

## English in Nepal: Attitudes Towards Nepali English or Other Varieties of English

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### Abstract

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*Since the emergence of varieties of English, varying debates and discussions about their formal features, functions, and roles have persisted worldwide. This quantitative survey research aims to identify the attitudes of Nepali speakers of English towards Nepali English (NE) and other varieties of English. Using the survey questionnaire, the researcher collected primary data through online and face-to-face modes from one hundred participants sampled randomly, out of which fifty participants were the English language teachers from different schools and community campuses and fifty participants were Master level students, including those students pursuing their Master level thesis from a community campus of Morang district. The participants' attitudes were analyzed and interpreted in terms of intelligibility, nature of standard, identity, practicality, and acceptance. The study showed that most participants were positive towards NE and most of them responded that they can better understand English spoken by NE speakers than British English (BE) or American English (AE) native speakers. However, majority of them were not against BE or AE in terms of intelligibility, nature of standard, and practicality though they*

*supported NE more.*

**Keywords:** World Englishes, intelligibility, standard, identity, practicality, acceptance

### Introduction

Nepal has always been an independent country, having no colonial history. Before the colonization of Britain over India, English had its existence in Nepal. English was in existence prior to the seventeenth century in Nepal (Giri, 2015). However, the colonization of British rulers over India had direct and indirect influence on Nepal and it is claimed that English spread and flourished more in Nepal during the colonial era in India. After Nepali, English occupies the second position in terms of its extensive

use and spread in Nepal (Eagle, 1999). Because of the widespread use of English, Giri (2020b) claimed that English has become a local language or everyone's language in Nepal. In some important areas like science and technology, business, education, tourism, trade, and most other economic areas, English has overtaken Nepali and become the principal means of communication in the Nepali society (Giri, 2020a). Demographically, English is spoken by 0.01% people of the total population as a mother tongue and by 0.30% of them as a second language (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2014). Moreover, Crystal (2003) estimated that English in Nepal is spoken by 27.6% people as a second language. Some people predict that English is spoken by 30% people as a second language in Nepal (Bolton & Bacon-Shone, 2020). Anecdotally, some linguists have predicted that "around 40-50% of urban Nepalese are functionally literate in English" (p. 56). Although English is not legally declared as an official language, its use is rapidly increasing in Nepal. Therefore, the official status needs to be given to English (Giri, 2020a), which functions as if it is an official language in different sectors of the nation.

With its global spread and contact with different local languages, English has undergone the natural process of hybridization, nativization, indigenization, acculturation, and diversification, which has caused the evolution of many English varieties. Braj Kachru used the term "World Englishes (WEs)" to mean different English varieties and further divided them into Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle Countries or Englishes (Kachru, 1990, 1998, 2011). Similarly, McArthur (1987) categorized the WEs into different regional and territorial or localized Englishes, some of which are Standard English and some others are Standardizing Englishes. More specifically, Jenkins (2009) categorized Asian Englishes regionally into South Asian varieties (e.g. Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India), South East Asian and Pacific varieties (e.g. Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), and East Asian varieties (e.g. Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong) and functionally into institutionalized varieties of the Outer Circle (e.g. Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore) and non-institutionalized varieties of the Expanding Circle (e.g. China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Maldives). In Jenkin's category, Nepal belongs to the Outer Circle country where English is a second language (ESL), but in Kachru's Concentric Circles, it is in the Expanding Circle where English is a foreign language (EFL). In this regard, Adhikari (2020) claimed that English in Nepal is "in the ESL/EFL blurred zone" (p. 28). The different alternative terms for WEs include "varieties of English," "localized varieties of English," "non-native varieties of English," "second language varieties of English," "new varieties of English" (Kachru, 2011; Kachru & Nelson, 2011), "transplanted or transported or twice-born Englishes" (Kachru, 1981), "twice-born varieties" (Patil, 2006), "postcolonial Englishes" (Schneider, 2007), "reincarnated Englishes" (Kachru, 2011), and "unequal Englishes" (Tupas, 2015; Tupas & Salonga, 2016). All the varieties of English do not develop overnight. They need to pass through from non-recognition of the local variety, extensive diffusion of bilingualism in English, acceptance, to recognition (Kachru, 1992), or from foundation, exonormative stabilization, nativization, endonormative stabilization, to differentiation (Schneider 2003, 2007).

The variety of English that has developed in Nepal undergoing the stages mentioned above is known by different names such as Nenglish (Daniloff-Merrill, 2010, cited in Karn, 2011; Duwadi, 2010; Koirala, 2021; Rai, 2006), Nepali English (Adhikari, 2018; Brett, 1999; Dewan, 2021; Giri, 2020a;

Hartford, 1993; Kachru, 2011; Shrestha, 1983; Subedi, 2019), Nepalese English (Crystal, 2003; Dewan & Laksamba, 2020; Jora, 2019; Karn, 2011; McArthur, 1987), Nepali variety of English (Verma, 2006, cited in Karn, 2011), Nepanglish (Kamali, 2010), and Nepenglish (Sharma et al., 2015). The study conducted by Lambert (2018) revealed that the hybrid term was created after the two-word compound term. In 1978, Shrestha used the compound term “Nepali English” in his article “Diglossomania in Nepali English” (cited in Shrestha, 1983). In 1987, McArthur used the compound term “Nepalese English” as a South Asian Standard(izing) English. Only in 2006, Rai used the hybrid term “Nenglish” in his article. Regarding the nomenclature of hybrid terms, Lambert (2018) mentioned that Nenglish was first recorded in 1999, Nepanglish in 2000, and Neplish in 2002. The factors for the emergence of such Nepalized English or Nepal appropriate ecological English are the global connectivity of Nepal with different countries and exposure on different WEs, language contact (e.g. English with other languages of Nepal), the bilinguals’ creativity, and the Nepali people’s nativization of English according to their local contexts. With regard to the Nepali variety of English, Bhattarai and Gautam (2008) claimed that for the last ten years, some kinds of changes in the use of English as a variety are experienced in Nepal due to Nepal's exposure to the globalizing world through media, technology, trade, and relations. Beside the influence of globalization, the creative Nepali writers have intentionally appropriated English according to the local contexts. Karn (2006, p. 75) stated, "...the English language has been acclimatized here according to Nepali soil, Nepali culture, Nepali accent and so on. As a matter of fact, some kind of Nepaliness has been added to the English spoken here." This has been justified by some scholars from home and abroad through their research based articles (Adhikari, 2018; Brett, 1999; Dewan, 2021; Dewan & Laksamba, 2020; Karn, 2012; Koirala, 2021; Sharma et al., 2015; Rai 2006).

With the evolution of localized Englishes, some hot debates and discussions are going on globally on the issues of which English variety is appropriate to adopt in teaching and learning fields: BE, AE, or other new Englishes. Some scholars (e.g. Prator, 1967, as cited in Ferguson, 2006; Quirk, 1985) argue for Standard BE or AE and assume new Englishes as uncodified, non-institutionalized varieties which are qualitatively different from the native speaker varieties. But other scholars (Kachru, 2011; Kachru & Nelson, 2011) criticize those views on the basis of educational and sociolinguistic realism. Even in Nepal, “English teachers and practitioners here are in dilemmas whether to follow British/American versions, Hinglish (Indian variety of English), or their own Nenglish (Nepali variety of English)” (Duwadi, 2010, p. 43). Consistent with Duwadi, Jora (2019) also mentioned that the emergence and growth of NE have generated heated debates amongst scholars regarding which variety of English is appropriate in Nepal. Moreover, there are some debates on whether to emphasize locally produced texts in the students’ home culture, native English texts in the target culture, or nativized English texts in the international target culture in the course books (Adhikari, 2020), which also reflects the attitudes towards different varieties of English. However, almost no research has been found that has surveyed such debatable issues relating to NE and other varieties of English. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the attitudes of English teachers and students towards NE and other varieties of English, particularly BE or AE, in terms of intelligibility, identity, the nature of standard, practicality, and acceptance. The findings of this

study offer some important insights into the field of WEs, particularly NE, policy making, and pedagogy. The following section includes the review of related literatures which reveals different attitudes of people towards different varieties of English.

### Review of Literature

With regard to which variety of English to choose as a teaching model, three different schools of thought - standard BE or AE only, new variety of English only, or all WEs - exist worldwide. Many scholars around the world still argue for BE or AE because it is “the variety most widely accepted, understood, and perhaps valued within and English speaking country” (McArthur, 2003, p. 442, as cited in Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 3). The argument behind making BE or AE as a teaching model is that it is much developed, systematic, coherent, and codified, and that it maintains mutual intelligibility. Prator (1968, as cited in Ferguson, 2006) argued that recognizing second language varieties as teaching models would be unwise since there is a doubt if coherent, homogeneous linguistic systems really exist in such varieties, and even if they exist, they are qualitatively more diverse and fundamentally more inconsistent than the native varieties of English. After Prator, Quirk (1985) also adopted the conservative position and argued for a single monochrome standard. Both Prator and Quirk held the imperialist or hegemonic views and advocated Standard English for maintaining mutual intelligibility among its users.

The advocates of WEs have challenged the traditional notions of Standard English, native speaker models, and intelligibility. Kachru (2011) claimed that advocates of Standard English ignore the sociolinguistic realities of a vast territory of different Englishes. New Englishes are not interlanguages or subordinate varieties as they claimed but the independent Englishes in their own right (Canagarajah, 1999) or the twice-born varieties on their own (Patil, 2006). They are the nativized or localized varieties which are appropriate to the local contexts. The advocates of WEs take the insistent use of Standard English as a hegemonic practice which can “devalue new or local varieties of English that exist around the world” (Farrell & Martin, 2009, p. 3). The non-native English speakers in the periphery countries resist such hegemony by appropriating “the language in their own terms, according to their needs, values, and aspirations” (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 176). Such appropriation also spreads the message that the native variety in its unchanged form cannot fulfil the needs of the non-native speakers (Achebe, 1965) and it is impossible for the speakers of other languages to speak and write like the English native speakers (Rao, 1938) because the periphery students are not their slaves but active agents who use English creatively and critically, but not mechanically and diffidently (Canagarajah, 1999). The periphery countries have their own local varieties of English which must be valued and given priority from curriculum design to classroom pedagogy (Kachru, 2011; Kachru & Nelson, 2011) since they are on the one hand, they are intelligible to the speakers of those varieties, and on the other, they are practicable to their local contexts. In his research on the attitudes of secondary level English teachers and students towards NE, BE, AE, and Indian English (IE), Kamali (2010) found most of the teachers and the students to be positive towards NE and recommended the government of Nepal to pay attention to develop NE. Similarly, He and Zhang (2010) found that for the students in China, the preferred pedagogic model of English should be a Standard

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Variety of English supplemented with the well-codified and properly supplemented traits of China English. The researchers concluded that China's English learners might feel easy to acquire China English and they will speak it with more self-confidence and relaxation.

Some scholars hold the balanced rather than "either-or" approach. Widdowson (1993) argued that Standard BE /AE and nativized Englishes "have their proper place in the scheme of things and both are of crucial concern in English language education" (p. 329). He acknowledged the use of nativized varieties for intranational communication and Standard English for institutional, formal, and international communication. Both variants should be provided a place in the process of schooling, assigning "Standard English as an end of learning" (p. 326) and nativized variants as "a means for learning" (p. 327). Kennerknecht's (2018) survey research endorsed Widdowson's view that, for Malaysian speakers of English, Standard English is more useful for international communication and more formal purposes, whereas Malaysian English for informal and everyday communication. Their attitudes towards both varieties revealed that one variety does not replace the existence of the other. In a survey study by Bernaisch and Koch (2015) on IE speakers' attitudes towards their local and other varieties of English, they found that although English speakers in India were positive towards IE, they also viewed BE in a more favourable light. This third way approach gives voices to the nativized varieties which are as important as the Standard English. In today's world, it is not sufficient to be proficient in one's own variety of English only (Canagarajah et al., 2012). It is necessary to "recognize the contextual appropriacy of different Englishes and teach students as many variants as possible" (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 181) and "develop the competence to engage with diverse varieties of English worldwide" (Canagarajah et al. 2012, p. 77) so that they can easily communicate with the people who speak different varieties of English and adjust anywhere. Therefore, Farrell and Martin (2009) suggested that in the present globalized world, all varieties of English should be valued, not just standard BE or AE since English speakers, as claimed by Acar (2010), need to be sensitive to the cross-cultural differences of each other when they communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.

The debates concerning which variety of English to use as a teaching model are chiefly concerned with the issue of intelligibility, identity, the nature of standard, practicality, and acceptance (Ferguson, 2006). Earlier, intelligibility was discussed with reference to native speakers, which was one-sided and scholars advocated the native speaker model for maintaining mutual intelligibility. Patil (2018, p. 8) stated, "The legitimization of new varieties of English has moved the debate on the issue of intelligibility from the one-sided position to a two-sided perspective." Intelligibility is a joint enterprise which goes both ways – from the native to the nonnative speaker, and vice versa. Otherwise, mutual intelligibility is very difficult to achieve. In this regard, Seidlhofer (2010, p. 366) took the term "intelligibility" to mean "being intelligible to native speakers, and being able to understand native speakers." Adhikari's (2020) study showed that locally produced English texts have pedagogical value because they are easier for both teachers and students to understand, more contextually relevant for them, and easier for them to relate to the authors and the characters of the texts. Similarly, some scholars advocate localized Englishes for identity since such Englishes project the personal, ethnic, social, or national identities of their users (Ferguson, 2006).

The bi/multilingual writers in South Asia use several devices to acculturate South Asian English and to promote national identity (Kachru, 2011). A study by Adhikari (2020) showed that using local English texts acknowledges and honours the contributions of local authors, highlights indigenous knowledge, and helps to create and validate Nepali identity.

With regard to the term standard, Akter (2006) claimed that a single ideal standard of English appropriate for all does not exist. Linguistically, all the varieties of English must be granted equal status and must be as much acceptable as Standard English (Mahmood, 2009). Even the Standard English is found to be proper English in certain places only and other varieties of English are proper to use in other places (Widdowson, 1993). Therefore, the traditional notion of Standard English ignores the sociolinguistic realities of other varieties of English. The native speakers can neither claim the ownership of English nor categorize the varieties of English as standard and non-standard. Rather the respective speech communities can decide and create their own standards (Widdowson, 1994) since localized Englishes are appropriate for varied contexts and purposes (Fairclough, 1992). More specifically, the immediate context in which communication takes place determines the practicality or appropriateness of the language (Baratta, 2019). Because of the impracticality of Standard English to their local context, periphery communities have appropriated English to accommodate their needs, desires, and values (Canagarajah, 1999). Above all, acceptability is the final but the most important factor that determines whether non-native varieties of English are innovations or not (Bamgbose, 1998). It is concerned with the attitudes and beliefs of the respective communities towards which variety of English to accept as the teaching model.

Studies reviewed above were conducted in Nepal, India, China, and Malaysia and focused on attitudes towards different varieties of English. However, very few survey studies are available on NE. Although there are some qualitative studies on NE focusing on phonological, lexical, grammatical, and discourse features of NE (Adhikari, 2018; Brett, 1999; Dewan, 2021; Dewan & Laksamba, 2020; Jora, 2019; Karn, 2012; Koirala, 2021; Rai, 2006), none of the study has been conducted on English teachers and students' attitudes towards NE and other varieties of English in terms of intelligibility, identity, nature of standard, practicability, and acceptability, the five theoretical constructs used by Ferguson (2006) to describe the debates between the Standard BE or AE and other varieties of English. Therefore, the researcher finds a wider lacuna in the earlier research and the present research and claims that it is a unique area of research in Nepal. Before moving on to a discussion of these issues, in what follows, the methods of study the researcher adopted in this research are described.

### **Methods and Procedures**

In the present paper, the researcher adopted a survey research design to identify the attitudes of Nepali speakers of English towards NE and other Englishes. In this design, the researcher administers questionnaires or interviews to collect data and describe the current attitudes, opinions, beliefs, or practices (Creswell, 2017). In the study, he used a closed-ended questionnaire with 3-Point Likert Scale (Appendix A) to collect quantitative data. He randomly sampled 100 participants, out of which 50 participants were the Master level students majoring in English, including those students who were pursuing their master

level theses from a community campus of Morang district, and 50 participants were English language teachers from different schools (both private and community) and community campuses of the Morang district with the qualification of Master Degree and Master of Philosophy in English education. The main reason behind selecting them was that they had undergone the courses related to applied linguistics and were familiar with WEs. He gathered the data from 50 participants through the face-to-face mode and from 50 participants through online. In the first case, the researcher visited them with the printed forms of survey questionnaire, requested them to fill up them choosing the correct option, and collected them. In the second case, the researcher prepared the survey questionnaire in google forms, sent it to the participants via messenger, communicated with them via messenger to inform them but he did not pressurize them to fill the survey form, and followed up with them to collect data. After the collection of data, he counted each option of each statement and calculated the total number of responses and percentage. Then he tabulated the results and discussed them, which are mentioned in the section below.

### **Results and Discussion**

Based on the framework developed by Ferguson (2006), the results and discussion have been organized into five themes.

#### **Intelligibility**

Regarding intelligibility, the findings indicated that the Nepali speakers of English (both teachers and students) preferred NE more than BE or AE. Almost all (94 %) participants agreed that they can understand English spoken by NE speakers better than English native speakers. Although 54 % of them agreed that BE or AE is easy to understand, 28% disagreed with the statement and 18% were undecided. It shows that NE is more comprehensible than other varieties of English. Likewise, more participants (58%) agreed that BE or AE should be the teaching model for maintaining mutual intelligibility. The equal number of participants (21%) disagreed and was confused (or undecided) with the statement. Majority of participants (41%) disagreed that the use of new varieties of English as teaching models leads to mutual unintelligibility. However, a considerable number of participants (31%) agreed that mutually unintelligible varieties of English emerge when new Englishes are used as teaching models (Appendix B).

The findings of the study can be connected with Patil's (2018) remarks that comprehensibility and intelligibility are dependent on the responsibilities of both native and non-native speakers of English and also on the linguistic, physical, and psychological contexts. Similarly, "merely speaking the same variety of English does not guarantee mutual intelligibility" (Sadeghpour & Sharifian, 2017, p. 11) because intelligibility and successful communication have to do with the consciousness of pragmatic meanings and culture-specific concepts connected with WEs (Sharifian, 2015) and both linguistic and extralinguistic contexts (Nida, 1987). The speakers of English need to be familiar with the grammatical, cultural, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic aspects of WEs to attain intelligibility or comprehensibility (Wilang & Singhasiri, 2016). It is because of the unfamiliarity with others' linguistic and sociocultural aspects, Smith's (1987) study showed that native speakers could not be easily understood, nor could they best understand the different varieties of English. Mutual intelligibility is concerned with "who speaks

what variety of English to whom and for what purposes” (Bamgbose, 1998, p. 11). In this regard, NE is intelligible or comprehensible for Nepali people because they might share the similar schemas and sociocultural backgrounds. The findings of this study endorse both Alptekin (2006), who found that Turkish EFL students better comprehended the nativized short stories than the original American stories, and Adhikari (2020), who found that texts with content and context that are culturally familiar are easier for students to understand on a linguistic and cognitive level. The finding of this research highlights the use and the promotion of NE for the purpose of intelligibility and comprehensibility.

### **Identity**

In the present study, the participants preferred NE for identity. Most of the participants (93 %) agreed that NE expresses personal, ethnic, social, and national identities, and majority of them (75%) agreed that NE is a stable variety that indexes a distinct Nepali identity. Similarly, a large number of participants (69 %) agreed that English should be appropriated or nativized in the Nepali context to develop a sense of ownership or to own it (Appendix B). This identity factor is crucial for promoting NE. The findings of the study support the earlier ideas that non-native varieties express identity and solidarity (Bamgbose, 1998; Widdowson 1993) and answer why India borrowed English, transcreated, recreated, stretched, extended, and contorted it (D’Souza, 2001). Aside from deliberate nativization, the incorporation of locally produced English texts into English language teaching (ELT) course books helps maintain and promote Nepal’s national and cultural identity as well as resist the hegemony of British and American literary texts (Adhikari, 2020). Furthermore, the preference to teach and learn one language over others is evoked by the discourse of the need to preserve and promote ethnolinguistic identity (Poudel & Choi, 2021). In this regard, the promotion of NE is important since, as the poet Das (1973, cited in Canagarajah, 1999) stated, “it voices my joys, my longings, my hopes” (p. 125), which is concerned with the identity of the speakers of any variety of English.

### **The Nature of Standard**

The present study indicated the mixed attitudes of the participants towards the standard of different Englishes. They accepted both BE or AE and even a localized English like NE to be standard on its own level. A large number of participants (71%) agreed that BE or AE is standard. But more than this (82%) agreed that each variety of English, including NE is standard on its own (Appendix B). Such mixed attitude of the participants is consistent with Canagarajah (1999, p. 181) that “each variant, even registers and sociolects... will have standards of different levels of generality for the respective communities.” Standard is not something monolithic and absolute that can be taken for granted everywhere and every time but something relative and contextual. However, the majority of teachers, in Adhikari’s (2020) study, associated Standard English with native English varieties and preferred native English texts over both local English texts and nativized English texts. The acceptance of a native variety of English in the name of standard and the rejection of a non-native variety and different clines of varieties within the variety informs Quirk’s deficit linguistic theory (Kachru, 1991). The findings of this study endorse Mahmood (2009) that “there is no need to eulogize one variety at the cost of others” (p. 28) and label different varieties of



English as non-standard and standard. All varieties of English are linguistically equal and prestigious. In today's pluricentric societies, pluricentric standards have emerged, each valid within its own context (Acar & Robertson, 2010). Therefore, the context and purpose of use determine the standard of the variety of English.

### **Practicality**

The study revealed that the participants preferred NE over other varieties of English because NE can be practically fit to the Nepali local contexts. Out of one hundred participants, majority of them (83%) agreed that it is practicable to recognize NE in ELT and most of them (85%) agreed that NE is appropriate to use in the local context. But a considerable number of participants (43%) agreed that it is practicable to adopt well-established BE or AE in ELT, but nearly the equal number of participants (41%) disagreed with it (Appendix B). From their responses, it can be inferred that NE is practically more appropriate to follow in the Nepali context. The findings of this study contradict with Duwadi's (2010) view that NE campaign is impracticable but are consistent with Brett (1999) that NE is practically advantaged and Karn (2011) that NE campaign is sensible and visionary. Furthermore, the findings of the study on practicality endorse the Cox Report as mentioned by Fairclough (1992) as: "Different varieties of English, and different languages, are appropriate for different contexts and purposes, and all varieties have the legitimacy of being appropriate for some contexts and purposes" (p. 36). It means, practicality or appropriateness has to do with context and purpose. In this regard, Baratta (2019) also argued that the appropriate form of language is determined by the immediate context of communication. Nepali people learn and use English in varied contexts and for varied purposes. Therefore, BE or AE cannot be practically appropriate to follow in Nepal. As for practicality, the findings of this study endorse Patil's (2006) argument that Asian teachers of English feel easy to use their own local standardized variety of English as a model for teaching and testing purposes because majority of teachers are local, they usually set examination papers and evaluate students' answers themselves, and they are in powerful, decision-making positions. It is because of the impracticality and inappropriateness of BE or AE in their local context, many countries have localized English, which can only accommodate their needs, desires, and values (Canagarajah, 1999). To make English practically fit into their context, Patil (2006) reported that authors involved in creative writings like Nigeria's Ojaide and Achebe and India's Raja Rao, Khushwant Singh, and Mulk Raj Anand knowingly deviated English from the so-called native norms of English. Such culture of appropriating English can also be experienced in the creative writings of Nepal (see Adhikari, 2020; Dewan, 2021; Dewan & Laksamba, 2020; Karn, 2012; Rai, 2006). Because of the practicality of NE, most teachers in Adhikari's (2020) study also agreed that NE should be institutionally recognized and given enough room in university course books. Therefore, there is a need to "reexamine the appropriateness and practicality of the native English model embedded in teaching and assessment" (Lin, 2020, p. 131) and the native English texts over local English texts (Adhikari, 2020) and to develop the local English model or norm that best suits the local contexts.

### **Acceptability**

In the present study, the participants expressed positive attitudes and beliefs towards NE. Most

of the participants (87%) accepted that they speak Nepali variety of English and majority of them (76%) agreed that they prefer to use NE in speaking and writing. Majority of participants (87%) agreed that NE should be developed and standardized. The same number of participants agreed that this variety needs to be codified. A considerable number of participants (39%) agreed that distinct features of NE are regarded as errors but more participants (42%) disagreed that they are errors. Similarly, 58% of them disagreed that they learn English to understand American or British culture (Appendix B).

This study endorses Kamali (2010) that Nepali variety of English should be developed and supports Bhattarai and Gautam (2008) that " Since our students are most likely the consumers as well as the producers of local English, they need support and positive attitude from the teachers in order to flourish and nurture their linguistic insights"(p.14). Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge and give space to local varieties of English in curricula and classroom teaching (Sharma, 2008). Furthermore, the findings of this study support Kachru (2011) that utterances considered as errors may not apply to the local Englishes as they may be perfectly acceptable. The traditional applied linguistic perspective does not take sociolinguistic realities into consideration because "socioculturally determined 'innovations' in multilingual contexts tend to be categorized as 'errors' and deviations" (p. 228) and to label innovative features in the indigenized varieties of English as errors, deviations, mistakes, fossilization, and pragmatic failure is to "deny the linguistic and cultural experiences that motivate such innovations" (Kachru & Nelson, 2011, p. 89). In this study, a majority of participants agreed that the distinctive features of NE are not errors. However, a considerable number of participants regarded them as errors because error analysis is still guided by the traditional normative ideologies on the one hand and NE lacks proper linguistic codification on the other hand. Therefore, there are some dilemmas what to call 'errors' and 'innovations'.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

This study indicates that Nepali speakers of English prefer to use NE because it is intelligible; it is standard on its own in the local context; it expresses their identity; and it is practicable to the Nepali context. Most of the participants were found to be very positive towards NE, which is attitudinal evidence for the position of NE as a distinct variety of English. They highlighted the need for codification, standardization, and development of NE. As it was a small scale survey research based on the data gathered from 100 sample participants, the findings of this research cannot claim that NE is in a position to be used as a teaching model right now. More intensive studies need to be conducted on the perspectives of different people such as students, teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers towards NE. However, the different attitudes expressed by the teacher and student participants in this study need to be duly considered by the policy makers to make local needs-based English language teaching policies and by the textbook writers to incorporate local texts produced by the Nepali writers. The teachers need to value on the students' local English despite being significantly different from what is presented in the class. They need to be flexible enough to understand and teach the kind of English that their students need. If the English teachers and the students heartedly accept they use NE and feel comfortable with it rather than BE or AE, it is essential to collect large corpora on NE through rigorous research, take necessary steps for its codification and

standardization in time, and make NE as a new pedagogical model. Until and unless NE is legitimized and accepted pedagogically as a norm, the teacher dilemma and debate on which variety of English to follow in the ELT classroom will remain forever.

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### Appendix A

#### Survey Questionnaire

Name:

Name of Campus:

Level:

Participant: Teacher/Student

Sex:

Please, respond to the following statements by giving the tick (✓) to the appropriate box.

S.N.	Statements	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1.	I can understand English spoken by Nepali English speakers better than English native speakers.			
2.	It is easy to understand British or American English is easy to understand.			
3.	British or American English should be the teaching model for maintaining mutual intelligibility/comprehensibility.			
4.	If new Englishes (Nepali English, Indian English) are used as teaching models, mutually unintelligible varieties will emerge, or mutual intelligibility among the speakers will be lost.			
5.	Nepali English expresses our personal, ethnic, social and national identities.			
6.	Nepali English is a stable variety that indexes a distinct Nepali identity.			
7.	To appropriate English according to our Nepali soil is to develop a sense of ownership or to claim the language as our own.			

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8. British or American English is standard.
  9. Each variety of English, including Nepali English is standard on its own.
  10. It is practicable to adopt Standard British or American English in ELT.
  11. It is practicable to recognize Nepali English in ELT.
  12. Nepali English (our own variety of English) is appropriate to use in our context.
  13. I speak Nepali variety of English (Nepali English)
  14. I prefer to use Nepali English in speaking and writing.
  15. Nepali variety of English should be developed and standardized.
  16. Nepali variety of English needs to be codified (e.g. dictionaries, grammars).
  17. Distinct features of Nepali English (e.g. phonological, grammatical, semantic, discourse) are regarded as errors.
  18. We learn English to understand British or American culture.
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### Appendix B

#### Tabulation of Participants' Responses

S.N.	Statements	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1.	I can understand English spoken by Nepali English speakers better than English native speakers.	94%	1%	5%
2.	It is easy to understand British or American English.	54%	18%	28%
3.	British or American English should be the teaching model for maintaining mutual intelligibility/comprehensibility.	58%	21%	21%
4.	If new Englishes (Nepali English, Indian English) are used as teaching models, mutually unintelligible varieties will emerge, or mutual intelligibility among the speakers will be lost.	31%	28%	41%
5.	Nepali English expresses our personal, ethnic, social and national identities.	93%	3%	4%
6.	Nepali English is a stable variety that indexes a distinct Nepali identity.	75%	13%	12%
7.	To appropriate English according to our Nepali soil is to develop a sense of ownership or to claim the language as our own.	69%	17%	14%
8.	British or American English is standard.	71%	18%	11%
9.	Each variety of English, including Nepali English is standard on its own.	82%	4%	14%
10.	It is practicable to adopt Standard British or American English in ELT.	43%	16%	41%
11.	It is practicable to recognize Nepali English in ELT.	83%	8%	9%

12.	Nepali English (our own variety of English) is appropriate to use in our context.	85%	7%	8%
13.	I speak Nepali variety of English (Nepali English)	87%	6%	7%
14.	I prefer to use Nepali English in speaking and writing.	76%	11%	13%
15.	Nepali variety of English should be developed and standardized.	87%	3%	10%
16.	Nepali variety of English needs to be codified (e.g. dictionaries, grammars).	86%	5%	9%
17.	Distinct features of Nepali English (e.g. phonological, grammatical, semantic, discourse) are regarded as errors.	39%	19%	42%
18.	We learn English to understand British or American culture.	30%	12%	58%

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