



Role of Collaboration in English Teacher Education: A Narrative Inquiry

Nirajan Bohara

MPhil Scholar, Kathmandu University, Nepal

lecturernirajan@gmail.com

Jai Raj Awasthi, PhD

Professor, Kathmandu University, Nepal

jrawasthi@gmail.com

Abstract

The study was conducted within the ELT (English Language Teaching) context of Nepal with experienced teachers as they implemented collaboration in teaching practices and bridged gaps in collaborative construction of educational growth. This paper explores the contribution of collaboration in the career growth of English teaching professionals. I employed narrative inquiry, and a semi-structured interview was administered to get their subjective perspectives. I implemented Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT) to view social context, reflective practice, group work, scaffolding, and autonomous exploration in learning mode. Vygotsky's social development theory indicates that interpersonal communication can directly moderate a pupil's reasoning and comprehension skills in the ELT milieu of Nepal. The interpretivism paradigm shaded the nuances of a robust and context-sensitive approach. Five secondary-level English teachers were selected for the paper, and a purposive sampling method was chosen under the criteria of experience, characteristics, and in-depth knowledge in the role of collaboration. Findings were inconsistencies in group members' involvement, reflective practice in the form of collaboration, and autonomy as a teacher's professional development. The implications highlighted the significant shift in the pedagogical approach, identity, and weaknesses faced by teachers in educational domains, as well as their professional growth in collaborative settings. Collaborative learning fosters the confidence and progressive outcomes of learners in education.



Keywords: collaborative learning, teacher education, critical thinking, learner autonomy, professional development

Introduction

Collaborative learning is in line with cultural and social settings. The teaching of languages is the first component in educator development dimensions. Teachers' enrichment holds the quality of collaboration so that they can give their best in their respective fields (Saud, 2023). Teaching methods, peer cooperation, and reflective practices are all incorporated into teachers' professional development. Based on roots, collaboration represents working in a team, and it displays creating, planning, evaluating, and finding objectives (Kaye, 1992). As per Kaye's (1992) definition, collaboration pertains to working as a team or jointly to get new insights and discoveries. Various shared resources are a point of entry for addressing issues in a range of personal objectives.

Collaborative signifies academic performance of students and social contexts in higher pedagogical impact (Johnson et al., 2007; Slavin, 1996). In anticipation of accomplishing common learning goals, collaborative learning has a greater influence on education. In a classroom setting, it improves social, communication, and interpersonal skills. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is a new emerging field of teaching that combines with collaborative learning, and it has been embedded in various fields (Joshi, 2016). Cornerstone of ICT in various fields such as agriculture, education, medicine, and e-commerce are incumbents to stress a student-centred learning approach.

Collaboration and leadership qualities are entwined at the same time because of egalitarian and decentralised contexts and phenomena. Teachers' collegial examination of issues can be envisioned as a form of reciprocal regulation (Butler & Schnellert, 2012). To refine their own transformation and students' learning outcomes from mutual regulation, teachers must mirror what they have learned from their peers. Insufficient budget, a dearth of resources, and limited training fail to integrate technology in education (Johnson, 2023). If the government does not provide any budget to integrate ICT in education, then there will be a lacuna in students' learning outcomes.

Collaboration incorporates practical training, theoretical grounding, and deepens academic excellence. Similarly, TPD (Teacher Professional Development) is knotted with collaboration because it includes developing skills, teaching performance, and teachers' professional competence. When teachers engage in collaborative learning, they expertise their teaching profession. Pedagogical strategies and meaningful responsibility thrive for obtaining visions of collaborative practitioners. Similarly, collaborative practice and TPD go hand in hand to remove the financial constraints, co-regulation, and foster inclusive spaces in learning. According to Jiang (2017), TPD involves skill training, theoretical education, and development in practical teaching and cognitive abilities. Teachers' professional growth encompasses training, academic knowledge, practical teaching, and cognitive development.

Thus, pedagogical services upliftment is more helpful for the teachers to develop their professional development, such as designing assessment methods, instructional materials, and educational planning (Karki, 2021). Teachers design lesson plans in a

variety of contexts, develop curriculum, make formative and summative assessments, and produce resources that are appropriate for the environment. Perry (1980) states that confidence, expertise, and training pave for the continuous updating of knowledge of English teachers. Teacher development highlights the growth, confidence, expertise, skills, progress, and positive attitudes. Johnson's (2023) analysis of assistive technology policies emphasises the necessity of financing and resources for devices such as screen magnifiers and braille readers. Policies should facilitate the technologies' corroboration for teaching advancement. According to Richards (2020), emotions play a vigorous role in language instruction that will be wedged on teachers' encouragement, social exchanges, and teachers' impetus. In addition, he emphasises that emotions are interwoven in education in fostering classroom subtleties. Nevertheless, the transformation of personal and relational carried benefits on institutional scales (Singh & Bhuyan, 2024).

Furthermore, the objective of teacher development is to help us become the most influential educators we can be. The focus of the teacher development component is on self-reflection and self-awareness. Thus, the dialogical and stable construction of teacher identity has transitioned (Pishghadam et al., 2022). Education for language teachers is an evolutionary field. Awasthi (2003) underscored policies related to teacher education in terms of consistency and effectiveness. Several changes have occurred in the evolution and development of this field. Brown and Green (2021) reveal that rudimentary training is important in the field of special education. On the flip side, Song et al. (2016) underscore as noted by the teachers' identity conflicts and emotional experiences have an impact on their instructional strategies. Hence, collaborative learning aids to metacognitive and social skills in learning instruments (Rumiantsev et al., 2023). It includes teacher productivity, craftsmanship, and in-service progress through special training and teaching experiences of teachers. Harris and Sass (2011) claim that these factors determine the quality of teachers. Teachers' roles are creating motives for a cultural and structured environment. Cultural activity tailors an intervention and supports the process in dealing with issues of participation (Maharjan & Bhattacharai, 2017). Teachers' attributes should not be a bossy nature and ruling in the course of learning, but they should be focused on evocative, fruitful, and motivating students in learning domains.

Similarly, educators develop their competencies, expertise in their profession with the help of exchanging knowledge (Asmari, 2016). On focusing on subjects and skills, one student is expected to be the tutor and another to be the tutee. Pertinent and scaffold chase a clear vision of outcomes for a successful collaborator to establish a good learning environment (Ernest et al., 2013). Collaborative activities should have a crystal-clear goal, be relevant to the learners, and offer satisfactory scaffolding. Within the cooperative learning spectrum, each person has specific roles and responsibilities to fulfil. As noted by Poekert (2011), moments of learning and sharing junctures with teachers engage and moderate facilitators.

Teachers are more responsible for the creation of their classroom environment, according to Hagenauer et al. (2015). It exhibits the aspiration, influence, and source of motivation from fellow friends in mutual understanding. Teaching effectiveness is further increased by self-efficacy and reflective teaching. Tomasello posits that imitation fast pace for acquiring collaboration at an early age (Tomasello et al., 1993). This

statement depicts the learning phase of an infant. Imitation is a salient and main aspect of learning. Imitation, in his opinion, is a grassroots method of picking up information and abilities. Effective systems and teachers' perspectives highlight the professional learning community (Asmari, 2016). The groundwork of teacher professionalism and excellence can also be considered in competence building.

The occupation of teaching English needs collaboration in order to face challenges posed by many people, and addressing them effectively can prove the great qualities that value teaching (Timsina, 2021). Teaching the English subject is an arduous, simultaneously rewarding, and challenging endeavour. Tackling those challenges and taking a step further is the creation of value in teaching. Continuing professional development (CPD) implies that language educators must continually improve their knowledge and skills as they progress in their professional trajectories (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019). CPD is a constant procedure catering to the dimensions of skills and a prolonged period of language teaching targeting the educators. Additionally, assisting teamwork and contemplative approaches are the trajectories in the setting of the CPD framework. Cooperation creates opportunities for insight, brainstorming ideas, and joint strategy development. Ongoing changes in education in the CPD context are becoming most important for career advancement in the collaboration field (Asmari, 2016). Sustained CPD illustrates a one-time event for promoting teaching effectiveness methods, enhancing teaching practices, and teacher identity.

Thus, CPD aids educators in reflecting on their professional triumphs and outcomes, which showcase their professionalism. Silvhiany (2022) emphasised webinars, seminars, and conferences to build workforce improvements for English teachers. Overall, educator skills are a crucial phenomenon in ameliorating outcomes of students' learning (Saud, 2023). Teacher professionalism is the epitome with reference to students' learning outputs, on top of nurturing the value of education. Collaborative learning encourages teachers to build their skills, reflect on their work, manage classrooms more effectively, and strengthen their professional knowledge. With this in mind, the study focuses on two main objectives: identifying how collaboration supports the professional growth of English language teachers, and examining the key challenges that arise when using collaborative learning in teacher education.

The research gap sheds the issues related to collaborative learning. The lack of budgetary constraints and insufficient training (Johnson, 2023; Joshi, 2016) hinder the teaching pedagogy in collaborative learning settings. Further research is obligatory in the field of collaborative practices and co-regulation among English teachers (Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Rumiantsev et al., 2023), incorporated into TPD programs. There is insufficient investigation into the entities of collaborative language teacher education in regard to enhancing collaborative learning (Jiang, 2017; Richards, 2020). Likewise, more research is needed on better collaborative learning and pedagogical practices in diverse students' classroom domains (Brown & Green, 2021; Johnson, 2023). Recent work highlights the need for stronger collaborative learning and more effective pedagogical practices across diverse classroom settings (Brown & Green, 2021; Johnson, 2023). Studies also show that collaborative practices remain underexamined, especially when it comes to addressing the complexities of classroom pedagogy (Adhikari, 2021; Poekert, 2011).

Within this gap, it is important to identify how collaboration supports the professional growth of English language teachers and to examine the key challenges that emerge when collaborative learning is used in teacher education.

Literature Review

In this segment, I have reviewed distinct educational policies that are relevant to collaborative learning and teaching education. Pertaining to Nepal, English teachers provide different instruction as per the needs of students. It paves the way for maintaining diversity, inclusion, and fruitful didactics. Also, it formulates effective and efficient instructional teaching pedagogies. According to Khanal and Poudel (2022), scaffolding breaks learning into cooperative learning, and students become more competent in independent learning. Thus, teachers worked together to share best practices and provide materials to help pupils learn the language, according to Adhikari and Ghimire (2020). Before entering the teaching profession, novice instructors created imagined ideal identities with people from their sociocultural backgrounds, such as parents, family members, and society (Neupane, 2024). Novice teachers have a misconception of the supreme and greatest when they are entering the teaching profession. The government's SSDP (2016–2023) mandates that children complete at least basic education and develop their value-based education to promote harmony in diverse communities. In compliance with the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) (2016–2023), every child should complete at least the foundational level of education and acquire skills from value-based education in sociocultural diversity. If an issue is observed, the plan, strategy, and course of action are put into action. The training of the teachers in Nepal was started in 1971 with the intention of improving the qualifications of teachers through the National Educational System Plan (NESP).

The expansion of the ITTP and teacher TPD program has been spotlighted in the execution and enforcement of the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) 2009–2016. It points out collaborative learning practices, teaching methods, and interwoven as a matter of ICT resources. By joining the training of TPD, teachers will elevate the instructional delivery system and engage in professional development. This implies the audacious policies accentuated on TPD training to reinforce the performance, competence, and overall prosperity of the English teachers (MOE, 2009). Teachers' collaboration skills, language learning competency, and ability to seize ongoing opportunities are all provided by TPD.

The key to teacher participation in any reform in education has placed top priority on induction and updating the skills of teachers (MOE, 2009). The government's synopsis of thoughtful upgrades and acknowledgement of successful classroom collaboration learning techniques. In a multilingual context, they tend to think about innovative strategies that allow them to determine the levels of students in the collaboration sphere (MoE, 2016). The classroom is full of diversity, and students speak multiple native languages, which have been congested by the English language teacher. A teacher has to face such a type of situation in a diversified classroom, which can be challenging in the Nepalese classroom context. Pennington (2015) presents teacher identity as a mental image, or

construct, or the conception of a teacher that directs teachers' practices and actions in specific acts of teacher identity.

The SSDP transforms learning environments, teaching, curriculum and learning materials, teaching methodologies, assessments, and promotes student learning (Ministry of Education, 2016). Numerous educational systems, including curricula, resources, and methods to enhance students' learning styles, are revealed by this policy. It reflects uniformity and inclusiveness in educational practice. As a result, SSRP to NESP, SSDP calls for equity, holistic, and professional development in secondary education areas (Poudel, 2024).

The social, political, and challenges shaping teachers' growth require crucial plans and policies. The SSDP 2016 to 2023 asserts teacher management, professional development, and strategies to formulate quality education (MOE, 2016). The SSDP plans formulated the policies of collaboration, equality, and justice in the periphery of teacher management for catering to the growth of English teachers in Nepalese educational landscapes. Similarly, collaborative learning highlights knowledge exchange, collaboration, engagement, and critical thinking (Shah, 2023). The leadership and collaboration of the teachers have an immense impact on student outcomes in the lifelong learning environment.

The National Education Policy (2019) explains that in order to increase quality for sustainable development in public education sectors, the federal government has made sure to provide education that is easy, straightforward, collaborative, equitable, practical, competitive, and qualitative. Hence, TPD training is more helpful for the teachers to develop their professional development, such as designing assessment methods, instructional materials, collaboration, and educational planning (Karki, 2021). Seminars and workshops enable teachers to familiarise themselves with new teaching practices in the expansion of in-depth knowledge (Saud, 2023). Teachers will foster their learning mechanisms when they participate in different types of training, workshops, and seminars.

Essentially, ELTEP increases training opportunities, observation, and mentoring guidance among teachers (British Council, 2022). Consistently, English language teachers raised, upgraded, and advanced their teaching approaches. Collaboration aids and mentoring abilities were cultivated through the ELTEP English Language Teacher Education Project, which was held from 2018 to 2021. The teacher is unable to participate in any election or any political party, confronting ineligible candidates in the teaching field (Seal, 1971). The teacher is restricted and prohibited from taking part in any political party election, representing or having a position within a political party. NELTA is helping teachers to enhance their professionalism and grow as vibrant English teachers in the modern era (Mahato, 2022). In Nepal, NELTA serves as a critical and pivotal element of language teachers' professional empowerment. Numerous programs, including conferences and seminars, are offered by NELTA to improve the lot of English teachers in Nepal.

I applied the skeleton of the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky to the Nepali classroom to solve the issues of traditional practices, rote learning, and language barriers. Scaffolding is the Vygotskian phrase for this direction or supervision (Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022). Instead of teaching, the function of a teacher in a Nepalese classroom

should be a facilitator. Scaffolding plays the role of a facilitator in learning domains by empowering schoolchildren towards shaping their logical thinking and troubleshooting aptitudes, and by generating a supportive physical classroom and collaborative space. In a similar vein, emotional and developmental approaches connected to the roots of language and interlinked from one generation to another for the betterment of language development (Vygotsky, 1978). Within Vygotsky's theoretical framework, the spreading of culture among students and cooperative learning are facilitated within the Nepalese education system.

Through SCT, Vygotsky underlined the relation between individual, cultural contexts, and psychological factors to mediate the mental functioning of individuals (Zubaidi, 2015). Vygotsky has a social interaction concept to drive sociocultural and children's cognition, aiming at discussion in fostering interactions (Blake & Pope, 2008). ZPD is a crucial key for nurturing higher-order thinking and critical appraisal skills because it has been suggested that students retain more knowledge while working in groups. Hence, ZPD posits that a child's intellectual growth, reasoning, cognitive, and learning ability can be structured and mediated within dynamic social guidance and engagement.

Methods and Procedures

I used an interpretative paradigm to explore English language teachers' collaborative practices in Nepal concerning the values, traditions, and beliefs of the society in which it takes place (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This interpretive paradigm is focused on a better understanding of the phenomenon and its complex nature by adopting this philosophical perspective, rather than making generalisations to the entire population (Creswell, 2007, as cited in Pham, 2018). The research adopted a narrative inquiry design to analyse descriptive components comprising character, plot, scene, and events of narratives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I questioned participants about their consent, motivation, learning modalities, and pertinent collaborative teaching techniques before the interview. I undertook interviews with five English teachers who had more experience in collaborative learning practices in the classroom. The participants of this study were selected based on purposive sampling and their involvement in teaching experiences, who engaged in collaborative learning practices. For ethical considerations, their names were changed to a variety of pseudonyms and anonymised. Participants' names were given as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, respectively. The research field was in Kathmandu, Nepal. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, which were transcribed to capture each participant's thoughts, experiences, field notes, reflections, and diaries.

The subjective judgments of participants can also be elicited from semi-structured interviews that are flexible and feasible according to Flick et al. (2004). The data analysis process employed thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), which involved identifying and examining the collaboration practices among the English teachers. Thematic analysis was chosen to analyse, evaluate, and interpret important themes in collaborative practices in the academic blueprint of Nepal. The study was also able to examine attitudes, experiences, and temperaments of the participants, which were

influenced by their psychological, environmental, social, and educational backgrounds, thanks to thematic analysis. To ensure validity, rigour, and reliability, I used an emic and ethical lens to reveal perspectives of the participants (Tracy, 2020). Moreover, the responses from participants vary, and it fosters critical thinking, effective collaboration, and equal participation among learners.

Results and Discussion

This portion embraces findings from the participants. Collaboration and group work are closely interrelated, and they examine the prevalent themes generated from interview excerpts. The main issue is that students are not participating in group work in diverse classroom settings, which hinders the collaborative progression. Participants' insights validate the interpretation on account of cases and proceedings.

Inconsistencies in Group Members' Involvement

We, teachers, have to influence students in debate, discussion and try to encourage them in collaborative learning. In a similar vein, students' learning habits differ from one another. Analytical skills will be developed if they participate in conversations. Plus, they improvised their capacity to think differently and sort out the issues in no time. Group work is emphasised in groundwork-based learning patterns. P1 expressed a variety of idea-sharing capabilities:

The collaboration means working in a group, but there are some challenges to face during the planning and implementation phases. Not all participants may contribute equally during the planning stage and preparation of a lesson. Some group members are not contributing their fair share to the group project, which can turn it into an inherently passive learning activity.

P1 shows that members do not all participate equally and that not all members are making the same amount of effort when it comes to planning and execution. Genuinely, knowledge construction also highlights the autonomy, group work, problem-solving, discussion, and engagement of students in the classroom. Collaborative learning provides a way for active engagement that can scaffold others' learning. Intellectual progress is socially grounded and influenced by social interactions, whereby it happens through interaction with other people, according to Vygotsky's theory. The teacher may consider academic standards while leading a group. Likewise, students would participate in activities without having any immediate supervision. The opinions of P1 and P3 are not in conflict with one another. In the collaborative learning context, both participants stimulated equal engagement, equal sharing, and the necessity of active participation. P3 resonated that collaborative learning and active collaboration are significant in learning by stating:

The collaborative learning and active learning are intertwined with each other. Collaboratively showcases shortcomings because we are unaware of the group work that plays a paramount role in learning. Learners contribute when they actively participate in learning. I believe that collaboration is a vital part of collaboration. If your partner is not participating, then we have difficulty in our

learning space.

Active participation strengthens the learning, whereas passive involvement leads to a deficiency in grasping insights. In collaborative learning, the expertise and experience of participants are also important. Socio-constructivist theory was first outlined by Lev S. Vygotsky, and his views of human actions take place in social contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). The main ideas of the socio-constructivist approach emphasise social interaction in society and develop knowledge by reflection, exploration, reflection, interaction, and collaboration. Collaborative learning cannot be successful, productive, or insightful if members are not contributing anything to the learning. Thus, student-centred learning and group-centred teaching encourage learners to work collectively to finish shared goals and achieve learning tasks (MacGregor, 1990). Social competence, collaborative engagement, and accountability marked the collaborative learning patterns, and they display the foundation of reflective group work.

Reflective Practice in the Form of Collaboration

Collaborative learning and reflective practice are linked to promote self-improvement and link reflection writing to real-world management, leadership, and instructional implications. Martin (2017) investigated mid-career English language teachers and found that administrative support, motivating environment, students' performance, and the exercise of personal agency played a pivotal role in constructing teacher identity. The formation of the best collaborator teacher identity with the necessary components in the educational context. P1 stated that the reflective practice covers inclusivity, which removes the consequences of learning issues:

The reflective practice covers the inclusion part and eradicates consequences in the learning paradigm. In the context of an EFL setting, we may find diverse learners from different geographical locations. Teachers should evaluate the learning ability of students to improve the results further. Reflective practice saves the inclusion by connecting the different backgrounds of students. Moreover, as reflective practice is concerned, it will substantiate learning enrichment in distinct learners. Reflective techniques assist teachers in improving their classroom experiences and obtaining peer input. Teachers can discover their teaching strengths and flaws with the support of this collaborative and reflective technique.

In an EFL classroom, reflective practice promotes inclusive learning according to P1. Genuinely, knowledge construction also highlights the autonomy, group work, problem-solving, discussion, and engagement of students in the classroom. Learning activities are an analytical method of evaluation, comparison, quality, and credibility of patching knowledge formation. According to Vygotsky, a child was dependent when he or she was young, and the child's actions were totally guided and supervised by the child's parents. Gnawali (2015) underscored a reciprocal relationship, two-way interaction, and EFL teachers' professional growth mutually reinforcing each other with language teacher associations. Thus, reflective practice is a systematic problem-solving process through which teachers deliberate, thoughtfully dwelling on a specific event, incident, or situation (Dewey, 1933). Reflective practice is the gateway to gaining insights and fosters

the enrichment of teachers' professional practices. Reflective practice allows teachers to become aware of their strengths and fundamental beliefs, better understand their teaching, evaluate their professional development, and make well-informed decisions. P5 discussed the advantages of reflective teaching in the scope of education by clarifying:

The reflective and introspective teaching assist the educators in consistently strengthening their areas of weakness, looking for more effective teaching strategies, and maintaining their effectiveness as educators. When a learner can relate prior mental concepts to draw a new one, this becomes creative learning. Thus, it reflects social, emotional, and cognitive aspects of involvement and collaboration. In order to thrive as a teacher, it is best to think globally and act locally at this time. As such, instruction should emphasise more practical learning from the local context.

The significance of reflective practice is seen as a form of dynamic assessment for teacher and student learning, highlighted in P5. This is consistent with the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory put forward by Vygotsky, in which educators strengthen their weakest teaching techniques. In contrast to conventional teaching techniques, student-centred learning should receive more focus. Now is the moment to think globally and act locally if you want to succeed as a teacher. SCT suggests that learning should be pertinent to students' prior knowledge and experiences. Therefore, the involvement of both teachers and students is needed in the process of cultivating social interaction and feedback. As a result, greater hands-on learning from the local context should be stressed in education. The OECD (2009) emphasised fundamental functions of professional advancement for teachers, such as content knowledge and attitudes, to promote dispositions in language education.

Subsequently, instruction should focus more on real-world learning, which should come from the local environment, since in order to succeed as a teacher, it is best to act locally and think globally at this time. Reflective teaching or teacher reflection posits an emotional and cognitive domain (Nagamine et al., 2018). Teachers can improve their methods and build stronger bonds with students by using reflective teaching, which increases the effectiveness of both the educator-led process and academic excellence. Instruction should focus more on real-world scenarios, which should come from the local neighbourhood, since to succeed as a teacher, it is best to act locally and think globally at this time. Breen and Mann (1997) have pointed to the magnitude of perceiving how teachers and learners intermingle in the classroom. In the beginning, the children accomplished the task with the help of teachers, and as time goes by, the students won't be dependent on them to accomplish the task. Conversely, P5 shared learning approaches, which create value in learning waves in spectrums of discussion, deliberation, and shared teaching values. P1 revealed that the collaborative practice is the centre of learning, and it is the nexus with reflective practices. Both participants shared similar analogies in collaborative learning practices.

Autonomy as a Teacher's Professional Development

In Nepalese classrooms, learner autonomy and collaborative learning play a crucial

part because they empower students to take ownership, accept accountability for their education, and engage in the process. Hence, they will gain autonomy, and their thoughts have to be valued in the community on the periphery of empowerment. In order to solve the problem, we might implement many tactics to increase students' independence in the ELT (English Language Teaching) classroom. P4 expressed that autonomy is gaining greater control over methods of assessment by revealing:

The autonomy is a greater sense of control over assessment processes and a significant rise in teacher ownership. TPD boosts motivation and commitment to improving assessment practices and assisting teachers' professional growth. Online courses, workshops, seminars, certification, and other ongoing training opportunities were mentioned as opportunities for professional development. In this way, educators can stay current on the latest ideas, technologies, and evaluation practices.

P4 presents autonomous learning, explores self-driven, independent, self-motivated, self-aware, and cultural activities that support independent learning in language environments. Autonomy will encourage the resolution of specific issues while lowering obstacles and repercussions in education. This autonomy demonstrates how important autonomy is to enhancing learning language strategies. Hence, autonomy reflects progress and can self-monitor in collaborative activities with peers (Allwright 1990; Holec 1981). Learner autonomy allows students to develop learning skills within and beyond the classroom. SCT views professional development as involving social engagement in the learning process in addition to knowledge acquisition.

Learning is a fundamentally social activity rather than an autonomous process of discovery, according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Autonomy in teacher professional development in accordance with a socially mediated process and the use of cultural tools to engage in self-regulated learning. The objective of the TPD framework is to improve teacher competence and motivation through the provision of need-based and result-oriented teacher development. (Thapaliya, 2016). In an educational setting, schoolchildren are not just simulated but are involved in collaboration with different external populations. Autonomy is an essential factor to be adopted in any classroom. Today's pupils will learn using digital resources. The portion of the process that includes tactics to support learning objectives is known as learners' autonomy. Both facilitators and students may play a critical role in fostering learners' autonomy. Within and outside of the classroom, library, or learning centres, facilitators can help with task selection, targeted tasks, and resource orientation. In order to reconstruct and shape the information, student collaboration may yield important results on its own. To encourage collaborative learning, P2 discussed that it is preferable to do away with the teacher-centred approach and implement autonomous learning in the classroom by mentioning:

Teachers typically have a bigger role in teaching and learning in traditional language teaching methods. In this way, the teachers control the classroom and their one-way means of imparting knowledge. However, teacher-centred instruction must give way to student-focused learning in the classroom to foster learners' autonomy.

For the improvement of students' learning autonomy, teachers have to change

the pattern of traditional teaching methods into student-centred ones. Lin and Reinders (2019) underlined that teachers' performance depends on clarity and ability in subject matter to students. Laister and Kober (2002) define collaborative learning as emerging from meaningful interactions, group-based learning achieved through massive discussion, discourse and sharing. Collaborative learning allows students to collaborate and exchange ideas with other participants. Specifically, P4 highlights autonomy in the stage of teachers' professional growth within the educational context, while P2 concentrates on 21st-century teaching approaches like collaborative learning, a supportive environment, and student-centred instruction. Both participants emphasise autonomous learning in the educational setting, but there are some differences in their perspectives. P2 addresses students' meaningful collaboration, and P4 signifies how autonomy shapes professional development mechanisms in influencing teacher autonomy.

Conclusion

Overall, the study aimed to explore the role of collaboration and issues of collaborative learning in teacher education. The findings reveal that there are inconsistencies in group members' involvement, reflective practice in the form of collaboration, and autonomy in teachers' professional development. Unequal participation, passive collaborative learning highlighted among group members, resulted in equal contribution and hindered knowledge construction. As for the first research question, the findings indicate that collaboration helps teachers to identify weaknesses, strengths, and critical thinking concerning social as well as scaffolding in expertise and communication skills. Addressing the second research question, findings manifest that teacher autonomy empowers collaborative activities, student-centred approaches, equal participation, and learning in independent ways. Likewise, collaboration and introspective teaching foster inclusivity, collaborative, reflective practice, and teacher autonomy to deal with learning issues in diverse learners. On the other hand, autonomy reflects the idea of self-directed learning and accountability in empowering students and teachers in a collaborative context. Prior research underscores that collaborative learning helps to develop interpersonal skills, higher-order thinking, instructional innovation, and fruitful learning outcomes of English teachers' enrichment. The findings highlight the need for structured policies, accountability, responsibility, and feedback to ensure equitable engagement and motivation in collaborative domains. Policymakers, teachers, leaders, educators, and practitioners should think of providing resources, training, and assessment strategies to cultivate self-directed growth and responsiveness to diverse learner needs. The proposed future studies could investigate qualitative research on how collaborative learning practices influence teachers and students in large samples using an ethnographic lens.

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