

## **Use of ICT Integrated Pedagogy in English Language Teaching: Readiness and Challenges**

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### **Abstract**

**Background:** Information Communication Technology (ICT) integrated pedagogy is an essential approach to improve learning achievement, particularly language skills, vocabulary, grammar and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills at community schools.

**Objectives:** This study attempted to explore whether English language teachers are ready to use ICT integrated pedagogy in teaching English at the secondary level and to identify the challenges of English language teachers in integrating ICT in teaching English.

**Methods:** To deal with the research objectives, a hermeneutic phenomenological research design was used to accomplish this study. The lived experiences and reflections of English language teachers were required to find out the relevance of ICT integrated pedagogy and their readiness to employ ICT tools for enhancing learning achievement. Eight English teachers were selected through a judgmental non-random sampling procedure. The in-depth interview and classroom observation were administered to elicit the required lived experiences of English language teachers regarding their readiness and challenges of applying ICT integrated pedagogy to teach language skills, vocabulary, and grammar to the EFL learners in the context of Nepal.

**Findings:** The findings of this study were the inevitability of engagement and motivation, the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in learning through ICT literacy, the lack of ICT devices and e-learning workshops and training in developing language skills and aspects.

**Conclusion:** ICT integrated pedagogy is an essential approach to engage the students to enhance learning achievement in community schools in Nepal. This approach helps the ELT teachers of basic and secondary level to promote their 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking skills, collaborative skills and digital literacy in the context of Nepal.

**Novelty:** The implication of this study helps the policy makers, teachers and students to be aware of the benefits of digital pedagogy to promote learning achievement of the learners and professional growth of ELT teachers through digital pedagogy.

**Keywords:** ICT integrated pedagogy, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, hermeneutic phenomenology, ICT devices, engagement and motivation.

## Introduction

Language skills and aspects are essential for effective communication and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, many students in Nepal face challenges in developing and enhancing their language proficiency, especially in English which is broadly used as a medium of instruction and a global lingua franca. One of the main reasons for this challenge is the lack of awareness of ICT devices among the students and teachers, which hinders their access to and use of various online resources and search engines that can facilitate language learning and teaching. Therefore, it is essential to address this issue and develop the attributes and fairness of education as well as to train learners for addressing the challenges in this digital age. In this study, language skills and aspects refer to the purviews of language acquisition, viz. listening, speaking, reading, writing, linguistic, pragmatic, and sociocultural competencies that enable the learners for effective communication and interaction in various contexts and purposes ([Poudel et al., 2021](#)). The ICT devices can enhance language skills and aspects by providing learners with access to authentic and diverse materials, opportunities for collaboration, feedback, motivation and engagement through interactive and personalized learning ([Saud, 2021](#); [Pasha & Bourn, 2021](#)). The learners can use ICT tools such as podcasts, videos, blogs, and social media to practice and improve their language skills as well as to develop their intercultural communicative awareness and critical thinking skills.

However, there is a lack of research on how ICT and language skills and aspects can be synthesized and enhanced through online and blended learning at the basic and secondary levels in Nepal. Hybridized and blended learning refer to the modes of learning that combine the use of ICT devices and face-to-face instruction respectively. The hybridized learning can offer flexibility, approachability, and personalization for learners, as well as novelty and competence for English language teachers. Nevertheless, the Hybridized learning also poses challenges such as technical issues, ICT devices, tutorial adjustment, and appraisal authenticity ([Shrestha & Thapa, 2021](#); [Poudel et al., 2021](#)).

## Review of Literature

Digitalization in education refers to use of ICT devices to increase the learning achievement of learners and teachers' competence in using ICT devices. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the weaknesses and inequalities of the education system in Nepal, as many schools and students were not prepared or equipped to shift to hybridized or blended modes of learning from face-to-face traditional mode of teaching and learning. Nepal revealed that only 36% of the schools has access to the internet, and only 18% of the teachers have received training on online teaching based on the survey study carried out by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology ([Shrestha & Thapa, 2021](#)). According to [Saud \(2021\)](#), facing ICT literacy is one of the obstacles encountered by English language teachers in Nepal, which is the shortage of adequate and relevant resources and training for teachers and learners. English teachers in urban settings are more likely to use laptops, multimedia projectors, and online platforms to enhance language learning ([Acharya, 2015](#); [Shahi & Khadka, 2025](#)). However, in rural schools have been facing limited access to electricity and internet connectivity, a dearth of ICT infrastructure and insufficient teacher training in digital literacy and a lack of ICT integrated pedagogy ([Paudel, 2022](#)). Therefore, EFL teachers in Nepal need to develop their digital pedagogical competencies in order to deliver effective online instruction.

However, many teachers and students face obstacles such as inadequate access to ICT devices, poor internet access, and a shortage of technical support, as well as low confidence and motivation to use ICT devices in their teaching ([Saud, 2021](#)). Similarly, learners also need to acquire the skills and knowledge to use digital tools and platforms for learning, communication, and collaboration. However, many learners lack the exposure and guidance to develop their skills in digital pedagogy, especially in rural and marginalized areas. However, the current curriculum and assessment of secondary level education in Nepal do not adequately address these aspects, nor do they incorporate the use of digital technologies and resources to enhance language learning and intercultural communication ([Pasha & Bourn, 2021](#)). ICT skill is considered "a survival skill" for this digital era ([Eshet-Alkalai, 2004](#)). The ICT literacy has been conceptualized as an ability to control and function ICT devices efficiently in teaching and learning ([Tafazoli et al., 2017, p. 716](#)). The main reason for being poor in English is that English learners have a very limited vocabulary. English as a foreign language (EFL) learners have poor comprehensive and productive abilities in English due to the poor content-specific vocabulary which are necessary to read and understand academic texts. EFL learners need at least 6000 words for their daily language use and 9000 words for communication academically ([Laufer, 2021](#); [Sonbul & Siyanova-Chanturia, 2022](#)).

The limited knowledge in vocabulary items of EFL learners grapple to understand the prescribed and referenced texts in their mainstream subjects. In this regard, the EFL learners can enhance vocabularies, rules of grammar and language skills, computer-mediated communication via Facebook and Messenger as a social media ([Cruz & Waemusa, 2023](#)). There is an immense exposure of English language through social media such as Facebook,

Viber, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, twitter etc. Due to the technological innovation, various types of communication have been developed which incorporate genuine language structure ([Kadir et al., 2013](#)). In this context, Facebook, and messenger group chats would enhance interactive skills in which learners can develop speaking and writing skills as well as vocabularies ([Cruz & Waemusa, 2023](#)). Learners can develop their interactive skills through informal communication with their colleagues on Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Viber, and Instagram. EFL learners require creativity and communication skills to be ready for global communication, think creativity and collaboration with their peers ([Davilla, 2016](#); [Mali, 2018](#); [Nazikian & Park, 2016](#)). The interaction between learners and teachers, as well as learners and teachers synchronously in WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Instagram, and Viber, is very essential to enhance communicative competencies ([Egbert, 2017](#)). Moreover, they can interact asynchronously through digital public platforms as well.

In fact, EFL learners' writing skills are to be developed for their academic careers. The students can be trained to run AI ChatGPT in order to develop writing skills. They can compare and contrast the human-generated writing text and AI ChatGPT-generated writing text in the language class ([Alexander, et al. 2023](#)). There are unlimited and infinite opportunities for online collaboration and communication in mobile technology ([Annamalai, 2019](#)). The EFL learners can develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills through the use of mobile technology such as WhatsApp, Viber, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc. ([Ankeny, 2019](#); [Grigoryan, 2020](#); [Zhu & Wang, 2019](#)). In this regard, [Resnik and Schallmoser \(2019\)](#) argue that WhatsApp can be used by learners as a social platform to learn language and cognitive development. Learners' critical, evaluative and creative thinking skills can be promoted through the reading habit of short stories during their free time. English as a second and foreign language learners can enhance language skills, vocabulary, rules of grammar and language functions in the target language through reading traditional and modern short stories effectively ([Kadel, 2021](#)). In this regard, the ESL learners can enhance their active learning, critical thinking and creative thinking skills through digital storytelling to develop their language learning ([Abdel-Aziz, et al. 2022](#)). The digital storytelling approach is very useful and effective for EFL learners to develop four language skills, vocabulary and grammar ([Guenier, 2023](#)).

ICT skills are not only technical skills, but also cognitive, social, and emotional skills that involve critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and creativity. It is essential for EFL teachers and students to cope with the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, such as global communication, intercultural awareness, collaboration, and creativity ([Kern, 2015](#)). ELT classrooms are the ideal places for fostering critical thinking ([Can & Altan, 2021](#)). ICT has significant implications for language learning and teaching, especially in English as a foreign language (EFL) context, where learners and teachers face various challenges and opportunities in accessing and utilizing ICT resources. Similarly, ELT educators must understand the dynamic interplay between technology, pedagogy, and contents ([Harris & Hofer, 2022](#)). Thus, ICT integrated pedagogy can support students' language skills by providing them with the access to a variety of digital texts and media, such as e-books,

websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, and games, that can cater to their interests, needs, and preferences. ICT integrated pedagogy can also foster students' language skills by engaging them in interactive and collaborative activities, such as creating and sharing digital stories, commenting and reviewing digital texts, and participating in online communities and discussions, which can enhance their comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and metacognition ([Tinmaz et al., 2022](#)).

Several studies have reported positive effects on ICT integrated pedagogy initiatives on secondary-level students' reading skills. [Nguyen and Habók \(2021\)](#) found that incorporating digital reading platforms and interactive e-books increases students' engagement, which improves their reading comprehension levels significantly. [Smith and Jones \(2018\)](#) also demonstrated that digital tools can be effective for enhancing reading fluency and comprehension of English language learners, especially when combined with other instructional methods, such as repeated reading, vocabulary instruction, and scaffolding. [Catalano \(2018\)](#) suggested that digital tools can be a useful resource for developing reading skills and promoting reading engagement among English language learners.

Similarly, [Hermafustiana and Rusinawaty \(2010\)](#) found that digital tools can create interest among low-ability readers and improve their reading skills. [Li \(2021\)](#) also goes in the same line as during pandemic, ICT motivated the teachers to handle remote classes. These studies indicate that digital literacy can support students' reading skills by providing them with access to a variety of digital texts and media, such as e-books, websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, and games, that can cater to their interests, needs, and preferences. ICT integrated pedagogy can also foster students' reading skills by engaging them in interactive and collaborative activities, such as creating and sharing digital stories, commenting and reviewing digital texts, and participating through online communities and discussions that can enhance their comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and metacognition.

[Al-Azawei et al. \(2021\)](#) carried out a systematic review of 35 studies on the use of digital storytelling for language learning in higher education. They found that digital storytelling can improve students' speaking skills and pronunciation to enhance their motivation, engagement, creativity, collaboration, and ICT literacy. They also identified some challenges and limitations of digital storytelling, such as technical issues, teacher training, and assessment. These studies indicate that digital literacy can support students' speaking skills by providing them with access to a variety of digital tools and media, such as web-based programs, mobile applications, e-books, websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, and games, that can cater to their interests, needs, and preferences. The literature on the importance of digital pedagogy to enhance vocabulary abilities of the students shows that various digital tools and programs can be used to create or access authentic, interactive, and personalized language materials that can improve students' vocabulary and language skills. These studies demonstrate the importance of digital literacy to enhance the vocabulary abilities of students in various contexts and levels of language learning. Therefore, this study attempted to explore perceptions of English language teachers regarding whether English language teachers are ready professionally to use



ICT integrated pedagogy in teaching ELT and challenges at the secondary level in Nepal. The school sector development plan ([MoEST, 2016](#)) and digital Nepal framework highlighted the importance of ICT in English language teaching (ELT) for integrating ICT in education, challenges in implementing ICT in ELT due to rural-urban digital divide, lack of infrastructure, teacher training and digital literacy. The ICT in education master plan (2013-2017) laid an early foundation, envisioning equitable access and quality improvement in education ([Ministry of Education, 2013](#)), which was followed by the school sector development plan (2016-2023). Furthermore, there is a need to develop and implement innovative pedagogies and methodologies that can enhance ICT of the students and tutors such as project-based learning, collaborative learning, and gamified learning ([Poudel et al., 2021](#)). Therefore, there is a dire need to enhance language skills and aspects through ICT approach at the secondary level in Nepal. Language skills and aspects refer to the language skills, the linguistic, pragmatic, and sociocultural competencies that enable effective communication and interaction in various contexts and purposes ([Poudel et al., 2021](#)).

## Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study were as follows:

- To explore whether English language teachers are ready to use ICT integrated pedagogy in teaching English language at the basic and secondary levels;
- To identify the challenges of English language teachers in implementing ICT integrated pedagogy in teaching English.

## Methods

### Research Design

The research design was a hermeneutic phenomenological research design, which was based on the qualitative approach to uncover the perspectives and lived experiences of the participants within the realm of the readiness and challenges of the participants on the use of ICT integrated pedagogy in enhancing learning achievement. We used a hermeneutic phenomenological research design to uncover the hidden meanings ([Dowling, 2004](#)). The main reason behind employing a hermeneutic phenomenological research design was to collect lived experiences and reflections of English teachers in relation to the readiness of employing digital pedagogy in language classrooms and the challenges of implementing digital pedagogy in enhancing the learning achievement of the learners. The lived reflections of English teachers were elicited to collect the subjective and multiple realities of the importance of employing ICT integrated pedagogy in English language teaching in enhancing learning achievement of the learners, thereby addressing the research objectives of this study. Phenomenology is considered to be the social and cultural conditioning of the behavior, interaction and the interpretation of behavior by participants ([Cohen et al., 2018](#)).

### Population and Sample

The population of the study includes all ELT teachers teaching at the Basic and Secondary levels in community schools located in Kathmandu district. The sample of the study consists of eight ICT literate English language teachers with at least 10 years of teaching

experiences. The main criterion for selection of the participants was that the ELT teachers should have the skills to use digital tools to facilitate ELT in the classroom. We visited them physically and consulted with them regarding their familiarity with ICT pedagogy. Two English language teachers were selected from each community school using a judgmental non-random sampling procedure.

## **Research Instrument**

This study employed in-depth interview guidelines and field notes to collect data from classroom observation. We conducted in-depth interviews with the participants to gather in-depth information. The classroom facilitation was observed and recorded as field notes. The lived experiences of participants were recorded as required data to address the research objectives. We had a face-to-face interview with six participants, and two participants were interviewed via telephone in this study.

## **Data Analysis**

The collected data from the participants were transcribed into English. Then, the data were coded and decoded rigorously. On the basis of commonalities of the codes, i.e., local codes, the organizing themes were developed. Subsequently, the organizing themes were merged together on the basis of similar codes and the global themes were developed out of them.

## **Ethical Consideration**

All of the participants were voluntarily engaged to provide data in this study as a source of data. The transcribed data were sent to the participants to check their validity based on the member check strategy ([Cohen et al., 2018](#)). We collected the data in the democratic manner and research academic norms. The participants were pseudonymously titled as T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, and T8 to maintain anonymity in this study. We have not asked them to share any personal information, such as name, name of their school, mobile number, email, etc., to maintain confidentiality. We promised them that the data which they provided verbally would only be used in this study. They were assured that the data would be kept secret and maintain confidentiality. We have taken consent from the participants to administer interviews and conduct classroom observation.

## **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Data were analyzed and interpreted qualitatively. While screening data, some comments were made in the margin of the transcribed interviews and observation field notes. The comments were converted into codes, which were further refined and developed as local themes. The local themes were categorized and grouped into organizing themes. In a similar vein, global themes were developed out of organizing themes. Thus, the thematic analysis procedure, as aforementioned, was followed to analyze and interpret the data in this study.

Table 1: A Sample of Global Themes Development

<b>Global Themes</b>	<b>Organizing Themes</b>	<b>Local themes</b>
Use of ICT Integrated Pedagogy in ELT	Engagement and Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excitement in using ICT integrated pedagogical tools such as Edu. Puzzle, Padlet, and Kahoot Mentimeter</li> <li>• Students delighted to learn English in assistance with digital tools</li> </ul>
	Need for Developing 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills in Learning through ICT Integrated Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative thinking</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Friendship, harmony, guidance and counselling</li> <li>• Teamwork while using ICT tools such as YouTube, Padlet, Storybird, etc.</li> </ul>
	Lack of ICT Devices for e-Learning Workshop and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient desktops, irregular internet connectivity, and required digital equipment even in the ICT laboratory</li> <li>• No emphasis from the head teacher and administrative staff for developing ELT lab</li> <li>• Electricity cut down during classes</li> <li>• No Workshop, training and seminar on ecology in different classrooms ecology</li> </ul>
	Developing Language Skills and Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of ICT tools such as YouTube, webinars, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc. for acquiring language skills, vocabulary and grammar.</li> <li>• Maximum use of ICT tools helps the EFL learners to mastery over language functions, vocabulary, language skills and grammar.</li> <li>• Drills for practicing language functions and pronunciation</li> <li>• YouTube to teach language functions.</li> <li>• Online games for grammar practice</li> <li>• Storybird and other tools for fostering writing skills</li> </ul>



## **Results**

The findings of this study are presented in relation to four major themes with verbatim of the participants: 1) engagement and motivation; 2) need of developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through ICT integrated pedagogy 3) lack of ICT devices and e-learning workshop and training; 4) developing language skills and aspects. These four global themes were developed out of the various organized and basic themes based on the verbatim of the participants. The global themes were analyzed and interpreted with the key verbatim of the participants as below:

### **Engagement and Motivation**

ICT integrated pedagogy can enhance language skills and aspects by providing learners with access to authentic and diverse materials, opportunities for collaboration, feedback, motivation and engagement through interactive and personalized learning ([Saud, 2021](#); [Pasha & Bourn, 2021](#)). In this regard, T2 stated:

*when I use ICT tools to teach vocabulary through an e-narrative story, the learners are more excited to comprehend the story and to address the comprehensive questions with their peers and partners in small groups. Even low learners are very enthusiastic to interact with their peers and tutors without any hesitation and are shy in the class.*

In fact, ICT for the learners and teachers is essential to make the learners aware of every device of information communication technology (ICT), which is the main key to get entry in the digitalized global market, employment, business, and education. The participants, T1, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, and T8 agreed the expansion of digital literacy and engagement of learners through a learning management system and different search engines. Regarding this, T4 remarked, “*I enjoy using Kahoot but it has limitations in its free version. The question types are also limited in free version. Paying for it is very expensive for us*”. In a similar vein, T3 argued:

*The students are very enthusiastic and motivated to carry out the classwork through the digital tools. When I taught them using Edu-puzzle, and slides with interactive mode, they were much more motivated to take part in the interactive activities. None of the learners were passive and inactive while teaching them through digital pedagogy.*

Moreover, ICT integrated pedagogy for enhancing learning is essential to teach English language teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), learners can be very dynamic and smart in language learning activities. The learners can be engaged through the StoryJumper activity, which provides an effective and engaging way of enhancing vocabulary and writing skills through digital storytelling ([Alshumaimeri & Almasri, 2012](#)). The engagement of learners is possible through the mode of ICT integrated pedagogy for e-learning. At this point, T6 noted:

*ICT tools for e-learning should be implemented in the community schools in order to develop the learning achievement of the learners by implementing ICT integrated pedagogy. Moreover, the professional development of the teachers could be enhanced through the ICT integrated pedagogy for e-learning as a campaign.*

This highlights that every teacher and learner in the classroom as well as at home would be engaged to be self-regulated learners since education is a lifelong learning process. All of the participants agreed that ICT integrated pedagogy can help the teachers and learners to be self-directed learners.

### **Need for Developing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in Learning through ICT Integrated Pedagogy**

The critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills, communication skills, and collaborative learning are the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. The integration of technology in communication skills is another prominent aspect. In this regard, T4 asserted:

*I think the practices of ICT literacy for e-learning can make the learners very critical and creative learners. They can become versatile and multi-dimensional learners with the help of digitalized global world. The learners are conditioned to use micro: bit, and scratch as gamification tools to make the learners critical and creative through digital literacy.*

The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are essential to survive successfully in this globalized village. Storybird facilitates students to learn vocabulary by providing them with a rich and diverse collection of illustrations and words through digital storytelling ([Yang & Wu, 2012](#)). Highlighting the role of ICT integrated pedagogy in developing writing skills, T3 stated that “I use Storybird to develop my students’ creative writing and critical thinking skills”. In the same line, T4 underlined that *developing* students’ speaking skills is possible “*by engaging them in interactive and collaborative activities, such as creating and sharing digital stories, commenting and reviewing digital texts, and participating in online communities and discussions, that can enhance their comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and metacognition*”.

All the participants accepted that the ICT integrated pedagogy for e-learning helps the learners to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. In this respect, T1 noted that “*there are many e-learning platforms for the teachers and learners. I know, they assist us in enhancing critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication effectively.*” Digital literacy project-based learning, collaborative learning, and gamified learning are developed through the digital learning for e-learning program ([Poudel et al., 2021](#)). This shows that most of the learners and teachers were motivated towards the implementation of ICT integrated pedagogy at the secondary level. Thus, it can be inferred that there is much more motivation of the learners and teachers for learning through engagement in digital literacy. Online and blended learning can offer flexibility, accessibility, and personalization for learners, as well as innovation and efficiency for teachers. The English teachers need ICT skills, teamwork readiness skills, problem-solving skills, creativity, and critical thinking skills ([Voogt & Roblin, 2012](#)). In fact, ICT integrated devices can personalize the learning of every learner based on their needs and interests. ICT integrated pedagogy can encourage learners for the personalized learning, collaboration, teamwork, and communication. Moreover, the technology can enhance gamification and collaboration through online forums, video conferencing, webinar and social digital platform ([Siregar, et al., 2024](#)).

### **Lack of ICT Devices, Workshop and Training**

Due to the lack of ICT devices, it is very challenging to execute ICT integrated pedagogy at community schools in Nepal. In this regard, one of the participants T7 stated that *“I have received training in ICT to teach ELT with technology; however, there is no desktop, laptop, overhead projector in the language class. So, it is very difficult to share the e-learning material to the learners.”* On the contrary, T2 blamed that *“in Kathmandu, most of the classes are equipped with ICT devices. But teachers are not using them as they should have because there is low parents’ pressure for them.”* This result is congruent with the concept that the limited access of ICT devices, poor internet connectivity, and lack of technical support causes low confidence and motivation to use ICTs in their teaching ([Saud, 2021](#)). Suppose the ICT literacy for e-learning has to be executed. In that case, the school administration and school management committee should manage the required budget to buy enough smartboards, laptops, desktops and internet access at school. In this context, the participant T8 asserted:

*The parents of the children have frequently asked the principals of each community school to issue them the transfer certificate for institutional schools since the teaching and learning activities are conducted through sophisticated modern ICT devices there; so, the learners and parents are fascinated with the latest sophisticated digital and hybridized devices in the institutional schools.*

This reveals that due to the lack of parents’ awareness on their children, teachers are not properly using ICT tools in their classroom pedagogy as a result teachers have low motivation towards using it. Moreover, the teachers of community schools are not interested to be ICT friendly even if the concerned authority of Local Government has organized and provided all of the teachers with short term workshop on ICT integrated pedagogy on the regular basis in the local level. However, there is no experts on digital literacy in the local level. In this regard, the participant T7 asserted:

*Owing to running classes without ICT integrated approach and digital devices, the workshop, short-term training in the name of ICT has become a waste of human resources and budget of the local governments. So, there should be mentorship on ICT-integrated devices from faculties of the provincial-level universities to implement ICT integrated pedagogy by the teachers of community schools.*

Most of the teachers lack confidence, training skills, technical assistance, resources and infrastructure to incorporate ICT into education context in their institution though they intend to digitalize in their class ([Krause et al., 2017](#)). The integration of technology in English can bring significant transformation in ELT.

### **Developing Language Skills and Aspects**

The students require at least 9000 words to read books and academic texts in the target language ([Laufer, 2021](#); [Sonbul & Siyanova-Chanturia, 2022](#)). In this regard, the participant T5 said:

*I always get my students listen to the unfamiliar words and repeat the words after audio text I play from my mobile or speaker. I have been teaching listening skills through ICT integrated pedagogy to the students of secondary level in the language class. I always ask them to listen to the comprehensive texts and ask them to address the questions at the end of the listening text in the group. I also ask them to interact and share appropriate answers in the group. Subsequently, I asked them to write the answer of each question and share it to me as class work.*

ICT integrated pedagogy is one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to develop listening skills for the second language and foreign language learners since English has become the global lingua franca in the world. Use of digital literacy helps the learners develop language skills, pragmatic, and sociocultural competencies that enable effective communication and interaction in various contexts and purposes ([Poudel et al., 2021](#)). In this context, T6 claimed that “teaching the listening skills through digital literacy help the learners improve comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, self-efficacy, anxiety, motivation, engagement, satisfaction, strategies, and attitudes of ESL and EFL learners”. Likewise, T1 accepted:

*I am ready to use ICT tools in my language classroom but due to electricity cut in the middle of the class has annoyed me a lot. It disturbs me in implementing my lesson plan. Sometimes I use my mobile phone to record my student’s conversation and play it back so that they can reflect on their pronunciation.*

This illustrates role of ICT tools for motivating the students towards language aspects such as vocabulary. This is congruent with Li’s (2021) finding that teachers are affirmative in using ICT. Moreover, presenting a different opinion, T7 remarked “though I accept students learn lessons more effectively and enthusiastically if I use ICT tools for grammar games, vocabulary games, speaking practice drills, due to financial and administrative problems, training is useless.” This reveals that ICT use supports in varying the teaching and learning activities and shift the teaching learning activities towards student centered methods ([Hidayati, 2022](#)). Digital literacy can also foster students’ language skills by engaging them in interactive and collaborative activities, such as creating and sharing digital stories, commenting and reviewing digital texts, and participating in online communities and discussions, that can enhance their comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and metacognition ([Tinmaz et al., 2022](#)).

ICT integrated pedagogy assists the EFL learners to develop reading skills as well. Studies have shown that ICT literacy can also enhance the reading skills especially through the use of web-based and mobile programs that provide authentic, interactive, and personalized reading materials. In this regard, the learners can be provided with the authentic reading texts and asked them to read and address the objective questions after each page through Edu-puzzle. These studies demonstrate the potential of digital literacy to enhance listening skill in various contexts and levels of language learning. [Dalton and Crissham \(2010\)](#) argue that digital tools can provide a more engaging and interactive way of enhancing reading skills and motivation. ICT integrated pedagogy has become a productive and meaningful approach to develop integrated skills, vocabulary and grammar effectively.

## Discussion

One of the findings of this study is that use of ICT integrated pedagogy helps the learners to be more engaged and motivated towards learning. Students' engagement can strengthen their performance in language classroom ([Eerdemutu et al., 2023](#); [Li, 2021](#)). [Rashid and Howard \(2023\)](#) argue that use of smartphones as a means of digital devices for blogging in the language classroom increases both confidence and motivation of the ESL learners to write more. Language teachers are to be ready professionally and digitally to handle language classroom with the help of digital platforms. In fact, online learning has become the integral part of any learner who studies through ICT integrated pedagogy in this 21<sup>st</sup> century ([Radzuan et al., 2023](#)). In order to develop learning achievement, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are to be used by the learners; however, they cannot develop collaborative, digital skills, problem solving skills and communicative skills without the ICT integrated pedagogy. The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are considered as survival skills" in this globalized society ([Eshet-Alkalai, 2004](#)). The learners of any university should learn 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to survive successfully. Owing to the lack of readiness of the teachers to use ICT integrated pedagogy, the learners cannot develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to enhance their learning achievement. The lack of internet accessibility is one the causes of challenges for ICT integrated pedagogy to enhance learning achievement of the learners. Each school has been facing the challenges of affording the laptop, desktop, smartboards, podium and digitally sophisticated language classroom as per the demands of parents and learners. In this regard, [Saud \(2021\)](#) argues that one of the main challenges of facing the development of digital literacy in Nepal is the lack of adequate and relevant resources and training for teachers and learners.

The online and blended learning also pose challenges such as technical issues, digital device, pedagogical adaptation, and assessment validity ([Shrestha & Thapa, 2021](#); [Poudel et al., 2021](#)). Learners can enhance vocabularies, rules of grammar and language skills computer-mediated communication via facebook and messenger as social media platforms ([Cruz & Waemusa, 2023](#)). Owing to the technological innovation, various types of communication have been developed which involve the usage of new word forms, structures and expressive style ([Kadir et al., 2013](#)). The public digital platforms play a vital role to develop the language skills, grammar and vocabulary of the learners. In this regard, [Andiappan et al. \(2022\)](#) argue that ESL learners could be able to enhance their speaking proficiency with the help of vlogging activities. Moreover, vlogging as a digital tool can be employed as a supplement to improve competence in speaking skills. The language skills, vocabulary and grammar of the learners could be easily developed if the teachers used digital pedagogy platforms in the school level.

## Conclusion

ICT integrated pedagogy is an essential approach to engage the students and teachers to enhance learning achievement in community schools in Nepal. The psychological motivation of the post-modern learners is possible through the learning management system. However, the teachers are not ready professionally, digitally and academically to use digital tools to teach language skills, vocabulary and grammar in the school level due to the lack of



strong policy on ICT integrated pedagogy of Local Government in Nepal since the controlling and running of local level education has been given authority to the local government as per the constitution of 2015 in Nepal. The ELT teachers can motivate to the learners through the ICT integrated pedagogy since the digital tools are motivating, exciting and inspiring to learn. The language functions, language skills, vocabulary items, and grammatical rules can be learnt and taught effectively through the ICT approach by using digital devices. The learners can be taught the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, collaborative learning skills, problem solving skills, ICT skills, leadership, guidance and counselling skills through digital pedagogy. However, there are some challenges of implementing ICT integrated pedagogy in community schools. Lack of adequate financial support to manage digitalized classroom with smartboards in classroom is one of the challenges to make competent teachers in digital pedagogy. The English language teachers in community schools are not experts enough to teach English with technology due to the lack of workshop and training in ICT. Looking beyond 2025, the success of ICT integration in ELT, especially in bridging the rural-urban gap, will depend on several factors. The proposed Digital Nepal Framework emphasizes strengthening digital infrastructure, expanding digital service access, enhancing digital skills and literacy, and reducing the digital divide ([ICT Frame, 2025](#)). Specific policy interventions focusing on targeted teacher training programs for ELT in rural areas, development of localized and offline digital ELT content, and sustainable solutions for infrastructure (like solar power) will be crucial. There are not adequate numbers of computers, projectors, and laptops in each community school in Nepal.

We would like to suggest expanding Centre for National Education Development's (NCED) three-phase training model for primary and secondary teachers with blended modes. The NCED's three phase training should be converted into subject-specific digital pedagogy by developing ELT-targeted modules. The Local Government should allocate adequate budget for digital infrastructure such as internet access, solar power, electricity connectivity, smartboards, laptops, desktops etc. to support blended learning in community schools.

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