

# Secondary-Level English Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of School-based Training for Professional Development

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/ljll.v5i1.93064>

## Article History

Received: October 17, 2025

Revised: December 29, 2025

Accepted: March 12, 2026

## Abstract

*School-based training promotes sustainable development and addresses specific educational needs by offering teachers hands-on,*

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*collaborative, and context-specific professional development. However, studies on post-training reflections from participant teachers have been overshadowed. The study aimed to explore English teachers' perceptions of school-based teacher training and the challenges they face in applying it in classrooms. Using a narrative inquiry method, we conducted in-depth interviews with four secondary-level English language teachers to explore their perceptions and experiences of school-based training. The findings highlight teachers' positive perceptions of school-based training programs that address the teachers' pedagogical skills within a particular school context. The study underscores the need for teachers' professional development and a stronger institutional support to overcome implementation challenges faced in English language classrooms. The findings also emphasize teachers' preference for real-class pedagogical skills enhancement programs for their professional development. The study's implications may provide policymakers, administrators, and teacher educators with valuable insights to enhance their understanding of school-based training and improve the overall teaching-learning process in real classroom settings.*

**Keywords:** collaborative learning, in-service teacher training, school-based teacher training, teacher professional development

## **Introduction**

In-service teacher training involves newly appointed teachers in workshops, training sessions, seminars, and other professional development activities. These programs help them bridge the gap between teachers' formal educational degrees and pedagogical performance, improving their knowledge and expertise (Osamwonyi, 2016). This enhanced expertise helps teachers make observable transformations to their classroom instruction. Due to its grassroots approach and context-specific nature, school-based training serves as an alternative method that draws policymakers' concerns and engages all educational stakeholders, including school teachers and principals (Alkhaldeh, 2004). School-based training programs prepare teachers for real-world, context-based teaching and learning and foster efficiency for both the individual school

and the teacher. School-based teacher training supports teachers who support the school's culture and environment (Schipper et al., 2020). During in-service training, teachers can adapt to school culture, strengthening the connection and enabling them to apply their skills in their actual classroom context. The training focuses on school management structures and strict supervision of teacher training and skill development throughout a teacher's career (Ngwenya, 2020). This enhances the creation of a realistic classroom atmosphere, helping teachers successfully implement their training skills in the classroom. The skills and knowledge earned from the training help teachers meet their professional responsibilities and develop sustainable educational goals (Kabadayi, 2016). Bell (2016) suggests a transformative educational model that aligns with the demands of the twenty-first-century teacher skills in a globalized world.

Workshops, seminars, and training sessions outside the classroom are typically part of traditional in-service teacher training programs in the Nepali context (Mahara, 2024). Unlike short-term teacher development programs, professional development through school-based training empowers teachers with the necessary pedagogical skills in an ongoing process (Alkhawaldeh, 2017). Enhancing professional skills and teaching techniques involves integrating several approaches, including peer coaching, feedback, mentorship, and continuous professional development.

Ongoing in-service training is crucial for keeping new teachers' knowledge up to date and applicable, as pre-service training alone is insufficient for them to teach confidently. It provides teachers with resources and knowledge to help them go further (Ur, 2006). On the other hand, issues in teacher training remain unexplored in the Nepali school context. Since instructors must leave their students, training takes place outside school, which is inconvenient and distracting (Fitria, 2023). This strategy may lower instructor quality and harm students' learning objectives. School-based professional development is crucial for supporting English language teachers in refining their instructional

strategies, adapting to evolving educational demands, and promoting student achievement (Sadeghi & Richards, 2021). However, there has been limited research in Nepal on needs, perspectives, and challenges faced by teachers regarding school-based training. There is a concern over the effective implementation of learned skills in classrooms, despite the government and non-governmental organizations offering an abundance of training programs (Roberts & Clark, 2026). This study fills a knowledge gap in professional development. This study attempted to explore English language teachers' perceptions of and experiences with school-based training. The following research questions were developed to achieve the research purpose.

1. How do English teachers perceive the school-based training?
2. What challenges do they face in school-based professional development training? How do they mitigate the challenges?

### **Literature Review**

This review examines previous studies conducted in school-based training and its significance for teachers' professional development (TPD). School-based training provides a context-specific, collaborative, and hands-on approach to professional development within schools, allowing teachers to enhance skills directly applicable to their classrooms while promoting sustainable development and addressing unique educational needs (Blundell, 2024). Teachers' professional development training fosters continuous learning and enhances teachers' pedagogical skills to facilitate student learning (Njenga, 2023). Continuous professional development is an ongoing, self-directed, and collaborative learning process that helps teachers adapt and transform their classroom practices in response to changing educational needs (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2020). Teachers gain from both activities initiated by the school and those led by instructors.

School-based training updates and reshapes language teachers' current knowledge, beliefs, morals, practices, and reflections, enabling their pedagogical skills to become more transformative (Tanang & Abu, 2014). Similarly, language proficiency, which includes knowledge of syntax, vocabulary, pronunciation, and other relevant topics such as

discourse, pragmatics, language acquisition, psycholinguistics, and the L<sub>1</sub>, enables teachers to facilitate student learning effectively (Lv, 2014). The two most crucial requirements for becoming a certified language teacher are language competency and understanding of the target language (Guang & Huang, 2013). The authors emphasized that English language teachers should understand ideas and guidelines related to language learning and instruction, particularly the cultural differences between L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub>. Instructors need to be aware of various professional development options. Creating more engaged and communicative classrooms is a key responsibility for language teachers. Professional development programs can enhance the competence and confidence of English language instructors. Professional development programs enhance teachers' self-confidence, refine teaching strategies, improve student learning outcomes, adapt to changes in education, and address individual professional needs (Iqbal, 2024).

Pre-service education alone is insufficient to prepare teachers (Khasawneh, 2023), as effective teaching demands continuous professional development and ongoing support to navigate classroom complexities and address diverse student needs (Dhungana et al., 2024). By fostering instructional innovation and raising student achievement, ongoing school-based professional development teacher training programs support both individual schools and the broader education sector (Ur, 2006). The skills gained from training help in retaining teachers in the profession longer (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Evans (2010) found that meaningful school-based teacher training has a positive impact on student outcomes and on meeting the needs of the curriculum. Another study by Alkhaldeh (2017) demonstrated that a sustainable, school-based professional development training program allows schools to adopt teacher development through mentorship in which experienced teachers support novice teachers. Utilizing school resources and promoting knowledge sharing among peers helps decrease dependence on general in-service training. It recommends a shift from traditional theoretical teacher training to a more school-centred method.

Studies indicate that school-based teacher training helps students develop skills for life and improves relationships among teachers, students, and school management (Ogunode, 2023; Ucheagwu-Okoye, 2025). School-based training establishes a direct relationship between school administration and teacher supervision (Erawan, 2015). The potential of this strategy to enhance teacher status and relationships inside schools is drawing the attention of educators, administrators, and policymakers. These studies emphasize the need for schools to conduct teacher training programs to enhance their teachers' professional quality. Enhanced teacher professionalism ensures the appropriate implementation of the curriculum, thereby enhancing student learning, information sharing, cooperative problem-solving, and cultivating collegiality within schools (Geletu, 2026). Despite these affordances, the school-based in-service teacher training has not received adequate attention from researchers. Therefore, this study explored how in-service teachers share their perceptions and experiences of school-based training in enhancing their professional development.

## **Method**

We employed a narrative inquiry method to collect data from the participants. Narrative inquiry gathers and analyzes stories as raw data that may represent the participants' knowledge and experiences (Saldana, 2015). We purposively selected four participants (two males and two females). The participants were selected considering their experiences, knowledge, and interest in volunteering to engage in the data generation process. Their lived stories in school-based training were collected through interviews (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). We focused our interviews on gathering the participants' shared details about their past, present, and future circumstances by asking them to share their stories and make meaning from them. Since the participants preferred to speak in Nepali, their L1, we later translated the interview verbatim into English to generate themes using the approach outlined by Miles et al. (2014). We obtained informed consent from the participants, assigned pseudonyms to

each of them, and ensured confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

This section encompasses two broad themes: teachers' perceptions of school-based teacher training and the challenges of school-based teacher training. The first theme has been further divided into two sub-themes: collaborative practice and update in current knowledge, and the second theme into inadequate facilities and resources, and lack of follow-up and support programs. The results have been discussed, analyzed, and interpreted using the relevant literature as follows.

#### **Perceptions of School-based Teacher Training**

The exposure to practical school-based training sessions enhances teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills (Wagle et al., 2024). Participants emphasize that school-based training is tailored to their specific needs and is contextually relevant. It is provided to teachers in local schools offering applicable, hands-on professional development. The experiences shared by the participants demonstrate greater effectiveness compared to off-site training in meeting particular regional requirements and enhancing instructional strategies.

#### **Collaborative Practice**

Collaborative practice in classroom teaching enhances language teachers' continuous professional development by enabling them to share knowledge and reflect on their skills. School-based teacher collaboration enhances student achievement, leading to the purposeful implementation of collaboration initiatives in secondary schools (Hargreaves, 2019). This collaborative environment enables the collective design of teaching methods, enhancing the overall teaching process. The value of the school

context for teacher training, highlighting the cultural and structural support available at the school level (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on social interactions through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in the learning process also supports that collaboration fosters language learning.

Keshav asserted, "My school holds departmental meetings once a month. Teachers discuss the challenges they face and bring the solutions, with senior teachers on teaching pedagogy and issues." Keshav narrated that the school held monthly departmental meetings, where teachers discussed challenges and developed solutions, with senior teachers guiding others on teaching techniques and curriculum issues. The teacher's experience aligns with Chatmaneerungcharoen (2025). He stated that collaborative practice is crucial for teachers to stay up-to-date with recent developments in the teaching profession. This collaborative practice led to systematic planning and implementation of the teaching-learning process.

Regarding collaboration, Radha shared her experience, "Sometimes my school invites an expert, and we share our successful teaching stories collaboratively with each other." Radha's experience suggests that teachers share their teaching experiences in training sessions, often conducted by external resource persons. These sessions offer a platform for English language teachers to discuss issues and share successes, facilitating mutual learning for their professional growth. Both stories highlight the effectiveness of collaborative practices in schools, supporting the views of Opfer and Pedder (2011). Such practices foster a supportive environment where teachers learn from one another, thereby enhancing their professional skills within their specific school context. Their collaborative experience is also consistent with the study by Annamalai et al. (2024), which revealed that sharing classroom tactics and ideas, necessary teaching materials, and using digital means such as Messenger, WhatsApp, or email empower language teachers with pedagogical skills.

Apil stated, "We share our classroom experience by attending conferences, webinars, and seminars. We improve the teaching learning process by getting feedback from each other." Teachers can improve their teaching skills by attending conferences, webinars, and seminars, sharing classroom experiences, receiving feedback, and collaborating on improving their skills (Mani, 2024; Tran et al., 2024). Collaboration between teacher training institutions and schools facilitates the sharing of resources, best practices, and knowledge on quality teaching. By forming professional learning communities and partnerships, educators can explore innovative strategies and enhance student outcomes through collective inquiry and feedback.

### **Updating Current Knowledge**

School-based training for teachers aims to develop essential workplace skills, benefiting both individual teachers and the school as a whole, helping retain teachers (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Effective professional development transforms teachers into innovative curriculum designers and enhances their teaching skills. In this regard, Apil asserted, "In my view, school-based training offers useful teaching strategies and provides us with opportunities to network with other educators, pick up fresh knowledge, and acquire new skills. We can learn new skills and refresh existing knowledge." School-based training provides teachers with practical teaching techniques in a real classroom setting. It offers opportunities to interact with other teachers, learn new skills, and refresh existing knowledge. Trainers emphasize the need for regular follow-up to ensure continuous learning and improvement. His narrative aligns with Erawan (2015), who stressed the importance of intense post-training supervision for effective lifelong learning.

Radha asserted, "School-based training helps us understand the school's goals and expectations from both parents and the institution. Regular training sessions facilitate easy adaptation to new environments and smoother handling of daily tasks." Teachers who participate in school-based training become familiar with the school's mission, vision,

and expectations, motivating them to collaborate with other stakeholders. Frequent training sessions make it easier to handle everyday responsibilities and adjust to new situations. These sessions made it easier to handle everyday responsibilities and adjust to new situations. Radha's experience aligns with Guang & Huang (2013), who emphasized the benefits of teachers questioning their practices and collaborating with peers and administrators to address classroom challenges. In this vein, Apil stated, "Training within the school context allows us to identify specific needs and challenges faced by the students and teachers. School management gains valuable insights into our problems, enabling targeted improvements."

This approach aligns with Canh & Minh (2012), who emphasized that a supportive school culture fosters teacher learning and empowerment. Keshav mentioned, "School-based training can assist to meet our needs as they address the common issues and provide practical, live demonstration classes." Feedback from trainers during class observations helps improve teaching practices. Keshav's reflections align with those of Gall and Acheson (2011), who advocated for observation-based feedback to identify necessary modifications in teaching methods.

Therefore, school-based teacher training is crucial for professional development as it is practical, context-specific, and fosters a collaborative environment among teachers. Regular follow-ups and a supportive school culture further enhance its effectiveness.

### **Challenges Faced in School-Based Teacher Training**

Challenges related to physical infrastructure, resources, and the effectiveness of facilitators' mentoring affect the effectiveness of school-based training (Alawi, 2024). The following two sub-themes, which appeared from the data, discuss how inadequate facilities and resources, and follow-up support activities, challenged teachers in applying the skills they learned during school-based training.

#### **Inadequate Facilities and Resources**

Inadequate facilities in school-based teacher training refer to the shortage of necessary infrastructure, resources, and support systems vital for effective teaching and learning. The data demonstrated several challenges relating to school-based professional training. In this regard, Apil asserted, "There are insufficient learning materials, poor facilities, limited technological access, and proper specialized spaces like laboratories and sports in my school. We haven't been able to effectively implement the training skills in the classrooms." Overcrowded classrooms, insufficient support to meet individual student needs, poor infrastructure, and a lack of essential learning resources are making it difficult (Vakili et al., 2024). Boring environments and familiar trainers can lead to boredom and decreased engagement.

Teachers in the Nepali English language context have limited opportunities for professional networking and exposure to new ideas and practices (Bhandari, 2022; Joshi et al., 2018). Emphasizing the need for a supportive environment for quality teacher training, Radha asserted, "If we do not have adequate facilities such as the proper training hall and sufficient required materials, training sessions cannot be conducted smoothly. We often lack suitable infrastructure and resources at our school that could only support school-based training." Inadequate facilities, including the lack of a proper training hall and insufficient materials, hinder training sessions, whereas better infrastructure and resources enhance school-based training. Her experience aligns with Gnawali (2018), who noted that training methods should be tailored to the local context, specifically in under-resourced schools.

The study revealed that teachers face challenges in applying the training and workshop knowledge and skills into practice due to a lack of resources, large class sizes, and excessive workloads. Similarly, Apil focused on the availability of training materials by stating, "During the training, our resource persons bring some interesting materials; however, they are sometimes costly for us, and cannot be easily accessible on the internet as well." Calverley and Shephard (2003) emphasized the

inefficiency of teacher training due to the inability to align available resources with students' identified needs and their perceived expectations.

### **Lack of Follow-up and Support**

Teachers often lack sufficient follow-up support to implement school-based training due to inconsistent supervision after their initial training. This creates problems in applying new skills (Martin, 2010). A lack of motivation, inconsistent classroom practices, and limited opportunities for training create challenges in adapting training to diverse local situations. In this regard, Keshav stated, "Unless we get support, we cannot apply the learned teaching strategies in our real classrooms efficiently. However, most teachers, including myself, do not get such support." Regular mentoring, peer collaboration, and feedback are essential to adapt training skills to our specific classroom context. Similarly, without appropriate monitoring and evaluation, it becomes difficult to confirm responsibility and measure the effectiveness of the training. TPD is widely regarded as indispensable; however, there is often a lack of consensus on how to implement it efficiently (Dierendonck et al., 2024). Regular support, including mentoring, peer collaboration, and feedback, is vital for successful implementation.

Follow-up teacher training and regular mentoring ensure teachers' efficiency in classroom teaching. However, despite these advantages, most training sessions are held in training halls, and trainees rarely have the opportunity to discuss their classroom issues with the facilitators later. Radha added, "When we receive regular mentoring and follow-up from the trainer and head teacher, they assist us to obtain real skills. However, it is quite difficult to meet our facilitators later to discuss our problems." In a similar vein, Keshav stated, "Without better organization, diverse training methods, and regular follow-up, school-based training will not be successful." These teachers' views underscore the need for regular follow-up, supervision, and monitoring of their classroom practices to guarantee the actual application of training outcomes. the findings corroborate Usiere

et al (2024) that post-training monitoring and supervision in schools are inconsistent and insufficient.

## **Discussion**

This study explored English language teachers' perceptions and experiences of their professional development through school-based training. The findings confirm that school-based training fosters reliance on the school's vision, collaborative experience sharing, and alignment of school strategies. It empowers instructors to obtain immediate feedback and develop plasticity and self-renewal. Teachers' professional development involves ongoing learning and training opportunities, enhancing their teaching skills to facilitate language learning more effectively (Nkundabakura et al., 2024). School-based teacher training fosters ongoing professional growth and confidence in school policies. However, a lack of qualified teachers, overwork, and inadequate management skills impede the effectiveness of training skills in the actual classroom settings.

School-based training is crucial in helping collaboration and professional growth among teachers. The findings aligned with Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD and demonstrated that training enables teachers to exchange ideas, reflect on their teaching practices, and provide constructive feedback to one another. This collaborative approach is reinforced by Opfer and Pedder (2011), who emphasize the need for both cultural and organizational support within schools to enhance teacher learning. Departmental meetings and conferences empower the sharing of ideas and solutions to common problems. The study findings corroborated those of Rahmat et al. (2023), who found that TPD helped English language teachers manage classroom challenges more effectively. Attending workshops, training sessions, and webinars enhanced teachers' pedagogical skills with more student-centered pedagogies, thereby improving their students' English language learning. The findings of the study closely aligned with those of Salifu et al. (2024), which found that TPD training sessions enhance language teachers' skills, enabling them to implement various teaching strategies and address classroom

challenges. Teacher training is a cooperative process that enhances teaching methods and supports the implementation of new strategies in classrooms.

School-based teacher training supports teachers in continuing to develop their existing knowledge, offering opportunities to enhance their pedagogical skills. It also confirms that teachers persist in their association with their school's tasks and adapt to changing opportunities. The context-specific, collective nature of school-based training contributes to teachers' ongoing professional development and enhances their overall effectiveness. Pedemonte (2016) contended that programs effective in one context may be ineffective in another, offering a challenge to teacher professional development. Likewise, time constraints and structural issues with teamwork, as identified by Sprott (2019), hinder the professional growth of teachers. The interview data also affirmed that regular feedback, continuations, and a helpful school setting further reinforce this process, promoting both teachers and students. Insufficient facilities in school-based training, such as poor infrastructure, inadequate learning materials, overcrowded classrooms, and limited access to technology, present a significant challenge to effective teaching and learning.

Similarly, inadequate resources, such as a proper training hall and sufficient materials, disrupt training sessions. Infrastructure and resources would improve the effectiveness of school-based training. The results corroborated Gnawali (2018), who highlighted the necessity to adapt training methods to under-resourced schools. School-based training is most effective when accompanied by ongoing support, a range of procedures, and sufficient resources; otherwise, teachers tend to revert to their traditional teaching strategies without adequate follow-up support.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

This study examined English language teachers' perceptions and practices of school-based training for their professional development. The findings revealed that English language teachers' positive perceptions of school-based teacher training are that it addresses their specific needs within the school context and enhances their professional development.

Involvement in in-service training sessions enhances teachers' skills of planning lessons, creating teaching materials, and classroom management in English teaching. The study underscores the benefits of school-based teacher training, which supports teacher teamwork to improve teaching skills and enhance learning opportunities. Various school-based training activities, such as workshops, seminars, training sessions, and teamwork support, help refine language teachers' pedagogical skills, including problem-solving and integrating technological skills. However, inadequate facilities and a lack of follow-up support hinder the practical application of new skills to improve institutional support.

This study suggests a bottom-up approach to teacher preparation, emphasizing alignment with local school environments over generic venues outside school. It also suggests enhancing teacher training by prioritizing local school settings and stresses the need for ICT resources and collaborative learning. This study can contribute to administrators' and teacher educators' understanding of how to expand school-based in-service training programs to meet English teachers' specific pedagogical needs. The findings of the study may help teachers transfer their knowledge and skills to the classroom and implement modifications to enhance the quality of education, thereby developing more effective professional development programs.

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