

## Use of ICT in English Language Teaching Classroom

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### Abstract

Information Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning is indispensable for improving teachers' professional skills in English language teaching (ELT). This paper examines secondary English language teachers' experiences in using ICT in teaching English in Nepal. The extensive semi-structured interview as a key information-gathering strategy under the phenomenological research method was employed to explore the participants' experiences in applying ICT skills in teaching English. Four English language teachers who had been using ICT in teaching for at least two years were selected purposively from two public secondary schools in Rupandehi, Nepal. The findings revealed that the use of ICT engages students' cognitive processes and their autonomy in class. It also creates an engaging and dynamic atmosphere for learning and facilitates better access to learning materials. The study can contribute to improving teaching and learning efficacy using ICT skills for effective teaching in public schools in Nepal.

**Keywords:** digital natives, ICT in ELT, online teaching, paradigm shift

### Introduction

21<sup>st</sup> century pedagogy has undergone substantial change through the application of ICT. Its implementation in ELT provides students with 21st-century skills for successful and well-organized teaching and learning. With its application, learners obtain more exposure and become skilled in languages as they get sufficient resources (Bhandari, 2020). The incorporation of ICT has become a fundamental part of the learning atmosphere (Parette & Blum, 2013). In this regard, Lewis (2009) asserted that merely textbook instruction seems inappropriate in the world of sounds and visuals. The implementation of ICT in teaching has changed the instructor's role from an instructor to a promoter or facilitator.

Then teachers have started to run online education by applying ICT in teaching English in Nepal as a part of their professional development. English language teachers shifted the conventional teaching mode to collaborative teaching and learning practices. ICT tools and devices can increase access to resources and information allowing teachers and learners to interact at any time (Smith & Jones, 2023). ICT enhances ELT by offering tools and platforms that support interactive and personalized learning. It provides access to authentic language materials, promotes collaborative learning, and fosters digital literacy. The use of ICT aligns with global education trends, where digital competency is crucial for academic and professional success. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of ICT in maintaining continuity and quality in language instruction (Kessler, 2020). The use of ICT in English language teaching is increasingly seen as beneficial due to its role in boosting student engagement, personalizing learning experiences, and offering access to authentic language materials. ICT tools like language apps, digital games, and online platforms make learning more interactive and adaptable, enhancing motivation and effectiveness. They also help develop crucial digital literacy skills and provide flexible learning opportunities. Recent research shows that ICT not only improves language skills but

also promotes collaborative learning, which is vital for real-world communication (Tondeur et al., 2023).

Despite the benefits, challenges like inadequate training, limited resources, and lack of confidence among teachers impede effective ICT integration. The digital divide leads to unequal access and varying levels of digital literacy, impairing educational inequalities and resulting in disparate learning outcomes. The absence of comprehensive pedagogical models and support for ICT integration results in inconsistent application and effectiveness across different educational contexts (Lawrence & Tar, 2018). The key focus of the study was to explore English language teachers' experiences regarding the use of ICT in teaching English. This paper seeks to answer the research question, how do secondary English language teachers experience ICT knowledge and skills in teaching English?

### **Theoretical perspective**

We adopted social constructivism as a theoretical framework for my study. Social constructivist learning theory offers to relax learning space as knowledge is socially and culturally built by collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). However, cognitive constructivists claim that each learner creates their knowledge based on their past understanding and new information. Constructivism's central tenet is that students actively create information rather than passively receive it from teachers. Instead of being passive information consumers, learners are active knowledge creators (Jonassen, 1991). When teachers share their problems and experiences through ICT devices with their colleagues, they can better teach their students. According to social constructivists, comprehension is the result of interactions with instructors, peers, and the general public. Without interacting, and sharing ideas and experiences, the learners cannot solve the problems. When learners interact with each other, they can share, modify information and learn better.

### **Literature Review**

In this section, we have reviewed theoretical literature under two themes significance of implementing ICT in ELT, ICT and its policy in secondary school curriculum and the review of empirical studies.

#### **Significance of implementing ICT in ELT**

The use of ICT provides teachers with a chance to learn more. Additionally, they have to adjust to new pedagogical theories and methods of instruction for which they may not have received formal training. Learners in the most marginalized groups, in particular, who lack the resiliency and engagement to learn on their own or don't have access to digital learning tools, are at risk of falling behind (Schleicher, 2020). So, it has become necessary for teachers to learn this new technology for enhancing pupils' language skills, language growth, learner-centred teaching, individualized instruction their engagement and quality learning with access to reliable learning resources (Sabiri, 2020).

Students get exposure and guidance through the use of ICT to improve their English language skills as the need in today's competitive world. The pandemic situation is having a significant impact and causing unseen alterations on instructors' and students' regular and traditional forms of instruction both domestically and abroad (Guo, 2020). After the pandemic situation of COVID-19, the Nepali educational system emphasized remote instruction and learning using a variety of digital instruments yet it had a positive impact on teachers' teaching (Dawadi et al., 2020).

#### **ICT and its policy in secondary school curriculum**

ICT has been given a room in the curriculum so, it is now required as a subject for instruction in schools, under the National Curriculum Framework (2007), to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. To enhance the quality of the school curriculum, ICT (2010) and the National Information and Communication Technology Policy (2015) both embraced

ICT. Four ICT in education components- infrastructure with internet connectivity, human resources, content development, and system enhancement-have also been integrated into the (2014) Education Master Plan. Similarly, the Teacher Competency Framework (2016) published by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Nepal lists digital skills as one of the eight qualifications for qualified teachers. It also confirmed that a teacher who has professional competence could effectively use ICT to facilitate teaching and learning. However, only a small number of institutions have incorporated ICT policy and put it into practice. The educational policies in Nepal realize that ICT integration is not only necessary but also inevitable for the improvement of instructional activity in the classrooms. Nonetheless, those documents neither provide a clear guideline for the effective integration of ICT nor set the standards for its implementation in the school sector. Therefore, there is confusion among schools about whether or not to integrate modern technologies into the classrooms. This issue of the digital divide in education seems to continue unless educational researchers and teacher educators are going to create academic discourse regarding the issue. ICTs improve the effectiveness, feasibility, vibrancy, and excitement of learning (Yunus et al., 2009).

### **Review of Empirical Studies**

Regarding the use of ICT, Poudel (2015) claimed despite their enthusiasm and readiness to use ICTs in the classroom, teachers in Nepal were unable to do so because of a lack of teacher training, a lack of resources, and a demoralizing administrative system. Both students and teachers are motivated to learn and teach through ICT but they have low knowledge and skills in ICT. Singh (2019) found that pupils are highly motivated to learn English through ICT. So, she suggested training teachers and preparing for this. Later, a study by Rana and Rana (2020) in Nepal concluded that older teachers may avoid adopting ICT because of their low knowledge and skills in the field. Gnawali's (2020) study found that integrating ICT in language courses at Kathmandu University improved students' digital abilities significantly. Furthermore, the study found that these skills were transferred to future learners after graduation, implying that when instructors are empowered to incorporate technology into instruction and learning.

Another research study by Paudel (2021) also discovered that English teachers are strongly motivated to use ICTs even when they lack confidence, adequate training skills, and knowledge of them. Despite their little knowledge of ICT, all of these testimonies highlight the necessity of examining the opportunities that drive people to use ICT. A recent study by Saud and Laudari (2023) found that English language teachers had a good attitude towards using ICT in ELT since it increases learning experiences, motivates learners, makes learning interactive, student involvement, access to materials, and creates dynamic learning settings.

The reviewed literature unveils the value of ICT for improving pedagogy. It can be used to create an appropriate ICT policy for language education. This study makes an effort to explore lived experiences in more detail about how English instructors in secondary schools have used ICTs in teaching English in the classroom. Studies on ICT in English language teaching in Nepal reveal deficiencies in effective teacher training and support, especially for older teachers. Although the need for such training is acknowledged, details on effective methods and their long-term effects remain insufficient. Furthermore, there are quite a few studies based on how ICT skills are utilized in different settings after graduation and how teachers' motivation and confidence influence their use of ICT in the local context. So the setting and teachers' experiences to be explored have differentiated this research from the previous ones. Therefore, I intend to fill the existing research gap in this research study.

### **Research Method**

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research method to derive meaning from participants' lived experiences. English teachers' experiences were used in the study to explore their experience thoroughly (Creswell, 2015; Whallen et al., 2019). In this

vein, Willis (2007) states phenomenology allows the researcher to focus on varied subjective truths (as cited in Campbell, 2015) in using ICT skills. Regarding the use of ICT in ELT, four English teachers (two males and two females) were selected purposively from two public secondary schools of Rupandehi having at least two years of online teaching experience and digital literacy to gather the essential data for the study. Reflection on lived experience involves recalling prior encounters with a specific occurrence (van Manen 1997, as cited in Sloan & Bowe, 2014).

In addition, to explore the research participants' lived experiences with ICT in teaching and learning English, the study employed semi-structured in-depth interviews. A qualitative interview was used to reveal the interviewees' experiences from their points of view (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). With their consent, participants' opinions regarding ICT use were recorded while maintaining their anonymity. Member checks were also employed to preserve the validity and reliability of the original data (Cohen et al., 2018). Then we used their pseudonyms to preserve anonymity and confidentiality. Interviews were conducted in Nepali to get detailed information from the participants then they were translated from Nepali into English. Finally, thematic topics have been interpreted and analyzed descriptively by using constructivist theory.

### **Findings and Discussion**

In this section, we discuss English teachers' experiences of using ICT in teaching English along with sub-themes.

#### **Teachers' experiences of using ICT in teaching English**

With the aid of ICT, students have the opportunity to practice their language skills through networking, communication, and presenting. They can also improve their language skills while developing their self-reliance and teamwork skills.

#### **ICT utilization and effective teaching**

Google Meets and different search engines were reportedly used by teacher participants when presenting and looking for information. The efficiency of teachers in using ICTs in ELT is demonstrated by their skills.

Regarding this, Dinesh asserted, *"I completed three basic computer training courses while I was doing my M Ed in Kirtipur but I forgot most of the skills. Once there was refresher training in school which supported me to apply the ICT skills in the class."* Dinesh's experience of using ICT after completing his three-month training and updating his technology skills supported him to apply the learned skills to some extent in his class. Instructors require ongoing mentor support and collaborative relationships for its effective implementation.

Dinesh further mentioned, *"Since there is the facility of ICT in my school, I perform online activities, for instance, quizzes and group work in the Zoom break room."* The expression illustrated above showed that the school offered the facilities to integrate ICT into teaching, and he seems to have understood ICT well. The use of ICT in ELT can assist him in making classroom teaching more realistic, remarkable and sustainable. Dinesh's experience of using ICT revealed that he could use YouTube, Google and PowerPoint presentations. Technology supports learning and teaching efficiency by enhancing classroom interaction (Lopez, 2010). In this line, Vygotsky (1978) also emphasized that understanding occurs through interaction with others. Therefore, students can successfully improve newly learned information through cooperative interaction for the specified tasks with the help of regular reciprocal group conversation.

In this line, Manju shared, *"I use the internet and multimedia to increase the quality of learning and create autonomy of learning. Learners can share their work with their friends and can get immediate feedback from each other."* Manju used the Internet and multimedia in

her lesson. Her pupils were inspired and interested in learning new concepts and the lesson smoothly. The less experienced person gains the ability to complete a task independently that she was previously unable to complete without the help of a more experienced peer (Chaiklin, 2003). Thus, experienced learners can do the task autonomously without the help of talented peers and teachers.

### **Transformation of the conventional mode of teaching**

The use of ICT motivates her learners to work at their own pace. It inspires them to be creative and interactive in learning since they are engaged in pair work on the assigned task.

Manju stated, *"I found my students very curious and motivated to learn new things by using ICT. I have been using it regularly, changing the traditional mode of teaching and improving learning experiences."* From her lived experience, it is clear that the use of ICT modified the conventional teaching mode to a modern one improving the learning experience. ICT tools and devices also stimulate and sustain her to update her professional knowledge and skills in teaching digital natives (Prensky, 2001). Both teachers and students can learn cooperatively if they have the skill of using ICT. Prem claimed, *"I use ICT in English class three or four times a week. I am getting an opportunity to learn soft skills from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Technical Assistance for Soft Skills."* From his story, I revealed that the use of ICT in the class motivates his students to be creative and interactive in learning because he reported that his students are involved in group interaction and discussion on the assigned topic that he presents in the class.

He further asserted his views in these lines: *"I study new things of the textbook from Google, YouTube and share with my students through power point presentation. They learn language easily when I use ICT devices."* He noted that the use of ICT assisted his students in understanding the subject matter easily; therefore, he applied it in his class. Dinesh claimed that CT devices helped him to motivate and provide feedback to his students.

Reetu mentioned, *"Sometimes, I motivate my students by playing videos of short films, asking them to write film reviews and discussing with them in pairs the next day. I exchange the final version with their partner and ask them to give feedback."* Reetu's personal experience of using ICT confirmed that she used ICT in teaching writing. Technology utilization encourages learner autonomy, works at their own pace and fosters high motivation in the classroom (Ahmadi, 2018, Singh, 2019). ICT use encourages students to work at their own pace.

Reetu added, *"Sometimes I make my students share their writing tasks through e-mail. They enjoy sharing and learning a lot of new things within a short time."* Her teaching experience of using e-mail revealed that she is incorporating and implementing ICT skills as a part of her professional life. This makes their learning meaningful and interactive. Learners explore new ideas via the process of e-mail interaction. Her view is in harmony with Wang and Fang (2005). They stated that using the Internet supports learners to transform their conventional methods of instruction into student-centred instruction. Knowledge is constructed but not transmitted through teachers. With constructivist ideas, learners engage in personal meaning-making discourse and the application of knowledge that has been cooperatively constructed with their fellow learners (Akpan & Beard, 2016). In this regard, social constructivism believes that interaction with peers, teachers, and technological tools can assist learners in improving their mental functions to construct knowledge.

Dinesh again pointed out, *"Our school has projectors and access to the Internet almost in every class. It also provides every teacher with a personal laptop and frequently provides teachers and students with ICT training. So, I started implementing soft skills in class."* Dinesh reported that he could apply ICT devices in his class due to the regular access to the Internet in the class. Also, teachers and students are skilful in using ICT. The illustration above revealed that the new generations are different from the old ones. Dinesh's

lived stories of teaching showed that he had switched to a new approach to teaching English using ICT. He added, "*Our school also provides ICT training and workshops to the students at the beginning of the academic year. So, we can motivate our students to search for many learning materials easily.*" From his experience, it is clear that if the school trains the teachers and students, they will be familiar with how to use ICT equipment. According to Reich (2021), without teachers having proper training, they won't be competent with technology resources and instructional platforms. The two-way exchange of knowledge with ICT motivates both teachers and students in teaching and learning and supports in making teaching-learning activities more effective and efficient.

The use of ICT has revolutionized the teaching-learning process by giving students more responsibility for their learning. It has changed the educational scenario and has led to a new technological era where instruction must be connected with a variety of virtual platforms rather than relying solely on printed resources like textbooks. The traditional face-to-face lectures are being replaced by technology-based online instruction using various programmes, which represents a true paradigm change in education (Mahaye, 2020). In the same vein, Dinesh asserted, "*The use of ICT has supported me in my teaching and learning as I can collect the required offline materials and use them in class. I use audio and visual content related to course books.*" The use of ICT has kept him connected to information sharing and evolved into a crucial tool for educational transformation. Additionally, Manju replied,

*I use ICT devices and make my students use them more than in the past. I share writing-related issues through e-mail. Now, they find the solution to the assigned writing tasks; get exposure to content and share. However, my students have low digital literacy and less support from administrations for managing classrooms for ICT-based teaching.*

Her lived experiences of using ICT devices have supported her in making teaching-learning activities more effective and efficient as the learners got more content exposure. However, she did not get administrative support and her pupils' low digital literacy, she could not manage class. This unexpected switch to online learning was not planned; rather, it was an urgent conversion (MacIntyre et al., 2020). Adaptation of ICT in writing eased and helped improve students' writing performance (Franco-Camargo & Camacho-Vasquez, 2018). It can interconnect with both teachers and students to work and learn together.

### **Students' engagement with ICT devices**

Engaging with ICT devices is vital for students as it enriches their learning experiences by offering interactive, accessible, and varied resources that encourage active involvement and a deeper grasp of the material.

Regarding this, Prem shared his views thus, "*I engage my learners in teamwork with smart devices, smart board, YouTube and mobile phones. They find materials such as story writing, report writing of various texts, articles, film reviews, advertisements, etc., and share with friends.*" Prem's lived experience of the application of ICT in the classroom provided efficient learning opportunities for the learners. It engaged them in both the face-to-face and online modes of learning interactively. The participant claimed that ICT supported students' active participation in learning tasks. Learning achievement is facilitated by interactions between students and teachers as well as between students at different times in the classroom (Wang & Degol, 2014). The involvement of students in such exchanges while completing various learning tasks in the classroom demonstrates their interest in the activity.

With this regard, Reetu mentioned, "*I ask my students to search textbook-related materials from Google and some other sites and present them in the class.*" Her real experience indicated that ICT has maintained for mental engagement of her learners and

combined effort and provided opportunities for conversation and collaboration. This exposed that she had involved her students in learning using ICT. The participants' experiences are in harmony with Ahmadi's (2018) study, which revealed that ICT helps with self-consciousness and strong motivation for successful learning, students can work at their own pace. Similarly, it boosts students' cognitive participation in class activities, resulting in more concentrated learning (Jang, 2012). In this sense, constructivists also claim that reality is created by human action as learning is a social process (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). Knowledge is socially and culturally formed. The opportunity to practice language and practical skills like networking, communication, and presenting, as well as to improve their language abilities they become self-sufficient in learning teamwork.

Prem asserted, *"Through the use of ICT, I engage my learners in learning activities. They solve the problem, learn collaboratively from the other, take part actively and develop critical thinking skills and understand the subject matter fast,"* The evidence above pointed out that ICT offers chances for students to boost their contribution to instructional tasks and quickly grasp the material through engagement. His view is in harmony with Hedding et al. (2020). They asserted that the COVID-19 pandemic's shift to online technology-based teaching and learning reassures by employing a holistic approach, we shift away from "rote learning" and toward problem-solving, critical thinking, and applied understanding because traditional evaluation methods are no longer useful in the contemporary environment. ICT can improve students' learning by engaging them in social interaction. Learners construct knowledge when they take part in interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). In the same way, Dinesh recounted,

*I did not receive any pre-service ICT training at campus. However, I got in-service teacher training in ICT such as using smart devices, smart boards, projectors, YouTube, Google, etc., for searching video, audio and other resource materials related to our course. It has supported me in making my teaching career easier.*

Dinesh did not receive training in ICT in his pre-service teacher training. He got soft skills training as an in-service trainee. He could search for numerous resources that he needs for teaching.

### **ICT skills for professional advancement**

The use of ICT has made teachers' jobs more accessible and has supported shifting to the modern way of teaching and learning. The audio and video information provides the learners with the opportunity to learn in their style and receive feedback. They also supported them in making their teaching better.

Dinesh asserted, *"I participated in about two dozen training sessions provided by the Curriculum Development Centre, British Council Nepal, and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Technical Assistance for Soft Skills (TASS) from Finland. The received skills assisted me for professional improvement."* Dinesh participated in about two dozen training sessions provided by the Curriculum Development Centre, British Council Nepal, and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Technical Assistance for Soft Skills (TASS) from Finland and improved his teaching skills.

Prem had similar experiences to his colleagues. He experienced, *"ICT devices help me find some relevant resources on the internet and update my professionalism. I prepare PowerPoint slides and use them through multimedia and give them group tasks."* His experience showed that he excelled in using ICT skills for his professional advancement. The ability of ICT technology has given him numerous options to find pertinent information and improve his teaching. ICT devices facilitated him to learn new things and share learning materials as ICT offers access and support to teacher professional development (Acharya, 2013). It assists students by providing the necessary learning materials and supports teachers in enhancing their professional development. In this line, Dinesh claimed,

*Sometimes I use videos and ask my students to share their tasks through the mail and frequently share materials with my colleagues through e-mail and Facebook. I believe it helps make teaching-learning effective and improve the quality of teaching as students can get sufficient information they require.*

His lived experience revealed that ICT could address multi-level students, increasing the quality of teaching. The learners of today are considered digital natives; therefore, the transition from the traditional to the contemporary form of education is crucial to preparing students with skills that are relevant to the 21st century. All the participant teachers acknowledged that ICT has changed them from being knowledge producers to facilitators. Participants' experience is in harmony with Lorenz et al. (2021) asserted the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, forced teachers and students to quickly shift from traditional face-to-face classroom instruction to online classes. In this changing situation, teachers are shifting their roles along with ICT to bring change in ELT.

Similarly, Manju emphasized, *"I used to share teaching materials rarely with my students and colleagues through ICT tools and devices in the past but I used them more frequently during the time of lockdown to engage learners."* Manju's lived experiences indicated that she hardly used ICT devices in sharing information with her students and colleagues in the past; however, these days, she uses them more frequently. Manju further stated,

*ICT boosts my professional career by providing the essential materials to the students inside the class and beyond it. Then I can transform my conventional teaching to student-centred teaching. However, due to a lack of knowledge, skills and expertise in digital technology, I cannot use it efficiently. Students with poor economic conditions also have less access to ICT.*

Interactive ways of teaching and learning are possible through improved ICT access to the required information. The conventional style of classroom teaching and learning has completely shifted to online instruction, which is accessible to everyone worldwide. Poor students could not afford computers and other devices that were necessary for learning. This is in harmony with Muslem et al. (2018). ICT problems include limited time, poor internet access, and a lack of training and competence. Thus, this shows that both language teachers and learners benefit from learning English inside and outside the class if they use ICT devices. Furthermore, they can transform their conventional mode of teaching into student-centred teaching.

The use of ICT devices and tools by teachers is crucial in contemporary education, as it enhances instructional techniques, fosters innovative teaching practices, and boosts student engagement and learning outcomes.

Regarding ICT use, Manju asserted, *"After the pandemic situation of COVID-19, I used ICT devices and tools more frequently than in usual classes as I found the majority of the students had access to ICT and the Internet at home."* Her experience explored if the teacher is active and professional, online teaching is not difficult. Even in a pandemic situation, she found that most students had access to ICT and the Internet in their homes.

ICT helps the teacher make teaching-learning activities captivating. In this respect, Reetu pointed out, *"As a teacher, I encourage my students to use different ICT tools and devices frequently, particularly in writing practices. It helps to make class interactive and effective by involving them in learning by creating a Zoom room for interaction."* Her idea indicates that she was conscious of using its usefulness, enhancement, student engagement, and usage of extensive learning resources, ICT is one of the most effective teaching instruments. Her experience is similar to Jafar (2016). He stated increasing levels of student engagement led to the emergence of a sense of individual accountability and student



empowerment. As constructivists assert, technology has consequently altered the degree of understanding of both teachers and students and produced new knowledge.

### **ICT and instructional quality**

Incorporating ICT into education can greatly improve instructional quality by offering innovative tools and resources for both teaching and learning.

Regarding this, Reetu put her views thus, "The use of *ICT facilitates me to improve the quality of teaching and makes my students creative and interactive.*" In reply to my inquiry, Reetu stressed and appreciated the value of using ICT in teaching English. It encourages her students to be imaginative and interactive in learning because they are involved in group interaction and discussion on the subject matter that she presents in class with the attention of the students. She added, "*When I use ICT, my students are very much excited, curious and motivated about the subject matter.*" She highlighted the impact of ICT in teaching practice that the students can also understand faster because they generally do not feel dull. Integrating ICT can improve student-centred learning, motivation, and self-learning (Jha, 2020).

Furthermore, constructivism stresses strong and brief communication between the learners with technical procedures (Desai et al., 2008). Then they concentrate entirely on the subject matter and comprehend it more clearly although she lacks knowledge, skills and expertise on ICT.

### **ICT and student-centred teaching**

The use of ICT in education fosters student-centred teaching by facilitating personalized, interactive, and engaging learning experiences personalized to each student's needs and preferences.

In this context, Prem asserted his view, "*Use of ICT tools facilitate me to emphasize student-centred teaching. They facilitate me sharing and learning many things in a better way.*" Prem mentioned how he shifted from the conventional role of a teacher to a facilitator allowing the learners to learn independently. When teachers used various ICT tools and offline materials, students paid more attention to learning. Since teachers could not provide adequate resources to the students through the conventional teaching mode. ICT could facilitate improved classroom activities by providing access to a variety of information sources. Additionally, it has created better learning opportunities for the pupils to retain information longer and with better understanding.

In this regard, Prem's experience is very similar to Dinesh's. He claimed, "*During the lockdown, our school provided training on ICT. I became more familiar with ICT tools and devices. When we used ICT in class, we had to do more smart work and less hard work.*" His practice of ICT indicated that COVID-19 enhanced ICT use for teachers in teaching English as the school provided ICT training to the teachers and they started doing smart work more and hard work less in classroom teaching. Manju claimed, "*ICT use in teaching inspires learners to learn better and more effectively. However, sometimes some students misuse ICT devices.*" The participant expressed the belief that the use of ICT made teaching and learning better and more efficient giving them more responsibility for their learning. Her experience is consistent with the study of Dawadi et al. (2020). They claimed that some children would become habituated to social media and electronic gadgets. They also abuse various automated devices, which would undoubtedly have numerous unintended consequences on their learning.

Various e-materials offered learners reliable resources for their requirements and interests. All the participants asserted that ICT integration motivates the learners in the lesson. The authentic materials on the Internet have increased their self-confidence in teaching. ICT integration supports learners' learning as they are helpful in their learning and get more chances to learn from each other (Singh, 2019). In this vein, Dinesh stated, "*I share*

*the best writing tasks of one section with another section. They get a chance to learn cooperatively and collaboratively. When teachers support them, they become confident and develop a good relationship with each other."* He reported he would share her students' best writing in the class, which provided the students with more opportunities to learn, developing the habit of cooperation and collaboration. Rongrong and Kusum (2018) also emphasized that support from teachers increases students' self-confidence and motivation in learning, which indirectly results in greater academic performance. This study indicated English teachers' good experience of using ICT as a helpful teaching tool, which led them to abandon their old teaching methods in favour of student-centred instruction.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of English teachers in applying ICT knowledge and skills in teaching English. The study reveals that ICT devices and skills support students in their cognitive engagement with authentic information regularly making teaching more effective, realistic, remarkable and sustainable. Technological exposure has supported both teachers and students to transform the conventional mode of teaching into a modern one developing the habit of cooperation and collaboration among them. Moreover, it motivates learners to work at their own pace, inspires them to be creative and interactive and succeed in ICT-based teaching and learning English. ICT use assists teachers in updating their professional knowledge and skills for professional advancement. From the social constructivists' viewpoint, classroom teaching is supported by ICT and a social learning process can be used to increase autonomy in learning. However, teachers' experience depicts students' and teachers' low digital literacy, inadequate digital resources, and less administrative support for managing ICT-based teaching as some challenges in its implementation. The study may enhance teachers' efficiency, and autonomy to promote learners' knowledge and skills in using ICT.

The study's findings may be useful to instructors who use ICT devices in teaching English and deal with similar situations. The government should also take accountability to support ICT infrastructure and teacher training. Due to the small size of the study, generalization of the results may only have limited applicability; therefore, a large-scale study involving all the stakeholders such as students, teachers, guardians and school management is needed to be studied to present a complete, more compelling, trustworthy, and more extensive picture of the use of ICT in English language classrooms.

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