Investigating Secondary Students' Perceptions of Curriculum Complexity and Instructional Challenges in English Language Acquisition in Nepal

Man Bahadur Jora, PhD iD
Assistant Professor
Far Western University, Nepal

Abstract

The present study investigates the problems encountered by secondary level students in learning the English language. The main objectives of this study were to identify the main problems faced by students in learning English at the secondary level and to identify the major difficulties experienced by students and the factors responsible for those difficulties. The study was a qualitative research design employing transcendental phenomenological research. Data were collected from secondary level students of selected schools using interview guidelines and themes were derived employing thematic analysis. The collected data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Learners find it difficult to grasp new English words because of a lack of adequate contextual information, pronunciation difficulties, and multiple meanings, causing apprehension about misusing the words and poor sentence construction, particularly for foreign students in Nepal. The less use of Nepalese cultural materials in textbooks causes a gap, making the textbooks seem foreign and uninteresting, especially for minority groups. Learning environments are devoid of speaking practice due to teacher-led approaches, crowded classrooms, and examination-oriented curricula, causing apprehension, passive learning, and poor speaking fluency. Moreover, monotonous writing activities without proper schemes and constructive comments hamper creative expression, leaving learners with mechanical skills but poor coherence and autonomy.

Introduction

English language is received as a complex subject in non-native scenario of English. According to Aranda (2022) and Grayson (2016), high school English acquisition curricula are extremely complex for students because they incorporate advanced academic language, complex grammar, such as passive voice constructions, and dense specialized vocabulary that necessitates concurrent content and linguistic mastery. These problems are exacerbated by instructional deficiencies, which lead to persistent challenges with reading comprehension, grammar usage, and oral fluency. Teachers frequently lack tailored approaches for diverse student backgrounds, educational gaps, and insufficient out-of-class practice (Grayson, 2016; Noyam Journals, 2025). In line with this, Aranda (2022), Grayson (2016), and Noyam Journals (2025) argue curricula that do not adequately address native language transfer effects and cultural nuances impede the development of skills such as inference, figurative interpretation, and textual synthesis.

Due to its role in education, technology, business, and international relations, English has become a worldwide language (Crystal, 2003). In Nepal, English is a compulsory subject that is taught to students from the basic level to the secondary level (Amalin, 2021). Secondary students are slated to have accomplished sufficient ability in listening, speaking, reading, and writing so that they can use English for academic and communication purposes in real, life situations (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MoEST], 2019). Nevertheless, a great number of secondary level students still are not able to reach the expected level of English competence even though they have learnt the language for several years (Giri, 2010). Students have problems in reading English texts, talking about their ideas, writing sentences that are grammatically correct, and using the right vocabulary (Shrestha, 2018). All these issues suggest that the learning of the English language at the secondary level has not been completely successful (Phyak, 2015). To make English language learning learner friendly, classroom discourse is significant in schools (Jora, 2020; 2022). Learners face difficulties while learning English in classes at the secondary level.

Nepal is a linguistically diverse country where students come from different language and cultural backgrounds (Giri, 2011). Most students speak their local language or Nepali at home and in the community, and English is hardly used outside the school, thereby students have very few chances of exposure and practice (Phyak & Bui, 2013). Besides, the majority of classrooms are teacher centered and examination-oriented so students hardly use English actively (Shrestha, 2020). Teachers also find it difficult to conduct lessons with large classes, limited teaching time, lack of teaching materials, and inadequate training in

modern teaching methods (Amalin, 2021). All these factors together form barriers to effective English language teaching and learning (Padak & Rasinski, 2013). This study aimed at exploring views of students on high school English acquisition curriculum complexity and instructional deficiencies.

Literature Review

English is an international language used across fields such as communication, education, business, office work, and technology (Crystal, 2012). English language learning holds importance due to its status as a global language (Kirkpatrick, 2010). The English language comprises four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, where listening and speaking serve as oral and primary skills, while reading and writing function as secondary and written skills; additionally, listening and reading are receptive skills, whereas speaking and writing are productive skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Listening aids students in comprehending spoken English within classroom settings (Vandergrift, 2012). Speaking enables students to articulate ideas, thoughts, views, and opinions among peers (Luoma, 2004). Reading entails understanding written texts and broadens students' knowledge base (Grabe, 2009). Learning of English language in Nepal requires to be directed to multilingual turn and Nepalese English accordingly to the level and need of learners (Jora, 2019; 2020). Teaching and learning of English is the crucial matter in the educational setting.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Problems Faced by Students in Learning English

English as a foreign language is very useful worldwide; however, in Nepal it is not commonly spoken at home or in everyday life. Students mainly learn English in classrooms through textbooks, curriculum-based lessons, and limited practice activities. As a result, students do not get enough opportunities to speak English outside school. They face difficulties in speaking due to limited vocabulary knowledge and weak grammatical competence. Many students often feel shy and afraid of making mistakes while speaking English.

Traditional teaching methods, such as lecture-based instruction, focus more on deductive teaching and learning rather than modern communicative approaches. This limits students' opportunities to use English actively in real situations. Therefore, students should learn English through interactive activities such as group work, pair work, role plays, watching videos, debates, and listening to English stories to improve their language skills.

Practice in such real life situations as conversations with peers and teachers are what helps the EFL learners to develop their fluency (BridgeUniverse, 2024a). EFL learners need to practice regularly, be given continuous support and

encouragement, be motivated, and be provided with the opportunities to use English if they are to strengthen their abilities effectively (BridgeUniverse, 2024b). Teachers have a vital role to play by providing a suitable classroom environment, which gives the students confidence to speak and write, thus leading to better learning outcomes over time (EFL Cafe, n.d.). Conversational activities in classes can make language learning and teaching effective and useful.

Students' High School English Acquisition Curriculum Complexity and Instructional Deficiencies

Students' high school English acquisition curriculum complexity and instructional deficiencies denotes the difficulties high school students face in acquiring English proficiency due to overly intricate curriculum design and shortcomings in teaching methods. This expression highlights how the high school English syllabus frequently presents more advanced and complicated subjects than junior high, overwhelming students transitioning to senior levels. These topics require enhanced understanding, stronger grammar skills, and extensive practice, but limited real-world application hinders retention. Secondary-level students face many problems in learning the English language. These problems include linguistic difficulties, psychological factors, socio-cultural problems, learner-related factors, previous studies, and research gaps.

Linguistic difficulties include grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as problems related to language structures. Psychological problems such as fear of making mistakes, low confidence, anxiety, stress, and low self-esteem also affect students while learning English. Learning English as a second language can be tough. Students often struggle with a small vocabulary, making it hard to understand things and express themselves (World TESOL Academy, 2024). Pronunciation can also be tricky because of new sounds and weird spelling rules (English College, 2025). Complex grammar, idioms, and fast talking can get in the way of smooth communication too (ICT.edu, 2024). Students in the countryside may have it even harder since they don't get as much exposure to English as those in cities, which can make them memorize things instead of really understanding them (Salleh & Amir, 2016). But, with regular practice, fun activities, and some help from teachers, these problems can be solved (Excel English Institute, 2024). Socio-cultural factors influence English language learning. Students from rural areas often have less exposure to English compared to urban students. Family and where you grew up can make learning English tough (Salleh & Amir, 2016; Danjuma, et al., 2024). Teachers still rely on old-school memorization (Isti, 2018). But, doing stuff together in class can really get people excited and help them understand things better (Dumchak, 2024).

Learning English Language at the Secondary Level

Another major problem at the secondary level is the lack of proper teaching–learning methods and a supportive learning environment. Some schools do not have enough trained and professionally qualified teachers, audio-visual materials, or well-equipped language laboratories. Large class sizes and learners' socio-cultural diversity also make it difficult for teachers to provide individual attention to students.

At the secondary level, the English language syllabus is wide and difficult for students. They are expected to read long paragraphs and texts, write emails and essays, and understand complex grammatical structures. Many students focus only on passing examinations rather than developing their language skills and communicative competence. They do not practice speaking English with their friends and lack opportunities to use English in real-life communication. Moreover, students do not engage in self-learning activities and hesitate to ask their teachers for guidance, which makes learning English more difficult at the secondary level. Therefore, students need continuous practice, supportive learning activities, and proper guidance to improve their English-speaking skills and use the English language correctly and direct students towards activity oriented classes like semesters (Jora & Joshi, 2026). The course contents require to be maintained with communicational aspects.

High school English language acquisition programs are often very complicated because they combine advanced academic language requirements with language learning. For example, students encounter complex grammatical structures such as passive voice and low, frequency vocabulary, which are very challenging for students who are learning both content and language at the same time (Grayson, 2016). The complexity increases at secondary levels where curricula demand learners to master a wide range of skills including understanding complex sentences, making inferences and interpreting figurative language. Students with little exposure to such skills get really overwhelmed (Noyam Research, 2025). These challenges become more difficult when teachers are not well equipped to handle them. Teachers are expected to adjust their teaching according to students' native languages, prior schooling, and motivation, but unfortunately, there are not enough specific strategies available for teachers to do this properly (Grayson, 2016). Teaching materials are generally not considering how much students change from being in junior high to senior high. At this point, the subject matter becomes more profound and abstract, and students eventually get confused with sentence construction, grammar rules, and vocabulary usage (Aranda, 2022). Students reveal that they face these challenges almost every day in the classroom, and the fact that they hardly get to practice outside makes it difficult for them to remember and use

the language effectively (Aranda, 2022). These discrepancies point to the necessity of having learning materials that gradually increase in difficulty instead of expecting everyone to be at the same level and ready (Noyam Research, 2025)).

One problem with how English is taught is that it focuses much on grammar rules by themselves, instead of showing how they're used in everyday situations. This can make it hard for students to understand what they're reading, and they can lose faith in their ability to learn (Aranda, 2022). Other things that get in the way are how classmates feel about learning, if students aren't motivated, and if the teaching isn't very good. Teachers might not have what they need to help students with different backgrounds or to put ideas from texts together (Grayson, 2016). The best kind of teaching changes to fit each student, but a lot of programs don't do that is that which keeps the problems going (Grayson, 2016). To fix this, we need to change what's taught to make it more interesting, give students practice with real-life examples, and mix language learning with other subjects. Teachers also need training to help them deal with these tricky issues (Aranda, 2022). If we don't make these changes, learning English in high school will keep being a struggle for students, which can hurt them later on (Noyam Research, 2025).

In a study, Sharma (2016) revealed that students faced difficulties in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence construction also showed that lack of practice and overdependence on memorization negatively affected students' language learning. Students need strategies that can attract them in classes along the concentration to students' learning styles (Jora, 2026). Convincingly, Oli (2018) said that the study concluded that students' home environment, parental support, and exposure to English played a significant role in English language learning and motivation and exposure got significant space in the learning of students. What's more is that Thapa and Rai (2023) revealed that mother tongue interference affected students' pronunciation, sentence structure, and fluency. The study concluded that students often translated directly from their first language into English, which resulted in grammatical errors and slow language development. For the enhanced learning of students, peer learning, pair work, group work, and guidance of the teachers are essential in students' English language learning.

According to the Input Hypothesis of Krashen, the acquisition of a second language comes about through the exposure of learners to comprehensible input that is just slightly beyond their current level of proficiency (i+1), and the hypothesis thus places natural comprehension far above explicit grammar teaching (Krashen, 1985). Unfortunately, high school curricula seem to disregard this by regularly exposing students to very difficult texts packed with academic vocabulary and abstract sentence structures, thus going far beyond i+1 and causing mental exhaustion (Krashen, 1982). When input is without situational cues, the complexity

of the curriculum can be too much for students to handle, while the lack of instructional support, e.g., teacher, centered drills or lack of interactive opportunities, leads to acquisition, servicing, low, anxiety, and meaningful exposure not being provided (Krashen, 2003). The consequence of such a mismatch is that students experience difficulties in reading comprehension, grammar usage, and oral fluency, as deliberate learning cannot serve as a replacement for subconscious acquisition (Krashen, 1985).

Methods and Materials

This study employs a qualitative research design being based on transcendental phenomenological research. The qualitative research design helped in interpreting students' views on problems towards curriculum complexity and English language learning. Transcendental phenomenological research is a qualitative method based on Husserl's philosophy which Moustakas adapted it for practical study. This method aims to describe the pure essence of human experiences by setting aside preconceptions through epoché. It includes structured steps such as horizonalization of data, grouping meaning units into themes, creating detailed descriptions of experiences, outlining the contexts, and imaginative variation to combine essential elements (Moustakas, 1994). This approach focuses on the life world and personal subjectivity to reveal meanings without bias or categorization (Husserl, 1931/2012). The population of the present study consisted of six secondary level students learning English. Interview guidelines were employed using purposive sampling. The selected sample included students with different levels of English proficiency, academic backgrounds, and learning abilities. After preparing the data collection tools, the researcher begged permission from the concerned authorities to gather data. The purpose of the research was clearly denoted to the respondents to ensure their cooperation and honest participation. I collected the data from 5 students studying at grade 10 in different schools in Kailali district. In the school setting, students come from different backgrounds to get education. Studying English at high school is an integral and important part of school education. They face diverse types of obstacles while acquiring English as a second language. Students attend in the period of English and feel unease in learning it as it an additional language for them. I have interviewed participants on the basis of interview guidelines that I developed prepared field notes on the diary.

Results and Discussion

The curriculum in Nepal's secondary education system is often challenging due to the presence of English language learning and other subjects like mathematics, science, and social studies. This complexity is exacerbated by instructional difficulties, such as teacher-centered pedagogies, resource gaps

between urban and rural schools, or a lack of alignment between curriculum expectations and real-world language proficiency needs, leading to superficial learning and student fatigue. By examining the perceptions of secondary students regarding these issues in English language learning, this study builds upon previous research and seeks to identify subjective experiences that can be used as inspiration for targeted reforms towards improving instruction. In this study, different themes were derived with data transcription. In the same way, the themes of collected data have been presented in the different subheadings below:

Difficulty in Getting the Meaning, Use of New Vocabulary, and Creating Sentences

Understanding new words is largely difficult because of two things: the absence of helpful contexts and the complexity of knowing words. Students face a situation where they stumble on unknown words without enough surrounding hints and therefore cannot derive the exact meaning, sense, or usage of words since words hardly ever come alone. This problem becomes even stronger for non-native speakers or people with processing problems, similar to dyslexia, where even multiple exposures are not enough to create long, term memory because it is difficult for them to connect new words with their already existing knowledge structures.

Adopting the new vocabulary after understanding it also brings about several problems especially the problems of pronunciation, spelling, and the ability to use the vocabulary correctly when speaking or writing. The studies reveal that students find it hard to memorize and use the words properly because the peculiarities of English pronunciation and the fact that one word may have several meanings cause them to misuse the words or forget them quickly unless they keep on practicing systematically. In order to overcome this, one needs to use methods like repeating vocabulary in context and analyzing the different parts of a word (stem, prefix), however, if their usage is not consistent it contributes to the feeling of being frustrated and abandoned.

In English classes at secondary level, there are used words and they are also in the textbook that are out from the surrounding of students. Similarly, students feel difficulty to state the meaning from their own level of knowledge and learning situation. In this regard, one of the participants (P3) reported:

> *We get the English words difficult to the sense of their meaning and always feel fear to the right meaning and convey the right message. We have no ideas of correct pronunciation of different words. Sometimes, we pronounce them incorrectly. We do not have the ability to differentiate words in separate uses. These words are no heard in our language and are also unfamiliar for us. We cannot create ample sentences because of lack of word knowledge.*

While learning English, students have less storage of vocabulary due to which they are unable to converse and interact as they intend to do in classes. On the other hand, they are uninterested to participate to solve questions and other activities in classes. Then, they cannot say words as to be applied in diverse situations. Besides, students' desires cannot be flourished as expected to be developed in their repertoire. They do not know words' roots or stems in different situations. Students become unable to develop sentences and create texts in contexts.

Frequently, English vocabulary words difficult to grasp in terms of their precise meanings, which instills fear in us when trying to convey the right message accurately. We do not know correct pronunciations for many words, leading to frequent mispronunciations. Moreover, we find it hard to tell apart words that have similar spellings or sounds but distinct uses in different contexts. These terms are rarely heard in our native language and feel entirely unfamiliar. Consequently, our restricted vocabulary prevents us from creating a wide variety of sentences.

Absence of the Contents from Local and Nepalese Culture

The lack of locally and Nepalese culturally, based contents in school curricula and textbooks leads to a major disconnect between what is taught in classrooms and students' everyday lives. Nepal being a multilingual and multiethnic society with more than 120 languages, the school curricula have traditionally focused on Nepali and English, thus ignoring the indigenous languages, local festivals like Dashain or Tihar, and folklores e.g. from Newar or Tharu communities. This gap results in the ethnic minority children feeling left out as they find it difficult to connect the basic ideas presented in the textbook to their cultural environment. Hence, their attention and understanding are lowered.

Moreover, the exclusion of Nepalese culture from the education system continues to maintain language and culture, based power relations where the dominant narratives prevail over the expression of diverse identities. For example, the decision in the National Education Planning Commission report to have Nepali only as the medium of instruction has sidelined other languages to such an extent that even the inclusion of local lifestyle, biodiversity such as Himalayan flora, or traditional indigenous knowledge has been left out. As a result, the absence of culture here works against the students' development of personal identity and provision of fair education thus; there are demands for localized curricula to be developed as a means of combining community knowledge and school literacy.

The texts have different information, but these involve lessons from the foreign backgrounds and tastes. For the ease of learning English, the local and Nepali situations are favored most by students. In line with this, the participant P2 presented ideas as:

Our textbooks have materials from unfamiliar contexts and circumstances. In this regards, we use words without getting local flavor to have meaning in the clear cut and precise ways. However, we use them and wishing to get the meanings.

Though the language of the class is English, the teaching and learning items need to be from Nepalese culture and setting. The lack of traditional Nepalese and local material highlights a significant cultural deterioration brought on by urbanization, globalization, and generational indifference. Rituals, dialects, and dances are disappearing as a result of younger generations' preference for contemporary influences over the preservation of cultural traditions. To protect this priceless identity before it completely disappears, immediate interventions—such as improved documentation, community education initiatives, and legislative frameworks are crucial for fruitful learning of students. Local cultural matters become central concerns and learner friendly in language classes. Our textbooks contain materials drawn from uncommon settings and situations, which makes it difficult for us to connect with them. Consequently, we use words without embracing their local essence or subtleties, thus missing their meanings in a clear and accurate manner. Nonetheless, we persist in using them with the hope of understanding their real importance.

Less Speaking Opportunities in the Classroom

Lack of speaking opportunities in the class room is a major factor in impeding first language acquisition. Students get hardly any or no practice of oral usage in the context of teacher, centered instruction. Traditional pedagogies put a heavy emphasis on grammar drills and reading comprehension, leaving out interactive dialogues. As a result, learners become passive spectators who find it difficult to gain fluency and confidence (Taye, 2025). This shortage of oral practice makes students develop anxiety and unwillingness as limited exposure works against natural reinforcement needed for unplanned communication. Moreover, overcrowded classes and inflexible time schedules make the situation worse by cutting down peer interactions and real, time feedback which are necessary for skill advancement.

Due to the large number of students and the exam, based curriculum, teachers often have to go back to lectures, leaving aside such activities like role, plays or discussions which could be a way of authentic language use (Mai, 2024). As a result, students end up having the theoretical knowledge and practically speaking deficits which is a pretty normal situation. Such a state perpetuates a cycle of being underprepared.

Students tell their views in the factual ways when we ask them being in proximity of their learning styles and situations. In connection with this concern, the participant P3, shared ideas in the following verbatim:

We get ideas from teachers lecturers. Teachers well, but we get less chances to communicate with them and friends in classes. The classroom activities, i.e. interactional ones, become less concentrated in pair and group works. Then, teachers focus on activities which are done by them which are less useful for the speaking opportunities.

The provided data describes challenges in classroom language learning, particularly for speaking skills. It emphasizes the origins of ideas (teachers/lecturers), scarce communication opportunities with both them and classmates, less attention on interactive pair/group activities, and an excessive focus on teacher-led exercises that provide limited speaking opportunities. This indicates a discrepancy between available learning resources and their actual use. These findings indicate the presence of systemic obstacles in the classroom environment hindering oral proficiency. According to language acquisition theory (such as Krashen's input hypothesis), speaking necessitates negotiation of meaning in low-pressure interactions—precisely what's missing here. While teacher-directed activities may enhance knowledge, they do not foster automaticity in production, resulting in passive learners. Teachers and lecturers, who are knowledgeable but give us little opportunity to interact with them or our peers, are the main sources of our notions about English. Less focus is placed on classroom activities, particularly participatory ones like group and pair projects. Teachers instead emphasize teacher-led activities, which are less effective at developing oral skills and provide fewer opportunities for speaking.

Difficulty of Understanding the Reading Contents

Difficulties in understanding reading materials largely occur when decoding skills are compromised, the vocabulary knowledge is very limited, and the background knowledge is insufficient, thus students are unable to extract the meaning from printed words. According to the research, readers who are less skilled mainly have problems with inferential comprehension because they do not use their prior knowledge together with the signals from the text, and thus their understanding becomes fragmented even though they can recognize most words correctly (Cain & Oakhill, 2007). When classrooms are culturally diverse, the lack of familiarity of certain cultural aspects may further deepen the comprehension gaps, which will disengage students and lower their academic performance.

Moreover, cognitive components like limited working memory and weak inference, making skills result in learners not being able to check their

understanding or piece together the information from different paragraphs. Research reveals that students who have specific reading comprehension disabilities continue to face difficulties despite trying different methods as they have fundamental linguistic comprehension deficiencies that are more significant than the gains in decoding (Spencer et al., 2021). Thus, targeted interventions such as teaching students how to summarize and create questions by themselves are crucial steps towards breaking down these hurdles and engaging with the text at a deeper level.

The textbooks include the vocabularies which are tough to get the meaning and use them contextually. Word glossaries are limited for students and their contextual uses in syntax is lacking in the exercises. Regarding this, the participant S4 stated in the following verbatim:

> *We have limited vocabularies and need to learn words by memorizing. Then words contextual applications are not elaborated in the text. We lack encoding of words and such lack can create complexity in decoding words. Contents in the text do not include matters from the local scenario of us. Teachers even say that we need to focus on English to learn better English.*

Learners are challenged by limited vocabularies in which memorization takes place without applicatory learning in texts. Encoding (memorizing word meanings) does not happen in this process; instead, it makes decoding (remembering and utilizing word meanings) hard in texts in which regional contexts are neglected. Instructing tutors emphasize a constrained "concentrate on English" environment in which blended approaches are ignored. This scenario depicts learning in a decontextualized manner. In other words, learning in this context depends on remote memorization in which words are memorized but not used. In this process, according to dual-coding theory, cognitive overload takes place in which words must have visual connections to enhance their meanings since words need to have visual associations to retain meanings. Our vocabulary is small, and we mostly absorb words by rote memorization without considering how they are used in context in texts. This makes it harder to encode words and makes decoding them more complicated. Local circumstances that are important to us are absent from text contents, and teachers maintain that in order for us to get better, we must only concentrate on English.

Top Writing Exercises and Lack of Schemes

Writing exercises in schools have mostly proven to be unsuccessful as they are often repetitive and decontextualized, thus students are hardly engaged in the authentic composition tasks that reflect real world communication. The typical copy, and, paste exercises or formulaic sentence completion situations give more

weight to mechanical accuracy rather than to creative expression, thus the learners ability to transfer the acquired skills to independent writing remains limited (Graham et al., 2012). As a result, students get a very superficial proficiency level and neglect important skills such as planning, drafting, and revising which are all vital for producing a coherent text.

The lack of a well, organized writing plan further worsens the problem since curricula hardly provide regular frameworks such as genre, specific rubrics or self, regulated strategy development that can be used for gradual progress. Teachers without these scaffolds tend to give assignments just for the sake of it, hence students get inconsistent feedback and limited growth, most notably for struggling writers (Koster et al., 2015). A complete scheme that is composed of explicit modeling and peer collaboration would be more effective at fostering sustained improvement and increasing motivation.

Students feel difficulty in writing exercises and prefer less to write themselves creatively in the inductive ways. Similarly, such exercises include the contents which are not according to the level of students. Writing activities need along with the interest of students. Then after, they become better in writing if teachers highlight in facilitated ways. Teachers just give notes and students get little chances of writing. In this case, the participant P1 forwards her views as:

> *There are activities which are difficult for writing because they are not example based. The schemes of writing lack in the activities as exercises just as tasks. Even teachers provide notes in classes and they make writing all the actions assigned in the works. More than that, we hardly get chance to write in the class. When we write, teachers mostly show the flaws. Consequently, we feel complexity to write the answers.*

Students have little knowledge of constructing grammatically correct and coherent sentences. A research reveals that students often produce sentence fragments and disjointed ideas, thus weakening their overall writing. Very often, students are unaware of the concept of paragraph unity and coherence; hence their written work is disorganized. In this way, the problem excludes them from displaying ideas in a logical and orderly manner. A further significant problem is the deficiency of adequate writing practice. Most of the writing activities in the classrooms revolve around examination, focused tasks, where students simply memorize answers instead of coming up with their own ideas. As a result of very limited experience of free and creative writing, students are unable to acquire the skill of confidently expressing their points of view. Hence, writing is turned into a mechanical exercise rather than a real and meaningful communicative process. Meanwhile, the report also shows that learners receive hardly any feedback on their writing. For the most part, teachers make an effort to find mistakes and mark them,

not really directing students towards improvement in terms of content, organization, and language use. In the absence of constructive criticism, writers cannot spot their errors and thus, cannot enhance their writing skills. Student centered activities and schemes are the significant points to be considered in classes (Jora, 2026) to reduce curriculum deficiencies.

Conclusion

This study tried to explore views of students on English curriculum and the challenges they faced while learning English. In the same vein, the transcendental phenomenological qualitative study was employed to understand the perceptions of five secondary level students. English language learning at the secondary level in Nepal faces major systemic challenges. This makes it complex and ineffective for non-native speakers, even though it is compulsory from basic to secondary education. High school curricula overwhelm students with complex academic language, passive voice grammar, dense vocabulary, and content that requires mastering both the subject and the language at the same time. This often goes beyond Krashen's i+1 comprehensible input level. Teacher-centered and exam-oriented classes focus on memorization, grammar drills, and lectures instead of encouraging interactive activities like pair or group work, role-plays, or real-life practice. This limits students' speaking, reading comprehension, and writing skills. Students have a hard time decoding unfamiliar words because they lack encoding strategies, find the texts culturally irrelevant, and depend on memorization without discussions on application.

In Nepalese English classes and instructional strategies, there are lapses at secondary level. In connection with this, minimal communication with teachers and peers, large class sizes, insufficient materials and training, and rare exposure outside the classroom all hinder oral fluency, confidence, and productive skills such as writing coherent sentences. Linguistic diversity, mother-tongue interference, differences in rural and urban exposure, psychological factors like anxiety and shyness, and irrelevant foreign-focused content make these issues worse and promote passive learning. According to student interviews, these interrelated issues—which stem from traditional pedagogies, misaligned curricula, and environmental limitations—cause secondary students to fall short of expected communicative competence after years of study. For learner-friendly English acquisition, there must be an immediate shift towards localized, interactive, student-centered approaches with teacher preparation and cultural integration.

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