

**Secondary English Teachers' Experiences of Using Information and  
Communication Technology**

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**Article History:**

Received Date : January 23, 2024

Reviewed Date: July 28, 2024

Accepted Date: August 28, 2024

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Article DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.3126/jonk.v2i1.91279>

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English Language Teachers'  
Association, Karnali Province

**Publisher**

Nepal English Language Teachers'

Association Karnali Province

Surkhet, Nepal

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**Abstract**

*This study attempts to explore the experiences of English teachers of using ICT and also investigates the digital techniques and tools that the English teachers use in classroom teaching at the community schools of Nepal. This qualitative research evaluated the experience and perception of teachers regarding the use of ICT in this post pandemic (COVID-19) era. The researcher conducted interviews with twenty Secondary Level English teachers on the basis of the guidelines of a set of semi-structured and open-ended questions for data collection and observed their classes visiting the respective school. For the analysis and evaluation of the data obtained from the teachers, phenomenological thematic coding was used. The finding of the study revealed that despite many challenges, teachers use ICT as per the demand of the content and it has been an integral part of*

*modern education system. The findings demonstrated the real picture of the rural community school teachers' condition in terms of the use of ICT. Furthermore, it also paved the way for the concerned authorities and bodies to strengthen the ICT friendly infrastructures of schools.*

**Keywords:** Information and communication technology, experience, virtual, strategy, qualitative, semi-structured, pandemic

**Introduction**

In the course of changing time, the world is transforming into digitally technological media and information with wider acceptance of the use of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) devices and tools in different areas of social phenomenon like business, governance, personal life including education (Rana & Rana, 2020). Particularly in educational sector, to support students in learning more effectively by providing wide range of skills and

pedagogy, ICT are used in education (Dhital, 2018). Teachers and students can get the open independent and accessible teaching learning environment with the dynamic features of ICT (Gulati, 2004). In the study, Dhital (2018) states that the use of ICT in classroom has been vital because it imparts the opportunities for students to learn and apply required skills essential for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. UNESCO (2014) has reported that ICT in education has multiplier impacts throughout education system. Firstly, it develops learning through imparting students with new set of skills; and on the other hand, it facilitates teachers and improvises the skills in them regarding the use of the traditional system of instructions. The use of ICT is an essential and inseparable component of teaching in the modern era which intensively depends on various factors including the integration of ICT. Multiple studies have found that there are so many challenges for maintaining e-friendly infrastructures and professional learning opportunities for teachers and students throughout the country due to lack of appropriate policy, documents, difficult topography, and the extreme environmental situations, in the context of Nepal (Rana et al., 2021).

Despite creating some challenges to teachers and students, the use of ICT leads to more interactive learning environment, resulting in student-centered learning, and participatory setting (Ahmad et al., 2020). The Government of Nepal, Ministry of Education has considered ICT as one of the strategies to achieve the broader goal of education and incorporated it as a subject and tool for instruction in school education through National Curriculum Framework (NCF).

In Nepal, firstly computer was introduced to publish the SLC result in 1981 AD at National Computer Centre and it was continued till 1988 AD. Then, the Examination Controller Office established the computer system for official purpose. Till then, all the efforts were made for smooth office operation only, not for the pedagogical purpose. Until the implementation of Education for All – EFA II (2004-2009), the efforts for integrating ICT in teacher preparation and professional development programs were not encouraged. In 2007 AD, the government launched One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) program in 26 primary schools of 6 districts for experimentation of utilizing ICT in education. The program couldn't satisfy the needs of the teachers and learners, however, it could show the essentiality of ICT in school education. Only in the process of implementation of SSRP in 2009 AD, government committed to support school computer program with matching fund. Now, with the provision of proper policy and system, the government of Nepal has designed and launched multiple programs on ICT as the means of instruction in the form of multi-media classroom with the management of ICT tools and devices (projector, LCD screen, speakers, computer lab, PC, microcomputer, CCTV, laptop, notebook, smart board, and other small devices such as, tablets and smart/mobile phones) in one to many and one to one approach. Constitution of Nepal (2072) declares education as a fundamental rights of people (Secretariat & Durbar, 2015). The government has developed many policies and programs emphasizing the utilization of ICT in education and brought into implementation. Some of the vital programs for the use and promotion of ICT in schools are: National IT Policy (2010/2015), 14<sup>th</sup> Five Years Plan, and School Sector Development Program (SSDP). The GoN, Ministry of Education has introduced various interventions in order to achieve the goal of education in Nepal. It has perceived ICT as one of

the strategies to achieve the broader goal of education by the state. National Curriculum Framework (NCF) has stated it as a subject and a tool for instruction in school education.

In the objectives of the recent national education plan, the following aspects are clearly determined linking with the knowledge and skills of teachers in ICT (SSDP, 2017-2023):

- to effectively use ICT to improve classroom delivery by establishing ICT infrastructure and enabling learning environment based on need and context,
- to enhance access to learning materials, along with supporting professional development package and guidelines, to ensure adequate capacity for incorporating these in the curriculum; and
- to use ICT for the improvement, effectiveness, and efficiency of overall educational governance and management.

Focusing on these various aspects of ICT contexts, teachers are considered as the means of transformation from traditional mode of teaching to the new mode of instructions with the use of ICT in school classrooms. Therefore, it is planned to conduct a research on this topic/area and expected to bring logical conclusion assessing the experiences of the teachers in the use of ICT as well as the strategies they apply in classroom teaching. Primarily, this research focuses on the pre-determined research questions: what are the experiences of Secondary English Teachers in the use of ICT in classroom teaching? and what strategies do they apply to use ICT? In which the first question inquires the experiences of the English teachers regarding the utilization of ICT in classroom teaching, and the second question concentrates on compiling their strategies that the teachers apply to use ICT. Class observation and interview tools are expected to use for the overall research work. For carrying out the research activities, 12 secondary English teachers from 8 different community schools are selected.

## **Literature Review**

### **Experience of teachers**

The act of literature review clarifies the status of existing knowledge on the proposed research topic which also deals with the theories and research studies. It provides the outline of research and helps to avoid the duplication. In the topic 'Secondary English Teachers' Experiences of Using ICT' several researches have been carried out by different scholars. Some of the studies on the theme 'experience of teachers in the use of ICT in classroom teaching' have been discussed in this section of literature review.

The teacher is one of the key factors who determine educational development and innovation in classroom teaching, as they are the ones to apply and implement the ICT for the promotion of education (Tezci, 2009). Tezci (2009) has clearly reported in his study that ICT do not have value in itself; they become important when teachers integrate them in teaching-learning process. But while implementing ICT inside classroom, certain variables like level of

knowledge of teachers, their attitude towards use of ICT in the classroom, infrastructures of school, educational applications, achievement expectations, and learning-teaching approaches play dominant role (Kozma, 2003). Development of advanced networking technologies and internet can have an important influence on teaching and learning that allows to use a wide range of ICT tools to share, communicate, and collaborate the ideas and resources (Arif et al., 2021). There are some practical challenges faced by the teachers while enhancing teaching learning process through ICT (Arkorful et al., 2021). Similarly, a study of Hudson (2009) has shown in his report that lack of access to computer labs is barrier for teachers to use ICT in classroom for effective teaching. In the changing context, teachers are capable enough to apply the ICT knowledge what they have learnt (Kaur & Sood, 2020), however, teachers have bitter experiences of not having adequate ICT tools and devices, lack of technical knowledge in them and staffs, frequent power cut off problem and instability in internet services; while incorporating ICT in English classroom (Kamau, 2012). However, to achieve the requirements of the modern world and fulfill them, ICT has become an integral part of English Language Teaching that brings significant changes in the traditional teacher-centered methods (Acharya, 2014). The use of ICT engages students' cognitive processes and their autonomy in class creating dynamic atmosphere for learning in public schools in Nepal (Bhandari & Bhandari, 2024). Moreover, it can be used as both a source and a tool of knowledge to enhance learning quality in classrooms, despite the lack of resources and poor ICT program implementation strategies (Koirala, 2019).

### **Strategies of Using ICT**

Regarding the theme of 'strategies of using ICT', the literature suggests a number of ways in which the teachers can adopt independently and make the use of ICT successful in the classroom. Scrimshaw (2004), in his study, has strongly reported that engaging teachers in innovative practice with the effective role of leadership, making the schedule for the use of ICT in the classroom, linking the content with the resources, reliable technical support, accessing the understanding of the students are the essential strategies of using ICT. The values and beliefs of teachers affects the application of ICT in classroom teaching, and knowledge of both learners and content influence the teacher's pedagogical strategies in relation to ICT (Sanchez & Alemán, 2011). Similarly, according to Ahmed Imran (2005) using the application software, providing sufficient infrastructure and technical help, using ICT in the subjects, using multimedia, internet communities, and familiarizing system software are the major strategies for using ICT classroom teaching (Imran & Gregor, 2005).

A research revealed that the use of ICT fosters more interactive, engaging teaching approaches, increasing student motivation and self-directed learning with the application of

flipped classroom model, virtual reality tools enhancing practical skills and cultural awareness (Alisoy, 2023). Similarly, a research in post COVID-19 pandemic situation found that the English Language (EL) teachers develop positive attitude towards the use of ICT as it motivates learners, student involvement, and access to materials with creating dynamic learning environment (Saud & Laudari, 2023). Moreover, after COVID-19 pandemic, the educational system of Nepal has emphasized remote instruction and learning using a variety of digital devices bringing positive impacts on the teaching activities of teachers (Dawadi et al., 2020).

### Methodology

In this study, the researcher used the semi-structured interview to gather information from the participants with the observation of their use of ICT in the classroom. The researcher visited the selected schools of the participants one by one preparing the interview schedule. Before visiting the school, the researcher contacted the participants and informed them about the context and topic of the study and built a rapport with the participants once or twice. The informal pre-interview conversation helped a lot to conduct the interview comfortably and also increased trust in the researcher (Rajbhandari & Rana, 2022). The researcher took consent and appointment of the teachers, and as per the schedule, he visited the schools and interviewed with them. It was recorded through the cell phone, taken photographs of the classroom teaching, and maintained a field note to document the observed items. Furthermore, the researcher observed the computer lab of the schools and ICT devices availed there. In particular, to explore and understand the experiences of teachers for using ICT, a qualitative interpretive design (Cohen et al., 2002) was applied. The participants' informed consent was obtained with the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. Then, the interview was conducted with the respective teacher on the basis of the semi-structured questions (Table 1). All the interviews were taken in the schools either in the staff/office room or on the side of the ground and sometimes in the computer lab too.

In addition, the recorded interviews were transcribed one by one, coded them on the basis of the pre-determined research questions and extracted the themes.

**Table 1: Guideline Questions for Interview**

1	How often do you use ICT in your classroom sir/madam?
2	Is there ICT friendly environment in your school? How is the scenario regarding it?
3	What sorts of ICT tools and devices are available in your school?

4	How is the connectivity of internet in your school?
5	As an English language teacher, for teaching which or what sorts of topic do you prefer using ICT?
6	What have you found the participation and involvement of students in ICT class?
7	Are the students interested in ICT class?
8	What differences have you found in teaching with ICT and traditional mode of teaching?
9	What are your personal experiences of using ICT or your perception about the use of ICT?
10	Are you satisfied with the use of ICT in teaching?
11	Do you have any suggestion regarding the use of ICT in the classroom?

### Data Collection Methods

The process of collecting information about the people, objects, phenomena or about the settings in which they occur in a systematic way is data collection (Chaleunvong, 2009). In this study, a set of semi-structured questionnaires was prepared as guidelines to obtain the required information from the respondents. For the data collection purpose from the respondents, I prepared a schedule with a fixed date, day, and time for the very task. I took consent from the school administration, fixed appointments with the teachers, and following the data collection schedule, I visited the schools and teachers, and conducted interviews with them along with the observation of the scenario on the basis of guideline questions. I also took photographs and recorded the interview as the evidence of my activities, maintaining anonymity and confidentiality properly.

### Study Tools Preparation

For collecting data from the respondents by the researcher, various tools have been developed. Using the appropriate tools, researcher can go to the closer and deeper to find the expected truth of the research work. The frequently used data collection tools in quantitative research are observation, questionnaires, interviews, photography, audio/video records, focus group discussion (FGD), surveys, case studies etc. For the data collection purpose, I prepared a set of semi-structured interviews questions as guidelines and observation to collect the data from 8 different schools and teachers of my municipality.

### Participants

For the selection of participants, at first I visited Education Section of Manthali Municipality and collected a list of community schools situated under the municipality with the name and contact details of the respective head teacher and English teachers appointed

there. I found 19 community schools in the municipality, out of which 8 schools were purposively chosen to select 12 English teachers teaching at the secondary level. I planned and held this research to explore and understand the experiences of the teachers for using ICT. The real names of teachers and schools are replaced with pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality of the teachers. Out of 12 teachers from different 8 schools, the ratio of female teachers was 1/3 that is approximately 33.33% of the total, whereas the percentage of male teachers the details of the participants is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Selected Schools and Participants**

SN	Name of Schools (pseudonym)	Name of Teachers (pseudonym)	Gender	District
1	Janaki Secondary School	Swikriti	Female	Ramechhap
2	Janaki Secondary School	Bhishma Lal	Male	Ramechhap
3	Kalidevi Secondary School	Ganeshman	Male	Ramechhap
4	Nakuleshwor Secondary School	Samriddhi	Female	Ramechhap
5	Parbat Secondary School	Harka	Male	Ramechhap
6	Chandrodaya Secondary School	Sabitra	Female	Ramechhap
7	Parmeshwor Secondary School	Ghanashyam	Male	Ramechhap
8	Gauri Secondary School	Dadiram	Male	Ramechhap
9	Gauri Secondary School	Gaurav	Male	Ramechhap
10	Aaramv Secondary School	Jaydeep	Male	Ramechhap
11	Janaki Secondary School	Rustam	Female	Ramechhap
12	Aaramv Secondary School	Mohan	Male	Ramechhap

### Data Analysis

This section of the study presents the findings after the collection of interviews with the pre-determined participants of 8 different schools. The analysis of findings is presented into three themes that emerged from the data: use of ICT in classroom teaching, strategies and tools and experiences of teachers of using ICT.

#### Use of ICT in Classroom Teaching

Interviews with 12 teachers from 8 community schools revealed that almost all of them used ICT in teaching and learning activities. The participants shared that Covid-19 pandemic became a benefit for learning online teaching and for launching online classes in their

respective school; however, they were initially unaware of how to use it. They emphasized the use of ICT as an integral part of present educating practice. Jaydeep, one of the participants from Aaramv Secondary School viewed: 'ICT has become a significant part of teaching and learning activities nowadays. Somehow I am also familiar with ICT' nowadays. Similarly, another participant from Janaki Secondary School said:

I did not use ICT in the past, but during COVID pandemic and after pandemic, ICT has been like integral part in teaching specially in English because we get so many materials available on internet. It has been easier and useful also. I have been using it for listening purpose. (Swikriti)

In the past, we were totally unaware about the ICT and its tools. But now in this present time, ICT has become an integral part of teaching learning process.

It is getting easier to the teachers as well as students to make the content understand with the use of different devices of ICT. (Ganeshman)

Swikriti's comments indicate that the situation during and after pandemic played crucial role for familiarizing teachers with ICT. Both the teachers and students got habituated in learning through using ICT tools. Ganeshman stressed that the use of ICT makes it easier for the learners to understand the content. Further discussions with other participants identified that though there was much confusion in using of ICT at the beginning, they have been habituated to its use in the present context.

Teachers further commented that they were not familiar with the use of ICT before the spread of COVID pandemic. They gave credit for learning and using ICT in classroom teaching to the pandemic. One of the participants Ganeshman from Kalidevi Secondary School said:

ICT has become an integral part of teaching-learning process. It is getting easier to the teachers as well as students to understand the content through the use of different ICT devices.

From the interview with teachers from different selected schools, it is revealed that almost all of them used ICT in teaching and learning activities. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed a lot to enforcing teachers to the use ICT in teaching-learning activities as an alternative mode of imparting education.

### **Strategies and tools in the use of ICT**

The entire interview and observation activities have reflected that the teachers are engaged in innovative practice with the effective role of ICT linking the content with the resources. Some of the common strategies are strengthening the ICT support in the classroom, accessing the understanding of the students, linking the content with the resources and making the schedule for the use of ICT in the classroom. Similarly, using the application software, providing sufficient infrastructure and technical help, using ICT in the subjects, using multimedia, internet communities, and familiarizing system are some other strategies of using ICT. Multiple tools and devices are used by the teachers in teaching process, however, the range and frequency of the use of tools differs as per the context and situation of the schools. Some of the common ICT tools and devices used by the teachers are: audio/video recorder, mobile, laptop, YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, smart TV etc. Example:

I am using very simple tools like recorder in the classroom. There is listening text, but we don't have any readymade listening materials. In this situation, I record the listening script on my mobile, then I play it through recorder at a high volume. Students listen carefully according to the need and do the exercises on the basis of the recording. (Bishma Lal)

I don't have an exact schedule of using ICT. Recently, the school has installed a smart TV so, we reach out for the required information through the smart TV and deliver it to the students in class. (Sumitra)

With the interaction to the participants, it is revealed that number of ways are adopted to run the teaching learning activities with the use of ICT in the classroom.

### **Experiences of teachers**

Interviews with teachers reflected that teaching with the use of ICT devices motivated the students in learning with proper attention and raised interest in learning. While implementing ICT inside classroom, certain factors like teachers' basic ICT skills, ICT infrastructures available in school, and accessibility of internet influence in teaching and learning activities. Interactions with the teachers also revealed that they formulated habits of using ICT at the beginning. Then, they enjoyed and gained affirmative experiences in the course of teaching in the classroom. Sharing the experiences, one of the participants Gaurav from Gauri Secondary School said:

ICT is a very useful tool for me specially for teaching English. We can develop different aspects in English, suppose for pronunciation also we can use it. I have been using it in Nepali medium students' section for developing listening skill. It has been very easy to use it but we should have internet access for giving materials. In short period of time in classroom, we cannot deliver and develop all the ideas and skills at once, at that time, it is useful. So, it is better to use but not good to be addicted.

Gaurav's comments indicate that, for teaching different aspects of language i.e., listening and speaking, the use of ICT tools is appropriate. Furthermore, he added that the use of ICT tools saves time of teachers and helps assign the students in messenger groups.

Another participant from Aaramv Secondary School disclosed about the benefit of utilization of ICT in the classroom as:

Of course, students are highly motivated while teaching is conducted using tools like overhead projector, and by showing them different structures from YouTube and Google. They have been found very interested while learning in the classroom. The important thing is that when I used to teach without such technology, students would make noise in the classroom, but after using these technologies, they are very interested, don't make the noise, show keen interest and are actively involved in learning activities. (Mohan)

His expression reflected that the ICT tools and devices are the sources of motivation for the learners and he has been using technology to minimize the noise of the students and grab their attention for learning. In addition to this, Bishmalal echoed that despite being ICT friendly,

the school administration and management committee should pay serious attention for strengthening the capacity of internet in the school, add sufficient ICT resources and develop teachers' competency in ICT skills.

The interactions with the teachers strongly support that ICT has become the integral part of modern education in this era. The teachers are developing their skills in the use of ICT and they are enjoying with ICT tools in the classroom.

### **Discussion**

The main purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of secondary English teachers in using ICT in community schools. The result showed that English teachers in municipality schools use ICT depending on the content and context. The findings of this study reflected that secondary English teachers in the study area are not unaffected by the influence of ICT use in classroom teaching. Almost all participants had positive impressions and perceptions regarding the use of ICT. They reported benefitting in multiple ways. As they emphasized, ICT has become an integral part of modern education and cannot be ignored. The study found that, particularly in English language teaching, ICT tools and devices are used for teaching listening, speaking, grammatical items, comprehension passages, and free writing exercises. Similarly, the most commonly used ICT tools by community school teachers are Android cell phones. However, advanced ICT devices such as: overhead projectors (OHP), speakers, laptops, smartboards, digital cameras and CCTV are also accessible in urban community schools with modern infrastructures. Another significant finding of this study is that despite the poor connectivity of internet in rural areas, limited access to advanced devices, and a lack of skills, teachers are striving to incorporate ICT in classroom teaching. They have observed that ICT-integrated teaching helps avoid laziness and boredom in learners, attracts their attention, and minimizes classroom noise.

### **Conclusion**

The results explored through this study have extended the knowledge and understanding of the experiences of community secondary school English teachers regarding the use of ICT. This study also searched strategies and methods that teachers used in classroom teaching. The findings concluded that the use of ICT has been inherent in modern education system which facilitates to both teachers and students for learning. It also recommended that the concerned authorities and bodies should pay greater attention to strengthening ICT infrastructures in community schools and to building teachers' capacity. The study highlighted some difficulties that prevent the effective use of ICT like poor internet network, unannounced power cuts, lack of efficiency in teachers, and lack of ICT friendly infrastructures etc. in community schools. However, teachers reported that using ICT makes teaching more enjoyable, helps removing boredom and laziness, and grabbing students' attention.

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