Pedagogical Content Knowledge and the Nepali English Language Teacher Training

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Abstract

The paper attempts to explore the crucial role of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) within the realm of English language teacher training in Nepal. PCK serves as a vital bridge between teachers' Content Knowledge (CK) and Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), facilitating effective teaching practices and enhancing student learning outcomes. The study examines the interconnectedness of PK, CK, and PCK, with the aim of improving the quality of teacher preparation programs and ultimately, the English language education system in Nepal. Through an extensive literature review, the research establishes a theoretical foundation, examining the conceptual framework of PCK and its significance in teacher education. It identifies existing gaps and challenges in current Nepalese English language teacher training practices, emphasizing the need for the seamless integration of PK, CK, and PCK in classroom instruction. The paper concludes that the contents of the teacher education and training programs differed from what the experts thought should be given. The broader areas of subject matter become narrower in the TPD program in Nepal. However, the nature of the programs is also responsible for the type of content being tried to be imparted to the English teachers. The research identified various factors influencing the successful implementation of PCK in teacher training. These included limited emphasis on PCK in the curriculum, time and resource constraints, and a lack of alignment between teacher education institutions and school practices. The findings underscored the importance of curriculum reforms and the provision of ongoing professional development opportunities to strengthen PCK integration.

Key Words: Pedagogical Knowledge, Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Content Knowledge Teacher Education, TPD, Contents of Teacher Training

1.   Introduction

In teacher training and education, the terms PK, CK and PCK are frequently discussed. There is debate about which is more important and

which one is less for the teachers during training, teacher education programs and other teacher professional development programs. This debate becomes more severe in language teacher training and education programs as there are more issues related to these terms and the role of language and fluency of spoken language while teaching the target language. In Nepal, there is always a conflict of views on what is more important for English teacher education and teacher training programs. Teachers, by nature, need to have versatile knowledge as the traditional role of teacher is to enlighten the students as being the source of knowledge to the students they teach. More serious roles and responsibilities for English teachers are allocated as they have to teach various subject matters while teaching English language; may those be parts of the Mahabharata, Ramayana like religious topics or the topics related to radiation, virology etc., or fashion and design as well as computing and online teaching and learning. Because of that, the type of knowledge required for the teachers is very versatile. As the knowledge needed for the teachers is very much versatile, the training of the teachers needs to be like this i.e., the English language teacher trainings need to impart necessary knowledge to the teachers so that they do not feel any problem while teaching English language may that be English speaking fluency or the contents to be taught.

English, as a global lingua franca and a language of opportunity, holds significant importance in Nepal for social mobility, access to higher education, and participation in the global workforce. Consequently, the demand for proficient English language teachers has increased, making it imperative to invest in high-quality teacher training programs that address the diverse linguistic and cultural needs of Nepalese learners. Despite the acknowledgment of the importance of PCK in fostering effective teaching practices, its seamless integration into English language teacher training in Nepal remains an area requiring rigorous investigation. The challenges of preparing teachers equipped with both content knowledge and effective pedagogical strategies necessitate a comprehensive analysis of the current state of PCK in Nepalese teacher education programs. Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to explore the role of PCK in the Nepalese context, specifically focusing on its integration within English language teacher training programs.

2.   Methods

This study interpretive and analytical approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in the context of English language teacher training in Nepal. Based on the secondary sources, the study offers a more holistic view of the research problem (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The theoretical framework for this

research is grounded in Shulman's (1986) concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). This framework emphasizes the inseparable nature of Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) and Content Knowledge (CK), which are integrated to form PCK. The theoretical underpinning posits that effective teaching requires a comprehensive understanding of subject content and the ability to employ appropriate pedagogical approaches tailored to the specific content being taught. By employing this theoretical framework, the research aims to explore the integration of PK, CK, and PCK in English language teacher training in Nepal. The framework provides a lens through which to examine the dynamic interactions between subject matter expertise and effective instructional strategies, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in PCK development in the Nepalese context.

3.   Review of Literature

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is a pivotal construct in the field of education that has garnered considerable attention in recent years. Shulman (1986) introduced the concept, defining PCK as the unique knowledge that teachers possess at the intersection of Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) and Content Knowledge (CK). This integration allows teachers to translate subject matter content into effective instructional strategies, tailoring their approach to meet the diverse needs and abilities of their students (Grossman, 1990). Theoretical models of PCK propose that teachers' ability to mediate between subject content and pedagogy significantly impacts student learning outcomes (Magnusson, Krajcik, & Borko, 1999). PCK emphasizes the role of subject-specific instructional strategies, content-related misconceptions, and alternate conceptions, making it an essential framework for improving teaching practices in subject-specific domains (Park & Oliver, 2008).

Grounded in the work of Shulman (1986), the theoretical foundations of PCK highlight the inseparable nature of PK and CK. This interplay enables teachers to adapt their pedagogical approaches to the content they teach, fostering deeper understanding and meaningful learning experiences for students (van Driel & Berry, 2012). The constructivist perspective also aligns with PCK's emphasis on active student engagement, as teachers incorporate multiple representations and activities to facilitate learning (Hammerness et al., 2005). Furthermore, the constructivist approach to PCK underscores the importance of reflection and continuous professional development for teachers. Engaging in critical self-assessment and collaborative learning communities fosters the growth of PCK over time (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). The incorporation of PCK in English language teacher training programs in Nepal remains an area of concern. Studies suggest that while pre-service

teachers receive instruction in PK and CK, the integration of these knowledge components into PCK development is often limited (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009).

In this regard, Dichaba and Mokhele (2012), quoting Gusky (2002), point out that the contents of teacher education must be covered during professional development activities. What attracts teachers to it is the belief that professional development will expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and improve their teaching. Content of the training was one of the issues that were covered in the training mentioned and many of the participants in the trainings indicated that the trainers were fully equipped with, as far as subject content was concerned. Thus, the policymakers were compelled to rethink the contents of the teacher training programmes and there has been a great consciousness nowadays towards what contents to be incorporated in the pre-service, and in-service teacher training courses all over the world. On the other hand, Peters (2005) describes that the preparation of teachers depends upon three major elements: a basic general education in the liberal tradition, a thorough grasp of one or more academic disciplines taught in the schools, and an intellectual and practical introduction to a career in education which includes an internship or apprenticeship.

Murray & Christison (2011), in the same vein, describe that the courses given in the teacher education should include the background information teachers need to know and be able to use in their classrooms. Teachers need to know (or know how to find out about) the characteristics of the context in which they work the nature of their learners, the features of their institution, the policies and expectations of their nation/state, and the broader world with which their learners will engage. They need to know how English works and how it is learned. To become proficient in English, learners need to be able not only to create correct sentences in the classroom, but also to engage in conversations with other English speakers, and to read and write texts for different purposes. To accomplish this, teachers need to know how learning occurs within the learner and through social interaction. The teachers need to understand their role in the larger professional sphere of English language education so that they can continue to grow as teachers and expand the profession through their own participation in its various enterprises. They also need to engage in their local communities to be informed of their needs and to inform their communities about the nature of English language learning. Not only this, the challenge of successful teaching is to know how to blend an understanding of learners, language, and language learning with knowledge of their content goals and how to achieve those goals. They also need to have the skills of planning, instruction and assessing what their learners already know and what they need

to know to reach their following curriculum goals. While instructing, teachers need to constantly assess whether their learners have acquired the language in focus and plan on the spot by reacting to student learning (or evidence of not learning). While assessing, teachers need to constantly review instructional goals to determine whether learners have achieved them and, if not, why not, and how to plan for revision or next steps.

Likewise, Hans & Akhter (2013) also stand on the same line regarding the importance of imparting content knowledge in teacher education programmes and believe that once teachers have a thorough understanding of the teaching content, they will never lose that expertise. So knowledge about the subject matter and feeling comfortable in delivery are equally crucial for efficient teachers. Sometimes they try to link knowledge in various ways while disseminating the information to students, and engaging them in effective learning. Today we have competent teachers who have a whole new set of resources and techniques that evolve around the use of technology. Technological aid should not be seen as a separate tool in learning instead it should be taken as an integral part of an effective pedagogical process. Richardson (2005), on the other hand, argues for the practicality of the knowledge teachers acquire and opines that despite the centrality of knowledge in both cognitive and constructivist views of learning, the importance of knowledge in teacher education is controversial. Under challenge is the applicability of theoretical knowledge to the complex and everyday practical concerns of teachers. In a research conducted by Emery (2012), a significant number of teachers, in the matter of their continuous professional development, responded to have the inclusion of various aspects in their forthcoming training as follows:

- Classroom management and dealing with discipline issues
- new methods of teaching
- group work and group management strategies
- use of technology
- child psychology and how children learn at different ages
- contents to keep up to date
- extra practice with primary classroom
- teaching methods for large classes
- networking with other teachers at workshops to share experiences and ideas.

Not only this, Freeman (1989), in a research, found in the same line regarding the concept related to the contents of teacher education and argues that the second language teacher education (SLTE) is confused about its pedagogical content base because the profession has failed to appreciate the

distinction between language teaching and the areas of inquiry on which it is based (linguistics, applied linguistics, methodology, SLA, etc.). He points out that applied linguistics and methodology should not be confused with teaching itself and should not be the primary subject matter of language teacher education. The 'what' of teacher education needs to be defined. Decisions on the content of teacher education curricula are made on all three levels (macro, meso and micro) (Swennen and Klink (Eds.) 2009). In this regard, Richards (1991) makes a detailed analysis of the contents of the teacher trainings for the teachers teaching English. Richards divides the contents of teacher training into two significant categories: pedagogical content knowledge and instructional practice, and presents the varieties of the contents used in different situations by different systems or authorities. Similarly, Day and Conklin (1992) claim that the knowledge base of second language teacher education consists of four types of knowledge:

1. *Content knowledge:* knowledge of the subject matter (what ESL/EFL teachers teach); e.g., English language (as represented by courses in syntax, semantics, phonology and pragmatics) and literary and cultural aspects of the English language
2. *Pedagogic knowledge:* knowledge of generic teaching strategies, beliefs and practices, regardless of the focus of the subject matter (how we teach) e.g., classroom management, motivation, decision making
3. *Pedagogic content knowledge:* the specialized knowledge of how to represent content knowledge in diverse ways that students can understand; the knowledge of how students come to understand the subject matter, what difficulties they are likely to encounter when learning it, what misconceptions interfere with learning, and how to overcome these problems (how we teach ESL/EFL in general; or how we teach ESL/EFL reading or writing in particular, for example); e.g., teaching ESL/EFL skills (reading, writing), teaching English grammar, TESOL materials evaluation and development, EFL/ESL testing, TESOL program and curriculum evaluation and development, TESOL methods.
4. *Support knowledge*: the knowledge of the various disciplines that inform our approach to the teaching and learning English e.g., psycholinguistics, linguistics, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and research methods.

Thus, Day and Conklin (ibid.) also stand almost in the same line as Richards (1991) regarding the contents of teacher education and development to produce competent and efficient teachers. Roberts (1998), quoting many other scholars

in the same area describes that content knowledge refers to the teacher's knowledge of target language (TL) systems, their TL competence and their analytical knowledge.

4.   Analysis and Findings

Pedagogic content knowledge refers to the knowledge of language we need to teach it. It includes our awareness of what aspects of the target language are more or less problematic to the learners. In the same way, general pedagogic knowledge refers to the classroom management skills of the teachers. The teachers should be trained with the principles and strategies of classroom management, the repertoire of ELT activities, knowledge of language assessment system, and the skills of using instructional materials and varieties of ELT resources to support learning the target language. Likewise, the curricular knowledge for the language teacher training is the information about the official language curriculum to be used, the books to be taught, the exam system etc. and the knowledge of the resources indicated by the curriculum. The contextual knowledge, on the other hand, refers to the teachers' awareness of the learners, their characteristics and behaviors as well as appropriate expectations, of the schools, basic norms of behaviour in class and with the colleagues, and the awareness of the community in matters of the expectations from the teachers and their accountability for the community development. Likewise, the process knowledge refers to a set of enabling skills and attitudes which enable the development of the teacher. The skills related to academic study skills, collaborative skills like team work, active listening and constructive criticism, inquiry skills such as observation and self-evaluation skills, classroom inquiry skills and language analysis skills required for a successful language teacher. What follows is his view regarding the knowledge necessary for language teachers in the table below.

Content Knowledge Knowing target language systems, Text types, etc. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Content restructured for purposes of pedagogy) Adapt content and means of communicating linguistic knowledge according to learners' needs General Pedagogical Knowledge Principles and strategies for classroom 　　management Planning and formative evaluation Classroom management Repertoire of ELT activities Aids and resources Assessment	Curricular Knowledge Of the official language curriculum (exams, textbooks etc.) and of resources Contextual Knowledge Learner: knowledge of their characteristics; appropriate expectations School: norms of behaviour in class and with colleagues Legal accountability Community: expectations and accountability Process Knowledge Ability to relate to learners, peers, parents Study skills Team skills Observational skills Classroom inquiry skills Language analysis skills

Fig. 1: Expertise: types of language teacher knowledge (Source: Roberts, 1998)

In education, CK refers to the knowledge of the specific subject and related to the content teachers are required to teach. CK is shaped by academic disciplines underlying the subject. In the case of ELTE, academics and curriculum developers (e.g., Richards & Farrell, 2011; Roberts, 1998; Widdowson, 2002; Woodgate-Jones, 2008) agree that CK includes knowledge of the English language as a system of subsystems and proficiency in using English. The latter is more important since English may be both the object of study and the medium of instruction in ELTE programmes (Bale, 2016). König et al. (2016) add that "language teachers are also required to develop a high level of language awareness, language learning awareness, and of intercultural competencies" (Banegas, 2020)

Likewise, PCK takes part as an influential function for teachers to develop their expertise in teaching. It is because teachers' professional knowledge and skill could be measured by their understanding of academic content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teacher practice in the views of Richard (2011). As a part of the English teaching requirement, it comprises knowledge of learners, subject matter, general pedagogy, and curriculum, which are comprehensively conducted in an appropriate instructional practice to facilitate learners to achieve better learning objectives (Faisal, 2015). In addition to this concept, Kultsum (2017) regards PCK as two integrated

domains: Content Knowledge (CK) and Pedagogical Knowledge (PK). CK is the knowledge of the specific topic, which teacher requires teaching it. For example, an English teacher should have the ability to understand English materials and capable of delivering them to her/his students. At the same time, PK is seen as the teaching principles and strategies that are applied in the classroom management and organization. From these concepts of PCK, it can be theoretically defined that Pedagogical content knowledge is also recognized as a complex blending of pedagogy and subject content and includes aspects related to an understanding of what is to be taught, learned and assessed, an understanding of how learners learn, an understanding of ways to facilitate effective learning and an understanding of how to blend content and pedagogy to organize particular topics for learners. As it is highlighted by Richard (2011), PCK should prepare teachers to be able to do things such as the following:

(a) Understand learners' needs
(b) Diagnose learners' learning problems
(c) Plan suitable instructional goals for lessons
(d) Select and design learning tasks
(e) Evaluate students' learning
(f) Design and adapt tests
(g) Evaluate and choose published materials
(h) Make use of authentic materials
(i) Make appropriate use of technology.

In the Indonesian context, Setiadi and Musthafa's (2013) study on English teachers mentions that PCK includes content knowledge, understanding of student's conceptions and preconception, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of educational contexts, knowledge of educational goals, knowledge of assessment and evaluation, and the use of assessment and evaluation results for instructional purposes. To conclude, the PCK concept endorses the teaching strategies, methodologies, and techniques and the high teachers' dedication and commitment to teaching the students tend to increase the quality of teaching. In line with this viewpoint, PCK in English teaching would help teachers to understand how to explore their content knowledge and how to convey it in a reasonable and appropriate way of instruction (Kalsum, 2017; Faisal, 2015; Setiadi & Musthafa, 2013).

If we take teaching as a sociocultural activity, ELTE programs need to provide (future) teachers with opportunities to imagine and develop their professional identity and agency socially and critically constructed, which could be supported by experienced teachers (Donnini Rodrigues, de Pietri, Sanchez,

& Kuchah, 2018). In this regard, teachers' knowledge of their subject as a component of their professional identity should be axiomatic (Cross, 2018). For example, Freeman (2017) challenges the syllogism "the more fluent in English, the more effective the teacher" since teacher language proficiency as determinant of effective teaching is based on the highly criticized native-speaker model because it promotes an ideological position of superiority of native-speaker teachers over non-native speaker teachers (Martínez Agudo, 2017). This view indicates that only content knowledge, or language use, is more important than teaching competency or pedagogical content knowledge in ELTE.

Various views in this area emerged, and presented in different ways but, the core concept of what these express seems almost similar. Johnson (2009) opines that in second language teacher education, the knowledge-base informs three broad areas:

(1)   the content of L2 teacher education programs: *What L2 teachers need to know;*

(2)   the pedagogies that are taught in L2 teacher education programs: *How L2 teachers should teach;* and

(3)   the institutional forms of delivery through which both the content and pedagogies are learned: *How L2 teachers learn to teach.*

He further adds that the knowledge-base of the teachers is not a static or neutral entity. Instead, it is grounded in certain values, assumptions, and interpretations that are shared by members of a particular professional community. Furthermore these values, assumptions, and interpretations are grounded in particular epistemological perspectives—that is, what counts as knowledge, who is considered to be a knower, and how knowledge is produced etc. The idea is fundamental and has many things to be considered while preparing and selecting the content for training the teachers. In similar line, Richards (1998) had earlier furthered the following components in the English language teacher education programmes:

Theories of teaching theories   : That guide SLTE programme, teacher's personal

Teaching skills   : Essential general repertoire, LT specific theories

Communication skills proficiency : General communication skills, Target language

Subject matter knowledge : Specialized concepts, theories and disciplinary knowledge Pedagogical reasoning and

decision-making skills   : Both when preparing and during teaching

Contextual knowledge : How society, community, and institution affect and shape teaching

Slightly different views, regarding the contents of teacher education programmes, are expressed by Graves (2009, quoting Freeman, 1991) who describes that the concepts of the knowledge base of language teaching have historically separated the two components- language on the one hand, and teaching on the other- into familiar dichotomies: content/pedagogy, theory/ practice, and knowledge/skills. Broadly speaking, until the 1970s, knowledge of language, as proficiency in the target language and knowledge about its structure, phonology and so on, was considered sufficient for teaching it. Knowledge about teaching was gained through studying language teaching methods and /or training in discrete teaching skills. Little attention was paid to the contexts in which teacher-learners would teach. The assumption was that the teachers would put together what they knew about content and what they knew about pedagogy into lessons in a practicum, if it was offered, or on the job. Similar views are expressed slightly in a different way by Villegas-Reimers (2003) quoting Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2001) which describe what the teachers need during the trainings and teacher education programmes. The idea includes three basic types of knowledge:

1. Knowledge-for-practice: Assumes that university based researchers generate formal knowledge and theory for teachers to use in order to improve practice.
2. Knowledge-in- practice: Some of the most essential knowledge for teaching is perceived as 'practical' knowledge, or knowledge that is embedded in practice.
3. Knowledge-of -practice: Knowledge is not divided into formal and practical knowledge. Teachers gain knowledge for teaching when they have the opportunity to reflect on their practice and use a process of inquiry in their own environments to learn more about effective teaching.

Villegas-Reimers (2003, p. 17)

In the same way, Richards (1998) also describes the contents of teacher education programmes and opines that the knowledge base of teaching was conceptualized as a content component and a method/skill component. The role of teacher education programmes was to transmit two-part knowledge base-knowledge about language, learning theories, the target culture and knowledge about methodology- and to train teachers to use skills. With the growth and diversification of language teaching as a profession, the content component of the knowledge base expanded beyond linguistic and cultural knowledge

to include a variety of subject areas such as discourse analysis, second language acquisition and language testing and so on. In the teacher training programmes, the role of the existing knowledge of the teachers is vital and it should, thus, be recognized before putting teachers into any teacher education programme. Crandall (2000) as cited in Graves (2009) writes that the role of prior knowledge changed thinking about the knowledge base of teaching. It did not only include knowledge of a variety of subject matter content and skills in teaching; it also included the teacher's previous knowledge and conceptions its implications for the SLTE curriculum were significant: Teachers were not empty vessels; the educational programme was not a matter of filling them with knowledge of content and pedagogy. On the contrary, it was found that traditional transmission-based instructional practices have little impact on what teachers learn.

In this regards some other experts describe the knowledge base of the English language teachers in slightly different ways but the core remaining almost the same. Shulman (1987) describes that the knowledge that should be imparted to the teachers can be categorized in seven types which itself is a separate framework for teacher knowledge. The categories are:

1. Content knowledge
2. General pedagogical knowledge e.g. Classroom control, using group work
3. Pedagogical content knowledge
4. Curriculum knowledge
5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
6. Knowledge of educational contexts e.g. Schools and the wider community
7. Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and Values

To clarify these ideas and describe what these points intend to state, Shulman (1987) defines content knowledge as the knowledge teachers have of the subject matter they are teaching. This definition does not include, for example, knowledge of the curriculum which is placed in a distinct category. McNamara (1991) as cited in Cogill (2008)) suggests that the knowledge of subject content is essential not only for teaching itself but also for the evaluation of text books, computer software and teaching aids. In relation to using ICT, Cox et al (2003) as cited in Cogill (2008) support these views and they suggest that teachers need to possess relevant content knowledge in order to make appropriate decisions when choosing any software. On the other hand, Shulman (1987) regards general pedagogical knowledge as the broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter. Brown and McIntyre (1993) as cited in Cogill (2008) provide

ten qualities proposed by pupils that create good teaching which are broadly categorized as below:

- Classroom management
- Effective presentation skills
- Proper care of the pupils
- Teachers' personal talents.
- Managing question and answer sessions and interactions.

In the same way, Mishra and Koehler (2006, as cited in Richards, 2011) further include another competence needed to the successful teacher, which is very important component of professional knowledge in today's classroom and is termed as 'technological pedagogical content knowledge' (TPCK). It is the ability to integrate technology into teaching. Reinders (2009) in the same line points out that depending on teacher's level of technological expertise, this could involve 'being able to first, use a certain technology; second, being able to create materials and activities using technology and third, being able to teach with technology'. Likewise, Richards (2011) also describes that becoming a language teacher involves learning to 'talk the talk', that is acquiring the specialized discourse that we use among ourselves and that helps define the subject matter of our profession. This means becoming familiar with several hundred specialized terms such as learner centeredness, learner autonomy, self-access, alternative assessment, blended learning, task based instruction, phoneme, and common European framework that we use on a daily basis in talking about our teaching. Being able to use the appropriate discourse (and, of course, understand what they mean) is one of the criteria for membership in the language teaching profession. Thus, the language teacher needs something more than others for being successful in teaching profession.

The Experts' Views about Teachers' Knowledge

The most widely accepted practice around the world in determining curriculum content is to incorporate the views of the experts or what they think the clients need to know. In the field of language teacher education which draws on a number of source disciplines, it is not always clear who the relevant experts are. Forty years ago, linguists regarded themselves as experts in second language teaching and had a considerable influence on both the content and process of second language teacher training programmes (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). But now –a-days the linguists are not supposed to be the major expert to the design the teacher education programmes. Although there is no any systematic norm as to who can be the best expert for the teacher education programmes, they could come from such fields as general education, instructional design, curriculum development, teacher education, second language acquisition, or

applied linguistics, depending on one's persuasion.

The views of language teaching specialists about the content of the teacher training programmes can be reflected on what they write about it in the publications. The content of introductory textbooks in the field of language teacher training reveals a reasonable base of content experts' opinion. Different experts like Rivers (1981), Omaggio (1986), Abbot and Wingard (1981), Harmer (1983), Brooks (1960), Bright and Mc-Gregor (1970) Richards and Hino (1983) Richards, Tung and Ng (1990) express their own opinions about what the teachers should be given for their trainings for professional development. The common elements that the majority of experts in this area intend to incorporate in the teacher education courses will be listed in the figure below.

Another very important source of the content selection for the teacher training curricula is the analysis of the current practices in the area of language teaching. Though the contents of the ELT courses vary largely according to the focus and needs of the education systems, there remains similarity in the content of the teacher education programmes. Darling–Hammond (2010) points out that much of what teachers need to know to be successful is invisible to lay observers, leading to the view that teaching requires little formal study and frequent disdain for teacher education programme. The weaknesses of traditional programme models that are collections for largely unrelated courses reinforce this low regard. Teachers also need to understand the person, the spirit of every child and find a way to nurture that spirit. And they need the skills to construct and manage classroom activities efficiently, communicate well, use technology, and reflect on their practice to learn from and improve it continually. Darling –Hammond (2010) further describes that powerful teaching is increasingly important in contemporary society. Standards for learning are now higher than they have ever been before because citizens and workers need greater knowledge and skill to survive and succeed. Education is increasingly important to the success of both individuals and nations, and growing evidence demonstrates that, among all educational resources, teachers' abilities are especially crucial contributors to students' learning. Furthermore, the demands on teachers are increasing. Teachers must be able to keep order, provide useful information to students, and be increasingly effective in enabling a diverse group of students to learn ever more complex material.

International Practices

In the matters of the content selection for the teacher education programmes, there is basically government control and support in the European countries which proved to be successful to maintain quality education and make teaching profession a bit more respectful. Lukkainen (2000) as project

manager published a report on 'European trends in anticipation of teacher training needs' which describes the trends of teacher training in Europe and some of its findings regarding the selection of content of ELT teacher training are presented here. The report found different systems of teacher education and contents selection in different countries.

In Belgium, the government is responsible for planning teacher training, especially in terms of contents. The Flemish (Belgium) Government determines the basic qualifications required of teachers and the core curriculum of teacher training. The basic qualification means the abilities, knowledge and attitudes required of teachers. Determination of core curriculum and qualifications required of teachers is influenced by the changes in pedagogical and social reality and the developments in educational theories, didactics and psychology. Teacher training institutions are free to design their own educational contents independently, provided that they are based on the qualification requirements set by the government.

In Scotland, the content, nature and duration of teacher training are determined by the First Minister of Scotland, who is also responsible for supervising its implementation. In addition to competencies for teaching knowledge and skills, teacher trainings must provide the abilities to nurture pupils and support their personal, emotional and social development. Through teaching and setting an example, teachers should be able to develop pupils' interest for learning and study. Teacher training should guide future teachers to reflect on their own work and its effects and to give thought to better and more efficient ways of working. The qualification requirements of teachers have been divided into four parts:

1) command of teaching subjects and educational content,
2) class management,
3) knowledge of the school institution and education systems, and
4) values, abilities and attitudes.

There is no established continuing training system in Austria, but the form and contents of training vary considerably. Trainings can be arranged in workshops, discussion groups, and conferences, excursions, in connection with industrial visits or traditionally at seminars with the aid of visiting lecturers. In terms of continuing training, efforts to create a compulsory system that would, for example, oblige teachers to participate in courses on an annual basis have mainly failed due to the high costs of such a system. The development of the contents of Austrian teacher training is based on the notion that they should adapt to changes in society and to the reform of teaching methods.

In this part only European system of teacher training has been presented, as

the teacher training system there has been well established and mature. There are representative examples only show that the teacher training is operated and controlled by the government in the developed nations as well. Even if the government does not directly control there are well established universities and other government bodies to train the teachers. These systems seem like that of the Nepalese teacher training system. In Nepal also the government tried to train the teachers initially through the DEOs and similar offices and then it was shifted to Tribhuvan University (TU) which accomplished various kinds of pre-service and in-service teacher trainings of various levels and subjects. In course of time, the responsibility of teacher training was given to the NCED, a government organization independently established for conducting the teacher trainings of various levels in Nepal. In the past, NCED used to design all the curriculum and content of the in service and pre service (short term/ non academic) teacher trainings, whereas the universities would decide about the curriculum and contents of the academic pre service teacher training programmes. Thus, the Nepalese practices of teacher training are also similar to the teacher training programmes in the developed countries. The difference is the way the teacher training system is actually implemented.

Nepalese Practices on ELT Content for Teacher Training

Nepal, as it started its planned development efforts only after the end of Rana Regime, has realized the need of the teacher training in the late forties and the training of teaching English as a foreign language is also considered similar to the training of other subjects i.e. teacher trainings of all the subjects are treated equally and there is no any special provision for ELT teacher training. The educationists that time realized the need to train the teachers and started with the establishment of Basic Teacher Training Centre in Tahachal, Kathmandu in 1949. But the teacher training package did not include English language component in the teacher training courses then. After the Rana regime in 1954, the National Teacher Training Centre was established in the same place where Basic Teacher Training Centre was conducted. It basically aimed at training all the primary level teachers in the country. A laboratory school was established for the trainees to practice the things they were trained in. The trainers of the teachers were sent to India to get initial training. This training centre was discontinued after 1956 (Shrestha, 1999). In this regard Sharma (2003) writes that the actual training of English language teachers started in Nepal with the establishment of the College of Education. At the same time, the normal school started functioning as one of the eight departments of the college of education. Its main aim was to run trainings, especially for primary teachers, and it also started functioning in the form of mobile normal schools

as well in seventeen different locations of Nepal. With the recommendations suggested by All Round National Committee on Education (ARNCE) only five Mobile Normal Schools, which were still training the primary school teachers, were converted into Primary School Teacher Training Centre (PSTTC) during 1964. These training centres started providing training in all subjects taught in the primary schools of Nepal. In fact, the training of how to teach English was formally started with the establishment of these centres.. Till now also the trainings are run with many modifications in the contents, methodologies and modality in the same teacher training centres which are at present called ETCs.

As mentioned earlier, the training of English language teachers started after the establishment of the College of Education (Sharma, 2003). It was initially supported by the American government. After 1973 the training centre became the part of Institute of Education of Tribhuvan University. The English Language Training Centre used to provide training to five months initially converted into a six-month training with certification. The English language teacher training programme was really comprehensive as it not only tried to train the teachers on methodology and teaching techniques but also the ways in which different types of teaching materials are used to teach English in the primary classes. It incorporated teaching language skills, teaching methods and teaching of English grammar and usage. The training also gave the knowledge of child psychology as well as the educational theories. Thus, the training that time was really comprehensive and useful to the teachers, as per the recommendations of many research reports by Nepalese and foreign scholars.

The training packages of in-service teacher training of that time used to have some ELT content. Though not significant for making the teachers competent enough, the packages of the ten month training courses used to have English contents. As a result, all the trained teachers had to pass the English courses in all three phases of the training. The major contents of the package are presented in figure below in comparison with others. Despite all these efforts of the government, the situation was not found satisfactory and thus a different program called Teacher Professional Development (TPD) was launched with the implementation of SSRP in 2009.This programme is demand based training and the responsibility to accomplish it was given to NCED. The TPD training initially was a ten-day-programme with five days face-to-face and a three-day project work in the trainee teacher's school and the remaining two days were meant for evaluation, feedback and counseling in her/his own school in the presence of other teachers, head teacher and members of the school management committee. After some years it was modified and 15 day package with written exam was started. The contents of the teacher training

in this model are not the same in the pattern. The Head Teacher collects and processes the demands of the teachers before they are sent to the RPs who in turn sends them to the roster trainers to prepare packages for the five day face-to-face programme. The figure below shows the contents of locally prepared TPD training packages, nationally prepared ten- month training packages and what the international experts think to be included in the training packages: The contents of the international ELT textbooks   The contents of ten-month-training for primary teachers   The contents of TPD training for primary teachers

The contents of the international ELT textbooks	The contents of ten-month-training for primary teachers	The contents of TPD training for primary teachers
• Objectives of Language Teaching • Language Teaching Methods • Theories of Language and Language Learning • Teaching Sounds • Listening Comprehension • The Speaking Skill • The Reading Skill • The Writing Skill • Testing: Principles and Techniques • Technology and language learning Centres • Games • Pair/ group work • Do administrative work • Design curriculum/ syllabuses • Vocabulary • Language and Literature • Grammar • Class Management • Error Analysis • Remedial Work • Oral Fluency • Planning Instruction for the Proficiency-Oriented Classroom • The Role of Context in Comprehension and Learning	• ELT situation of Nepal • English textbooks for Primary students • Teaching Vocabulary • Teaching Listening and speaking skills • Teaching communicative skills • Teaching reading and writing skills • Teaching grammar • Lesson planning, unit planning and classroom management • Classroom language • Construction of specific objectives • Construction and use of visual aids • Using dictionary • Storytelling and role play • Language games • Testing communicative skills • Testing for classroom purpose • Microteaching • Trial teaching	• Introduction to motivation and its types • Use of materials in classroom • Introduction to tests and its types • Use of test and its importance • Grammar: affirmative and negative • Adjectives and comparison • Use of different types of greetings and responses • Teaching conversation and dialogues • Speaking more English in class • Teaching language games and rhymes • Teaching preposition (Time) • Teaching vocabulary (Playing Bingo) • Teaching reading (Strip Story) • Teaching poems, chants and rhymes • Teaching articles • Teaching listening skills • Project method in teaching learning process • English grammar: Parts of speech

Fig. 2: The comparative list of the ELT contents of teacher training (Source : Kshetree, 2018)

The table above reflects how the contents of the teacher training packages are developed from general to particular, keeping in mind the level for which they are prepared. The locally prepared TPD packages used for the training of primary level teachers, the nationally prepared ten-month teacher training packages for primary level teachers, and the views of the experts in the area of language teacher training seem to be significantly different in matters of their coverage and systematicity. The experts suggest broad areas to be imparted to the teachers during training and these emphasize detailed knowledge to be imparted to them. But due to various reasons and mostly time constraints, the ten-month training was not that much detailed as suggested by the experts. In the same way, the nature of the TPD training is quite different and the time of the training is too less, which is practically only three working days (now ten days) as the first day of the training is used for registration, introduction, package distribution like administrative tasks and the fifth day is basically for the introduction of the project work and other part of the training, distribution of the tasks and allowances of the training etc.

Most importantly, the TPD system requires contents for making the teachers more competent in the areas of language use and the use of modern teaching techniques as well as making use of the available technology like cell phones and online resources for teaching and learning language. Not only this, the locally prepared packages did not seem to include any contents related to language testing and designing various types of test items which may be due to the fact that the teachers neglected this area or they did not think it as important as language teaching. The knowledge of preparing the test items is vital for the teachers themselves to know the effectiveness of their teaching and therefore give feedback to the students. Thus, the TPD program, due to the time constraints, could not cover the major theoretical contents for the trainee teachers as it addresses the problems they face while teaching the English courses. Thus, the contents of the TPD training are scattered and unsystematic. These focus on classroom problems only.

5.   Conclusions

Nepal, a multiethnic and multilingual nation, faces the unique challenge of accommodating numerous languages, including Nepali, English, and various regional languages, within its education system. English, as a global lingua franca and a language of opportunity, holds significant importance in Nepal for social mobility, access to higher education, and participation in the global

workforce. Consequently, the demand for proficient English language teachers has increased, making it imperative to invest in high-quality teacher training programs that address the diverse linguistic and cultural needs of Nepalese learners. Though the contents of English language teacher training and education seem to be different, there is always some kind of linkage among the experts and the different kinds of teacher training and development programs as well as the teacher preparation or teacher education programs in Nepal. All the programs and models of teacher training activities aim at improving the ELT situation in Nepal. We need to be positive in the hope that the situation will soon improve and the ELT situation will get better day by day in the near future.

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