

English Language Learning for Professional Transformation and Intercultural
Awareness: An Autoethnographic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Autobiography is the account of life experiences of an individual, and autoethnography is the research-based interpretations of the autobiographical narratives in connection with socio-cultural, educational, and overall aspects of life. Thus, this article is the outcome of the experiences of the author which are collected in autobiographical form, and interpreted autoethnographically. The main purpose is to interpret the lived experiences of the author's autoethnographically. It is to answer: to what extent the author's lived experiences of learning English play role in shaping his personal and professional growth? How the social aspects (economic condition, and political conflicts) and family responsibilities are influencing the author's academic achievement? For this, the autobiographical narratives were taken as the primary source of data. The autoethnographic interpretations reveal, though various personal, socio-economic, and family limitations, the curiosity, determination, educational thrust, and good professional networks play a transformative role in constructing knowledge and professional identity of an English language learners and/or teachers in the context of remote rural context of Nepal. Moreover, connection with professional institutions like Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA), can play praiseworthy role to the English language learners and teachers for the professional growth. So, collection of autobiographies, and analysis of autoethnographies can be recommended to explore the real experiences, challenges, and encouragements of English language teaching and learning in the context alike to Nepal.

Keywords: autobiography, autoethnography, struggle, determination, transformation

INTRODUCTION

It is understood that narratives are the life stories of people tell about their experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Moreover, phenomenology is the lived experience which are interpreted individual in connection to social realities (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this connection, stories people live with and what they tell (social and contextual environment) are the sources of the information for the narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The narratives are the basic information which explains the personal/professional identity, and social relation. The narratives are socially constructed and shaped by cultural contexts (Riessman, 2008). The

autobiography in this study reflected these realities connected with the life journey of the author.

Autoethnography consists of lived experiences with reference to socio-cultural context. So, it can develop insights by constant self-reflection, and critical inquiry with reference to the educational, cultural, political, and environmental context. Autoethnography, as a research method, combines autobiography and autoethnography. It is based on the believe that lived experiences are resources of knowledge that uses personal experiences to interpret and make meaning with reference to socio-cultural

perspectives. It is the critical reflection of personal experiences in connection with socio-cultural, educational, and institutional context. Autoethnography supports developing professional identity through constant interpretation of experiences which can develop self-awareness and lead professional growth (Barkhuizen, 2016).

The autoethnography can give data to understand how learning takes place in a specific community context. When a teacher examines his/her own teaching experiences, it provides reflective teaching practice through constant self-reflection, it can help to identify strengths, challenges, and spaces for improvement in pedagogical practices (Farrell, 2013). Moreover, autoethnography can provide a platform for teachers and learners to share struggles, emotions, and success stories which were lacking in traditional classroom (Ellis et al., 2011). As a result, teachers' and learners' voices can be considered for better learning environment. Further, the constant analysis of lived experiences helps to bridge the gap between theories and classroom realities, the integration of reflections and actions promote praxis (Anderson, 2006).

Being an English as a foreign language teacher in the context of Nepal, I often face challenges of language proficiency, learners' expectations, and institutional demands. Thus, by means of autoethnography, we can develop context-specific insights and help to create learners' need specific learning environment. In this connection, autoethnography can be a valuable method of identifying the teachers' and learners' challenges in the context of Nepal, specifically, where the Western produced theories are highly dominant in the educational system. Thus, the collection of autoethnography can help to develop context-sensitive pedagogies.

Although autoethnography is an analysis and interpretation of self-experiences with reference to socio-cultural realities, the definition covers multifaceted aspects. As autoethnography is different things to different people (Chang, 2016), here, in this connection, the autoethnography is taken as the combination of 'auto,' 'ethno,' and 'graphy' where the auto is the study related to self, one's own (community) experiences point of view which are author's personal experiences and reflections, the

ethno is the interpretation of how environment shapes the personal experiences in relation with socio-cultural values, practices, identities, and sometimes critiquing on it, the graphy is the dissemination of knowledge and experiences in writing with the use of creative resources: narratives, for generating, recording, and analyzing data, thus construction and carefully written vibrant story with rich description (Adams et al., 2016; Canagarajah, 2012). Moreover, autoethnography invites identity work: who am I; how did I become this variant of myself; how might I become more compassionate, understanding, and engaged; what social locations do I occupy, and how do those foster, shape, and constrain my opportunities and challenges? By centering the intrapersonal, autoethnography cultivates the introspection, sensitivity, and reflexivity needed to write our way through difficult experiences, moving from frustration, pain, and grief toward meaning, fulfillment, and hope. Thus, autoethnography can help us make sense and meaning of both mundane and extraordinary lived experiences, including trauma (Adams et al., 2021).

The meaning of the experiences in a particular event is understood thorough phenomenological study, it shows the lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Alike van Manen (1990) phenomenological inquiry emphasized lived rather than conceptualized experiences, the author's lived experiences as the English language learners in the context of Nepal and professional struggles autoethnographically interpreted in this study. Learning a language is not possible in isolation, it is a social phenomenon. It is shaped by various socio-cultural, political, and educational factors. I analyze myself from my lived experiences with socio-cultural, political, and educational setting in the context of Nepal. The interplay of different aspects a society can be understood with the analysis and interpretation of the autobiography in an ethnographic way. The autobiography is not only a personal life account; it consists of social realities connected with the person. Moreover, as Ellis et al. (2011) mentioned autoethnography is the meaning making process of experiences that are analyzed and interpreted connecting with social, cultural, political, and educational realities. Thus, the information and experiences collected in the form of bioautography are analyzed and interpreted accordingly in this autoethnographic study. Therefore, the author's fear,

hope, struggle, aspiration, transformation, and awareness are reflected in this ethnographic study.

Moreover, I agree that with the engagement in story-telling and judicious interpretation of lived experiences reflected the impact on teaching and learning (Stanley, 2020). In this regard, I collected my narratives of lived experiences in the form of autobiography, and desired to analyze and interpret in connection to society where I lived my life. Thus, the main purpose of this paper is to analyze and interpret the autobiography in terms of socio-cultural, and educational perspectives with reference to learning English and making career it in the context of Nepal. To achieve the purpose, this paper attempts to answer: to what extent the author's lived experiences of learning English play role in shaping his personal and professional growth? How the social aspects (economic condition, and political conflicts) and family responsibilities are influencing the author's academic achievement?

METHODOLOGY

As, personal experiences are narratives, and lived realities of the author in this study, they are based on lived experiences. The narrative is the telling of the stories that human beings experience in their journey of life. It is assumed that all human beings have their life stories. If those narratives are systematically collected and analyzed with the interpretation that becomes the narrative inquiry design of the research. On the other hand, phenomenology is a particular situation. So, to collect the lived experiences from that specific situation, in that particular time and systematically analyze with interpretation is called phenomenological research design. I have narrated the stories of my life and also focused on the specific situation so it becomes phenomenological. Thus, firstly, the autobiography is constructed with the collection of narratives and lived experiences of the author, and attempted to analyze them autoethnographically.

As, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) mentioned narrative inquiry emphasized on storytelling and lived experiences, and Creswell and Poth (2018) illustrated the phenomenology consists of lived experience with meaningful interpretation, this study adopted the phenomenological narrative inquiry design. Moreover, the reflective narratives (van Manen, 1990)

supported to explore the autoethnography through autobiography. The autobiography was interpreted in connection with educational, and social context (autoethnographic way) of the author. Thus, the sole source of the data was the author's autobiography. The lived experiences and narratives were analyzed through repeated reading, and thematized them based on similar information.

For the ethical consideration, the autobiography was interpreted objectively, respectfully, and academically. As autoethnographers share micro-experiences—secrets, epiphanies, traumas—to encourage others to consider, listen, and respond, I am trying to reflect this reality in this study. Moreover, they reframe and re-story experiences in ways that leverage positionality and can build agency and empowerment (Adams et al., 2021). I attempted to implement those experiences for the advancement of my knowledge and skills. In this regard, Alike to Bochner and Ellis (2006) illustration, I as an autoethnographer, used my personal experiences to describe (sometimes critiqued) the cultural beliefs and practices in my community, and experience and identity in my daily life. I engaged in rigorous self-reflection in order to identify and interrogate intersections between myself and society, as well as I reported what I did, how I lived, and I attempted to make meaning of my struggle in the community.

Moreover, I constantly thought and I used the combination of both evocative autoethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 2006), which required detailed narratives, and analytical autoethnography (Anderson, 2006), which integrate engagement of theories and research findings. Autobiography accounts the overall life journey, here the author's educational experiences, socioeconomic hardships, political conflicts, and personal transformation from an ordinary child to a university teacher are interpreted autoethnographically.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The lived experiences recorded in the autobiography, are narrated and interpreted to construct meaning autoethnographically on the following themes:

Educational Struggle: Curiosity, Competition, Self-Awareness, and Identity Construction

As my birth certificate shows, I was born in the early 1980s in one of the remote villages of Surkhet district, Karnali Province, Nepal. My birth name was Durga, which was used to call me by family, friends, relatives, and people in the neighborhood. Later on, my eldest brother admitted me at school in the name of Dipendra. In this regard, the naming one in birth and home, and another name in school reflected the transition from family identity to institutional identity i.e. fluidity of identity in my society.

To tease me very often my senior family members and relatives take reference of my earliest school days and say *ma ghara jannan* (I don't go home). According to them, it was on the annual result day of school, I was reluctant to enter my house as I approached near home from the school and wept nearby looking to the house building. The reason what they said was (*maile kaapi paina*) I did not get a notebook as my elder brother had got notebooks and pencils as the prize being first in the class. Now I found the answer from them what the reason was, I officially was not admitted at school because of underage and below 5.

I remember my elder brother and his colleagues often wanted not to respond teacher because my teacher used to take me in the upper grades to tell stories as I was in grade 1 or 2, or lower grades. The teacher used to say a student from a lower grade can tell the lesson of the higher grade and they used to take me to different classes that made my elder friends jealous and wanted me not to do that for their respect. This reflected the teacher's right identification of my potentiality and encouragement for further motivation. Moreover, my self-awareness was raised and identity was constructed positively with the inspiration of teacher to my ability.

As exam-oriented motivation in Taiwan (Chen et al., 2005), we were motivated to get good position in the exam. We studied hard to get better marks in the examinations.

I looked as if I was permanently second in the class, I was never first up to fourth grade but I was first in the fifth grade. I came to know that it was a district-level examination and why I was first was that it was neither handled in my school nor the authorities of my school. Now I guess if it was in my school, I might not have been first again, I could be second which was a

synonym to me in my basic level schooling, I feel. I came to know the reason why the classmate who was never second, and I never first was a secret. It was not he but his elder brother who played a vital role in it being a school official staff in the position of helper in that school. It will be unjust for them to disclose the confidentiality from my side except saying he used to get question paper twice and I once as all other examinees. It reflected alike UNESCO (2021) report the inequality of educational access affects academic participation and achievement. It was proved when I was first in the fifth grade. In this regard, this childhood experiences reflected hidden inequality, and institutional favoritism which influenced the academic ranking. This reality shaped my understanding of injustice and fairness in that particular culture. Moreover, the curiosity and confidence played role to challenge these barriers, and I developed my potentiality.

I still remember my relatives and school teachers often teased me by saying what did you eat? my answer, '*paani khayara aayako*,' (I came drinking water). My elders still talk me about my curious nature in my childhood days. They give example that any guests came to my house should tell a story because I often demanded, '*Kathaa bhanuuna*,' (tell story) often requested new stories. Moreover, I used to go work with my mother and other elder women to listen to the stories even if very early morning at three they used to go '*pisna and kuutna*' (grinding grains) or any other works till the late evening. In this connection, this activity shows my curiosity, and enthusiasm which occupied a central place in my childhood experiences. I did not follow them in the daytime because they did not tell *Siluuk* (story) during the day opined that there will be *laataa chhoraachhori* (dumb and blind offspring if stories are told at day time). Thus, this reflected a social value of oral tradition which function both entertaining and educating informal ways that could shape the childhood imagination power in rural Nepal.

Secondary school was far from my village. It reflected the limited access to resources of education and infrastructure (Bhatta, 2009). It took one and half hours on foot to walk to school. Thus, I used to run, in fact, I did not walk. This shows a difficult access to education in remote geographical region of Nepal. I wanted to go and return alone because the colleagues who studied in my class used to beat me and wanted

not to be in front of them. They wanted me to stop answering correctly in the class as the teachers scolded them for not studying hard and loved me for being laborious. I remember, there were loving friends too in my class and called me the loving name *kanchha* (the youngest in the class). I still have memory, the teacher made me a leader to those who were from my village area to come in time and lead the group of students to make them to reach school in time for assembly. But my problem was different so the teacher's idea did not work for this hidden and bitter reality. I used to work a lot at home because my father was ill and could not work for a long time in the field for farming to plow and grow for survival.

I used to go collecting grass and grazing cattle on the holidays. Generally, Friday was also a holiday for me because I did not use to go to school on Fridays instead I used to stay at home working for home. It was not only my way of life; it was a common culture in our village *sukabaar dherai padhai hudaina kinaa janne* (there are not many classes on Friday so not to go to school on those days).

Sometimes being with friends, I used to work as the porter who carries loads for the money. As mentioned earlier, father's illness and manual labor reflected the intersection of poverty and education. Moreover, this reality made me to work heavily in my childhood which sharpened me. These all were to support myself and my family. Further, this reflected poverty and its harsh reality to combine labor with education. I and our friends did it in our interests, no obligation from our home except little encouragement to get money is good. The route was long and up and down which took us about 15 hour's trips. I remember, I used to carry load of 53 kilograms as recorded in the memory, and my friend 56 and more. I know that first time with my earning, I had bought a green shirt still pictured in my mind. This memory shows a self-respect and developing independence on me. The good thing was that we used to use that money to have our tiffin at school among the friends the *Taataa* (name) biscuits. we know our parents did not have money for our tiffin as today our children have. Moreover, I realized, and agreed that the socioeconomic condition influence in schooling experiences (Pherali, 2013). The good thing was that these difficulties strengthened my determination for my career. I was also loved by *saahuji* (businessman) as other friends in school and addressed me encouraging *yo khayasya bahut baliyo*

chha (this fellow from ancestral Brahmin is strong as the Kshetri and Thakuri). They used to add, 'he is good in studying too.'

The story of our secondary education was very interesting because there used to be competition among the first students from the different primary schools around there as it was the only one high school in the area. About a dozens of primary school graduates used to be admitted to the only school. Therefore, there used to be about dozen of the first students to compete for the one first who is taken heightening the name of their own previous schools. This shows the achievement was not only personal but also collective pride and had a social significance of the people from different communities and schools. I was one of that competitors which made me feel a kind of pressure to study hard for my primary school but the exam result showed, I missed the two ranks and possessed third till tenth grade.

It was the first time I had lived out of home for a week to attend School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examinations. I felt that one week was longer than six months. I met all the neighbors and many relatives feeling that I was in the village after a year. But very few people realized it. I filled the gap when the SLC result was out. It was on the month of Asadh, I alone took 6-hour journey to see the Gorkhapatra for the result. The Gorkhapatra owner used to take 5 rupees checking the roll number per passed result. I had to wait for a few minutes because somebody was searching the roll numbers of their list. When I was waiting, I was curiously looking to the Gorkhapatra, and noticed my roll number. The other people around did not know about it so I had saved 5 rupees. But being more curious, I asked the price of the Gorkhapatra, the owner said, 'it is not for sale.' 'It is for searching the result,' there was only one Gorkhapatra in the bazaar. So, he was reluctant to sell it. But after a few minutes, he might have made mind to see, and he called me and told me to give 50 rupees for the whole paper. It meant, he was ready to sell it in 50 rupees. I was curious to take the newspaper at home, see other friends' roll numbers and wanted to show my roll number to my family members so I was ready to pay 50 rupees without any bargain. This demonstrates emotional value attached to academic achievement. Moreover, the walking long distance to search reflected the scarcity in educational system during that time. I bought it and went towards an open

field by the Bheri River. I was alone to read it and enjoyed looking at my roll number and the other three friends' roll number in the list from my school. Within a few minutes, the man who sold the Gorkhpatra ran around to search me and took back the Gorkhpatra because many other people came to him to see the result. There was no other alternative, so I gave it to him, and decided to return home. On the way home, I bought a couple of kilograms of mango picking up by riding on the tree and reached home walking for more than seven hours. All the family members and relatives were happy to see me in the top position from my school among the four who passed SLC that year. They were willing to send me city for further study. This revealed academic achievement connected with social identity, self-esteem and future dreams.

Political Conflict, Insecurity, Vulnerability, Power, and Uncertainty: Continued Educational Struggle

I was seriously ill, the first time typhoid and missed to be admitted in the Community Medicine Assistant (CMA) course that the eldest brother wanted me to study. It was beginning of the rainy season, I had to go to Birendranagar, the head-quarter of Surkhet district where higher educational institutions (colleges) were located. My purpose was to fill up the form for entrance exam to be admitted in Intermediate in Education (I. Ed). when I was staying in the hotel my 2000 rupees was theft at night, I suspected my senior colleague who was in the same room during that night. But I did not accuse him of. After the entrance exam, my name was published under the group of English Education so I had had to admit in English majoring group, and did accordingly. When I took second year exam, there was not good environment to live in the village because of the Janayudha (people's revolution by Maoist party), I headed to India, Himachal Pradesh, Simla. The study environment was not good, alike reported in Pherali (2011), the decade-long conflict between Maoist and the government, specifically rural, Nepal badly affected life and education. We, the villagers had had to involve to carry the war weapons, food and other things from one village to another village as per the orders of the Maoist local leaders. This revealed the fear in society and deteriorated social and educational environment. During the stay in India, I worked to cut grass in one of the house in the Simla, Himachal Pradesh. Sometimes I worked to spray the apples. One day, I got chance to talk to them in English. I felt respected

after the house owner knew that I could speak English. They wanted to check my English and whether I was from Nepal, they called the neighbors to talk to me in English. How a Nepali is speaking English, you are from Nepal! they surprised. After that day, they started to respect me and suggested to go home and study well. Really, I got back home after 22 days. Though difficulties, I realized the world view is broadened with the stay in India, and working there, though it was a short span of time. As I came back from India, I realized I was one step matured, I learned many things. I experienced that new thing during my travel. I realized we can learn many things from the experiences.

I lived with relatives in the Terai area because the worse environment in my hometown because of the Janayudha. After few months, the final result of I.Ed. was published and I passed I.Ed. within top ten rank from that college and got 2000 rupees as the scholarship. I still have that English Oxford Dictionary that I bought with that money.

I joined to the Bachelor in Education (B.Ed.) level, and started to study well. Once I attempted to join Nepal army second lieutenant. I eagerly passed physical fitness test. Seeing young enough, I realized, they did not measure my chest, they just touched, they said passed 'go in'. I was so inspired and started to dream about my career in Nepal army force but, later on, I was failed in IQ (Intelligence Quotient) test and had had to return home. Then, I, then and there, decided to stop my journey to join army, I thought it was not for me. I never attempted second time to join military job. I felt, I was not fit for or it was not my field so I stopped thinking about it. I thought, I was lucky to study I.Ed. and B.Ed. from the same college. While I was studying bachelor level, I worked in one of the boarding schools as the part time teacher for some months and a full-time teacher for a couple years.

Because of the father's death in the same year, I missed time to be admitted in the central campus of Kirtipur for the Master's degree. My senior colleague admitted me in Tahachal campus. I was three months late to attend Master's degree classes. I was so worry about my study. Therefore, I took classes at Kirtipur, central campus at day time and Tahachal campus in the evening. This shows the extreme hunger for education with intrinsic motivation for learning.

During the study, I had to travel home (Surkhet) to Kathmandu frequently. One very heart trending incidence happened on the way from Surkhet to Kathmandu when I was a student of Master's Degree. It was hard time to travel because of the conflict between the government and the Maoist Party, it was leading the Janayudha wings (Maoist movement). I remember, the bus was stopped at the army barrack at the boarder of Banke and Dang districts. As all the passengers were told to be queued to be inspected turn by turn. I was also checked up by some army personnel, and ordered me to go inside the barrack with my luggage. I did not know the reason why he sent me to the barrack; my bus was allowed to go and only I was stopped for the further investigation. I did not know the reasons and afraid of any worse thing could happen at that time in the suspect of the Maoist from the army side. After a few minutes, I was accused of going to give trainings to the Maobadi (Maoist wings). I did not know why they were blaming me of it.

Later on, I realized that it was because of sound system note as there was list of English consonant and vowel sound symbols in my notebook. I experienced as Shields and Rappleye (2008) explained the conflict worsened the educational activities, social security, and mobility of people in Nepal. Moreover, I realized alike Pherali (2013) Maoist conflict affected schooling, migration, and social stability. It disrupted educational environment and security in the society. What is happening my God! I was stopped and accused of having a sound symbols system notes in my bag. They said *oe maobaadi kina ultaa aksher lekhekochhas?* (Oh Maoist! why did you write these upright down letters?). The army interpreted it as the symbolic letters to give training to the *Maobadi dasta* (Maoist army). As, I was taken inside the barrack for further investigation, it was my good luck, I was saved by an army soldier who was from my village although I did not identify him, he recognized me. He addressed me by taking reference of my eldest brother. His attention and references showed the value of social connection during difficulties, which became the source of survival for me.

He confirmed me and reported to his boss about me. He said, '*uhaa chai haamro gaauko padhne manchhe,*' (pointing to me, he is a good and studious

boy from our village). In this context, I realized, he took risk to speak in front of his boss for me and saved me from the bad star. After some minutes, they allowed me to come out from the army barrack, and the soldier from my village stopped a bus and told the bus staff to take me to Kathmandu where I was heading to study Master's degree. The staff did not even ask me bus fare and allowed me to travel in the bus. Many things came in my mind about that event afterwards. I started to think, what could be my situation if the army soldier (from my village) was not there in the barrack during the time. Then, my heart started to beat faster and faster without fear, a kind of happiness in my head and heart.

Commitment for Higher Education and Teaching Profession

When I was studying Master's degree, I did not go back home from Kathmandu for a whole year because I wanted to sharpen my knowledge taking regular classes. After two years, I completed my Master's Degree in first division. So, I got chance to work in Surkhet Campus as a part time teacher. I did not know the facilities neither I knew the salary. I thought, it will be good earning until a year. But I came to know later on that there was a very little money to be survived. I could not get sufficient money from there, and my relatives expected a lot to support economically. So, I worked in one of the private schools and hardly lived my life. There was advertisement for the post of contract teacher in the campus. I was curious and filled up the forms for the post. There were many rumors about who is going to be contracted. But finally, my name was in the number one on top of the result list. I was contracted as the full-time teacher in 2066 BS (2009 AD), and permanent lecturer 2074 BS (2017 AD), demonstrated a gradual promotion as the outcome of the determination and struggle.

When I was paid monthly, my relatives suggested to study for public service commission because they said master *bhaneko mastarai ho kehi subidha chhaina* (Teacher is teacher: a profession with low facility, no satisfactory facilities for good life). I did not listen to them by heart. This shows my commitment and respect to the teaching career. Instead I was busy in teaching as the private tuition classes (the participants payed for my work) to make money, and which could support me and my relatives economically. This shows the economic insecurity,

low pay, and higher expectations of the people in Nepalese context. I was spending a kind of machinery life: got up early at 4, and start teaching 5 am to 8 pm with some hours gap for lunch and taking rest in between. I did not know how the time was passing on. Thus, I felt like Masten (2014), the struggle with the hardships and adversities contributed for my self-development and resilience.

Marriage and Family Responsibilities

As, many of my relatives were thinking about my future life. I got married in 2068 BS (2011 AD) to satisfy relatives and my family members. I know, I did not think about marriage. Here, for me, marriage was taken as the family responsibility rather than a romantic decision. I made decision within a couple of hours without any prior thought. The life started to move in new pace but bad star followed me. She was sick of tuberculosis within the three months of marriage. She had had to take rest and take medicine living with her parents for six months. This brought a kind of pressure emotionally and financially.

The time was passing on without any further progress until I was permanent as the post of lecturer in 2074 BS (2017 AD) in Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Alike the discussion of Bourdieu (1986), even in the lack of economic capital, the dedication and curiosity for education as the cultural capital of mine influenced the success in my life career. Despite overall difficulties, adversities, and different types of pressure, I continued my struggle with a firm determinant, and I took all those factors as the motivational force to me for resilience development in me.

Many of my colleagues were already joined MPhil (Master of Philosophy) and PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) for their further career. I was suggested to abroad study by my colleagues. They often said *tapainjasto young manchhepani angreji ke napalma padhnuhuncha* (go English speaking country in this young age for further study of English). I did not make up my mind to go and study abroad because I was busy in managing my home and family.

Professional Networking: Expansion of Identity

Professionally, I was connected to Nepal English Teachers' Association (NELTA) as the life member at the beginning of the days and later on one of the

executives at district level. So, I got chance to be linked with the English Access Micro-Scholarship Program that was sponsored by the Regional English Language Office, US Embassy, Nepal. Although, it was a volunteer work for me, I happily worked as the Focal Person of that program in my district. I realized, I learned lots of soft skills related to my life and career. Alike Richards and Farrell (2005), I experienced the continuous professional enhancement through collaboration and professional engagement in various social and leadership development activities. Moreover, I felt broadening pedagogical and social skills. I expanded my professional horizon from these platforms. I became one of the contents to be talked in Surkhet and among the NELTA people. It was a right time to learn some English culture as one of the English Language Fellow from US, who was working in Surkhet and spent almost 9 months with us. One of the authorities from NELTA Central Committee reported me that while he was leaving Nepal, he said one of the take away from Nepal is, 'DIPENDRA, who is working without politics in Nepal, all others do politics in their work.' Thus, the involvement in professional institution provided opportunities for networking professionally and socially, developing leadership, broadening intercultural communication, shaping professional identity, and strengthening confidence reflected in the narratives of my autobiography.

Trauma Brought an Understanding of Life, Relationship, and Human Care

It was Mangsir 19, 2075 (2018 AD), I met a dreadful accident, I was driving from Surkhet to Nepalgunj on motorbike to the eldest uncle's house, who was died 9 days ago. My mother about seventy was with me on the bike. I did not know how I collided with the truck and missed my heart.

Moreover, I did not know who and how we were rescued and taken to Kohalpur teaching hospital. I sensed that I and mother were in the hospital on the third day of the accident. When I regained my sense on the third day, I saw my relatives around me. I did not know on the first day within two hours of accident, many staffs from college came and observed my situation. I saw only on the third day, again the other staffs came to meet me and my mother. I was taken to my friend's house nearby the hospital, and mother had had to go under the operation of the broken leg. I

remember one of my staff who left my room lastly said *dai* (brother) take care and I happened to tell lock my room from outside because I may go out because I was not in completely conscious. I told him when I was at college after a couple of month, '*timi dai dai bhanchau tara bhetna aayanau*' (you are closer to me saying dear brother, you did not go to meet me when I was in deathbed). He laughed, '*haaa you said dai lock my room from outside,*' now I realized oh! Yes, you were. It brought me mental problem for some days, and mother's recovery of broken leg. I realized the love and care of relatives, colleagues, friends from around me. All cared me, I remember the colleagues from my campus used to come to my home, one by turn to pick me up to take attendance at college register. They did not assign me duty, they even did not talk me for a long time, thinking that I was not in well recovered. So, I was taken Upendra Devkota Neuro hospital Bansbari and Annapurna Neuro Thapathali, Kathmandu as per the demand of my eldest brother. Although I was in normal condition, many people did not believe me, I have been healthy. Specially those who met me first time in the Kohalpur hospital and saw my condition, they were still worried about me. So, the status I put in the facebook wall made them to think about my improved health. The liminal (transition of death and life) experience in the accident, transformed my thought of life, and value of social ties reflected in my renewed life, gratitude, and emotional maturity.

In the living world, I realized that how people express love after death. I remember, my colleague recorded my voice and played after a month, 'now listen who you are *yesle aba sabai birsiyo, yeslai aba feri ka, kha padhauna school bharana garnu parchha hola, feri school jaanebho keto.*' (he has forgotten everything that he has learned from school, it may be case to admit him school to learn alphabets). '*Ae ta kahaa chhas?*' (Do you know where you are?) my answer was '*ma gharma chhu, tihaar manauna aako hiihii*' (I am at home, came for the Tihar festival celebration). Those audios and videos are the evidences that made me think that I really lost my mental conscious condition in that accident, and recovered after a couple of days.

A Visit to the English Native Land Expanded the Cross-cultural Awareness

After a few months of the nightmare time (motorbike accident), I got offer to visit Temple University, the

USA for the University Teacher Exchange Program. It was primarily in Philly (Philadelphia), a day in New York, one week in Georgia for TESOL Convention. Moreover, I privately spent a couple of hours in Baltimore with a senior colleague who was already in US (Dr. Uttam). Overall, it was about a month experience in the dream country of the world (United States of America) [USA]. I found the USA was more developed than what I thought while I was at my homeland. With my few days experiences, I came to conclude that the people work in system compared to Nepal. This experience developed me to be critical about my own society which developed awareness, confidence, professional identity, and knocked for transformation. Thus, while I was in US, I was in English authentic context, and realized enhanced English language competence (Brown, 2007), and I experienced and felt intercultural understanding with the engagement in authentic interaction. Moreover, I was convinced with Kramsch (1998), the social and cultural contexts influenced in language learning. Moreover, the sharing with the 24 countries' participants specifically, and 48 in general, I achieved something amazing, and I agree that with the engagement in story-telling and judicious interpretation of lived experiences reflected the impact on teaching and learning (Stanley, 2020).

I did as David, an English Language Fellow suggested, 'taste the varieties of food, interact a lot, drink (water) a lot, and speak with smile.' This suggestion symbolizes the intercultural awareness for effective communication. He often reminded me to smile, 'hey man you are not smiling while speaking, smile and speak.'

Identity as a Research Scholar: An Instance of Intellectual Growth

Alike the discussion of Bourdieu (1986), even in the lack of economic capital, the dedication and curiosity for education as the cultural capital of mine influenced the success in my life career.

My senior colleagues who are in the USA often followed me and suggested to study abroad for real flavor of English. 'Why do you want to study English in Nepal? Why do not you use this opportunity to learn English in the English context? You can do it, we know.' They were confident about me. But who knows my reality, the wearer only knows where the

shoes pinches. I was stuck with my personal and family obligations, and started my research level study in Nepal. Though a lot of obstacles, my learning hunger and determination mirrored the transition from a student to a research scholar, which is not only for job promotion but also for further pathways to construct knowledge and skills.

Except getting for further knowledge and skills, I have a kind of value to take research level education for my life career, though, the main goal was to broaden the horizon of knowledge and skills. It looked like the main aim was for the advancement of the professional career.

Realizing the worthiness of the research level study, I first time filled up the entrance form in 2075 BS (2018 AD), but due to the motorbike accident, I could not attend the entrance exam. Again, 2076 BS (2019 BS), I missed the entrance exam because of the delay of the plane from Nepalgunj to Kathmandu. It was third time in 2077 BS (2020 AD), and all the processes leads to one year to get admission. I wanted to develop a horizon of my knowledge and skills in the research area. Moreover, my desire was to construct knowledge from analysis, discussion, and interpretation of the experiments.

As, I was taking classes in research level, I have experienced various things related to colleagues and teachers, for instance, different types of teachers, I found some of them as the positive teacher who often encouraged us to study and work with them. Few of them were negative who undervalued us in our work as well as few neutral teachers who sometimes cared about our study and our life goals, and sometimes they did not even respond our queries.

The most unforgettable experience was related to the teachers' attitude. Most of them came to our class and announced, 'this is the course I designed,' 'the purpose of the course is...' 'this is content I kept in this course...' 'this is the book which I read most of the time, other people even did not see this book, ...' I felt strange to listen to those remarks and their psychology of speaking. This kind of university teachers' behavior (either encouraging or showing academic superiority) developed in me a kind of critical awareness about academic culture and power relation in the context of education system in university. Thus, this situation supported to grow

analytical consciousness in me. We know that they are the professors who designed the course, they have enough education and skills. The question comes to my mind about their statement 'why they are announcing this in front of us?' 'what may be the purpose of putting these remarks in front of us?' We easily experienced that some of them behave in such a way that they know everything and we know nothing.

CONCLUSION

The overall autoethnographic analysis of autobiography-based resources of information, developed confident that the identity is shaped by the life experiences (Goodson, 2013). Likewise, the lived experiences are shaping motivation, and support to growth personally, socially, and professionally. In this regard, education in my life is shaped in Nepal by geography, poverty, and sociopolitical inequalities (Bhatta, 2009). It is reflected in the autobiography in terms of long walking distance while going school, lack of reading resources except textbooks, economic burden, and lacking infrastructures. Similarly, I realized as Beijaard et al. (2004), I developed my professional identity through various experiences in real life, and making reflections time and again. I am confirmed that the lived experiences in difficult situations make strength ability for personal growth and resilience (Masten, 2014). Thus, personal dreams are not only shaped by an individual activity, but also socio-cultural and collective family expectations in my life. This reflects the reality of the community where the middle-class people are living their life in difficulties and aspirations.

As, Freire (1970) mentioned the transformative role of education is for empowerment and mobility, I realized transforming from rural child to a university lecturer despite financial hardship, political conflicts, and other barriers. Though various obstacles (poverty, political conflict, difficult access to education), education is emerged as the transformative force in terms of a rural child to university teacher i.e. employment, confidence, dedication, intellectual freedom, and professional dignity reflected in the autoethnography. In this regard, all the adversities are turned as the sources of maturity and reflexivity in me. Thus, autobiographical narratives can be a rich and meaningful data for auto ethnographical study.

In short, from my autobiography i.e. collection of experiences, and autoethnographical analysis, it was concluded that lived experiences and narratives are the ways to understand process of one's identity formation, role of educational struggle, and commitment for professional development. Thus, various autobiographies of English language teachers should be interpreted autoethnographically for the further development of insights in the field on English language teaching in the context of Nepal.

Authors' Contributions

Although this autoethnography is based on the autobiography of the principal author (Mr. Khatri), overall structure was designed and language editing was completed by corresponding author Dr. Khadka.

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