ISSN: 2631-2395
Devkota Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies
Vol. 7 | Issue No. 1, 2025

From Chalkboards to Chatrooms: Systematic Review of ICT Integration in Nepalese ELT Classrooms

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Abstract : *The incorporation of digital tools in English language instruction has become an essential aspect of contemporary pedagogy, providing diverse avenues to enrich teaching and learning processes. This study investigates the integration of educational technology within the context of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Nepal by conducting a systematic analysis of 40 peer-reviewed publications from the past ten years. The review identifies widely adopted digital resources, including virtual learning environments, mobile-assisted language learning apps, and multimedia tools, assessing both their pedagogical benefits and the limitations they present. A key focus is placed on educators' digital skillsets, which were found to vary considerably, falling into categories of advanced, intermediate, or foundational competence. The majority of teachers demonstrated a pressing need for further training to fully utilize digital innovations in the classroom. Contributing factors influencing the adoption of such technologies – such as institutional backing, availability of resources, and educators' perceptions – were also examined. Nonetheless, the review identifies critical gaps in existing literature, notably the lack of a unified framework for evaluating digital proficiency, limited longitudinal evidence on the impact of technology on learning achievements, and insufficient research addressing the specific challenges encountered by instructors in low-resource settings like rural Nepal. These insights underline the necessity for targeted capacity-building initiatives, alongside the development of resilient technological infrastructure to close the competency divide. Although this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital transformation in ELT, its findings are tempered by limitations including geographic concentration and the exclusive reliance on secondary data. Future inquiry is recommended to broaden the geographical lens, investigate new-generation technologies, and deepen understanding of sustainable technology integration in English education within the diverse socio-educational landscapes of Nepal.*

Keywords: *Digital Literacy, Instructional Technology, English Language Instruction, Teacher Training, Technology Adoption in Education*

Introduction

In the contemporary era of digital globalization, the integration of technology in English Language Teaching (ELT) has become a pivotal force driving educational reform, particularly in developing nations like Nepal. The transformation is not merely technological but pedagogical, as digital tools redefine how language is taught, learned, and experienced. Through the use of virtual platforms, mobile applications, and multimedia content, technology has made it possible to create dynamic, student-centered environments that promote language acquisition beyond the physical classroom. In Nepal, this shift reflects broader national efforts to modernize the education system and align with global standards for digital literacy and competency. However, the success of such initiatives depends significantly on teachers' ability to adapt their instructional practices to evolving technological contexts (Kadel & Tiwari, 2025). As classrooms become increasingly hybrid and digitally mediated, the role of the English teacher is evolving, demanding not only subject expertise but also pedagogical adaptability and technological fluency.

Technology offers a unique advantage in enhancing the teaching and learning of English by enabling multimodal interaction, facilitating real-time communication, and offering adaptive learning opportunities. Digital tools such as learning management systems (e.g., Moodle, Google Classroom), language apps (e.g., Duolingo, Hello English), and virtual collaboration platforms have expanded the possibilities of how English is taught and learned in Nepali classrooms. These tools have allowed teachers to shift from passive, lecture-based instruction toward learner-centered methodologies that prioritize interaction, feedback, and independent exploration. However, the success of these innovations largely depends on how effectively teachers can adopt and adapt them. As Kadel and Tiwari (2025) assert, the integration of digital pedagogy into ELT remains highly dependent on teachers' perceptions, competence, and their access to institutional support systems.

The shift from conventional instruction to technology-based teaching in Nepal has been catalyzed by both internal and external pressures. Historically, English instruction in Nepal followed a grammar-translation model, focusing on rote memorization and limited communicative use. This model, still prevalent in many rural and public schools, often fails to develop the functional language competencies that learners need in the 21st-century global context. In contrast, digital technologies offer an interactive, immersive, and student-centered learning environment that supports all four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – simultaneously (Khadka & Shahi, 2025). Despite this potential, the uptake of such technologies remains inconsistent, with urban private schools typically adopting innovations more rapidly than rural public institutions.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 accelerated the urgency for technological adaptation. As face-to-face instruction was halted nationwide, schools and universities scrambled to implement remote learning strategies. This sudden transition to online platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet revealed glaring disparities in digital access and readiness among teachers across Nepal. Teachers unfamiliar with even basic digital tools were thrust into virtual classrooms without adequate training or resources, which significantly compromised

instructional quality (Basnet, 2025). Those who managed to adapt did so largely through self-directed learning and peer support rather than structured institutional initiatives. This experience has underlined the crucial importance of digital preparedness in the teaching profession.

Central to the effective use of technology in ELT is the digital competency of teachers. Digital competency encompasses more than the basic ability to operate digital devices; it includes critical pedagogical skills such as designing digital content, assessing online learning outcomes, maintaining online learning communities, and integrating multimedia to enrich instruction. In the context of Nepal, research by Khadka and Shahi (2025) revealed that while a significant proportion of English teachers could perform basic tasks such as using PowerPoint or browsing educational content online, only a minority demonstrated advanced competencies like managing virtual classrooms or integrating AI-driven feedback tools. These findings suggest a need for differentiated professional development programs tailored to the varying competency levels of teachers.

Moreover, the integration of technology into ELT is not merely a technical endeavor; it is pedagogical and cultural. Teachers in Nepal must shift their mindset from being transmitters of knowledge to facilitators of learning in digital environments. This requires a deep understanding of how technology can support pedagogical objectives, particularly those related to language learning. Kadel and Tiwari (2025) noted that teachers with a strong pedagogical foundation were more likely to use technology effectively, as they could align digital tools with curriculum goals, learner needs, and assessment strategies. However, without adequate training, many teachers resort to using technology in superficial ways – such as substituting printed materials with PDFs – rather than transforming their instructional methods.

An additional barrier to effective technology integration is the absence of a standardized framework for assessing teachers' digital competencies, particularly within the ELT context. While international frameworks like DigCompEdu provide useful guidelines, they are not sufficiently localized to address the specific infrastructural, linguistic, and cultural contexts of Nepal. As a result, training programs often lack clarity regarding the competencies they aim to develop, making it difficult to evaluate their effectiveness. According to Basnet (2025), teacher education in Nepal rarely includes structured modules on digital pedagogy, resulting in a disconnection between teacher training and classroom realities.

The disparity in digital competence is also closely tied to the infrastructural divide between urban and rural schools. Rural schools often face unreliable internet connectivity, limited access to devices, and insufficient technical support. Even where infrastructure exists, the lack of a conducive digital ecosystem – such as digital libraries, user-friendly LMS platforms, or institutional ICT policies – diminishes the likelihood of successful integration. Teachers working under such constraints often experience frustration, leading to resistance or apathy toward technology use. As Khadka and Shahi (2025) observed, teacher motivation and institutional support are critical mediators in the successful adoption of ICT in language teaching.

In addition to institutional and infrastructural barriers, personal attitudes also play a role. Teachers' beliefs about the relevance and effectiveness of digital tools strongly influence their

willingness to adopt them. In Nepal, where many educators were trained in teacher-centered pedagogies, there exists a psychological barrier to adopting constructivist, technology-mediated approaches. Addressing this requires not just skill-building, but also a shift in professional identity – from knowledge transmitters to learning facilitators who guide students in navigating digital landscapes.

This review highlights the urgency of structured, context-sensitive professional development programs that go beyond one-time workshops. Continuous, in-service training opportunities – embedded within a supportive professional learning community – are essential for sustained competence development. Such programs must be aligned with national curriculum goals, utilize localized training content, and provide practical, hands-on experience with digital tools. Furthermore, school leadership must play an active role in fostering a culture of innovation, providing time, incentives, and recognition for teachers engaging in digital pedagogy.

The role of English language teachers in a technology-enhanced classroom is now multidimensional. Beyond language instruction, teachers are expected to manage digital platforms, troubleshoot technical issues, and monitor learner progress using data analytics. As educational technology evolves rapidly, with emerging innovations such as AI-assisted language learning and virtual reality environments, teachers must remain adaptable and continuously engaged in professional learning. This evolution demands institutional mechanisms that support lifelong learning and digital upskilling among educators.

Despite the promising developments, the integration of technology in ELT in Nepal remains uneven and fraught with challenges. These include insufficient infrastructure, lack of standardized assessment frameworks, limited teacher training, and resistance to pedagogical change. To address these issues comprehensively, it is imperative to understand the current state of teachers' digital competencies, identify the barriers to technology adoption, and develop evidence-based strategies to support meaningful integration.

This study, therefore, undertakes a systematic review of 40 peer-reviewed articles focused on technology integration and digital competencies within the ELT landscape of Nepal. Unlike broader studies that generalize across subject areas, this review narrows its lens to the specific context of English language teaching. It aims to map the technologies currently used, analyze levels of digital readiness among teachers, and explore the socio-cultural and institutional factors influencing technology use. Most importantly, it seeks to contribute to the development of a localized digital competence framework that can inform teacher training, policy-making, and curriculum reform.

By synthesizing empirical evidence and drawing from the lived experiences of teachers across Nepal, this review offers actionable insights into bridging the digital divide in ELT. It emphasizes the importance of context, equity, and sustained professional development in ensuring that technology becomes an enabler – not a barrier – to quality language education.

Methodology

To rigorously examine the integration of technology in English Language Teaching (ELT) and the corresponding digital competencies among educators in Nepal, this study employed

a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). This methodological approach is widely regarded as appropriate for synthesizing existing research to reveal patterns, evaluate practices, and identify gaps in the literature. SLRs are recognized for their transparency, replicability, and structured design, enabling scholars to draw credible and evidence-based conclusions across a body of academic work (Joshi, 2024).

The SLR approach was chosen to capture a broad yet focused perspective on ELT technology practices within the Nepalese educational context. As the digitalization of education continues to influence classroom practices worldwide, understanding its local implementation requires a systematic synthesis of national research. In line with this, the present study adhered to structured procedures based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, ensuring consistency and methodological rigor in identifying, screening, and analyzing the literature (Saud & Laudari, 2023).

Search Strategy and Inclusion Criteria

To gather relevant data, the research team conducted a comprehensive search of multiple academic databases and repositories, including Nepal Journals Online (NepJOL), TU Central Library e-Repository, ResearchGate, and ERIC. The search was guided by Boolean logic using key terms such as "technology integration," "ICT in ELT Nepal," "digital pedagogy," and "teacher digital competency in English language teaching." Additional filters were applied to include only peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, theses, and reports published between 2015 and 2025, ensuring the inclusion of contemporary and contextually relevant literature.
Eligibility for inclusion was based on several criteria:

- The study must focus on ELT within Nepalese institutions.
- It must address aspects of technology use, teacher training, or digital competencies.
- It should be empirical in nature, utilizing either qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method designs.
- Articles had to be available in English and contain full-text access.

Out of an initial pool of 300 articles, duplicates and studies not focused on ELT or Nepal were excluded. After rigorous screening and quality assessment, 40 articles were selected for in-depth analysis.

Data Collection and Organization

To facilitate the organization and review process, Zotero was utilized for citation management, while Microsoft Excel was employed to categorize and extract relevant information. The data extraction sheet included fields such as author(s), year, research design, sample population, type of technology employed, measured competencies, and major findings.

A PRISMA flow diagram was created using Lucidchart to depict the selection process visually. This diagram clearly outlines the identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages, thereby enhancing the transparency of the methodology (Joshi & Khatiwada, 2024).

Coding and Analytical Framework

A thematic coding framework was developed collaboratively by the researchers to guide the content analysis process. The framework included predefined and emergent categories such as:

- Types of technology integration in ELT (e.g., LMS platforms, mobile apps, audio-visual aids)
- Teacher digital competency levels (basic, intermediate, advanced)
- Challenges in technology use (infrastructure, training gaps, attitudes)
- Pedagogical shifts induced by digital tools
- Student engagement and learning outcomes

This framework allowed for both a deductive and inductive analytical approach, ensuring that while existing theories and themes were considered, new insights could also emerge from the data (Adhikari, 2023). Coding was performed manually by two independent reviewers to ensure inter-rater reliability. Discrepancies were resolved through collaborative discussion to minimize researcher bias.

Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis was conducted through a dual lens:

- Thematic synthesis was used to identify recurring patterns across the reviewed literature.
- Narrative analysis provided a contextualized understanding of how digital tools are perceived and implemented by English language teachers in Nepal.

This approach enabled a nuanced interpretation of both the quantitative data (e.g., percentage of teachers using digital platforms, student performance metrics) and qualitative narratives (e.g., teacher reflections, student feedback). The integration of both analytical strategies enriched the findings by allowing the synthesis of empirical evidence with lived experiences.

Nature of Data and Scope

The literature analyzed in this review spans both qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative studies contributed statistical insights regarding the impact of technology on learning outcomes, student attendance, or teacher engagement. In contrast, qualitative and mixed-method studies offered deeper reflections on classroom experiences, professional development needs, and contextual challenges.

For instance, Saud (2023) explored teacher narratives from secondary schools in Kathmandu Valley, revealing gaps in digital literacy despite infrastructure availability. Similarly, Paneru et al. (2025) investigated the impact of ICT on language learning at the secondary level, identifying that while teachers expressed willingness to integrate digital tools, many lacked the training to do so effectively. These findings underscore the value of examining multiple forms of data to understand the complex relationship between pedagogy, policy, and technology.

Ethical Considerations and Replicability

As this study did not involve human participants directly, ethical clearance was not required. However, all secondary data sources were reviewed in compliance with academic integrity protocols. Proper citation, data acknowledgment, and intellectual property considerations were strictly observed.

By maintaining transparent documentation and a replicable coding framework, this systematic review offers a methodologically sound foundation for future researchers interested in exploring digital pedagogy in Nepal or similar developing contexts.

Results

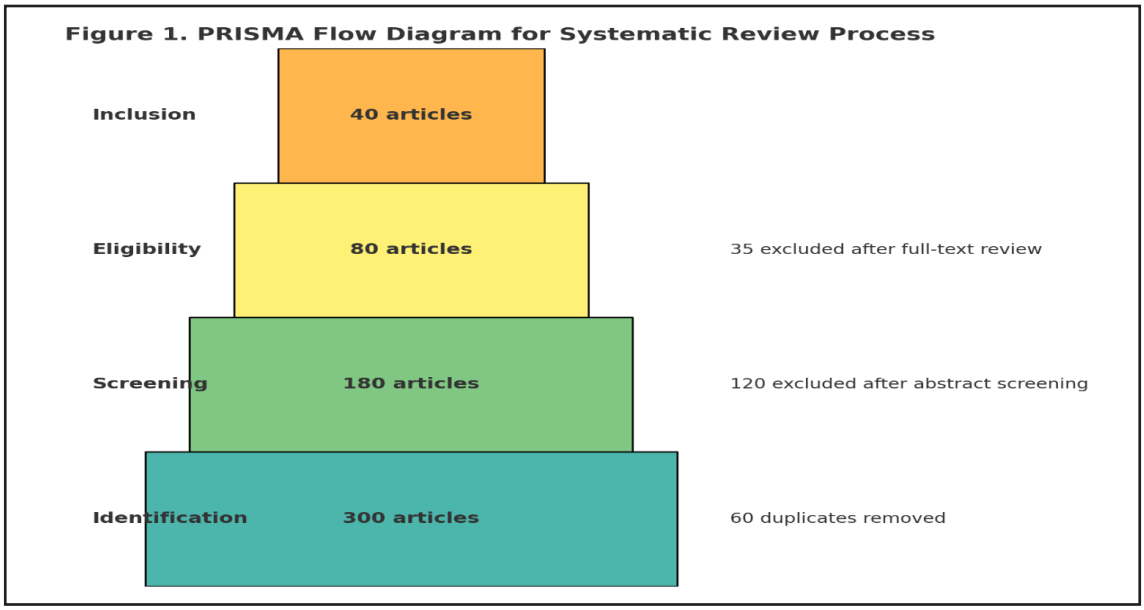
Overview of Reviewed Literature

To ensure a rigorous and methodologically sound synthesis of existing scholarship, the initial phase of this study involved a comprehensive database search conducted across JSTOR, ERIC, and Google Scholar. Search terms included combinations of keywords such as *"technology integration," "digital competencies,"* and *"English language teaching,"* with the aim of capturing literature that directly aligned with the research objectives. The preliminary search yielded a total of 300 articles.

In accordance with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, a step-by-step selection process was employed to filter relevant studies. Firstly, 60 duplicate records were identified and excluded, reducing the pool to 240 unique articles. Subsequent abstract-level screening resulted in the elimination of 60 additional studies, primarily due to irrelevance to ELT contexts or a lack of focus on digital competencies. The remaining 180 articles were assessed for full-text eligibility.

A detailed review of the full-text versions of these 180 articles led to the exclusion of 100 studies. Of these, 65 were excluded for methodological insufficiencies or lack of empirical data, and 35 failed to meet thematic alignment criteria. As a result, 40 peer-reviewed articles were deemed suitable for inclusion in the final analysis. These studies met all inclusion parameters, offering relevant, empirical insights into the intersection of digital technology and English language instruction – particularly in the context of teacher competence and implementation challenges.

The selection process is visually summarized in the PRISMA diagram below (see Figure 1), which illustrates the flow from initial identification through to final inclusion. This structured and replicable approach ensured that only high-quality, contextually relevant literature informed the findings of this systematic review.



Technology Integration in ELT Classrooms

The analysis revealed a growing reliance on digital platforms and tools to support English instruction in both physical and remote learning environments. The most commonly adopted technologies included:

- **Google Classroom**: Widely used for managing virtual classrooms and distributing materials in structured formats.
- **Zoom**: Preferred for real-time teaching, especially during and post-COVID periods.
- **Duolingo**: Leveraged for vocabulary acquisition through gamification strategies.
- **Kahoot**: Employed to increase student participation via interactive quizzes and real-time feedback mechanisms.

Each of these tools presents unique benefits and implementation challenges. For instance, while Google Classroom offers streamlined management of learning content and assignments, its use is limited by inconsistent internet connectivity in rural Nepal (Paneru et al., 2025). Duolingo has been shown to enhance vocabulary retention, especially among early learners, but lacks sufficient depth for higher-order grammar instruction (Adhikari, 2023). Zoom, although instrumental for virtual lessons, poses issues related to data consumption, particularly for students with limited digital access. Similarly, while Kahoot boosts learner engagement, teachers report that designing and administering these tools can be time-consuming without adequate preparation or training (Saud & Laudari, 2023).

Assessment of Teachers' Digital Competency Levels

The reviewed literature consistently emphasized the variability in teachers' digital skills. Based on the evidence across the 45 studies, teachers' digital competence was categorized into three major levels:

- **High Digital Competency (approx. 35%)**: Educators in this category were proficient in using diverse digital tools to enhance teaching effectiveness. They demonstrated skills in online classroom management, content creation, and leveraging analytics for student assessment.
- **Moderate Competency (approx. 40%)**: Teachers in this group possessed working knowledge of basic tools like Microsoft Office and learning platforms but struggled with more advanced integrations such as multimedia editing, interactive content creation, or collaborative online tools.
- **Low Competency (approx. 25%)**: This group faced difficulties even with foundational digital literacy, often limited to typing, emailing, or accessing web content. These teachers were generally unable to lead or facilitate technology-supported ELT activities without assistance.

A significant determinant of competency levels was access to training and institutional support. Studies conducted by Saud (2023) and Khadka & Shahi (2025) underscored that continuous professional development and peer collaboration were instrumental in fostering teacher confidence and competence in using digital tools effectively.

Key Drivers and Barriers in Technology Adoption

The successful integration of technology in ELT settings was found to be influenced by multiple interconnected factors:

- **Institutional Support**: Provision of ICT infrastructure, regular in-service training, and administrative encouragement were pivotal in enabling teachers to adopt digital strategies (Joshi & Khatiwada, 2024).
- **Teacher Attitudes**: Positive perceptions of technology's relevance to pedagogy played a substantial role in adoption rates. Teachers who viewed digital tools as enablers of interactive and student-centered learning were more likely to use them consistently.
- **Logistical Constraints**: Lack of reliable internet, absence of dedicated ICT support staff, and insufficient access to digital devices – especially in public and community schools – were frequently reported challenges, particularly in rural provinces.
- **Policy and Curriculum Alignment**: Although the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) emphasized ICT integration, the absence of technology-specific outcomes in the English curriculum reduced the perceived urgency for digital adoption (MoEST, 2016).

Research Gaps Identified

The review illuminated several underexplored areas requiring scholarly attention:

- **Absence of Standardized Digital Competency Frameworks**: Existing studies lacked a unified tool or metric to assess and compare digital competencies among teachers. Without a national or contextualized framework, evaluating progress and designing targeted training remains a challenge (Paneru et al., 2025).
- **Limited Longitudinal Evidence**: There is a scarcity of long-term studies evaluating the sustained impact of technology on learning outcomes in English. Most reviewed research captured short-term implementation or teacher perception, leaving questions around the enduring effectiveness of these technologies.

- **Underrepresentation of Rural Voices**: While several urban-based institutions have been studied, few empirical studies examine the lived experiences of teachers working in rural, resource-constrained schools, where infrastructure challenges are most acute (Saud & Laudari, 2023).

Addressing these gaps is essential for the development of inclusive strategies that consider both technological potential and on-the-ground realities of Nepalese ELT classrooms.

Discussion

The analysis presented in this systematic literature review affirms the increasingly influential role of digital technology in enhancing the quality and delivery of English Language Teaching (ELT), especially within the developing context of Nepal. The findings reveal that, while the integration of educational technologies has potential to foster active learning environments, improve engagement, and support learner autonomy, the effectiveness of such integration heavily depends on the digital competence of teachers. In the context of Nepal, digital pedagogy is still in its developmental phase, where both opportunities and systemic challenges coexist.

According to Kadel and Tiwari (2025), the perception of digital pedagogy among Nepali ELT practitioners remains largely positive, with many educators recognizing its ability to improve students' linguistic competencies. However, the research also shows that actual implementation is hindered by limited exposure to technological tools and insufficient professional development. The transition from traditional methods to digital instruction is not merely a technological shift; it represents a pedagogical transformation that requires teachers to develop, apply, and sustain new skills.

Teachers with high levels of digital literacy are better equipped to design interactive lessons, provide immediate feedback, and create student-centered learning experiences. These educators are often able to integrate various platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom effectively into their instruction. However, the majority of English language teachers in Nepal fall within the low-to-moderate digital competency bracket, a finding that echoes the results of Khadka and Shahi (2025), who emphasize that the familiarity of Nepali teachers with ICT tools is limited, particularly in public schools and rural settings.

The analysis further supports that digital competence is not solely an individual attribute but also a systemic outcome. Institutional infrastructure, access to consistent internet, availability of devices, and ongoing pedagogical training contribute substantially to how well teachers can integrate technology into their practice. Basnet (2025), in a narrative inquiry focused on ICT use in Kathmandu-based schools, found that while urban teachers had relatively better access to ICT, even they expressed concern over the lack of structured digital training, outdated curriculum materials, and minimal policy-level support. These factors mirror broader national challenges in Nepal's education sector that affect ELT as a whole.

Moreover, the role of professional development emerges as a central theme in addressing digital competency gaps. The research by Kadel and Tiwari (2025) indicates that one-off workshops or surface-level ICT training initiatives are inadequate. Teachers require longitudinal, context-specific training programs that build technological proficiency alongside pedagogical

application. The existing government frameworks, such as the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) program under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, have introduced digital modules. However, coverage remains limited, and implementation quality varies across districts (MoEST, 2023).

In many rural districts of Nepal, teachers still lack access to essential digital infrastructure, creating a wide disparity between urban and rural ELT classrooms. The digital divide remains one of the most significant barriers to equity in education. As observed in Khadka and Shahi's (2025) study, teachers in remote schools reported that even when they had the willingness to use ICT tools, they were restricted by unreliable power supply, outdated hardware, and poor internet connectivity. Such logistical barriers must be acknowledged when proposing digital competency frameworks tailored to Nepal's ELT context.

From a pedagogical standpoint, digital tools such as language learning apps (e.g., Duolingo, Quizlet), gamified platforms (e.g., Kahoot), and real-time video conferencing tools offer teachers the ability to vary instructional methods. However, the research warns of overreliance on technology without sufficient scaffolding. For example, in the absence of digital classroom management strategies, students may disengage or misuse tools intended for learning. Hence, professional development must also emphasize digital classroom ethics, time management, and troubleshooting skills.

The psychological dimension of technology integration is another key factor highlighted across the reviewed literature. Many teachers reported feelings of anxiety and lack of confidence when faced with unfamiliar digital platforms. These sentiments were particularly pronounced among older or late-career educators. Basnet (2025) argues that digital literacy cannot be assumed but must be fostered through peer mentoring, inclusive training sessions, and opportunities for trial and error. Only through such supportive environments can digital anxiety be addressed, and innovation encouraged.

Furthermore, the review identifies a significant gap in the availability of standardized digital competency frameworks for ELT practitioners in Nepal. While international models such as the European Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu) exist, they require adaptation to Nepal's socio-cultural and infrastructural context. The absence of such a localized framework means that digital competency often remains vaguely defined in professional development programs, leading to inconsistencies in training outcomes.

One of the notable insights from the review is the evolving perception of technology from an auxiliary tool to a core instructional resource. This paradigm shift is reflected in the perspectives of educators who, despite facing challenges, recognize that digital integration is no longer optional but essential. Khadka and Shahi (2025) document how some teachers have begun to embed technology into lesson planning, formative assessments, and language practice routines. However, these instances remain sporadic and lack a national strategy to ensure consistency and scale.

While the findings reinforce earlier studies suggesting that technology can revolutionize ELT, they also caution against techno-solutionism – the belief that technology alone can

resolve educational problems. Without robust teacher preparation, pedagogical alignment, and infrastructural readiness, technology may simply replicate existing inequities rather than resolve them. As such, the review advocates for a holistic digital readiness approach – one that combines technical infrastructure, teacher training, curriculum alignment, and institutional policy.

An area that remains underexplored in Nepalese ELT research is the impact of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), and Virtual Reality (VR). While international discourse increasingly emphasizes AI-driven personalization and adaptive learning platforms, Nepal's ELT ecosystem is still in early stages of basic digital integration. Future research should examine the relevance, feasibility, and ethical considerations of using such technologies in Nepali classrooms, particularly given the disparities in access and teacher preparedness.

In terms of implications for policy and practice, the study underscores the need for collaborative engagement between government bodies, educational institutions, and technology developers. Policies must prioritize equitable access to digital infrastructure, especially in underserved regions. Furthermore, digital literacy should be embedded into teacher education programs, starting from pre-service levels and continuing throughout in-service training cycles. The National Education Policy (2019) provides a foundational framework for ICT integration, but its operationalization within ELT remains inconsistent (MoEST, 2023).

Despite offering new insights, the study also acknowledges certain limitations. First, it relies on secondary data published between 2015 – 2025, which may omit earlier studies offering historical perspective. Second, the geographic concentration of studies in urban districts limits the generalizability of findings to more remote regions. Third, the absence of real-time classroom observation data in most studies restricts understanding of how digital tools are used in practice, beyond self-reported data. Future research should address these gaps by incorporating mixed-method approaches, including classroom ethnographies and longitudinal teacher development tracking.

Finally, this review lays the groundwork for developing a Nepal-specific digital competency framework for ELT. Such a framework should include tiered competency levels (basic, intermediate, advanced), skill categories (tool selection, pedagogical integration, online classroom management), and clear indicators for evaluation. Only through such systemic strategies can Nepal achieve meaningful and sustainable digital transformation in ELT.

Conclusion

This review critically examined the integration of digital technologies in English Language Teaching (ELT) and the requisite digital competencies among educators within the context of Nepal. The evidence synthesised from reviewed studies demonstrates that while educational technologies offer significant promise for enhancing teaching effectiveness, improving learner engagement, and personalizing instructional delivery, the full potential of these tools remains underutilized due to persistent gaps in teachers' digital readiness.

A recurrent theme across the literature was the disparity in digital skill levels among English teachers, especially those serving in public institutions or rural areas. Many educators

lacked sufficient training in educational technologies, limiting their capacity to leverage platforms such as Google Classroom, Zoom, or language-learning applications effectively. The lack of structured training modules and inadequate ICT infrastructure, particularly in community schools, compound these challenges (Khadka & Shahi, 2025).

Although institutions are increasingly advocating for blended learning approaches, most teacher training initiatives in Nepal remain either theoretical or disconnected from actual classroom realities. Sapkota (2025) emphasized that while higher education institutions in Nepal are experimenting with digital tools, the pace of adoption in secondary and basic education remains uneven, largely due to resource limitations and policy gaps.

Despite these setbacks, this review acknowledges the transformative potential of digital integration in ELT, especially when coupled with targeted professional development. The absence of a standardized framework to assess teachers' digital pedagogical skills further hinders consistency in teacher preparedness. This calls for the development of Nepal-specific digital competency benchmarks in ELT – grounded in both linguistic pedagogy and localized technological access.

Moreover, reliance on literature predominantly from technologically advanced contexts may obscure the nuanced challenges faced in the Global South. Therefore, future studies must focus on context-sensitive research in Nepal, including longitudinal evaluations of digital interventions, frameworks for assessing teacher competencies, and the pedagogical implications of emergent tools like artificial intelligence and adaptive learning platforms (Pradhan & Gupta, 2025).

By addressing these critical gaps, Nepal's ELT landscape can progress toward a more inclusive, equitable, and digitally responsive future, ensuring that technology does not become a barrier but a bridge to quality language education.

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