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Unlearning and Transfer: A Collaborative Autoethnographic Reflection on the Education Journey from Nepal to the United States

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Abstract

This article critically reflects on the educational journeys of two students and educators, from their experiences with school-level English education in Nepal to their first year of PhD studies in the United States. This reflection is informed by the methodological insights of collaborative autoethnography (CAE), as both authors share similar educational experiences. The theoretical concepts used in the reflection are unlearning and transfer. The authors' joint reflection identifies seven transitions involving unlearning and transferring. Based on these seven transitions, they derive seven key teaching-learning insights and propose a pedagogy grounded in a critical self-inquiry model. Therefore, the article explores innovative educational theories of unlearning and transfer in teaching and learning, while also opening avenues for further research.

Keywords: *Autoethnography, critical reflection, critical self-inquiry, collaborative reflection, unlearning, and transfer*

Introduction

We, the authors of this article, are two graduate students pursuing our doctoral degrees in Rhetoric and Composition at two different universities in the United States. We completed our school education, undergraduate education, and graduate education in Nepal and worked as school teachers and college lecturers for over a decade, from elementary to graduate levels. In this article, we navigate our learning experiences, with special emphasis on the transitions—unlearning and transfer—that we encounter during our teaching-learning journey from Nepal to the U.S. The focus of this article, however, is our journey of learning English as a school subject, English as a major in higher education in Nepal, and our first-year doctoral journey in Rhetoric and Composition in the U.S. The methodological insight employed in this article is collaborative autoethnography (CAE), and the theoretical insights are the concepts of unlearning and transfer. Our critical self-reflexivity on unlearning and transfer offers insights into how

transitional teaching and learning experiences can be made successful, particularly in adapting to new educational settings. Hence, in this article, we seek to answer the following research question:

> *In what ways did we develop our teaching and learning habits in Nepal, and how have we adapted to the educational practices of the United States?*

We aim to answer this research question by achieving the following three main objectives: (a) to reflect on the teaching-learning experience in Nepal, (b) to reflect on the teaching-learning experiences in the U.S. and (c) to develop an ever-evolving philosophy of teaching.

As we attempt to answer the research question and achieve these three objectives, we have organized the paper, beginning with the introduction that contextualizes the issue. Following the introduction, the article is organized into five main sections, each addressing a central dimension of the study: methodology, theoretical framework, Critical Reflection: Our Educational Journey in Nepal and the US, and discussion and conclusion.

Methodology: Autoethnography

In this article, we employ autoethnography (AE) as our methodological approach. AE is a research method that relies on the lived individual experiences and narratives of the researchers (Butz & Besio, 2009; Ellis et al., 2011; Lapadat, 2017; Dahal & Luitel, 2023). This is an approach to research and writing that seeks to ―describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience *(ethno)*" (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 273). Thus, AE ―foregrounds the emotions and experiences‖ by acknowledging the subjective nature of knowledge as "an epistemological resource‖ (Butz & Besio, 2009, p. 1662). Within AE, collaborative autoethnography (CAE) is a method that weaves together multiple people's experiences, offering a collaborative lens to inquiry and reducing the risk of narcissism and self-indulgence (Lapadat, 2017). CAE, however, does not mean narrating stories and experiences. Instead, it ―encourages individuals to engage in introspection and examine their thoughts, feelings, and actions‖ (Dahal & Luitel, 2023, p. 3). In this article, we employ a CAE framework to navigate and critically reflect on our shared educational journey.

Theory: Unlearning and Transfer

The collaborative autoethnography presented in this article is informed by theories of unlearning and transfer. In simple terms, unlearning means "leaving behind old knowledge and behaviour to make room for new learning" (Papastephanou & Drousioti, 2024, p. 22). Similarly, unlearning is ―a process of working collaboratively to create and produce new knowledge.‖ (Oparinde, 2021, p.247). On the same note, Emily J. Klein (2008) considers that unlearning is ―letting go of deeply held assumptions about what it means to be a teacher, what classrooms look like, what

the essence of teaching and learning is.‖ (p. 80). In the theory of learning, unlearning is ―an important dimension of professional reflective practice that can offer new insights‖ (McLeod et al., 2020, p. 183). It is the practice of self-inquiry and self-criticality regarding preoccupations and habitual thoughts, a key tool in enabling oneself to "respond to the demands of a changing world" (p. 184). It is situated and contextual: "Unlearning is like the reality of ongoing practice, characterized by constant flux" (p. 191). Furthermore, Siddiqi (2023) indicates that unlearning strategically sheds outdated paradigms, while relearning deliberately integrates new insights with prior knowledge to foster continuous, nuanced growth in understanding. If unlearning is an act of intentionally avoiding old habits, transfer theory examines how old learning habits are transferred. The transfer theory of learning is based on the principle that learning in one context can influence learning in another context. Its thesis is that "educating people through instruction, guidance, and practice in a particular context can help them gain mastery of a particular task of a domain, and this mastery is all that is needed to utilize knowledge in practice" (Hajian, 2019, p. 102). It means learning habits transfer and travel from one context to another. As discussed by Perkins and Salomon (1992), prior teaching-learning experiences of one context influence or impact another context, either positively or negatively. They state that if the learning context shares certain similarities, it is near transfer, whereas if the learning contexts are dissimilar, it is far transfer. In this article, we critically reflect on what we unlearned and what we transferred in order to relearn in our educational journey.

Critical Reflection: Our Educational Journey in Nepal and the US

School Education: Foundations of Learning English

We received our school education in the 1990s and completed it at the turn of the century in Nepal. We began learning the English alphabet in grade four and continued learning English not as a second language but as a compulsory school subject throughout our school education. The method of teaching English adopted by our teachers was teaching vocabulary, basic grammar rules, and common greeting expressions in grades four and five. In grades six, seven, and eight, we were taught the forms of verbs, tense rules, subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, active and passive voice, reported speech, question tags, and writing leave applications. We also practiced memorizing English words in the Nepali language and learning synonyms and antonyms. When we were in grades nine and ten, we were taught to memorize nearly all the English grammar rules: parts of speech, tenses, voice, use of articles, question tags, subject-verb agreement, writing short and long answers, writing short essays, and writing short stories. Practicing all these basic English skills, we completed our school education. Here, what shaped our English education in school was memorizing vocabulary, thinking in our first language, Nepali, and writing in our second language, English. The focus was more on reading and writing rather than speaking. We unlearned the Nepali grammatical rules to learn English grammar, but we transferred the concepts of synonyms, antonyms, and parts of speech from our first language, Nepali. Hence, learning the fundamentals of the English language was the primary goal of our English education throughout our school years. English was a compulsory subject from grades

four to ten, and failing the English subject carried a stigma in classrooms. Those who passed English were counted among the bright and brilliant students. Therefore, learning the English language was considered a form of intelligence. We were not encouraged to see English as a language or a way to communicate; we wrongly regarded it as a source of knowledge and wisdom. With this mindset, we felt prepared for higher education.

Post-Secondary Education: Unlearning and Transfer

In our days, school education was for ten years, followed by a two-year program: either (10+2) in higher secondary schools or a proficiency certificate level (PCL) in a university. The second author of this article completed a 10+2 program, while the first author completed a PCL program under Tribhuvan University. The modalities of teaching and learning in both programs were broadly similar. After school, we continued our higher education journey, majoring in English, commonly known as "Major English." Within major English, there were two options: English education (teaching-focused) and literature (humanities and arts). We jumped into the second option without making an informed decision, but we are making the most of it. When we began our journey, it was a particularly challenging time for us because we had to familiarize ourselves with the outlines of English (primarily British) literary genres: prose, poetry, drama, and fiction. To pass the exams, we had to master the history of English literature, the basic elements of literature, extract minor syntheses, conduct thematic analysis, and write concise notes. At this level, we unlearned the habit of memorizing grammar rules and then applied them in real writing. In school education, memorization was of great help, but later, we were required to memorize key points and concepts. Here, we gradually unlearned memorization and began learning to combine main ideas with grammatically correct sentences. More importantly, at this level, we learned about resourcing: collecting resources available in the market, taking notes in class, reading teachers' notes, and finally preparing our own notes by copying central ideas from all available resources. We also learned to use an English dictionary for the first time. With these unlearning and transferring skills, we completed our two years of post-secondary education. Hence, the two-year English education offered us some literary concepts and conventions that we were already familiar with in Nepali literature. For the first time, we realized that there are some common traditions, conventions, and patterns in Nepali and English literature; however, we were not guided from a comparative perspective, which would have made our learning much easier to understand and conceptualize them. These realizations gradually informed us of some norms of academic writing needed for undergraduate education.

Bachelor's Degree: Unlearning and Transfer

In our time, there was a common belief among students that getting higher education in an urban area would offer better academic opportunities. Motivated by this community narrative, we enthusiastically joined two popular campuses in the capital city of Kathmandu (First author) and one of the educationally popular urban destinations, Butwal (Second author). Our Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in English was a three-year course that exposed us to Western philosophical

traditions, from Plato to postmodernism, as well as Greco-Roman myths and literary genres—prose, poetry, and drama— critical and creative thinking, logic, and reasoning. All these areas of knowledge were predominantly Western; we do not _recall‘ a single text by a Nepali author being included in our major English courses. In terms of pedagogy, the lecture method would dominate the classrooms, being predominantly the banking model, as we reflect now. The instructors delivered oral lectures, and we were busy taking notes. Some of the lecturers used to distribute notes, and we would have them photocopied at a nearby photocopy centre. In our bachelor‘s degree program, guidebooks—the simplified, summarized versions of primary textbooks written by Nepali instructors—were readily available for purchase, and we would read those guidebooks first before approaching the prescribed primary textbooks. In our three-year undergraduate program, we unlearned, or were only partially convinced, that memorizing and using grammatically correct sentences would be helpful. Nevertheless, we transferred the note-taking skills from our post-secondary level. Most importantly, we learned that there was no alternative to working hard: reading all the available resources in the market, consulting the prescribed textbooks, using the *Advanced Oxford English Learners' Dictionary* for word meanings, and designing notes. Therefore, one of the most critical skills we developed was the ability to become an independent learner. Still, we were not encouraged to make a connection between English texts and Nepali culture. We were taught some basic levels of critical thinking skills, which mainly involved asking questions to answer them rather than developing a critical and unbiased perspective to observe a text. This approach was more emphasized during our master‘s degree.

Master's Degree: Unlearning and Transfer

Completing a B.A. in English and pursuing a Master of Arts (M.A.) in English was a matter of pride, and it gave us the motivation and confidence to hold our heads high. Traditionally, in Nepal, a master‘s degree was considered the highest degree for both academic and industrial jobs. Most of the students like us had the dream of studying at the Central Department of English in Kirtipur, Kathmandu. Kirtipur was once considered an intellectual hub, and we hope it still is. Almost all the tea shops in Kirtipur were akin to symposia in the evenings, where master's students engaged in philosophical conversations. We had the opportunity to materialize all those dreams when we rented a room in Kirtipur and embarked on our M.A. in English journey, with the dream of passing our a Master of Arts (M.A.) with first division (60% and above), which was highly regarded at that time. When we purchased the prescribed textbook, we were overwhelmed by the course load; we nearly lost all confidence. The courses included *Critical Theories from Plato to the Postmodern, A General Survey of British and American Fiction, Rhetoric and Composition, Stylistics, Movement and Genre Studies, British and American Poetry: A Survey, Global Perspectives on Drama, Non-Western Studies, and Intellectual History,* and a thesis. All courses, except for nonWestern studies, used texts primarily from Euro-American sources.

In our master‘s program, the method of instruction was primarily a lecture-based approach; however, most professors encouraged critical discussions in the classroom. We were encouraged

to read prescribed texts rather than available resources and guidebooks. We were exposed to a range of critical theories: Marxism, neo-Marxism, deconstruction, feminism, post-structuralism, postcolonialism, new historicism, cultural materialism, queer theories, and non-Western epistemologies. One of the most rewarding experiences in our master's class was listening to how our professors contextualized Western theories in the Nepali context. Most importantly, doing a master's thesis was a real challenge for us, as it was the first time we had ever been exposed to research conventions. We wrote our thesis by critically examining one of the English literary texts not prescribed in the course from the perspective of critical theories. Reflecting on our educational journey until M.A. in English, we unpacked our unlearning, transferring, and learning journey as follows:

- Memorizing all answers and points is impossible (Unlearned)
- Hard work is the first principle of learning (Transferred from B.A.)
- Critical thinking skills make our writing better (Learned in M.A.)
- Note-taking and note-making truly help (Transferred from post-secondary and B.A)
- A certain degree of memorization is necessary (Transferred from school education)
- Reading primary text is one of the best ways to master the content (Learned in M.A.)
- Group study and collaborative learning make reading a lot easier (Learned in M.A)
- A comparison and contrast perspective in learning theories and literary texts makes learning a lot easier (Learned in M.A.)
- What matters the most in exams is our writing or delivery of ideas rather than our content (Learned in M.A.)

We completed our master's degrees and entered the job market, and the hard work paid off: we secured English lecturer positions in colleges. The real challenge lay before us was to implement theoretical knowledge in classroom practice.

Teaching in Colleges

After completing our master's degrees, we joined two different colleges in Kathmandu, Nepal, as English lecturers. There were prescribed textbooks, and our job was to summarize, elaborate on, and discuss the problems. Upon completing lessons in every textbook, we had some questions, which we discussed in the classroom. The teaching method we adopted was primarily a lecture-based approach. We corrected students' errors, especially the grammatical issues in their writing. Usually, the competence of lecturers was measured based on the results of the students in their subjects. Therefore, the teaching job was highly competitive, and it always encouraged us to perform better in class so that students would not only like our teaching style but also secure high scores on final exams. As an English lecturer, what we unlearned was that reading as a

student and reading as a teacher are different. In our student life, we studied to write, but later we read to teach or speak. We recall practicing mock lectures, gazing at ourselves in the mirror in the restroom at home, even though we never actually taught when we were students. And when we started actual teaching, we used to write word meanings, explanations, references, and key ideas in the margins of nearly all pages of the textbooks we taught. We transferred some valuable insights from our learning journey: we encouraged students to memorize key concepts from lessons, had them take notes during class, prompted them to ask questions, and motivated them to prepare for exams with mock tests. In sum, the teaching profession taught us to read to write, read to teach, read to speak, speak to teach, and listen to respond. However, we still were not satisfied with the expanding knowledge that motivated us to pursue a higher degree, the Master of Philosophy.

The first author continued in the teaching profession in Nepal until 2024, but the second author moved to Norway in 2017 to earn a Master's degree in Social Science from two different geo-academic locations, Nepal (first author) and Norway (second author).

Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.): A Transition in Teaching Learning Paradigms

As time passed, colleges in Kathmandu began to prefer hiring English lecturers with an M.Phil. degree, and Tribhuvan University implemented a rule that required an M.Phil. to qualify for a doctoral application. Therefore, there was a trend of students joining M.Phil. programs, and the entrance exams were highly competitive. The first author completed his M.Phil. from Pokhara University, while the second author completed his M.Phil. from Tribhuvan University. Despite the differences in courses and professors, the modality of teaching and learning in our M.Phil. programs bore a resemblance to each other. Our M.Phil. comprised two semesters of research-oriented coursework and a dissertation. We gave a presentation in classrooms on all papers, and the professors expected a new critical perspective, which prompted us to consult various resources. We would often travel to libraries, such as the U.S. embassy, to access materials and resources that were rarely available in other local libraries. The term papers were equally challenging and new to us, as they were nearly as rigorous as a journal article. Finally, after submitting the dissertation, we successfully completed our M.Phil. During our M.Phil., we applied the theoretical and critical perspectives we developed in our master's program, and we unlearned the philosophy of relying solely on memory and hard work, as we could neither memorize all the prescribed resources nor fully comprehend the content. Nevertheless, we applied the critical prospects we acquired during our M.A. studies, which also helped us delve deeper into research work. What we also learned in our M.Phil. program was resource management, research, critical discussion, and research writing. Gradually, through the theoretical knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom and their practical application in the teaching classrooms, we honed our skills, which supported us in establishing ourselves as one of the ‗competent' English lecturers in Nepali academia before preparing to pursue higher education abroad. The first author continued in the teaching profession in Nepal until 2024, but the second author moved to Norway in 2017 to earn Master's degree in Social Science.

Preparing for Doctoral Application: Unlearning and Transfer

Preparing for a PhD application was a new challenge for us. After conducting our research about potential Rhetoric and Writing Studies (RWS), we began preparing an application from two diferent geo-academic locations, Nepal (first author) and Norway (second author). We began our journey with preparations for language proficiency and aptitude tests. Preparing for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) exposed both of us to the integration of language and logic through the use of clauses, punctuation marks, sentences, and paragraphs. It enabled us to move beyond traditional, cursory approaches to reading, adopting a thorough approach to texts. We learned the skills to scan, skim, read in detail, paraphrase, and infer meaning from the context. We realized that learning new vocabulary, using it in our own sentences, and revising past vocabulary helped us broaden our conceptual understanding of the test. In terms of vocabulary, our M.A. helped us a lot. Consistent practice, learning new vocabulary, and a skill-based approach for tackling for each question type helped us not only expand our understanding of language in the test but also achieve the competent score needed for the competitive admissions pool. Additionally, for the language testing, first author appeared on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and second author prepared for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Here, we transferred all the reading and writing skills we had developed from school to the M.Phil. level.

Another essential part of our PhD application process was writing the Statement of Purpose (SOP), which was a completely new genre for us. After shortlisting potential universities, we explored their websites, reviewed their vision, mission, and goals, and cross-examined our research interests, published articles, and focus areas of faculty members to see how well they aligned with our own research interests. Building on the research and writing skills acquired during our MPhil, we produced several drafts of the SOP. These practices not only polished our writing but also helped us better understand the direction of our research. Since we had even prepared a PhD proposal for submission to Tribhuvan University, the experience further supported us to craft a well-structured SOP.

During our application process, we realized that competent _sample essays‘ are a crucial factor in determining PhD admission decisions at U.S. universities. Initially, we were confused about the genre of writing sample papers. However, we gained some insights from our seniors that these were miniresearch papers designed to demonstrate an applicant’s ability to conduct scholarly research. As we had already learned to design research during our MA and M.Phil., we wrote and crafted two compelling research articles required for the application. To the best of our knowledge, it was the moment when we applied our research skills to their fullest extent, drawing on ideas from our M.A. and M.Phil. studies, as well as our teaching experience. At this point, we realized that the process could have been faster and easier if we had developed and published our M.Phil. term papers in some of the peerreviewed journals earlier. Finally, both of us got offer letters with full scholarships from different universities, and our new avenue of advanced studies in Rhetoric and Composition began in the US.

Doctoral Journey in the US

University Writing Center

A new academic community, new academic conventions, a new life, and new challenges. In the initial days of our doctoral journey, one of the biggest challenges we faced was the pedagogical transition as we joined the University Writing Center (UWC) as writing consultants. Initially, we had a conviction that the UWC consultant's job was to edit students' papers. After a week-long workshop, we unlearned that instead of marking up students' drafts with red ink, we needed to ask about the challenges they were facing, offer strategies, encourage self-revision, and focus on guiding rather than fixing. All these experiences led us to unlearn the teaching method we employed in Nepal. Thus, with the pedagogical insights from this writing center, we revamped our pedagogical practices to make them effective in US classroom settings. Similarly, we transferred our teacherly confidence and communication skills accumulated from our home country. We realize that without teaching experience, we would have struggled greatly in this unlearning process. One of the lessons we adopted was learning to _voice' our opinions. We aimed to collaborate with student writers and preserve their voice and cultural identity in their writing at UWC. Gradually, we became used to our roles in consulting, tutoring, and learning as graduate students.

Reflections on Graduate Study

As we reflect on our first year of PhD journey, our graduate studies gave us diverse learning opportunities and challenges. In both semesters, we had 20 hours of duty at the University Writing Center (UWC) in addition to three courses to study. Since we were new to U.S. pedagogical practices, we were overwhelmed by the pressure of assignments, discussion board posts, synthesis papers, issue papers, journal analyses, dissertation analyses, abstract writing, composing Call for Proposals (CFP), trace papers, journal responses, context brief, seminar papers/manuscripts, writing book-review, course facilitation, dissertation review, and a range of reading and responding assignments every week. At times, we lost confidence. However, with the support of our professors and the adoption of non-Western resilience and work ethics, we gradually began leading classroom discussions. We unlearned our listening habits and became active participants in classroom discussions. We also unlearned to expect readymade answers from professors, as they only asked unsettling questions and offered critical perspectives. This is where we realized that professors are not only here to answer questions but also to pose critical ones. Every writing assignment provided us with techniques to respond to rhetorical situations: audience, purpose, program expectations, and impact. Here, we transferred the reading comprehension skills we had studied during our language and aptitude test preparation classes while completing a long list of reading assignments every week. Along with time management skills, we learned the genres of different assignments. Exposure to diverse perspectives not only broadened our understanding of expressivist and cognitivist pedagogies but also provided a practical foundation in social constructionist pedagogy, demonstrating how knowledge is shaped

through dialogue and shared inquiry. In our observation, our first-year journey taught us what the current genres of assignments are that a student and future instructor should be familiar with. Some of them—out of many—are as follows:

- Discussion board post: Demands that a graduate student read the week's listed articles thoroughly and write their impression on the issues raised by the writer(s).
- A synthesis paper: Expects students to identify a common thread or idea among multiple readings and critically discuss it.
- An issue paper: Requires a specific issue or problem to develop in considerable detail, supporting ideas from various sources.
- A Journal analysis: informs about the key components of submission guidelines.
- A Dissertation analysis: Critical analysis of key components of a dissertation
- Mini-research project and presentation: Requires graduate students to formulate a research question, design survey questions, rationalize data collection methods, synthesize the results to identify common themes, and present their findings.
- Seminar paper: A manuscript for a seminar
- Book review: review of the most recent conversations in a theory/methodology book

Thus, we completed our first year of foundational PhD coursework, setting ourselves up for the years to come. As we reflect, our entire journey encompasses the comprehensive pedagogical process of unlearning and transfer, where we relearn new ideas, skills, and approaches necessary for a new educational context, as discussed below.

Discussion and Conclusion

When we reflect on our journey from Nepal to the U.S., we take pride in our non-Western approach to teaching and learning, grounded in hard work and resilience. We are gradually incorporating aspects of collaborative learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, and social justice into our approach. Our critical reflection suggests that teaching and learning modalities are ever-changing due to the varying study levels and numerous contextual factors. Every invention and socio-economic change brings both challenges and opportunities, thereby necessitating adjustments in teaching and learning modalities. Since pedagogical approaches should be contextual, dynamic, and creative, we firmly adhere to the belief that our pedagogical discussion should be centered on things to unlearn and transfer. Overall, our CAE yields the following takeaways:

First, in the Nepali context of pedagogical approaches, we need to recognize that although it remains partially necessary, memorization should not suppress students' creativity at every level. Second, in English education, a certain degree of critical consciousness is to be imparted to students. Taking an example, we propose facilitating the students' learning of English by

answering some questions: What form of English matters to them the most, why it matters to them, how they can connect their identities while learning English, and why they need to connect language and culture. When students learn English from these critical perspectives, they not only develop critical thinking skills but also foster critical dialogues in the classroom. Third, we propose reevaluating or revamping the teachercentered English education approach to adopt a student-focused and engaged approach to English teaching and learning. To borrow the terms from McWilliam (2008), modern teachers are not Sages and Guides; they are mediators who collaborate, facilitate, and innovate, meeting students where they are. Therefore, English education, at present, should not be rejected but advanced by honoring students' sense of self and identity. When necessary, the Western or Euro-American ideology rooted in English education needs to be challenged and locally contextualized. This is what we refer to as a decolonial English education. Fourth, we need to question structural biases that can limit the accessibility of local textbooks and resources and learn ways to make English textbooks more inclusive, including diverse ethnic and indigenous knowledge and languages. The transformation of knowledge, culture, and ethnic identities is only possible by updating our English education curriculum and syllabus. Fifth, we advocate for the practice of self-reflection, which enables English instructors to evaluate the effectiveness of their pedagogical approaches. That is, when instructors realize that the discussion did not occur effectively, they can consider alternative pathways for the upcoming debate. It means English instructors need to be open to a state of transformation, unlearning, and relearning. Sixth, to move forward with the transfer of learning English grammar rules in context, we must critically reexamine traditional teaching methods that separate grammatical instruction from real-world usage. This English language teaching approach should not exclude local identities, cultures, or languages. Instead, English instructors should encourage the early integration of English locally, enlivening and engaging dialogues, playful rhymes, and lively songs. Seventh, in terms of transfer, our autoethnographic reflection suggests that transferring English teaching and learning skills from one context to another is always rewarding. This means that English language teaching and learning strategies and methods need to be discussed, debated, and theorized periodically to ensure they remain ever evolving. The skills and methods of teaching and learning English need to be designed in a way that can be transferred from one context to another.

All these unlearning and transferring have limitations and challenges. The seven takeaways we derived are based on our shared educational experiences. Many changes may have already occurred since we graduated, or they are occurring every moment as we move ahead, and our CAE may no longer be entirely relevant at present. However, our CAE may serve as an archive of traditional pedagogy that needs reform and revitalization, particularly if it contains traces of some outdated practices. Nevertheless, the reformation is not easy. In the Nepali pedagogical context, the nationally uniform evaluation system, curriculum, syllabus, and textbooks may sometimes act as constraints. However, English instructors can still overcome these biases by evaluating and modifying their methods through encouraging classroom dialogues, discussions, demonstrations, and many more. These responsibilities lie with teachers and educators. We firmly believe that such efforts to enhance English education classroom strategies consistently serve as moments of unlearning, transferring, and learning.

In conclusion, our CAE indicates that learning involves a process shaped by a dynamic interaction among unlearning, transferring, and (re)learning. However, these components do not exist in isolation; they are interconnected and form a continuum. This learning process becomes especially important during certain transitional educational stages, such as moving from high school to higher education or switching between different academic environments. For modern learners, one of the most challenging aspects of today's pedagogy is unlearning, which requires adaptation to various contexts. Therefore, our CAE offers valuable insights into educational reform by actively applying the principles of unlearning and transferring ideas for the sake of relearning through student orientation programs, teacher training, and professional development initiatives. Consequently, our CAE has created opportunities for further empirical research to examine how teaching and learning practices are affected by the unlearning and transfer of skills in different educational settings.

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