Teaching English in Multilingual Contexts: Teachers' Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The national and international migration has made multilingualism a common phenomenon; Nepal is no exception. Nepal is regarded as a multilingual country where more than 129 languages are spoken. Despite multilingualism, English language has been taught from basic to advance levels of education as a core or optional subject. In this context, this article has investigated challenges faced by English teachers in teaching English in multilingual classes of Nepal. The article has also attempted *to explore the strategies employed by teachers to deal with the challenges that they faced. To achieve these objectives, explanatory sequential mixed research design was used. Eighty basic level English language teachers from forty different (2 from each) schools of Kaski district were selected purposively. The data was collected through survey questionnaires, interview and classroom observation. The research showed that linguistic diversity, students classroom behavior and demotivation towards English, uncontextual and lengthy syllabus, lack of teachers' involvement in curriculum designing process and refresher courses programmes were the major challenges that the teachers have faced while teaching English. The research also indicated that the use of translation, use of increasing reading materials, managing rewards to the students, and repetition of the text were the major strategies that teachers employed to cope with the challenges in multilingual contexts. This implies that the policy makers, curriculum designers, and administrators should train the teachers to address these issues that are related to teaching English in a multilingual context like in Nepal.*

KEYWORDS: Curriculum designing process, English language teaching, multilingualism, strategies

INTRODUCTION

Multilingualism is a situation in which more than two languages are used in the society as societal multilingualism and a speaker uses/speaks more than two languages. In this regard, European Commission (2015) writes multilingualism as "the ability of societies, institutions, groups, and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day to day lives" (p. 6). Similarly, Li (2008) concedes multilingual individual as "anyone who can communicate in more than one language, to be it active (through speaking & writing) or passive (through listening & reading)" (p. 4). These accounts reveal that multilingualism is the situation in which mastery over two or

more languages is required. In this context, Flynn (2016) argues that multilingualism or bilingualism is a natural state of human kind which incorporates the ability of speaking several languages. Multilingualism is the condition of using more than two languages in the same context for the same purpose. Similarly, Jha (2012) takes multilingualism as a means of establishing and maintaining social harmony. It is one of the qualities of modern civilization and development.

There is no any part of the world where a single language exists. However, there is still an argument about proficiency level that an individual or society needs to get mastery over the languages to meet the requirement of multilingualism. The degree of language competency may be varying and all the languages are not used in the same domain. In such context, Hornberger and MacKay (2010) argue that the suitability of language is determined on the basis of subject matter and its domain. So, the level of proficiency is context and subject sensitive and can vary from person to person.

Multilingual context has become common in the post-modern era. As Lewis (2009) claims that the present day world is digitized and globalized where 7000 languages and 200 independent countries exist. This shows that the number of languages spoken is larger than the countries and the speakers of different languages that are unevenly distributed in several parts of the world. This implies that the speakers of smaller languages need to speak other languages apart from their native one in their daily life for survival. In this regard, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) argue that a monolingual individual would be regarded as a misfit in the society in the sense that s/he lacks the skill of interaction in the society and could not understand the reality of the world.

English pursuits the need of multilingualism even more important and relevant. Paik (2008) in this context asserts that the demand for learning English language has been increasing day by day since it is perceived as an indispensible tool for the global economy and identity. In the same vein, Kirk-Patrick and Sussex (2012) concede English as a widespread global language and it has become a very common subject or as a language of classroom instruction in schools and universities in the world. These accounts reveal that global spread and demand of English language has turned monolingual phenomenon to bilingual or multilingual.

Connecting English language with classroom dynamics, Zeeshan (2013) claims that insufficient knowledge in English language disadvantages the students. In the same connection, Jimenez and Rose (2010) affirm that social, cultural and academic capitals which the students need to foster higher education or accomplish some significant tasks require students' great effort in the process of learning English. English language has been regarded as the language of hope, progress and harmony in multilingual contexts.

Nepal is a country representing a complex cross-section of linguistic and cultural diversites. It is a multilingual, multicultural, multiethnic and multireligious country (Constitution of Nepal, 2015). However, there exists unified linguistic and cultural structure. The report of CBS (2011) shows 123 languages spoken in the country merging a number of indistinct languages as others in the lack of complete information, however, Awasthi(2020) mentions that the number of languages spoken in Nepal has reached in 129. Although English is spoken by a very few speakers in Nepal that is only 0.01% of the total population, it has occupied a significant position in Nepali education system (Yadav, 2014). It is used from the basic level to the advanced level either as a core subject or an optional subject. In this avenue, Educational Manual (2015) has made the provision of Nepali or English as the medium of instruction in the classroom. However, at the same time, the use of Nepali language in primary level is enforced with the aim of developing it as a true national language. The government of Nepal has made and implemented mother tongue education since 2007 (Singh Zhang & Besmel, 2012). In this diverse

context, Nepali school classrooms have the children having their mother tongue and/or Nepali language and at the same time, they are imposed or motivated towards learning global language of *lingua franca*. The diverse classroom setting creates a number of challenges for an English teacher while teaching English since it is foreign or second and non-institutionalized language in the country.

Very few studies have been conducted on multilingualism and language education. The study carried out by Fareh (2010) shows that English language teaching worldwide but the quality of teaching and learning of it has been decreased considerably in the countries where English is used as foreign language. Similarly, Bista (2011) claims that a number of challenges in English language teaching have been noticed in-terms of textbooks, methodology, curriculum, and resources both in school and college levels of Nepal. Though these studies concern with English language teaching but no specific research was carried out to explore the challenges faced by English teachers teaching English in the multilingual classroom at the basic level of schools in Nepal. In this sense, this study is an attempt to investigate the challenges faced by English language teachers and also to explore the strategies the teachers employed to deal with the challenges in the classroom teaching process. This study will be applicable for the English language teaching and learning in multilingual contexts like in Nepal. Moreover, it will help both the English language teachers and students in teaching and learning English using appropriate and context sensitive strategies in multilingual classes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Changes in living condition caused by globalization, economic degradation and civil wars around the world are the reasons why a large number of people are in motion, resulting in national and/or international migration that leads to multilingual context (Nalunga, 2013). Multilingualism is one of the phenomena of human life at present time which emerges when people realize the need of across speech communication. In this context, Aronin (2015) asserts that multilingualism is the emerging issue and topic of present age; however, it has been in practice throughout the history of human civilization and development. The political, economic, social, cultural, linguistic and even geographical transformation lead to a society towards multilingualism. In this vein, Hammarberg (2009) states, "Humans are potentially multilingual by nature and that multilingualism is the normal state of linguistic competence" (p. 2). Moreover, Weber and Horner (2012) describe the terms "bilingualism" and "multilingualism" under multilingualism and claim that each human has a variety of linguistic resources that leads not just to have one or more languages that one poses.

These accounts imply that multilingualism is not only the collection of languages that a speaker gets mastery over and controlled but it is a complex phenomenon connecting specific semiotic resource. Aronin and Singleton (2012) take it as a social aspect rather than just adding the number of languages in human repertoire and they claim it as "a new linguistic dispensation" (p. 43). They meant to state that multilingualism covers language ideologies, policies, language education and the structure of language use along with mastery over languages. Similar to them, Jessner's (2008) study reveals that any kind of language acquisition, and involves qualitative changes in language inquiry and learning related to an increase in the number of languages lead to multilingual development and use. Similar to this, Franceschini (2009) asserts that different form of social, cultural, institutional and individual usages of languages along with individual and group competence in diverse contexts creates a multilingual situation. In this sense, multilingual is a post-modern popular phenomenon

which may create language contact, language loss, language conflict and language change in some cases due to frequent contact and use of more than two languages.

The world is taken as the storehouse of languages which brings linguistic as well as cultural diversities leading to multitude of languages and cultures even in a small geographical location. In connection to this, Crystal (2004) states "Most reference books published since 1980s give a figure of between 6000 and 7000 but estimates have varied in recent decades between 3000 and 10,000" (p. 3). This shows that despite linguistic diversities, English has become obligatory language to get the access of world knowledge. Supporting this phenomenon, UNESCO (2007) reports that bilingualism and/or multilingualism both in north and south, and east and west is a normal practice in diverse linguistic context where English is used as first, second or foreign language in almost all the countries. English as a *lingua franca* serves for progress, education, trade and employment in multilingual contexts. It has become a cardinal skill for the person who wants to get succeeded in his/her professional and academic career in this 21st century. In this vein, King (2018) insists that the language policy of the country should focus on the process and procedure of making equal and equitable access to high level of English language proficiency so that learners can get opportunities that English offers as a global language. Well managed language policy ensures the effective, efficient and successful English language teaching without any loss and negative transfer in the native language, culture and identity of the learners.

School is a miniature form of society where multilingualism and multiculturalism overlap with each other and translating and code switching are the common practices in classroom teaching (King, 2018). Thus, it is necessary to consider for preparing the learners with the language skills they need for a multilingual situation and the ways of training them to develop required sensitivity towards cultural and linguistic needs of the fellow learners. In this context, Rasheed, Zeeshan and Zaidi (2017) state hat multilingual classrooms are considered to be the biggest challenges for English language teachers and students throughout the world. Regarding this, Agwu and Chukwu (2019) consider teacher qualification and command over English language itself is the challenge for the teacher in teaching English in multilingual classroom. Curriculum, classroom equipment, mother tongue interference, evaluation system may be the possible danger aspects that may hinder second language or foreign language competence and performance of the learners.

Nepal is a country representing a complex cross-section of linguistic and cultural diversities. It is a multilingual, multicultural, multiracial and multi-religious country. The constitution of Nepal in its article four defines Nepal as independent, indivisible, sovereign, secular, inclusive, democratic, and federal country. Article 6 of the constitution has made provision that all the languages spoken in the country as national language and article 7 asserts that Nepali language as the language of offices (Constitution of Nepal, 2015). The people of Nepal speak different languages as they belong to different ethnic groups and follow different religions. However, there is an undercurrent of unified linguistic structure.

The mother tongues enumerated in the CBS 2011 (except Kusunda) belong to four language families; Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian. While Kusunda is a language isolate consisting of a single language without any genetic relationship with other languages (Yadav, 2014). CBS (2011) records that 82.10% (21,753,009) people belong to Indo-European language family. Likewise, Sino-Tibetan is spoken by 17.30% (4,584,523), Austro-Asiatic is spoken by 0.19% (49,858), Dravidian is spoken by only 0.13% (33,615), 0.09% people speak other languages

(including English) as their mother tongue and 0.18% languages are categorized as not stated family.

Further, CBS (2011) has made the provision of Nepali language as official language, which is spoken by 44.64% population of the country as other mother tongue and others as *lingua franca*. The most numerous mother tongues spoken by indigenous people are Maithili (11.67%), Bhojpuri (5.98%), Tharu (5.77%), Tamang (5.11%) and Newari (3.20%) reported in the CBS (2011). Besides these languages Doteli, Urdhu, Gurung, Rai, Sherpa, Achhami, Bantawa, Limbu, and Baitadeli langauges are widely used as means of communication. English is used as means of communication as well as a means of instruction in the classroom. Moreover, CBS (2011) shows English is spoken by 0.01% of the total population of the country. English, in Nepal, is neither institutionalized language nor acquired as mother tongue nor the language of wider communication nor a language of group identification. However, it has been used as a medium of instruction in many classes from basic level to advanced levels of education. Regarding the position of English, Philipson (2007) states that English has retained its privileged position in education process in Asia. Nepal is not exception of it. It has welcomed the newly developed trends and tendencies developed in English language. Many programmes are running only in English in both government and non-government sectors. Crystal (2004) presents it differently and claims that English has no official status in South Asian context; however, it is used as a medium of international communication. It is being increasingly perceived as language of cultural modernity by the young South Asians.

At present time, English language has occupied a remarkable position in schools and colleges of Nepal. English language has become the global language. It has been used more widely than any other languages in the world. English language teaching has been established as the language of Nepal's reform and modernization. At the same time, we are in the condition of language endangerment which could result in the extinction of many vernacular languages of our country. In this context, Paudel (2010) from his research concludes a conflicting situation that affects English language teaching at higher education of Nepal. He claims that students are deprived of the right of getting education in their own language and teachers feel comfortable in Nepali language while students feel comfort in their own language but the goal of language teaching is English. This diversity of interests and situations is a challenge for teaching English at higher education. Similarly, Teevno (2011) from her research in Pakistan claims that the syllabus is not as per the needs of the learners and English teachers are not given any proper training which make English teacher difficult to teach in multilingual classes. Moreover, Noom-Ura's (2013) study in Thailand suggests proper trainings, seminars, workshops and study trip for both teachers and students for enhancing their academic and professional career in linguistically diverse situation. Ismaili (2015) realizes the need of using L1 in teaching English. Similar to him Gopang, Bhugio, Umrani and Lohar's (2015) research also reveals that students feel comfort in speaking in their native language and feel hesitant to speak in English due to fear of committing mistakes. In the same context, Phyak's (2016) study concludes the need of multilingual and mother tongue education in the multilingual contexts like Nepal.

These studies show that teaching English language in the multilingual setting is the biggest challenge of post-modern era. The studies recommend that English language teachers should be well trained and critical so that they can teach English language in motivating, interesting, effective and efficient manner. There are very few studies on multilingualism in Nepal; however, no research has been carried out to explore teachers difficulties and challenges of teaching English at basic level schools at present time.

Thus, this research is an attempt to explore the challenges in teaching English language guided by the following research questions:

What are the challenges that are encountered by basic level English teachers in teaching English language in the multilingual classrooms?

What strategies have they been using to overcome the challenges of multilingual classrooms?

Being based on these research questions, this study aims to find out the challenges encountered by English teachers in multilingual contexts at the basic level of School education. Moreover, it also intends to explore the strategies used by the teachers in teaching English in such contexts.

METHODOLOGY

The philosophical and theoretical standpoint in this research is informed by the pragmatist paradigm which aims to explore individuals' insights and understanding of the phenomenon which they have been experiencing and working in their socio-political context. In this regard, knowledge is regarded as personal, subjective and unique (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2009) and therefore, the responses collected through questionnaires were validated with the information collected through interview and observation.

The research design employed in this study was explanatory sequential mixed research which consists of two phases; quantitative followed by qualitative (Terrel, 2012). Terrel (2012) further insists that though both the phrases are equally prior, primary focus is to explain quantitative results by exploring certain results in more detail using follow up qualitative study. The explanatory sequential mixed research design (Terrel, 2012) employed in this research is presented in figure 1.
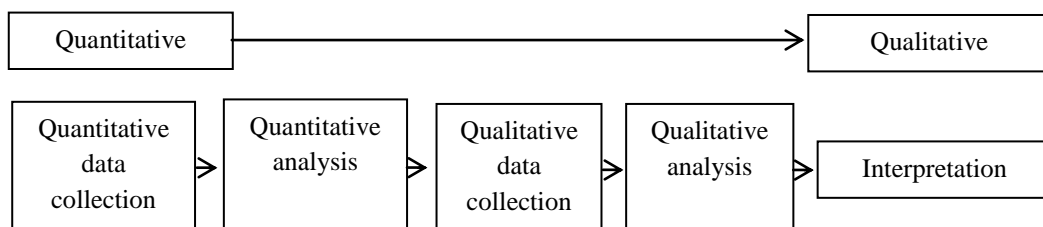

Figure 1. Explanatory Sequential Mixed Research Design (Terrel, 2012)

Involving all the basic level school teachers in this study was not possible due to some constraints such as time and scope of the study. In this context, it was essential to ensure that the study is representative. Thus, 80 English teachers from 40 different basic schools (2 from each) of Kaski district were the sample population of the study. The schools were selected randomly and teachers were selected purposively. The selected teachers were sent survey questionnaire through e-mail after making rapport with them. After receiving quantitative data, 10 teachers were selected for unstructured interview and five for participant class observation purposively for qualitative data collection. The collected data were analyzed separately and then they were integrated, analyzed and interpreted both numerically using percentage and textually under five themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since this study has aimed to explore the challenges encountered by basic level English teachers and strategies that they employed to overcome them in multilingual classes, quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and qualitative data through class observations and interviews. Both the data collection processes were conducted to ensure that the informants expressed their view freely and thoroughly. The

interviews were coded, and compared and categorized with the information collected through observation and questionnaire. Then, the data were analyzed and interpreted numerically and textually through thematic analysis techniques in five different themes.

Multilingualism Leads to Difficulty in Teaching English

Multilingualism is very common in the English teaching classes of Nepal since more than 129 languages are spoken where English is neither institutionalized, nor acquired as the mother tongue. In this context, multilingualism has become a great challenge for teaching English language at basic level of school. Table 1 presents teachers' attitudes towards the influence of multilingualism in teaching English.

Table 1

Teachers' Attitudes towards Multilingual Classes

Classroom indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Linguistic diversity	40	50
Students less motivation towards English	20	25
Students' diverse cultural background	15	18.75
Linguistic diversity does not hamper English teaching	5	6.25
Total	80	100

Table 1 shows that half of the informants (50%) responded learners' lingual background and diverse classes are the challenges in teaching English. Likewise, 25% responded that students' low motivation is a challenge in the multilingual classroom. Moreover, 18.75% took students diverse culture as the challenge in teaching English language whereas only 6.25% teachers found easy to teach English even in the multilingual context. During the classroom observation, it was seen that teachers were facing great difficulties while teaching English since the learners were from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They were found talking to each other in their own mother tongue rather than paying attention to English and its use. In this context, T1 asserts, "It is really a challenging job for teaching English in our contexts were learners of diverse contexts and backgrounds come to classroom." Similarly, T3 concedes, "Our students do not understand the role and value of English language. They feel shy and hesitant to use English and they even do not understand English language properly which lead as more difficulty to handle the class". Multilingual classes keep teachers more busy and force them to use extra effort in teaching.

Students' Classroom Behaviours Determine the Success of Teaching

Multilingual class holds the students of diverse culture and backgrounds which determine their classroom behaviors, that is, students perform their behavior or manner as per their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. If they perform positive, supportive and active, and participatory and collaborative manner, it enhances English language learning and ease teaching. Table 2 presents learners' classroom behaviors in basic level schools in teaching English from teachers' perspectives.

Table 2

Teachers' Perception towards Students' Classroom Behaviours

Behviour	Frequency	Percentage
High anxiety among learners	15	18.75
Shy feeling students	20	25
Lack of confidence	25	31.25
Behavior of students does not play key role	20	25
Total	80	100

Table 2 depicts that 18.75% teachers believed high anxiety among learners towards English language that is the challenge whereas 25% reported that students did not express their view even they know the content showing their shyness in using English. 31.25% teachers found that students did not use English because they did not have enough knowledge on it. Moreover, 25% teachers did not take students classroom behavior as the sole source of challenge in teaching English. They meant to state that if other factors are supportive and conducive, students' behaviors cannot hamper teaching English. In the classroom observation, it was seen that some students were in stress and showed disrupted behaviors when their English class began while others were found to bowing their head down to escape from classroom activities. In this regard,T4 expresses: "Anxiety among the learners has become great challenge for me. They feel stress and nervous when I ask them question in English and make me compel to use Nepali language." In the same vein, T9 adds that students lack confidence, feel nervousness and hesitant while speaking English in most of the English classes which he has experienced from his teaching of 23 years in different schools.

Nature of Curriculum/Syllabus Determines the Success of English Teaching

Curriculum is an overall plan of an educational programme. The nature of courses, context, input, process and output of a curriculum influences teaching English and its effectiveness in the multilingual classroom. If the curriculum addresses the needs of the learners and presents the context accordingly, English language can be facilitated and teachers' less effort can also be sufficient to impart English language on learners. Regarding curriculum syllabus as a challenge, the teachers' views can be shown in table 3.

Table 3
Teachers' Views towards English Curricula at Basic Level in the Multilingual Context

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Support English teaching in multilingual context	4	5
Unnecessary lengthy	17	21.25
Difficult to implement	47	58.75
Needs and context based	12	15
Total	80	100

Table 3 reveals that many of the teachers (i.e. 58.75%) found the curricula difficult to implement. In the interview, T5 mentions that English curriculum has introduced sound system, language functions and many more reading materials which are difficult to implement due to our poor classroom infrastructure, students' level of knowledge and lack of English vocabulary. Similarly, table 3 further shows that 5% of the informants found the curricula multilingual friendly and 15% supported it as need and context based whereas 21.75% reported that the course is unnecessarily lengthy. In the classroom observation, it was found that many teachers were without plan and felt difficult to implement the curriculum in the sense of its goals and objectives. Most of the teachers were busy to repeat the previous day lesson in the learners' mother tongue rather than in English language. In this connection, T7 asserts, "The English curriculum has introduced the courses and content beyond our students' level and background so we feel very difficult to finish the course in time." The next informant T8 expresses similar view and explains "Though the contents of the English syllabus are communicative and need based but they do not address the multilingual classroom and the way of presenting them." The courses seem more difficult to implement in our context and culture even if

they are need based. T3 asserts that learners' needs and interests are neglected and teachers are time bound to finish the course.

Teachers' Motivation and Skills: A Key to Successful Teaching English

In the successful teaching process, , the teacher is the most important classroom participant. A teacher who is motivated, dedicated and devoted in the profession and is knowledgeable and skillful can impart quality education and deal with multilingual classes more effectively and efficiently for the betterment of students. Teachers need to be promoted and given opportunities for their professional development and develop quality and confidence. Table 4 presents teachers perception towards their motivations and skills on teaching English in the multilingual context of English language teaching in Nepal.

Table 4
Teachers' Attitude towards Their Motivation in Teaching

Exponents	Frequency	Percentage
Motivation in teaching English	80	100
Training, workshops, seminar are available	70	90
Involved in course designing	2	2.5
Lack of refresher courses	40	50

Table 4 shows that all the teachers were motivated in teaching English. Among the informants, 90% reported that they were given opportunities of training, workshops and 50% of the respondents were in need of refresher course programmes and disseminations. Only 2.5% teachers were consulted in course designing process where others were neglected. During the classroom observation, it was seen that almost all the teachers were presenting lesson effectively putting their effort to make students understand the English language texts. They used different activities and techniques as if they were trained in using them. In this context, T8 asserts that they were very eager and interested to make students learn English despite their low proficiency and disinterest in using English language. One of the informants, T9 claims, "We are motivated and given different trainings by the government but our voice is not represented in the curriculum, so we feel difficult to contextualize the content of the curriculum in our multilingual classes." In the same vein, T5 opines "We should be included in syllabus designing process, even if it is not possible, course refresher programmes need to be conducted time and again to keep us up to date and familiar to the content of the course." Multilingual classes are always challenging to the teachers so that those teachers of English who have been teaching multilingual classes need to be well trained, motivated and dedicated towards English language teaching.

Strategies Employed to Deal with Multilingual Classes

All the teachers realized that multilingual classroom are challenging in teaching English as a second or foreign language. Despite the challenges, the teachers are mingling one or more strategies to teach English in such diverse and complex situation. Table 5 presents the various strategies employed by basic level English teachers in teaching English language.

Table 5
Strategies Used in Teaching English in Multilingual Classrooms

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Use of translation	50	62.50
Giving space to students' experience	10	12.5
Use of supplementary materials	12	15
Use only English language	5	6.25
Associating classroom activities in the society	35	43.75
Creating or using local text and materials	2	2.50
Increase and focus on reading activities and materials	60	75
Rewards to the students	55	68.75
Repetition and orality	40	50

Table 5 shows that English teachers used several strategies where 75% of the respondents increased reading activities and materials. Likewise, 62.50% of them used translation as the techniques of teaching English. Moreover, the table depicts that only 12.50% teachers gave space to share students' experiences in the classroom while 15% of them used supplementary materials to enhance English language teaching in the classroom. Only very few teachers (i.e. 6.25%) used only English in the classroom and 2% created localized texts in the context. Similarly, 43.75% informants taught English associating textual concepts to the society and 50% of the informants used repetition and orality as the techniques of teaching English.

In the classroom observation, it was seen that some teachers have used two or more than two techniques to teach the single lesson in the same class. They tried to create English environment encouraging the students to use it by making the provision of reward. They were found of using translation as an alternative technique, that is, when they do not find any option, they used to switch their codes. In regard to teaching strategies in multilingual classroom, all the informants agreed that single monochrome strategy does not work in the classes, so they switched from one technique to another technique. T2 shares his experiences as "I have been teaching English for 13 years and I do not use only one technique in the classroom." T3 adds that he mostly used Nepali language when students do not comprehend the meaning in English. T5 agrees that the use of reward has increased English language proficiency of the students.

Discussion

The results show that multilingual classes are really a challenge in teaching English as a foreign or second language situation. The students could not communicate in English language and do not show their passion towards it which leads teachers to face difficulties. The finding of this study is similar to Haukas (2016) who claims that multilingual classrooms are always challenging. Students' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and their negative or fewer motives towards using English language has become a common problem for all the basic level English teachers as Rasheed, Zeeshan and Zaidi (2017) point out it as a great challenge to cope with. Multilingual classes require skillful teachers who can bridge between students home language and English language creating conducive environment for motivating students towards using English language so that they would not feel handicapped in world communication and do not feel worry about losing their local tongue.

Similarly, the results also exhibit that students classroom behavior can be one of the indicators of influencing English language teaching. Almost all the respondents agree that students do not have strong English language background and they are more likely to act like passive listeners in the classroom rather than taking active part in different

classroom dimensions and activities. This finding reveals what MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) claim anxiety is connected with second language context, students' confidence including speaking, listening and learning. Learners' feel hesitate to use English when they find their peers and teachers laughing when they make any mistake. Well prepared and confident students get lower level of anxiety which increases their participation in teaching and learning activities. The classroom behavior of the students need to be positive, and should be free from anxiety as Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) claim that learners' behavior is determined from the uniqueness of language teaching process. The findings of this study are similar to Rasheed, Zeephan and Zaidi (2017) who claim that students who belong to different linguistic backgrounds and have no ample exposure to English language do have higher level of anxiety and low level of confidence so they feel hesitant to speak English with their teachers and friends.

Moreover, the results imply that the basic level English curricula are not multilingual-friendly class. They seem as if they are prepared without taking need analysis survey of the learners and the context. The respondents assert that the time allocated for each course is not sufficient to cover the whole content and the difficulty even has increased due to multilingual classroom. The courses offer the vocabularies, language functions and phonological aspects on English language which the students level could not meet as a result they remain quiet or less interested to respond to the teachers. The teachers were supposed to do each and every activity so that time bound courses have become a challenge for them in the multilingual situation. This research reveals similar finding as Teevno (2011) finds as difficult and lengthy English syllabus is one of the challenges in multilingual classes.

Further, teachers' knowledge, skill and motivation are the keys for successful teaching and meaningful learning in multilingual situation. Teachers should be able to observe the expected and unexpected classroom behaviours and use them for their and students advantage (Harmer, 2008). Teachers who are professionally trained and groomed can handle the multilingual cases better and more efficiently as compared to those who are untrained (Rasheed, Zeehan & Zaidi, 2017). The result of this study reveals similar to the finding of Noom-Ura (2013) who claims that workshops, seminar and refresher courses designed for teachers are landmarks for dealing multilingualism. The English teachers at basic level expect their involvement in curricula designing process and course refresher trainings or packages time and again for being themselves capable of dealing multilingual classes. The results affirm that teachers have put effort to make English language teaching more comfortable and easy in multilingual context using one or many strategies. It's teacher's skill to find out suitable techniques for teaching particular language item (Harmer, 2008). Teachers can promote English language teaching adopting context based classroom activities what Gomes, Mortimer and Kelly (2010) call "Pedagogical strategies of inclusive practices" (p. 108). The study shows that teachers are capable of using situational English language teaching strategies so that they can mingle English language in multilingual context of Nepal.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study intended to figure out the challenges faced by English language teachers at the basic level schools of Nepal in teaching English in the multilingual situation and also aimed to explore the strategies that they have been using to cope with the challenges. The participants' views in questionnaire, interview and classroom observation reveal that teaching English in a multilingual situation is a great challenge for English teachers. They are supposed to put some extra effort in teaching because of linguistic diversity in the classroom. Teachers are in need of adjusting their teaching to

address the students' classroom behavior. Students' manner need to be more focused and put into consideration for effecting English language teaching. Moreover, teachers are time bound in public schools and they have to complete the syllabus in a time bound period. The curriculum which is designed incorporating teachers' voice, analyzing learners' and teachers' needs and the contexts can give affirmative message in multilingual context. Teachers are in need of training, workshops, seminars and course refresher training time and again for effective implementation of the curriculum. The study reveals that English teachers are capable of using strategies like translation, repetition, rewards, local text and materials, and reading texts and materials in multilingual context, but just question raised is if they can mingle out the suitable and contextual strategy to mitigate the learners' needs and demands in the global context.

Despite the fact that this study contributes to an understanding of English teachers' views towards the challenges of teaching English in multilingual classes at basic level schools of Nepal, it has a number of limitations. First, it was a small scale explanatory mixed research design incorporating only English teachers' perspectives and practices in teaching English; therefore, its findings may have limited applicability. A large scale survey research or convergent parallel design incorporating multiple layers of participants like policy makers, course designers, experts, teachers and all other concerned authorities and stakeholders is needed to evaluate and determine the challenges of teaching English in our context. Moreover, for this research, the classes of the selected participants were observed only once; therefore, in the future research, each classroom could be observed for a week or a month to bring the comprehensive results. Nonetheless, it is believed that this study provides feedback to the policy makers, curriculum designers, and administrators to make teachers well trained, skillful and knowledgeable for handling multilingual classes effectively. Moreover, it inspires all the English teachers to be dedicated, motivated, professional and capable of selecting suitable strategies as per the context of English language teaching in Nepal.

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