and more comfortable. So, English is a barrier to building a close relationship with them.*” Her experience exposed that English is a barrier to developing a deep relationship with the students. There are situations in which pupils utilize their native language rather than English to complete classroom duties such as having an exchange or performing an English language activity, and in such cases, using the L1 is less acceptable if we wish pupils to utilize their English. They will not be assisted if they speak in another language (Harmer, 2008). Arun recalls, “*My students think the English language is difficult to learn. So, they use Nepali as a medium of instruction.*” If the learners have a negative attitude or anxiety towards EFL, they will find it difficult to learn English. Neither instructors nor pupils utilize English as a medium of instruction, which might hinder successful interaction in teaching

other languages. According to Freeman and Anderson (2017), students' native languages should not be utilized in classrooms to provide them with sufficient exposure.

### ***Inadequate Policy and Influence of Politics***

The policy begins with the government, which governs and regulates all educational activities in schools. The government does not make any policies to make teacher training programmes effective. Bindu asserted, *"Improving English language teaching and learning has never been a top priority for government officials."* ELT in Nepal is not free from the influence of politics as there is no strict policy. Nepal's ELT policy is devoid of sincere study and appraisals. ELT curriculum devices, plans, and aims are not founded on any study so there is an ineffective evaluation of teacher's teaching. Gita believes, *"Evaluation of teacher's teaching effectiveness is essential for better ELT. When students are unsuccessful, teachers blame students instead of evaluating how and why teaching was unsuccessful. From it, I can detect what to re-teach to my students."* Her experience clarified that evaluation helps assess a teacher's teaching effectiveness. Through evaluation, teachers detect what to re-teach, where to provide student practice, and where more effort and practice need to be provided. Regular feedback through rewards and punishments seems to be lacking in our ELT.

Regarding this, Kamal stated, *"There is no fairness while selecting teachers, due to political influence. Different political parties force experts to select the candidates of their parties. It seems quite difficult to choose the right type of candidate for the job."* His

view made it clear that political interference affects the selection of the right types of teachers for the job. Moreover, students and teachers themselves are involved in different political activities therefore their duties and responsibilities are affected badly. Politically recruited teachers are responsible to their political representatives rather than their profession.

Thus, participants believed that currently, there is no systematic testing of teachers' English language skills before they become teachers. With increasing nepotism and favoritism in the recruitment process, they thought that less worthy persons were joining the teaching profession resulting in low performance of schools.

### ***Lack of Regular Supervision and Monitoring***

It is crucial to analyze teachers' teaching and identify strengths and weaknesses. Supervision helps in bringing supportive change in teaching and learning. There is little monitoring for improving schools. Supportive and creative changes are expected to be brought by the supervision but participants narrated there is a lack of regular supervision of their teaching.

In this context, Arun remembers, *"After taking TPD training, there is no regular supervision and follow-up in our teaching by the head teacher or school supervisors. Supervisors have never supervised and monitored my classes."* His experience clearly shows that there is irregular supervision of their teaching to improve their instruction. Neither the supervisor nor the head teacher supervises the effectiveness of their teaching. Teacher supervisors have many different

responsibilities for guiding less experienced or less capable colleagues. He added, “*There is no punishment and reward system for the teachers in my school.*” Supervision of their teaching increases accountability among the teacher co-coordinator or headmaster and assists in fostering positive change in teaching and learning by supervising their teaching. Thus, senior and experienced educators help in mentoring less qualified or less experienced colleagues. Regarding this, Bhandari et al. (2022) claimed that training knowledge and skills for pedagogical reform can be implemented through routine monitoring and a reward and punishment strategy.

### Conclusion and Implications

This study attempts to explore the perceptions of secondary school English teachers on ELT problems in Nepal. The findings reveal that English language classrooms are linguistically, culturally and socio-economically diverse that present various challenges for teachers. Mixed-ability students, their varying language backgrounds and inadequate infrastructure make it difficult to teach effectively. Teachers often struggle to manage their classrooms, provide individual attention and adapt to their different learning styles. Poor infrastructure, i.e., classroom facilities complicate the teaching and learning process further. Students’ low proficiency compel teachers to use their first language in class limited the time for exposure to the English language. Furthermore, inconsistent ELT policy and political influence hinder effective English language teaching and learning. The findings also reveal several challenges in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Nepal. Teachers face issues such as linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse learners, over-reliance on the native language (L1), poor

infrastructure, and ineffective classroom management. Students, being underprepared, encounter teacher-centred, exam-focused instruction from overloaded teachers with limited access to technology. Inconsistent and outdated teacher training further exacerbates the problem, as it fails to translate into practice and does not meet modern teaching demands. Additionally, poor policy, political influence, nepotism, and lack of proper supervision and monitoring contribute to the overall inefficiency of ELT in Nepal.

The study highlights how coordinated efforts among instructors, students, parents, school administration, and government officials can address the challenges faced by English teachers in Nepal. By understanding and addressing these English Language Teaching (ELT) problems, a more effective and conducive learning environment can be created, ultimately improving English language education in the country. This study is not free from limitations as it is a small-scale qualitative study that included only four participants and relied on in-depth interviews rather than actual class observation, its conclusion cannot be extended throughout the country. Therefore, future researchers can conduct a study covering a larger region and a larger population to explore the challenges of ELT from students’ perspectives with solutions.

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