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Lived Experiences of English Teachers who were Initially Taught English in Nepali: Implications for Professional Development Programmes

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Abstract

This research explores the perspectives of current English teachers in Nepal who were initially taught English in Nepali. The study adopts a qualitative approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis to uncover key factors influencing their preferences and challenges in English language instruction. The research reveals the impact of traditional teaching methods, such as rote learning, on their language proficiency, but also highlights teachers who embrace interactive and student-centered approaches. Challenges in conveying idiomatic expressions and cultural nuances are evident, influenced by prior knowledge of Nepali language structures. The teachers' adaptations include differentiated instruction and experiential learning, emphasizing the importance of continuing professional development. The findings contribute to the development of targeted professional development programmes to enhance English education in Nepal and create a supportive learning environment.

Keywords: *Rote learning, Interference theory, Pragmatics, Experiential learning, Inclusive education, professional development programmes.*

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Introduction

I was born in the picturesque village of Dhankuta, nestled in the eastern part of Nepal. Growing up in this tranquil rural setting, my educational journey began at the age of five when my parents sent me off to school. The school, situated just 500 meters away from our home, became my gateway to a world of knowledge and learning.

In those early years, I attended a Nepali medium school where all subjects were taught in our native language. My father, a literate individual, played a pivotal role in supporting my education, while my mother, though illiterate, offered her unwavering love and encouragement. It was through their guidance and belief in the power of education that I took my first steps towards a brighter future.

Within the walls of my school, the teachers relied heavily on lectures as the primary mode of instruction. It was a world of memorization, where we were expected to absorb information without fully grasping its meaning. I diligently committed stories, facts, and figures to memory, knowing that they would be tested in examinations. Rote learning became the norm, with little emphasis on understanding the concepts being taught.

While my teachers were dedicated, there were challenges to overcome. Some hailed from the Terai region of Nepal or even from across the border in India, which meant their accents often proved difficult to understand. Furthermore, being located in a rural area meant that attracting teachers to our school was not always easy. Headteachers would frequently travel to the district education office in search of teachers, and in their absence, a school assistant, who had completed only up to grade 5, would step in to teach various subjects. As highlighted by (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2013), I also used to have significantly lower test scores compared to schools with qualified teachers.

Amidst the traditional approach to education, a fascinating twist came in grade 4 when the school assistant introduced me to the English alphabet. It ignited a spark within me, opening a door to a new language and a broader world of possibilities. As I progressed to grade 5, my exposure to English expanded, and I began learning words and phrases, building a foundation that would shape my future endeavors. However, as mentioned by Petrovic & Olmstead (2001), my English learning was very slow due to the lack of enough exposure.

But as the chapter of primary school drew to a close, a new chapter awaited me. I had to say goodbye to familiar surroundings and embark on a new adventure in a different school, where I would join grade six. The new school was a considerable distance away, a sixty-minute walk from my home, which meant traversing a dense forest each day. Undeterred by the challenges that lay ahead, I embraced this transition with determination and excitement, ready to embark on a fresh educational journey.

In my pursuit of higher education, I enrolled in the Faculty of Education at Dhankuta Multiple Campus, where I chose English and Nepali as my major subjects. At the time, my decision to study English was influenced by my best friend's choice rather than a clear aim or passion for the subject. Coming from a Nepali medium school, I encountered numerous challenges in grasping the concepts as English was taught in Nepali.

Struggling to understand the literary texts, I sought help by joining a tuition class. It was here that I met Singh sir, my tuition teacher, who played a crucial role in guiding my studies. To aid my understanding, he provided me with summaries of literature texts in English and advised me to memorize them. Following his guidance, I committed the summaries to memory. Furthermore, Singh sir advised me to write these memorized summaries for all types of questions that might appear in the examinations. Little did I know that the examination controller office at Tribhuvan University evaluated answer sheets based on the length of writing and handwriting, without necessarily reading the content. Relying on memorization, I managed to pass my Master's degree in ELT in Education, despite the initial difficulties and the unconventional examination evaluation process.

Becoming an English teacher and instructing students in both secondary and higher education was a dream come true, but it came with its fair share of challenges. Despite majoring in English during my higher education, I found myself facing practical difficulties in delivering instructions in English due to a lack of sufficient exposure and practice in the language.

One memorable experience that vividly showcased my struggles was on my very first day of teaching at a private school. Not only was I required to teach English inside the classroom, but I also had to interact in English outside the classroom, as per the school's language policy. This added pressure made me acutely aware of my shortcomings in fluency compared to some of my proficient students.

To illustrate, the extracurricular coordinator asked me to accompany the grade 10 students to the basketball ground and provide support during their basketball session. While this seemed like a straightforward task, I faced significant difficulty in giving instructions in English. For instance, I wanted to convey the phrase "bouncing the ball," but I was unable to recall the appropriate words. In that moment of hesitation, I sought the assistance of the students, who promptly supplied the correct phrase. As mentioned by Smith & Johnson (2022), I did not have enough communicative English. It was a humbling experience, and I realized the importance of continuous learning and improvement as an English teacher.

Understanding Continuing Professional Development

There are certain times in life when we are forced to look at ourselves in the mirror and question our abilities. These are the times when we change our attitude toward things and start to look at ourselves differently. I vividly remember that day about twelve years back when I faced a similar situation.

It was during the Hornby Regional School in Colombo in 2012 when my tutor asked me a question after my session delivery. "How long have you been teaching?" He asked. "It's been eight years," I said. He, then, enquired about my teaching methods. "Do you teach applying this same approach, methods, techniques and materials every year?" Confident about my tried and tested techniques I confidently replied. "I had prepared my notes eight years ago and have been using the same for eight years." I received an unexpected reply from the tutor. He told me that I was wrong, and in reality, I only had one year of teaching experience as I had been using the same techniques and notes for eight years. Numerous questions started hovering around my mind: Why do I need to change my techniques every year? How could he say that my notes don't work? Why do I need to focus on my development when I know my lessons are going well? Is he right? But he had opened my eyes.

As an employee of an international organization, part of my responsibilities involves supporting the government of Nepal in offering continuing professional development opportunities to English language teachers. In pursuit of this objective, I embarked on a research activity to explore the perspectives of current English teachers who were initially taught English in Nepali.

The rationale for this research arises from a significant gap in the existing literature regarding the experiences of current English teachers in Nepal who were initially taught English in Nepali. While the landscape of English education in Nepal has evolved over the years, there remains a lack of comprehensive understanding of how teachers' past language learning experiences influence their current instructional approaches and challenges. Existing research often focuses on students' language acquisition, but the perspectives of teachers who underwent English instruction in Nepali have been underexplored. This research seeks to bridge this gap by exploring into the detailed interplay between teachers' historical language learning experiences and their current pedagogical practices.

The research objective of the described study is to explore the perspectives of current English teachers in Nepal who were initially taught English in Nepali. The aim is to understand their perceptions and experiences in order to gain insights into their preferences and challenges related to English language instruction. The ultimate goal is to use this information to develop more effective and targeted continuing professional development programmes for English language teachers in Nepal, thereby enhancing the quality of English education in the country.

Theoretical Framework

In my research, I adopted a theoretical framework that drew upon several key concepts and theories in the fields of language acquisition, language teaching, and teacher education. Firstly, I embraced the theoretical lens of constructivism to understand how my past language learning experiences had influenced my approach to teaching English. According to constructivism, learners actively construct knowledge based on their prior experiences, shaping their instructional choices and beliefs as teachers (Phillips, 1995).

I integrated principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in my framework, emphasizing the significance of authentic communication and interactive language use in the classroom (Vinz, 2023). As a teacher/programme designer, I prioritized creating meaningful language learning opportunities that promoted fluency and communication, aligning with my preference for student-centered and communicative approaches to English language instruction.

In addition, I drew insights from the perspective of inclusive education (Hockings, 2010) to explore how I adapted my instructional practices to cater to diverse learning needs and backgrounds. Inclusive education emphasized providing equitable opportunities for all students to access and engage with the curriculum, and this concept guided my dedication to personalized support and differentiated instruction.

I also considered the impact of interference theory (Underwood, 1957), recognizing that my prior knowledge of Nepali might have influenced my acquisition and use of English as a second language. This theory helped explain the challenges I faced in language production and comprehension in English, stemming from my linguistic background.

I incorporated the theoretical perspective of pragmatics (Fretheim, 2014) to examine how I navigated the contextual use of language and cultural appropriateness in English language instruction. The challenges in conveying idiomatic expressions and cultural nuances in English were related to my understanding of pragmatic aspects, and this concept shed light on my experiences.

I acknowledged the role of teacher education in shaping my instructional practices, as I recognized the importance of continuous learning and professional growth. As an English teacher in Nepal/programme designer, I was committed to lifelong learning, seeking out opportunities for professional development through workshops, conferences, and collaboration with fellow teachers.

By integrating these theoretical concepts, my research aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing my perceptions and experiences as an English teacher in Nepal who was initially taught English in Nepali. The theoretical framework guided the analysis of data and provided a basis for developing targeted professional development programmes to enhance English language instruction and improve the overall quality of English education in Nepal.

Research Design and Methods

In this research, I employed a qualitative research design, utilizing semi-structured interviews to explore the lived experiences of English teachers. I chose the research design of phenomenology, following the guidance of Mertens (2010) and Leavy (2017). This approach facilitated a deeper comprehension of the daily lives of English teachers and allowed me to capture their unique experiences (Patten, 2002). Rooted in the exploration of the origin of meanings within the

subjective viewpoints of teachers, the phenomenological design focused on their individual experiences (Van Manen, 2018). This framework was well-suited to investigate the unreflected experiences of English teachers, allowing for a thorough exploration of their perspectives, beliefs, and insights through carefully constructed questions. By prioritizing the personal interpretations of teachers' reality, the phenomenological approach facilitated a comprehensive exploration of the intricacies and potentials within the territory of teaching practices.

Guided by my philosophical stance and the chosen research design, I accurately crafted the research questions to align with the overarching goal of investigating into the research topic. Consequently, my exploration aimed to address the central research question: "What are the primary factors influencing the perceptions and experiences of current English teachers in Nepal who were initially taught English in Nepali, and how do these factors shape their preferences and challenges related to English language instruction?" I further deconstructed this comprehensive inquiry into five sub-research questions, each representing a distinct avenue of investigation:

Teachers' Experience of Learning English in Nepali - How did being taught English in Nepali during your school years influence your understanding and proficiency in the language?

Influence of Past Language Learning Experience on Current Approach to Teaching English - In what ways have your prior experiences as a student learning English in Nepali shaped your current methods and approaches to teaching the language?

Challenges in Delivering English Language Instructions - What challenges do you face in conveying English language concepts to students, considering your own experience of learning English in Nepali?

Adaptations and Modifications - How have you adjusted your teaching techniques to accommodate the shortcomings of the methods used when you were taught English in Nepali?

Experience of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) - How has your history of being taught English in Nepali motivated your engagement in ongoing professional development activities to improve your teaching practices?

I precisely formulated these research questions to extract insights from the lived experiences and viewpoints of the teachers. To ensure methodological rigor, I thoughtfully tailored the study's sampling process to incorporate considerations of sample size, representativeness, and the inherent nature of the research, aligning with Cohen et al.'s (2013) recommendations. Striving for a comprehensive perspective, I employed a purposive sampling strategy. Specifically, I deliberately chose six English teachers who were taught English in Nepali during their schooling and were currently teaching English in public secondary schools within the Kathmandu valley to participate in the study.

I conducted a series of in-depth interviews with these English teachers, serving as a conduit to capture first-hand insights and real-life experiences related to teaching English, exploring into the detailed subtleties of their perspectives. The subsequent transcription of these interviews, while a necessary step, came with its own set of challenges, as highlighted by Flick (2014). The transcription process involved the careful conversion of spoken dialogues into written text, thereby preserving the essence of participants' narratives for successive analysis.

The subsequent phase involved an intricate analysis of the transcribed data, encompassing a thorough exploration of the content derived from the interviews, as expounded by Creswell (2014). To this end, I thoughtfully adopted an iterative thematic analysis approach, drawing on insights from Braun and Clarke (2006). This methodological choice was rooted in the

process of identifying, analysing, and ultimately reporting recurring thematic patterns embedded within the data. The initial step of coding systematically labelled segments of the transcript. These codes emerged both inductively from the data itself and were predetermined to align with established thematic foci inherent to thematic analysis. This dual approach, effectively blending emergent insights and pre-established thematic frameworks, acknowledged the intricate interplay between newfound discoveries and pre-existing thematic constructs. It is worth noting that certain predetermined themes from the interview schedule itself were also incorporated as codes. The subsequent phase entailed the aggregation of these coded data into overarching main themes, encapsulating recurring concepts resonating across the dataset. These identified main themes, intricately woven into the existing literature (Lee and Fielding, 2004), significantly contributed to the investigation's core aim of addressing the research questions.

The ethical framework for this study comprised three fundamental procedures. Initially, I employed an information sheet to communicate the study's scope and participants' roles. Subsequently, participants were presented with a consent form. Lastly, I took stringent measures to ensure the security and ethical utilization of participants' information, guaranteeing their privacy and anonymity in the final publication.

Results

The study explored the experiences and perspectives of English teachers in Nepal who were initially taught English in Nepali. The context of Nepali medium schools emerged as a significant factor impacting language development. Rote learning was the predominant method of instruction, where students memorized information without grasping its meaning. This approach hindered their understanding and fluency in English, leading to difficulties in comprehending English texts and accents. Additionally, limited exposure to English outside the classroom further contributed to language learning challenges (Ojha, 2018). I have presented the results of the study in the following themes.

Theme 1: Experience of Learning English in School Education

The responses of the English teachers highlighted the impact of their early language learning experiences in Nepali medium schools. Rote learning was the prevailing teaching method, focusing on memorization rather than meaningful engagement with the language. This approach hindered their language development and made it challenging to comprehend English texts and spoken language. As mentioned by Sundqvist & Sylvén (2016), limited exposure to English outside the classroom further exacerbated these difficulties.

However, some teachers demonstrated a positive shift in their approach to teaching English. They drew from their own experiences as language learners to embrace student-centered and communicative methods. Prioritizing active learning, critical thinking, and understanding the meaning behind language, these teachers adopted a more modern language teaching approach. They recognized the importance of interactive and engaging methods (Bernhard, 2000) for effective language learning.

Theme 2: Influence of past language learning experience on current approach to teaching English

The teachers' past language learning experiences significantly influenced their current instructional practices. Drawing from their own journey as language learners, they adopted a

pedagogical approach grounded in constructivism, empathy, and student-centeredness. The teachers emphasized creating authentic communication opportunities and fostering a culturally responsive and inclusive learning environment, valuing students' linguistic identities. However, they also acknowledged the challenges they faced in delivering English language instruction, particularly related to interference from their prior knowledge of Nepali and the complexities of pragmatics and contrastive analysis (Shemshadsara, 2012).

Discussions

Participants' experience of learning English in Nepali

By exposing teachers to various methods and encouraging them to reflect on their principles and actively engage with teaching techniques, they can gain clarity about the reasons behind their instructional choices and beliefs. This reflective process allows teachers to become aware of their fundamental assumptions, values, and beliefs, empowering them to choose different approaches from the ones they were exposed to as students. According to Lotrie (1975), the methods used in teaching a foreign language serve as a reflective tool, enabling teachers to become conscious of the underlying thinking that guides their actions. This aspect holds particular significance for prospective teachers attending methodology classes to learn how to teach. These aspiring teachers enter teacher training with preconceived ideas about the teaching and learning process, which were formed during their years as students themselves. The primary objective of teacher education, as noted by Schulman (1987) and Larsen-Freeman (2000), is to make the implicit knowledge of teachers explicit.

Based on the participants' responses, several key themes emerge that shed light on the impact of teaching English in Nepali and its implications for language learning in Nepal. The participants' experiences reflect the influence of their past language learning environment, where the emphasis on translation and memorization hindered their understanding and fluency in English. One of the participants (Shankar) argued, "I progressed through school, English was taught in Nepali. Our teacher would explain the grammatical rules in Nepali and translate literary texts from English to Nepali for better understanding. I must admit that at that time, I didn't fully grasp the language itself, and the focus seemed to be more on translation rather than building a strong foundation in English".

The limited exposure to English outside the classroom also affected their language development. However, some participants embraced a student-centered and communicative approach to teaching, recognizing the importance of interactive and engaging methods for language acquisition. Despite challenges in comprehending English texts and accents, their awareness of these obstacles suggests the need for a more supportive and inclusive learning environment. By integrating modern language teaching approaches that prioritize communication and ample exposure to English, teachers in Nepal can create a conducive setting for effective language learning and improve the overall quality of English education in the country (Krashen, 1982).

Influence of past language learning experience on current approach to teaching English

Lortie's ground-breaking research in 1975 shed light on the vital role of teachers' prior experiences as learners, influencing their cognitive processes and classroom practices, often

referred to as the "apprenticeship of observation." This has sparked a growing interest in exploring teachers' knowledge base, particularly in the field of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE). Building upon this concept, Grossman (1991) asserts that prospective teachers do not approach teacher education as blank slates; instead, they bring with them substantial prior exposure to teaching methods and pre-established knowledge and beliefs about their subject area.

The responses from the English teachers provide valuable insights into their perspectives on how their past language learning experiences have influenced their current approach to teaching English. Overall, it is evident that their own journey as language learners in a Nepali medium school has had a profound impact on their teaching practices. Shankar's response indicates a conscious effort to move away from the traditional memorization and translation methods he experienced during his English language learning journey. He recognizes the importance of using English as the primary medium of instruction and encourages active speaking and listening practice. This shift in focus towards fluency, pronunciation, and critical thinking skills reflects a student-centered and communicative approach in his teaching. Bipana's response highlights her understanding of the challenges that learners may face when transitioning to a new language. Her own struggles with English language learning have made her more empathetic towards her students' needs and learning preferences. By employing diverse teaching methods and materials to cater to different learning styles, she aims to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Subarna acknowledges the limitations of the traditional methods he experienced in learning English and is determined to break away from them. His emphasis on promoting active language use and critical thinking aligns with a more modern and communicative language teaching approach. Rakesh draws on his experiences of memorization and rote learning to emphasize the importance of understanding the meaning behind words and phrases. By encouraging interactive activities and real-life simulations, he provides students with practical opportunities to apply their language skills in authentic contexts. Tankamaya's response reflects her awareness of the challenges that students face in transitioning to a new language. Her commitment to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment, where students feel encouraged to take risks and make mistakes, shows her understanding of the emotional aspects of language learning and the need for supportive and patient teaching. Madhav's experience as a second language learner informs his approach to teaching by prioritizing a culturally responsive and inclusive learning environment. By incorporating diverse teaching materials and examples that reflect the experiences of his students, he aims to make the content relatable and meaningful to them.

The teachers' responses demonstrate their reflective and student-centered teaching practices, influenced by their own language learning experiences. They have internalized the challenges they faced as learners and strive to create a more engaging, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for their students. This critical interpretation indicates a positive impact of their past experiences on their current teaching practices, as they seek to provide effective and meaningful language learning experiences to their students.

Challenges in delivering English language instructions

Teaching English as a foreign language in developing countries, including our own, presents numerous challenges that teachers must navigate (Prince and Barrett, 2014). One specific challenge arises for teachers who were themselves taught English in Nepali during their own

education. This experience can make it even more challenging for them to effectively deliver English language instructions to their students.

The challenges faced by individuals who were initially taught English in Nepali, as expressed in the responses, align with various theories and concepts in the field of language acquisition and teaching. One notable theory relevant to their experiences is "interference theory (Callies, 2015)," which suggests that prior knowledge of one language can influence the learning of a second language, leading to errors or difficulties in language production and comprehension (Shankar). This is evident in Shankar's response, where traditional learning methods like translation and memorization from Nepali to English may interfere with the adoption of more interactive and communicative teaching approaches in English language instruction.

The mentioned difficulties in conveying English idiomatic expressions and cultural nuances can be linked to the significance of "pragmatics" in language learning (Bipana and Tankamaya). Pragmatics involves understanding the contextual use of language and the cultural appropriateness of expressions in various situations. When they attempt to directly translate idiomatic expressions from their native language, it can lead to inaccurate interpretations and challenges in explaining these nuances effectively.

Moreover, the responses highlight the importance of "contrastive analysis" in addressing cross-linguistic differences (Bipana, Rakesh, and Tankamaya). Contrastive analysis examines the differences and similarities between two languages to predict potential areas of difficulty for learners. The challenges faced in understanding and applying English syntax, grammar, pronunciation, and phonetics that differ from Nepali can be attributed to this concept.

Additionally, the need to handle language ambiguity, such as homonyms and multiple meanings of words, is evident in the responses (Madhav and Tankamaya). This aligns with the broader challenge learners encounter when navigating the complexity of language and its potential for varied interpretations.

The experiences shared by individuals initially taught English in Nepali illuminated the complexities of language acquisition and instruction. Interference theory, pragmatics, contrastive analysis, and the challenge of handling ambiguity are key concepts that help explain the difficulties they face in delivering English language instruction. These insights underscore the importance of considering learners' linguistic backgrounds, cultural contexts, and employing interactive, communicative, and contextually relevant approaches in language teaching to foster effective language learning experiences (Shankar, Bipana, Rakesh, Tankamaya, and Madhav).

Adaptations and modifications

In the Nepali classroom, teachers often face challenges when it comes to modifying and adapting teaching methods and resources. Several factors contribute to these difficulties, making it essential to understand the context and constraints that teachers encounter. One primary challenge is the traditional educational system that has long relied on rote learning and a one-size-fits-all approach (Borg, 2023). Teachers are accustomed to using these conventional methods, and transitioning to more modern and interactive teaching approaches requires a significant shift in mind set and pedagogy.

The responses provided by the English teachers showcase a comprehensive understanding and application of various theories and principles of language teaching and education. Through differentiated instruction, teachers like Bipana and Rakesh demonstrate their commitment to tailoring their teaching approaches to meet the individual needs and proficiency

levels of their students, ensuring each student can progress at their own pace. Moreover, the emphasis on culturally relevant teaching by Shankar, Subarna, and Tankamaya highlights their dedication to creating inclusive and supportive learning environments that celebrate cultural diversity and value students' linguistic identities. By adapting their instructional practices to accommodate students with diverse learning abilities, as shown by Rakesh and Madhav, these teachers exemplify the principles of inclusive education, providing personalized support and alternative modes of instruction to ensure all students can access and engage with the curriculum. Additionally, Tankamaya's incorporation of hands-on activities and real-life examples aligns with experiential learning, enhancing students' understanding and connection to the English language. Lastly, Madhav's use of multimedia resources reflects the integration of technology in language instruction, adding an engaging and motivating element to his teaching approach. Overall, these teachers' commitment to applying a variety of theories and principles in their classrooms demonstrates their adaptability and dedication to fostering effective and meaningful language learning experiences for their students.

Experience on continuing professional development (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a planned, continuous, and lifelong process aimed at the enhancement of teachers' personal and professional qualities (Padwad & Dixit, 2011). Its primary objective is to improve teachers' knowledge, skills, and teaching practices, ultimately leading to their empowerment and the betterment of their agency within the educational system. CPD is also envisioned to contribute to the overall development of educational institutions and the growth of students. It is not a one-time event but an ongoing journey that demands dedication and effort from teachers. It underscores the significance of a lifelong commitment to learning and the evolution of knowledge, skills, and behaviours that cater to the changing needs of education and students.

The responses provided by the teachers reflect a strong recognition of the importance of continuing professional development (CPD) in the field of education. Their past experiences as students in Nepal have influenced their understanding of the impact that dedicated and well-trained teachers can have on students' learning journeys. As teachers now, they express a deep commitment to ongoing learning and growth to enhance their teaching practices and better support their students.

Shankar highlights the significance of CPD in improving the quality of education and fostering inclusive classrooms. He believes that through continuous learning, teachers can gain insights into innovative strategies and technologies that can engage and empower their students. This perspective aligns with the notion that CPD equips teachers with the necessary tools to adapt to the changing educational landscape.

Bipana draws a connection between her own positive experiences with dedicated teachers and her commitment to ongoing professional development. She emphasizes the importance of staying up-to-date with pedagogical approaches, language teaching methodologies, and technology integration. Bipana's view emphasises the idea that CPD helps teachers evolve and offer the best possible learning experiences for their students.

Subarna echoes the sentiment that well-trained teachers had a positive impact on her language learning journey. As a teacher herself, she recognizes that education is a dynamic field and seeks continuous professional development to keep her teaching skills relevant and effective.

This response highlights the importance of teachers' dedication to continuous improvement for the benefit of their students.

Rakesh's perspective aligns with the notion that education is constantly evolving, and teachers need to keep pace with the latest trends and research. By engaging in various forms of professional development, Rakesh aims to provide the best possible education for his students. This emphasis on staying informed and adapting instructional practices reflects the commitment to lifelong learning as a teacher.

Tankamaya emphasizes the dynamic nature of education and the need for teachers to continuously adapt their instructional practices. By participating in professional development opportunities, she aims to create a more effective and inclusive learning environment for her students. This perspective aligns with the belief that CPD allows teachers to cater to the diverse needs of their students.

Madhav's response also highlights the positive impact that well-trained teachers can have on students. He expresses a dedication to continuous learning to enhance his teaching skills and provide the best education for his students. Madhav's perspective aligns with the idea that CPD empowers teachers to improve their instructional practices and positively impact student outcomes.

The responses collectively highlight the importance of CPD in the field of education, particularly for teachers who have experienced the positive influence of dedicated teachers in their own learning journeys. The teachers' commitment to continuous learning and growth reflects their dedication to providing high-quality education and creating a positive impact on their students. The view that education is a lifelong journey aligns with the notion that teachers should continuously evolve and adapt their practices to meet the changing needs of their students and the educational landscape.

Implications for Professional Development Programmes

The insights garnered from the participants' personal experiences and reflections on their English language learning journeys carry profound implications for the design of professional development programmes aimed at enhancing the capabilities of English teachers in Nepal. One of the critical considerations derived from participants' narratives is the essential role of immersive language exposure. Given that teachers' own exposure to English has been limited outside the classroom, integrating English as the medium of instruction within the professional development sessions becomes imperative. Such an approach not only boosts their fluency but also fosters familiarity and confidence in using the language. Acknowledging the unique circumstances of teachers who were initially taught English in Nepali, professional development programmes should be meticulously tailored to address their specific needs and challenges. Recognizing the potential hurdles, they might face in adopting novel instructional methods, the programmes should proffer practical strategies that enable teachers to navigate these challenges effectively. The professional development curriculum should shine a spotlight on modern pedagogical approaches in language teaching. Prioritizing interactive and communicative methods over conventional memorization and translation techniques can empower teachers to create engaging and dynamic learning experiences. Exposing teachers to learner-centered strategies can encourage active participation and holistic language acquisition.

The significance of inclusive practices cannot be overlooked, especially given the diverse linguistic backgrounds and learning abilities of students. Professional development programmes

should equip teachers with the tools to differentiate instruction, catering to various learning styles and levels of language proficiency. This ensures that every student is provided with an equitable opportunity for language development. Encouraging reflective practices within the professional development realm allows teachers to critically analyse their own instructional methods and underlying beliefs. By fostering self-assessment and self-awareness, teachers can identify areas of improvement and adapt their teaching strategies to align with best practices. Incorporating contrastive analysis in professional development programmes is paramount. This analysis equips teachers with insights into common errors and difficulties that students may encounter due to language interference. Armed with this knowledge, teachers can provide targeted support to alleviate these challenges. The programmes should focus on nurturing pragmatic competence among teachers. This entails an understanding of not only the structural aspects of language but also the contextual use, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances. By imparting this knowledge, teachers can guide students towards effective language usage. Given the contemporary significance of technology in education, professional development programmes should exemplify how multimedia resources and digital tools can be seamlessly integrated to enhance language instruction. This practical demonstration offers teachers the means to create more engaging and interactive learning environments.

The emphasis on continuous professional development remains key. Professional development programmes should underscore the value of ongoing learning by encouraging teachers to participate in workshops, seminars, and conferences. This commitment to staying updated with the latest advancements ensures the currency of their teaching practices. The diverse classroom landscape necessitates a heightened cultural sensitivity. Professional development programmes should cultivate an understanding that fosters inclusivity and respect for students' cultural backgrounds and experiences, creating an atmosphere where every student feels valued. Facilitating collaborative learning and mentorship initiatives during professional development can be transformative. By encouraging teachers to learn from each other's experiences and receive guidance from seasoned teachers who have navigated the transition from traditional to modern teaching methods, a supportive network is established. Professional development programmes should delve into the realm of effective assessment aligned with modern pedagogies. Teachers should be equipped to provide constructive feedback that nurtures growth and development in students' language skills, fostering an environment of continuous improvement. Lastly, professional development programmes should empower teachers to advocate for systemic changes within the educational landscape. By enabling teachers to articulate the benefits of modern language teaching methods, a collective effort can be directed towards policy reforms that champion innovative approaches.

Conclusion

The participants' experiences of learning English in Nepali medium schools provide valuable insights into the impact of teaching English in Nepali and its implications for professional development programmes. The traditional emphasis on translation and memorization hindered their understanding and fluency in English, leading to limited exposure and challenges in language development. However, some participants incorporated student-centred and communicative teaching approaches, recognizing the importance of interactive and engaging methods for language acquisition. The influence of their past language learning experiences has

been profound, shaping their current approach to teaching English. The teachers' reflective and student-centred practices show an assurance to creating supportive and inclusive learning environments that foster effective language learning experiences.

Conveying English language instructions in Nepali presents unique challenges, particularly for teachers who were themselves taught English in Nepali. The difficulties in language production and comprehension can be attributed to interference theory, pragmatics, contrastive analysis, and handling language ambiguity. To address these challenges, teachers must consider learners' linguistic backgrounds, cultural contexts, and employ interactive, communicative, and contextually relevant approaches to language teaching.

Adapting and modifying teaching methods and resources in the Nepali classroom is not without challenges. The traditional educational system's dependence on rote learning demands a significant shift in mind set and pedagogy for teachers. However, the participants' commitment to employing a variety of theories and principles, such as differentiated instruction, culturally relevant teaching, inclusive education, experiential learning, and technology integration, showcases their adaptability and dedication to fostering effective and meaningful language learning experiences for their students.

The participants' perspective on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) highlights the importance of ongoing learning and growth for teachers. CPD provides teachers with the necessary tools to adapt to the changing educational landscape, stay up-to-date with pedagogical approaches, and provide the best possible learning experiences for their students. The teachers' commitment to lifelong learning reflects their enthusiasm for continuous improvement and positively impacting student outcomes.

The impact of past language learning experiences, teachers can create more effective and inclusive learning environments, fostering meaningful language learning. Embracing student-centred and communicative teaching approaches, along with continuous professional development, is crucial for inspiring the quality of English education in Nepal. The government and other key actors should consider all the findings while designing the professional development programmes in future.

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