

**Critical Perspective on Educational Activities: Lived Experiences of
School Students and Teachers**

Surya Sigdel

**A Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Education**

**Submitted to
Graduate School of Education
Office of the Dean
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**Tribhuvan University
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Supervisor

Prof. Bal Mukunda Bhandari, PhD

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The nature and practice of educational activities determine students' participation and empowerment. Emancipation in teaching-learning activities enhances students' participation and performance. It then promotes empowerment, conscientization, and intellectual growth. Children learn the best when they find themselves in their world. However, they often experience educational activities as burnout praxis. Therefore, this study has explored how students and teachers make meaning of the teaching-learning activities and sought viable options for transforming the banking model of education to learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational practices.

To explore school students' and teachers' lived experiences of educational activities in school, Interpretive phenomenological research was carried out in five community schools of Chandragiri Municipality, Kathmandu. In-depth interviews, online communication and interaction with the participants, observation, and focus group discussions were used as information collection methods from ten eighth-grade students and five teachers teaching them. Besides, formal and informal communication with the concerned stakeholders was performed to enrich the description. I used ATLAS.ti 9, a software for qualitative data analysis for coding, theming, comparing, relating, networking, and exporting reports from the transcribed and translated data received from the field. The information collected in the field and related literature was discussed with critical theory, social dominance theory, and theory of social justice. The first was used to see things from multiple perspectives, the second to find hegemonic practices, and the last to see the (un)justifiable practices and viable strategies for maintaining a justifiable environment.

The study found that the students have experienced both student-engaged and teacher-centered educational activities. The first ones are when the teachers have no



pressure to finish the course and to prepare their students for the examination, and before or after a long vacation and initial phase of the academic session. The students have experienced the second one as the dominant part of education, which is the main focus of the whole education system. The study also found that whatever the students learn in school does not matter; what matters is their grades or scores from the two- or three-hour paper-pencil test. This trend has discouraged teachers from running learner-centered activities and forced them to follow traditional teaching. When led from the area of their interest/ talent and made responsible, the students become self-governed, enjoy teaching-learning activities, and thrive to meet the goal. Similarly, the teachers, when empowered and facilitated, plan and lead their students to run different events, the events which make them feel proud and awarded, perform their roles, and empower their students with transversal and academic competencies.

The study concludes that learner-engaged educational activities that emancipate, empower, and conscientize the learners in a justifiable environment nurture the learners with both competencies. For this, a harmonious school environment that promotes a sense of ownership and belongingness; cared and supportive language and behavior that makes them intimate; interdisciplinary learning content with choice options from the area of students' needs, interests, and talents; action-packed classroom activities in which the students have to plan, organize, lead, participate, perform, and reflective report different curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities in which they had a role; and the assessment that assesses students' multiple intelligence and the program as a whole make the educational activities learner-centered, self-governed, and goal-oriented. In short, educational activities that make every day a new day and empower the students with hands-on experiences are to be prioritized.



शैक्षिक गतिविधिको प्रकृति र अभ्यासले विद्यार्थीको सहभागिता र सक्रियकरणको निर्धारण गर्दछ । विद्यार्थीहरूलाई शैक्षिक गतिविधिहरूमा स्वाधीनता दिएमा उनीहरूको सहभागिता बढ्छ । यसले सक्रियकरण, सचेतना, र बौद्धिक वृद्धिलाई प्रवर्द्धन गर्दछ। बालबालिकाहरूले त्यती बेला सबैभन्दा राम्रोसँग सिक्छन् जुनबेला उनीहरूले कक्षाकोठामा आफ्नो अनुकूलको वातावरण पाउँछन् । यद्यपि उनीहरूले प्रायः शैक्षिक गतिविधिहरूलाई बर्नआउट प्राक्सिस (Burnout praxis) को रूपमा अनुभव गर्छन् । यस सन्दर्भमा, यो अध्ययनले विद्यार्थी र शिक्षकहरूले शिक्षण-सिकाई त्रिविधिहरूको अर्थ कसरी लगाउँछन् भन्ने पक्षमा खोज गरेको छ र बैकिङ मोडेलबाट सिक्ने-सिकाउने प्रक्रियालाई विद्यार्थी-व्यस्त, न्यायसंगत, र लक्ष्य-उन्मुख शैक्षिक अभ्यासहरूमा रूपान्तरण गर्ने सम्भावनाहरूको खोजी गरेको छ ।

विद्यालयका विद्यार्थी तथा शिक्षकहरूको शैक्षिक गतिविधिको जीवन्त अनुभवको अन्वेषण गर्न, काठमाडौंको चन्द्रागिरी नगरपालिकाका पाँच सामुदायिक विद्यालयहरूमा व्याख्यात्मक परिघटनात्मक (Interpretive phenomenological) अनुसन्धान सञ्चालन गरिएको थियो । यस अध्ययनमा आठ कक्षामा पढ्ने दशजना विद्यार्थी र उनीहरूलाई पढाउने पाँचजना शिक्षकसँग गहन अन्तर्वार्ता, अनलाइन सम्वाद र अन्तरक्रिया, कक्षा अवलोकन, र फोकस (Focus) समूह छलफलजस्ता सुचना सङ्कलन विधिहरूको प्रयोग गर्नुका साथै, सम्बन्धित सरोकारवालाहरूसँग औपचारिक र अनौपचारिक सम्वाद गरि वर्णनलाई समृद्ध पारियो । यस अध्ययनमा ATLAS.ti 9, गुणात्मक डेटा विश्लेषणका लागि सफ्टवेयर प्रयोग गरी फिल्डबाट प्राप्त ट्रान्सक्राइब र अनुवाद गरिएको सुचनाबाट कोडिङ (Coding), थीमिङ (Theming), तुलना, सम्बन्ध निर्धारण, र नेटवर्किङ (Networking) गरी रिपोर्ट निर्माण गरियो। फिल्डमा सङ्कलित जानकारी र सम्बन्धित पुर्वकार्यलाई आलोचनात्मक सिद्धान्त, सामाजिक प्रभुत्व सिद्धान्त, र सामाजिक न्यायको सिद्धान्तसँग जोडेर छलफल गरियो। पहिलो सिद्धान्त विषयवस्तुलाई बहुविध दृष्टिकोणबाट हेर्न प्रयोग गरियो, दोस्रो सिद्धान्तको आधारमा प्रभुत्वकारी अभ्यासहरूको खोजी गरियो, भने, अन्तिम सिद्धान्तको प्रयोग गरी (अ)न्यायसंगत अभ्यासहरू हेर्न न्यायसंगत वातावरण कायम राख्नको लागि सम्भाव्य रणनीतिहरूमा छलफल गरियो ।

यस अध्ययनले के पत्ता लगायो भने विद्यार्थीहरूले विद्यार्थी-व्यस्त र शिक्षक-केंद्रित दुवै शैक्षिक गतिविधिहरूको अनुभव गरेका हुन्छन् । पहिलो, तिनीहरूले विद्यार्थी-लगाव सिकाइको अनुभव तब गर्छन् जब शिक्षकहरूलाई शिक्षण कार्यमा पाठ्यवस्तु पढाएर सकाउन दबाव हुँदैन; परीक्षाको तयारी गर्न आवश्यक हुँदैन | त्यसैगरी लाभो



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I hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge, this dissertation entitled 'Critical Perspective on Educational Activities: Lived Experiences of School Students and Teachers' is my original work except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text. All the information I have presented here is either cited or created by myself. This part of the work has not previously been submitted to any other university for any other professional qualification or degree candidature.

I understand my dissertation will be part of the Tribhuvan University Library collection. My signature below gives consent for my dissertation to be available to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

Surya Sigdel

August 16, 2024 (2081-05-31 B. S.)



I am pleased to certify that Mr. Surya Sigdel has prepared and submitted his dissertation entitled 'Critical Perspective on Educational Activities: Lived Experiences of School Students and Teachers' for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Education under my guidance and supervision. He has nicely presented a critical pedagogical perspective on educational activities in community schools in Nepal. I recommend the dissertation to the esteemed Research Committee, the Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, for acceptance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bal Mukunda Bhandari", written over a dotted line.

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.....

Surya Sigdel

PhD Degree Candidate

August 2024

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List of Abbreviations and Cryptonyms

CDC: Curriculum Development Center

ECD: Evidence-Centered Design

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELE: English Language Education

ELLE: Extensible digital library for language learning

ELT: English Language Teaching

EMI: English as a Medium of Instruction

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

ICT: Information Communication Technology

JPG: Joint Photographic Service

L1: Mother-Tongue/ first language

MOE: Ministry of Education

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation Development

PDF: Portable Document Format

PTA: Parent Teacher Association

S1: One of the five schools selected for data collection

S2: One of the five schools selected for data collection

S3: One of the five schools selected for data collection

S4: One of the five schools selected for data collection

S5: One of the five schools selected for data collection

SMC: School Management Committee

T1: Teacher from school 1 as one of the research participants

T2: Teacher from school 2 as one of the research participants

T3: Teacher from school 3 as one of the research participants

T4: Teacher from school 4 as one of the research participants

T5: Teacher from school 5 as one of the research participants

URL: Uniform Resource Locator

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter I

Introduction

In this study, I have addressed the issue of educational activities from the meaning-making of lived experiences of students and teachers. More particularly, I have conducted this research study to explore the essence of teaching-learning activities: How learner-centered, justifiable, and goal-oriented the educational activities are as they are practiced in the experience of the students and teachers. In this introductory chapter, I have described the sources that motivated me to start the study, the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the rationale of the study, the purpose of the study, research questions, and delimitations of the study, and, I have also presented operational definitions of key terms used in the paper and outline of the dissertation.

Background of the Study

Pedagogical practices are reformed and enhanced along with the development of new knowledge and advancement of science and technology, mainly 'Information and Communication Technology' (ICT). The practices guided by a theory or theories and the role of the stakeholders in planning, management, and administration make learning more meaningful. Similarly, the environment regarding emancipation, empowerment, justification, and conscientization influences the engagement and performance of students and teachers. The renewed educational practice in the environment can bridge theoretical knowledge into practice that determines their learning outcome. This critical perspective on educational activities examines praxis-based pedagogy, bringing theory into practice and getting reflection (Breunig, 2006 & Freire, 1985). It attempts to understand and disrupt power imbalance and emphasizes students' needs, interests, and learning context, and then it encourages

them to grow as dignified human beings. Knowledge is not what others deposit in learners' minds but what they experience and make meaning. Traditionally, knowledge is the information that teachers deposit in learners' minds. Traditionally, "The role of a school is to pass this knowledge to children. Therefore, traditional education imposes education from above and outside" (Roberts, 2003, p. 5). Such educational practices cannot prepare students for the 21st-century changing world. Replacing traditional practices with the praxis of critical pedagogy is essential to nurturing children with the knowledge and skills needed for the complex, changing society.

The main effort of school education has been academic performance measured through high-stakes testing rather than education with hands-on experiences and real-life related skills. In other words, "students' performance is the level of proficiency attained in academic work and knowledge acquired in school subjects, represented by the percentage of marks" (Bhetuwal, 2022, p. 35). It is the marks that the students obtained from the written examination. The school management, including parents, teachers, and concerned authorities, focuses on textbook-limited rote learning. On the other hand, the students took learning as a force and burden. The students who have support and encouragement from their parents can face it. On the other hand, those who are already weak and have less support and encouragement from the family cannot overcome it. However, such a trend of educational practice demotes students' creativity and empowerment. Additionally, community schools are for children whose parents cannot afford to send them to private schools and who cannot support and encourage them appropriately (Bhetuwal, 2022). The students in community schools have poor achievement compared with private school students. Community schools have problems with teaching-learning strategies, remedial actions, and the role of

head teachers (Khanal et al., 2022) despite well-qualified, trained, and experienced teachers. Student's home language, parents' education and occupation, family size, student's interest in subjects, teachers' regularity, and their feedback after homework are major influencing factors for students' learning achievement. "Majority of students cannot learn what is taught in all subjects" (Khanal et al., 2022, p. 10). The statement, "Why the students are not interested in learning, is the issue to be addressed in the study.

The teachers are educated and trained to make the classroom student-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented. However, they need help in leading the students in their education and training. The students want to engage in activities from the area of their interest, but the focus of teaching is on high-stakes testing, which demands theory-based rote learning. It lacks the matching between teachers' knowledge and training and their education. The first (teachers' knowledge and training) demands praxis-based student-friendly activities, and the second (their teaching) stresses teacher-centered theory-based teaching. Praxis is the use of theory in practice. It is the act of practicing ideas and getting reflection from the action. It makes a theory meaningful. A theory's essence or underlying meaning can be achieved or seen only when implemented in real-life situations. Talking about pedagogical practices, Monchinski (2008) asserts, "Critical pedagogy cannot be stagnant. It demands reflection and reconceptualization between what goes on in our classrooms" (p.1). Accordingly, the critical perspective on pedagogical practices attempts to make teachers and students conscious of ill practices in the school or classroom. This critical awareness can establish a fair and justifiable environment in the school. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), it empowers and helps children to maximize their learning and flourish in their own way and their potential areas. It also helps teachers lead their

students to strive ahead in dignified positions. From the critical perspective of pedagogy, the school should be a children's utopian society where they, without discrimination, domination, or isolation, gather in a place, plan learning activities with teachers, work together, and construct meaning. According to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011), "Critical pedagogy stresses empowering learners to think and act critically to transform their life conditions" (p. 1). For this, classroom activities should be made learner-centered. Students learn better if they find the environment friendly, enjoy teaching-learning activities, are emancipated, empowered, and treated justifiably, and are made responsible and accountable in the activities.

The teachers are expected to create a child-friendly environment and facilitate students to flourish with their inner talent and creativity through different participatory learning activities. For this, they are invited and provided opportunities to participate in various trainings, workshops, seminars, conferences, or webinars with the pedagogues from home and abroad so that they can make classroom activities child-centered, participatory, or student-friendly. They also discuss, run programs, and present papers to promote students' holistic development. The schools have annual plans to run different curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs. To promote teacher-parent interaction and maximize students' learning at home and in the school, every school has a school management committee and parent-teacher association. The school has assigned a class teacher and a sports teacher. The students have a library, computer lab, science lab, and sports club in the school. However, tedious rote learning is still dominant, and little attention is paid to nurturing children's creativity and potential by utilizing the abovementioned provisions. The praxis of critical pedagogy is similar to Avoseh's (2009) claim, "The greatest challenge for 21st-century adult education is that it has (almost) derailed from

commitment to the socio-political life of adult learners” (Avoseh, 2009, p. 127). Even with such provisions and commitments to make the school environment student-friendly and classroom activities student-centered, the school situation is still traditional.

Before they go to school, children are more confident, less frightened, and more curious. As they pass time in school, they slowly and gradually become less excited, less curious, more frightened, and less confident. In other words, “he (the student in the school) learns that he is worthless, untrustworthy, fit only to take other people’s order, a blank sheet for other people to write on” (Holt, 1969, p. 50). This is one of the reasons for dropping out of school. The students, mostly the inferior ones, are reluctant to attend school. They feel nervous speaking with the teachers and presenting what they have learned in front of their friends; they feel stressed with assignments and examinations and frightened of the errors and mistakes they will likely commit during their performance. Nevertheless, when a holiday comes, the examination is over, or they have no assignment, they feel more comfortable. Holt (1969) further argues that schools cannot enhance children’s inner talent and creativity until and unless children stop feeling worthless and untrustworthy, thinking they are fit only to take other people’s orders, a blank sheet for others to write on. The practices of classroom activities in developing countries are still far behind the practices that IT (Information Technology) has made accessible for learners in classrooms.

Traditional ways of teaching-learning need to be revised to prepare students for global opportunities in the 21st century, the age of computers, the internet, and mobile phones. Zafari (2019) states that ICT has encouraged student-centered learning, transformed traditional classroom-based education into an innovative way of

learning, and made learning attractive and exciting. However, the existing practice of classroom activities is still dominant. The teachers still lecture in the class, provide their students with notes, and prepare them for examinations. Students are still working hard to score better marks through the examination from the limited courses and theories. Moreover, students are judged based on their scores. In other words, their score determines their status. Their study is wholly separated from their lives, and their learnings and lives are not supportive of one another in the way they could. The 21st-century pedagogy demands the sublimation of lecture into interaction, chalk and talk into real-life related conversation, grading through written examinations into grading based on performances, and rote-learning of theories into their applications. Education should prepare an individual for a better life with related knowledge and skills for a prosperous life in a changing society, not for the percentage and grades from limited theories and bookish knowledge. Following the path of critical pedagogy emancipates and empowers the students to learn from their needs and interests, to learn about their autonomy, and to link their studies with their lives. It also promotes collaborative learning and encourages a transparent and self-assessment system. Therefore, this study aims to capture the essence of educational activities through a critical perspective from the lived experiences of school students and teachers and their expectations of the activities.

Source of Motivation

Students' reluctance to classroom activities, their interest in digital work and outdoor activities, the converged traditional teaching of teachers, and the dominant influence of high-stakes testing motivated me to study the praxis of educational activities. Seeing school children's reluctance to classroom activities and their severe attraction to mobile and the dirty playground outside the school, I became curious to

explore the questions: What factors have hindered the teachers from implementing what they have learned in training, workshops, or seminars? Why can't they nurture children like a gardener who cultivates plants? Why can't they update their teaching along with the changing pedagogy? These questions reminded me of the days when I had difficulty concentrating my mind in listening to the teacher's long lecture in the classroom. I could not listen to the teachers attentively continuously. As a result, I could not correctly understand all that they taught. While the teacher was teaching, I would try my best to grab what they taught, but my attempts to concentrate would fail soon. Why did dominating, insulting, and isolating behavior, along with unfriendly verbal and non-verbal means of communication, occupy my mind, affect my concentration, and increase distraction in the class? The facts: Why do the students suffer from conflict with their friends and their teacher's scolding or insulting behavior? Why do the students feel nervous and move back when they attempt to perform something in front of the teacher and others? It is not the fault of a student. If so, is it the fault of a teacher, the content, the school management committee, or the environment? Why can children not learn in their world where they enjoy doing different activities collaboratively and work in their autonomy? Why can the children not have a school environment like their playground where they can gather, plan, enjoy different games, and share their experiences? How can the teachers free their students from feeling guilty, weak, and defeated, at least in class? Are the teachers to ease, encourage, and empower the students in classroom activities or to train them to work like machines? Why can the teachers not understand the facts that their students learn better if the teachers understand their needs and interests, if they work with them and lead them in different activities if they treat them in the way they want to be treated if they link classroom activities with their real-life; if they involve them in

designing their learning experiences; if they involve them in different programs and events from planning phase to assessment and encourage them to have a role and perform it; if they offer additional courses or integrate the use of online resources; and so on. The queries like why children are reluctant to go to school and why they feel quite happy when a holiday, Saturday, or leisure period comes have led me to think of the school where children can work and enjoy learning in their world. These queries motivated me to explore the meaning-making of the students' and teachers' lived experiences.

Students of similar ages, needs, and interests are grouped in a class as in the adage of Umphress et al. (2007) “. . . all human societies are structured as systems of group-based social hierarchies, consisting of three different stratification systems: age systems, gender systems, and arbitrarily set systems” (p. 397). Generally, a class consists of students of similar ages, needs, and interests so they can be led together. Similarly, the proverb, “Birds of a feather flock together,” indicates that children enjoy with children. However, why do the children in such classes not enjoy being with children in the school, especially in the class? Why do the teachers not make classroom environments like the children's gathering place near their home where they leave their mother's lap and go to play with their playmates? Why can they not promote students' participation by adding learning content to the activities they (students) enjoy, and why can they not work with them together? If the teachers have to explain each topic clearly and provide them with notes, computer-generated classes, which are far cheaper and accessible, can replace them.

Statement of Problem

The evolution of teaching must align with the progress of modern technology, a realm where transformative changes have touched various facets of our lives—

work, fashion, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. Despite this sweeping transformation, the educational landscape, particularly in Nepalese schools, remains mired in what Freire (2005) aptly terms "narration sickness." Being too traditional and rote-learning oriented, the teaching-learning practice has become cold, rigid, and tedious. This affliction manifests a teacher's monotonous delivery of content, a meaningful connection to the context, content, or the student's experiences.

Whatever university education, training programs, workshops, seminars, and conferences are launched to introduce learner-friendly and goal-oriented classroom activities, the essence of school education persists in a traditional, teacher-centered, and theory-based pattern. Students find themselves confined to textbooks, engaging in rote learning, and being evaluated through theory-centric paper-pencil tests—a model that fails to resonate with real-life applications. As Zafari (2019) emphasizes teaching as an intricate process involving the understanding and addressing of individuals' needs, experiences, and emotions, it is necessary to link learning content and classroom activities with life skills or professional skills; textbook bound paper-pencil tests with fieldwork practice; and judgment based on grades and certificate with behavior, communication skills, and field performance. There is a compelling need to interweave learning content and classroom activities with life skills or professional skills to bridge the gap between school education and real-life applicability.

The prevailing education system, rooted in high-stakes testing, compels students toward bookish knowledge, prioritizing limited texts over broader, practical skills needed in the 21st century. A paradigm shift in education that includes comprehensive evaluation of behavior, communication skills, and field performance rather than grades and certificates is imperative. Critical analysis of pedagogical practices provides insights to fulfill the demands of 21st-century education. The 21st

Century education focuses on 21st-century skills: learning and innovative skills; information, media, and technology skills; life and career skills; and core subjects and 21st-century themes (Fadel, 2008).

Recognizing the diverse learning paces of individual students, Zafari (2019) advocates for an innovative teaching approach that accommodates a flexible pace aligned with each student's abilities. Developed countries showcase classrooms with the necessary infrastructure to support student-centered activities, such as group work and performance-based assessments. In contrast, developing countries, including those in Asia, grapple with the persistence of the traditional teaching model.

This study unravels the cause of why students fail to grasp knowledge optimally and explores avenues for empowering educators to create more learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities. The inquiry delves into motivating teachers to infuse classroom activities with dialogical processes, problem-posing events, critical interventions, and critical consciousness—key components in fostering academic and transversal student competencies. The central query revolves around understanding how educational authorities can facilitate this transformative shift in teaching methodologies to unlock the full potential of students' learning experiences.

Students are reluctant and frustrated with school education. They find it forceful, tedious, and frightening. They feel happy when they see the holiday notice, are informed of the leisure period, have no assignment from the textbook, and are told not to open the book during the period.

On the other hand, studies have shown a whim of learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities in schools. Existing policy practices show that learning contents are designed from students' needs and interests; educational

activities are learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented; and assessments are made liberal and free of fear. However, the actual situation is highly dominated by the top-down education system. Moreover, the result is frustrating, and the blame goes to the students and teachers. The essence of how friendly and motivating the school environment is, how life-related and students' interest-related the contents are, how learner-engaging and experiential the educational activities are, and how fearless and reflective the assessments are can be explored only through the lived experiences of the students and teachers. No study has been conducted to examine the essence of educational activities phenomenologically. In other words, this study has attempted to explore how friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities are based on the meaning-making of lived experiences of students and teachers.

The Rationale of the Study

Pedagogical practices that emancipate and conscientize students in a justifiable environment empower students with various competencies to deal with 21st-century challenges. Praxis in critical pedagogy is a self-reflective activity that identifies the surrounding world, brings ideological concepts into practice, gets reflection, and attempts for social change. This cycling process makes the learners critically aware and changes them. According to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011), the practice of theory in real-life situations and its critical analysis bridges the gap between theory and action for transformation. It leads the concerned authority to manage and organize different events and programs that are learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented. Along with university education and professional training, events and programs like conferences and seminars are organized for quality education. Despite a huge talk, discussions, or interactions among teachers, teacher educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers for student-friendly and learner-

centered pedagogy, classroom practices are still traditional: teacher-centered, high-stakes testing bound and textbook-limited. I was interested in exploring the hindrances of existing educational practices and the options for making educational activities learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented.

The concerned stakeholders talk about new changes in educational practices. However, the deeply rooted banking model of education still influences their behavior and attitudes. This is the time to create the environment because “every person brings something to the table” (Knowlton, 2033, as cited by Alismail & McGuire, 2015, p. 152). For this, efforts have been made. In addition to training, seminars, and workshops for practice-based classroom activities that are student-friendly, learner-centered, and action-oriented to encourage the teachers, administrators, curriculum designers, policymakers, and concerned stakeholders for implicational praxis of critical pedagogy have been essential. This study can be influential in exploring the ways to make school education student-centered, real-life-oriented, and justifiable. It can play a vital role in changing the top-down approach into a bottom-up one, theory-based teaching into real-life-related practices, exam-oriented assessment into skill or performance-based assessment, and cognitive knowledge-based assessment into academic and transversal competencies. This change will be a milestone for breaking the banking model of education. The teacher’s role will be like that of a gardener, providing an appropriate environment and caring for the plants to blossom with the best flowers or fruits they can. Children growing up with their innate power in a fearless and non-discriminatory environment can find school as a place of their preference. The findings of the study will be helpful for the teachers to lead students towards achieving their potential talent and creativity along with theoretical knowledge, for school management to create a child-friendly environment, for

policymakers to set the policy to discourage the banking model and embrace the participatory life-related teaching-learning model; and for the experts to design curriculum which has several insights to promote students' innate power, potential talents, and skills for a real-life situation.

School education has shifted to progressive practices such as computer classes and continuous assessment systems. However, it is still teacher-centered, hierarchy-based, and high-stakes testing-oriented. The students need more support with school education: school environment, learning content, teaching-learning activities, and assessment. They find the school environment less friendly, learning contents beyond their interest, classroom activities a burden, and assessment, particularly the high-stakes testing, frightening and harassing (Amrein & Berliner, 2002b). On the other hand, the teachers perceive the school environment as less motivating and hierarchy-based, teaching-learning content as a part of their duties to finish the course and prepare the students for paper-pencil tests, and assessments as formal work to complete. Therefore, the study attempts to discover ways to make school education praxis-based, learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented. Thus, this study is significant for all the concerned authorities.

Purpose of the Study

The study's main concern was to explore the essence of the meaning-making of the phenomena from students' and teachers' lived experiences of educational activities in the school. As a critical pedagogue, I aimed to explore learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities. In addition, it is an interpretive phenomenological study that aims at understanding experiences as lived (Peoples, 2021). Therefore, the study's purpose was to explore the meaning-making of the praxis of educational activities from the lived experiences of students and teachers

and pursue viable options for making the educational activities learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented. To fulfill the purpose, the study has explored students' and teachers' experiences of educational activities; then, it has explored their construing of the experiences of teaching-learning activities; and finally, it has identified the participants' meaning-making of their lived experiences for making educational activities self-governing, justifiable, and goal-oriented.

Research Questions

To explore the essence of educational activities from the lived experiences of school students and teachers and their meaning-making, I have set five specific research questions which are:

1. How do the teachers and students experience teaching-learning activities?
2. What are their lived experiences of classroom discourse, learning content, and assessment practices?
3. How do they interpret the school environment and classroom discourse as they lived?
4. How do the students and teachers construe educational activities and make meaning of child-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities?

Delimitations of the Study

This study examines the overall scenario of the pedagogical practices in school education from the lived experiences of students and teachers. In the context of school education, the study investigates how existing pedagogy liberates students from being oppressed. It challenges the status quo, views issues through multiple perspectives, promotes democratic solidarity, and explores alternative bodies of knowledge. In the words of Boegeman (2013), "Critical pedagogy transcends understanding, using the

critical consciousness to inform and inspire transformative action” (p. 12). To determine how learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented the educational activities are from the lived experiences of students and teachers, the study was delimited to classroom discourse, which includes school environment and language and behavior of the students and teachers, teaching-learning contents, classroom activities, and assessment.

Moreover, the study was delimited to the surrounding critical perspective of pedagogical practices and research participants’ lived experiences. To examine the participants’ lived experiences and sense-making, the study took place in five schools in the suburban area of Kathmandu. In other words, the study, as it was qualitative, was delimited to five community schools of Chandragiri Municipality. The study participants were ten grade-eight students and five teachers teaching them. The research design was delimited to interpretive phenomenology and information collection methods, including in-depth interviews, follow-up interviews, informal communication, overt non-participants, and FGD (Focus Group Discussion) with the teachers and students. The FGD with the students includes all the students with the students who are research participants in the class, and the FGD with the teachers includes all the teachers interested and present in the school. The research tools were delimited to observation guidelines, interview guidelines, recording, field notes, and FGD (Focus Group Discussion) guidelines.

Operational Definitions of the Key Terms

In this section, I have mentioned the critical operational and conceptual terms and defined them as used in this dissertation.

Community school: also known as a government school, a government-funded public school as indicated by the Education Act 2075 (9th Amendment). It

serves as a hub for community resources, fostering strong partnerships between the school and its surrounding community. This model of school attempts to foster collaboration between educators, families, and community organizations to enhance students' academic, social, and emotional development.

Conscientization: Critical awareness in people. Paulo Freire's emancipatory pedagogical process. This design teaches students to be creative and critically aware without fearing discrimination and hegemony.

Critical analysis: Studying and thinking widely about an issue to develop a deep understanding and point of view. For example, a researcher's study of various contexts of teaching-learning activities and critical investigation helps them develop experience and a point of view.

Critical pedagogy: Praxis-based pedagogy of educational activities that embraces transformative actions and reflective practices. It is an approach that emancipates, empowers, and conscientizes students in a friendly and justifiable environment. And then, it encourages them to grow with academic and transversal competencies. It seeks a utopian world where children enjoy performing their roles as planners, organizers, participants, performers, and evaluators. Critical pedagogy encourages students to examine social structures and power dynamics critically. It aims to foster conscientization, social justice, and transformative action. Also, it seeks to empower students to challenge accepted social norms, values, and practices. Furthermore, it emphasizes dialogues for collaborative exchange of ideas where everyone's perspectives are valued.

Critical perspective: A way of looking at an issue from different viewpoints. It does not accept any information as it is told and seen but examines its underlying assumptions and other ways of thinking.

Critical understanding: A mode of thinking that makes a person defensible as it examines and analyzes an idea or issue from different perspectives and shapes his or her independent thought.

Educational activity: An activity carried out in a school as a curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activity and its subordinating activities. It differs from the teaching-learning and classroom activities in that it includes all curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities, whereas classroom activity includes only curricular activities.

Epistemological curiosity: An intellectual curiosity that makes students intellectually engaged. It is a strong desire to know or learn something in depth.

Hermeneutic circle: A revisionary process. In revising, the parts inform the whole, and the whole informs the parts. If something is broken down into parts alone, the phenomenon is lost. This circle focuses on how participants' understandings of different situations are revised during interpretation and analysis.

Institutional school: Also known as private or boarding school, this school is funded by a person, a group of people, or trustee(s). Such schools take fees from students, have no government intervention in internal management, and are run as per the existing Education Act 2075 (9th Amendment). They are established, organized, and conducted with a business motto.

Intersubjectivity: The shared understanding and mutual comprehension of students and teachers. It refers to the ordinary meanings or interpretations of experiences and concepts through dialogue and interaction. It takes place when people share the same perception of a context. The context is the school environment, language and behavior, teaching-learning content, classroom activities, and assessment that students and teachers experience and perceive.

Left-behind children: This term refers to children who are weak and move slowly in their studies due to insufficient support. Because of a lack of sufficient support and encouragement, they feel they are left behind, weak, and unable to keep up with others in the study. It also denotes that they are ignored, oppressed, and not cared for in the school or classroom. If children are left behind, they remain at a lower level than others because they are not quick at understanding.

Lifeworld: Husserl's concept of a self-evident universe. A world that people experience together.

Lived experience: also known as personal experience, first-hand experience, or one's own experience with something or a situation. It is the knowledge that a person gains from their first-hand involvement or direct experiences.

Phenomenology of spirit: The science of experience of consciousness. It is the consequent transformation of the subject. It is the result of a deepened knowledge of the object.

Outline of the Dissertation

The outline of this dissertation consists of altogether seven chapters. It presents chapter-wise summaries with subheadings. The opening chapter begins with an Introduction to the Study (i.e., Chapter One). In this introductory chapter, I have explained what motivated me to start the study and the background information of the study. Then, I clarified the problem and rationale of the study. After that, I mentioned the study's guiding purpose and research questions. Additionally, I traced the track, noting the boundaries of the study. Finally, I have defined the key terms used in the study, followed by the dissertation outline.

In Chapter Two (i.e., Review of Related Literature), I have reviewed related literature to explicate existing knowledge as the foundation of the study. I have also

reviewed the literature related to the concepts, theories, and empirical studies. The description of pedagogical practices. Under this, I have described pedagogical practices, their origin and development, and their link with the existing practices, which showed me the area to focus on in the study. Under ‘Dynamics to Influence Students’ Learning,’ I have outlined multiple intelligences students can inherit and develop. Then, I described experiential learning under constructivism, including the types of motivation and their roles in teaching and learning. And then, I have explained transformative learning and critical pedagogy with their implication. After that, I reviewed post-method pedagogy, 21st-century skills, task-based learning, existing classroom activities and classroom distraction, classroom discourse, and assessment. They all clicked on the idea of making the study narrow and specific. To lead the study ahead with theories, I have reviewed three theories: critical theory, social dominance theory, and social justice theory. Then, I explored language policy in education in the context of Nepal. Then, I reviewed empirical studies related to the praxis of critical pedagogy and found the area unsearched as the gap to be filled. Finally, I summed up the chapter with a summary followed by a conceptual framework.

The third chapter is ‘Research Methodology: Philosophy, Paradigm, and Design of the Study.’ In this chapter, I have described phenomenology as the philosophical framework. Under it, I have clarified my research paradigm, ontology, epistemology, and axiology. After that, I have outlined interpretive phenomenology as the research design adopted in the study. Under this, the context of the study, including the demographic profile of research participants and research tools, was depicted clearly. Then, observation, phenomenological interview, and focus group discussion were explained as information collection methods. Finally, I described how

I maintained quality standards and ethical considerations and summarized the chapter with an information analysis procedure.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, I interpreted and analyzed the information received from the field. In the fourth chapter, I presented the information collected from the field under four themes: classroom discourse, learning content, classroom activities, and assessment with their eight themes (two organizing themes of each) and thirty codes (local themes). In the fifth chapter (of Educational Activities), I have presented the sense-making of the participants' experiences. I have analyzed the participants' experiences of educational environment, language and behavior, learning content, classroom activities, assessment, and assignment. Then, I developed figures from the information from the research field. Finally, I have summed up the chapter, interpreting the strategies to make the teachers responsible and accountable, followed by the chapter summary.

In the sixth chapter (Discussion of Findings), I have discussed the findings of the information with the theories and literature. I have generated meanings from the sense-making of the participants' experiences and summed it up with a chapter summary.

The seventh chapter contains the conclusion, Implications, and Recommendations. First, it presents the overall conclusion of the study. Then, I present the implications of the findings: how we can make educational practices learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented. Finally, I present the issues for further studies under recommendations.

Then, I mentioned the resources I reviewed and consulted under References. Finally, I presented interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and guidelines for

focus group discussion and transcribed and translated data from interviews, observations, and focus group discussions under 'The appendix'.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced my study area to the existing situation. I have outlined the sources of motivation and raised questions about why teachers cannot perform their roles with the insights they learned in the university and from different training, workshops, and conferences for their professional development.

Then, I created the background for the study in which I depicted the actual situation of the community schools through my own experience. Under the problem statement, I have raised the burning issues: students' reluctance, good and bad educational practices, and the teachers' and concerned authorities' attempts and negligence for better school education. Then, I have described the existing practices, their usefulness, and their benefits for students, teachers, curriculum designers, and concerned authorities under the study's rationale. After that, I mentioned the purpose of the study and the research questions to trace the roadmap of the research journey. I have also demarcated the area by delimiting the boundaries to make the study more specific, detailed, and in-depth. Before the end of this chapter, I defined the operational key terms as they were used in the text, and finally, I came to the end of the chapter with the dissertation outline.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

A research work tells its readers stories about how the world works and how the research works. Similarly, this study led me to go through related studies, weave my stories on others' stories, and locate the unsearched area. The theories embraced in the research, and the academicians' scholarly works led me to find the gaps and lack in school education, particularly educational activities. This chapter deals with setting out for the review of related literature. I reviewed critical pedagogy and dynamics to influence students' learning under related concepts and themes. The theoretical premises consist of three theories: critical, social dominance, and social justice. Then, I reviewed language policy in education and empirical studies and explored research gaps. Finally, I developed the conceptual framework of the study.

The literature review is a short overview of scholarly works on a particular topic that answers related queries. In other words, it is a critical outline of previously published intellectual works on a specific topic or issue. The literature review is "what we already know, what we need to know, and how we can get there" (Schryen, 2013, as cited in Rowe, 2017, p. 243). Therefore, it studies what has already been written or published on a particular topic or issue and what has to be explored. This study supported me in learning about already explored knowledge and practices and then finding the gaps in the knowledge and existing practices. Harris (2020) identifies academic literature as a conversation, an exchange of voice and vision with others. I have reviewed them, set the theoretical base, acknowledged the previous research works about the praxis of critical pedagogy, and found the knowledge gap in why students cannot learn in the way they could.

In the ancient, education was understood as an inculcating part of religious duty. In the 19th and 20th centuries, public schooling gradually evolved, curricula were developed, and knowledge expanded with the leadership of religious people in religious places such as temples and churches. In order to evaluate and grade students' learning achievements and encourage them to study more ahead, they used to be assessed at the end of certain teaching-learning activities. Because of the system to grade students through paper-pencil tests, teaching-learning became mechanical. On the other hand, in the competition for leading students to score better marks from high-stakes testing, various private, public, and public charter schools were developed. As a result, students from different socio-cultural backgrounds gathered in the schools. The parents perceived that they come in touch with others from different socio-cultural or religious backgrounds and are likely to deviate from their ethnic background. The perception created a sort of fear in parents. For such parents, homeschooling became an option, particularly in North America. Homeschooling was resurrected in the 1960s and 1970s by educational reformists dissatisfied with industrialization (Abilasha & Ilankumaran, 2014; Holt, 1969). The people who favor homeschooling severely criticized school education and favored homeschooling. They focused on how schools discourage students' creativity and curiosity by insisting on rote learning. They criticized school education as being more mechanical and exam-oriented and against students' needs, interests, and potentialities. John Holt (1923-1985), an advocate of homeschooling, wrote 'School is bad for children' focusing on how schools spoil children (Holt, 1969); 'How Children Fail' focusing on "The (students) fail because they are afraid, bored, and confused" (Holt & Fromme, 1964, p. 2); and 'How Children Learn' (Holt, 1967) focusing on learners interest on learning content, context, and strategies. He defines home-schooling as a form of private

education that is parent-led and home-based. Homeschooling can be understood as a part of a liberal radical critique of institutional schooling on one side and as a conservative response to the voices calling for reform on the other.

However, homeschooling cannot be a perfect solution. One reason is that home-school children are limited in their homes; they are away from the diverse society and complex public life. The following reason is the parents' knowledge and skills. Although it can be constructive during early childhood education, parents cannot nurture their children with the necessary knowledge and skills that children require for upgraded education. They may have insufficient knowledge and skills and be unaware of changing society. Moreover, they may lack sufficient knowledge and ideas to guide their children in all areas of knowledge significantly. Besides, homeschooling leads children to be similar to their parents and cannot conscientize and empower them with transversal and academic competencies for the changing global society. In this regard, Monchinski (2008) raises issues like, "What if the family is racist and wants to teach their kids to be racist? What if the family is intolerant of religions other than their own and wants to teach their children to be such?" (p. 40). As school education is designed systematically, qualified teachers can lead students to meet the expected goal. Moreover, children have immense opportunities to interact and learn from one another in the school. The school represents a society where children learn from one another. Home-schooling is difficult for parents because it requires sufficient time, commitment, and self-discipline. Therefore, school education, which is only the systematically designed platform for children's holistic development, has no better alternatives. Schools cannot give expected results only when there are wrong practices, weaknesses, and negligence in some people's performance.

Schools have well-designed educational activities as guided by the curriculum. Monchinski (2008) states, “Schools allow for education which can guarantee widespread community of interest and aim” (p. 41). They have various resources systematically designed and managed for students’ holistic development. Due to the weaknesses and negligence in management, running activities, and assessment, students fail to achieve expected goals. The idea of critical pedagogy becomes worthwhile to mitigate this deformity and lack. School education has no better alternatives. Schools cannot give the expected result when there are wrong practices, weaknesses, and negligence in some people’s performance.

Critical Perspective on Educational Practice

The critical perspective on educational practice highlights the role of education in promoting social justice and empowerment of marginalized groups. Critical pedagogy sprouted from the critical theory of education, which makes students critically aware of the beliefs and practices that dominate them. As a transformation-based approach to teaching, “education should go beyond transfer of knowledge and training the future labor force” (Abraham, 2014, p. 1). It makes learners critically aware and promotes their critical consciousness. As students have much information from different sources, they need crucial power to scrutinize them and find out the purpose of the information and how and to what extent it is helpful. Critical pedagogy is based on the ‘Critical Theory’ of education, which makes students critically aware of those beliefs and practices that dominate them.

Critical pedagogy is a praxis that constitutes action and reflection. In other words, praxis is exercising or practicing a theory or idea in real life. During the praxis of a theory, we perform an action or implement it in the field and get reflection. Critical pedagogy “requires thought and deed together, reflection and action”

(Monchinski, 2008, p. 2). Praxis is the process of using a theory in practice. In the absence of one, the other is incomplete. In this regard, Monchinski (2008) clarifies, “Cut off from practice, theory becomes a simple verbalism...separated from theory, practice is nothing but blind activism” (pp. 1-2). As a theory should guide practice, the theory should be restructured or amended by its practice. Of two types of praxis described by Freire (2005), revolutionary praxis and the praxis of the dominant elites, he focuses on the earlier one and emphasizes disheartening the latter. The praxis of the dominant elites prescribes the top-down approach in which students receive knowledge from their teachers, apply it in real-life situations, and gain an understanding. In this traditional form of education, teachers follow the decisions of the people at the upper level. As the students must follow the teachers’ instructions, this approach cannot help students develop critical thinking skills and creativity. The type of praxis includes manipulation, sloganizing, depositing, regimentation, and prescription. The revolutionary praxis, on the other hand, follows the bottom-up approach in which students, with the facilitation of their teacher, plan and perform an action, reflect, and make decisions.

Critical pedagogy emphasizes human needs, context, and history. It focuses on education that empowers students with critical awareness. It is political because it challenges domination and addresses the issues of social justice and democracy. In this pedagogy, the teacher’s role is to raise the issues from the other side of students’ opinions and lead them to see the vision from another perspective. It focuses on the holistic function of education, so it is a praxis that constitutes action and reflection. According to Shudak (2015), critical pedagogy is one of “few unique discourses which have developed to scrutinize schooling and educational practices and do so from critical, sociological, and philosophical perspectives over thirty years” (p. 464).

This discourse is practical to enfranchise students and systematically promote equal access and opportunities. When a dominating or unjustifiable action occurs, it plays its role in mitigating the undefeatable control.

A curriculum that does not address learners' needs and interests becomes a failure. "All curricular decisions would be based on the needs and interests of the students involved, and choices as to what would be studied, and how, would be made jointly by teachers and students" (Giroux, 1997; Shor, 1992 as cited in Degener, 2015, p. 43) as critical pedagogy focuses on the curriculum from the students' surrounding world. Furthermore, the curriculum should be closely linked to the immediate realities of learners. Students become more confident when they believe the curricular activities and material are from their world. Teachers can better educate their students when they promote students' discrete work skills in the real world, which they enjoy the most.

Critical pedagogy originated from critical theory, and the theory originated from critical thinking. In other words, critical thinking is the essential source of theory, and critical theory is the source of critical pedagogy. They all emerged from the Frankfurt School, an institute for social research at the University of Frankfurt, Germany. The school was "responsible for the founding and various trajectories of critical theory in the contemporary humanities and social sciences" (Garlitz & Kögler, 2015, p. 380). They divide critical theorists of the school into three generations. The theorists of the first generation are represented by Marcuse, Adorno, Benjamin, etc., who focused on how advanced capitalism had managed to liquidate the force.

The second-generation theorists include Habermas (2003), who focused on communicative competency, and Paulo Freire, who focused on education. Freire (1970) brought a wave condemning the traditional concept of education. He argued

that such education cannot develop cognitive skills in students. According to McLaren and Kincheloe (2007), “Emerging from Paulo Freire’s work in poverty-stricken northeastern Brazil in the 1960s, critical pedagogy amalgamated liberation theological ethics and the critical theory of the Frankfurt school in Germany with progressive impulses in education” (p. 12). The emergence of critical pedagogy brought a revolution to liberate and empower children with their potential talent and creativity. Finally, Honneth, who worked as the director of Frankfurt School from 2001 to 2018, represents the third generation. He focused on power relations, recognition, and respect. They have a crucial role in liberating and empowering the students with critical awareness.

Superficial knowledge does not empower students with reasoning skills, the skill that empowers them to solve the underlying problems. So, educational institutions should be responsible for educating their students and developing their creativity through critical thinking. Thinking is a mental process in which a person manipulates and analyzes information that they receive from different sources. It is the foundation of cognitive activities. Human beings are superior to other creatures because of their unique thinking capacity. This critical thinking is the way of thinking that employs curiosity, creativity, skepticism, analysis, and logic. It is the ability to think clearly and rationally. It is the ability to identify, construct, and evaluate arguments. Goatly and Hiradhar (2016) define critical thinking as seeing logical flaws in arguments or weighing evidence for explicit claims. It is the art of analyzing, evaluating, and reasoning. Jeyaraj (2014) argues that critical thinking prepares individuals to seek reason, truth, and evidence, whereas critical pedagogy aims to nurture children, empowering them to seek justice and emancipation. Critical thinking, a higher order of thinking, uses cognitive skills that increase the chances of

desired outcomes. “Creative thinking tries to create something new, whereas critical thinking seeks to assess worth or validity in something that exists” (Baker et al., 2001, p. 173). It encourages people to use their logic.

The teacher providing the students sufficient time to think critically, analyze the context, and seek solutions can better educate the students than those who instruct them by explaining the content. Donovan et al. (2014) argue that teaching thinking skills is compatible with 21st-century pedagogy. They also say that critical thinking and problem-solving are associated with thinking skills. Therefore, the teacher’s role is to create a fearless and justifiable environment where students can participate in different activities and enhance their creative thinking. As “creative thinking consists of revising, creating, evaluating and developing new ideas” (Donovan et al., 2014, p. 25), students work on a topic or issue, revisit their work, create a conclusion, and then evaluate their work to develop new ideas. For this, equal empowerment of the students in the classroom is necessary. Vandrick (1994) claims that the primary goal of critical pedagogy is to emancipate and educate all people regardless of their gender, class, race, etc. Children learn better if they get a learning environment in their autonomy and emancipation.

As learning cannot be fostered in a hegemonic environment, critical pedagogy emancipates people from being dominated, oppressed, and subordinated. It liberates, empowers, and enables the oppressed to proceed ahead independently without any domination. Aliakbari and Faraji (2011) state, “Critical pedagogy challenges any form of domination, oppression, and subordination intending to emancipate oppressed or marginalized people” (p. 77). Students cannot grow with their potential talents like a plant in a cave when they are oppressed and limited. The students grow with their

potential creativity and talents only when assured of an emancipating, justifiable, and empowering environment.

People in every society have power relations, as do teachers and students in the classroom. Aliakbari and Faraji (2011) state that critical pedagogy is an educational response to inequalities and oppressive power relations in academic institutions. The teacher's role is to break off the power relations and lead the students in learning, maintaining a participatory and justifiable environment.

Problem-posing education nurtures students better than the top-down model of education. Freire (1970), the leading advocate of critical pedagogy, discusses the banking model of education and problem-posing education. He rejects the first one and proposes the next. In the banking model of education, teachers are superior, dominant, and oppressors. This model of education takes the teachers as knowledge bankers who deposit knowledge in students' minds. It asserts that they know everything and students know nothing; their minds are empty vessels. Smyth (2011) states, "Teaching is by nature a political activity both inside the classroom and outside of it" (p. 31). The teacher is a leader who should control students to lead them on the track well ahead. Students should have liberty within certain boundaries without which they may deviate from the learning track. Students should be obedient to the authority, but unnecessary obedience should be avoided. In the traditional model, students are entirely obedient and teacher-dependent. They receive, memorize, and repeat what the teachers say and teach. It is cost-effective education with minimum personal contact between teachers and students. In contrast, problem-posing education focuses on learning with discussion and self-effort. It involves uncovering reality, striving for the emergence of consciousness, and critical intervention in reality (Freire, 1970). Problem-posing events activate students to face a problematic situation

and find options for solutions. When students face life-related problems, they detect the reality and learn meaningfully. This education is necessary for students to swim across challenges and enjoy global opportunities.

Practicing critical pedagogy is challenging; it requires commitment and devotion from the beginning to the end. Shudak (2015) mentions the four dimensions of Freire's critical pedagogy. One is that "education means a critical understanding of reality" (Shudak, 2015, p. 465). The primary purpose of education is to empower students with intellectual and moral powers so that they can challenge and break the inequitable and dehumanizing system. The next is that education means ensuring a utopia and changing reality. Until and unless the structures of inequity and dehumanization are dismantled, critical, conscious, and meaningful learning is impossible. The third dimension is that education means training those who will make this change. As Monchinski (2008) states, "abused children grow up to abuse children" (p. xvii); children should be well cared for and well treated so that they can create a world of harmony and brotherhood/sisterhood. Well-treated and well-cared children grow up to treat and care for others heartily. The last is that education means dialogue. Dialogue is indispensable for developing meaningful knowledge. In conversation, participants must listen attentively, inquire for meaning to gain understanding, think effectively, and communicate with reasoning responses. For this, the content for dialogue matters: the more interesting the issue/topic for dialogue is, the better motivated the students become for it.

Critical pedagogy aims to nurture individuals, empowering them to seek justice and emancipation. Critical pedagogy empowers mentally, psychologically, socially, and spiritually inadequate students and prepares them to solve the problems that they face in their real lives. It examines the inequalities and injustices that exist in

society. The inequity and injustice exist not only across class, race, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity but also within them. Critical pedagogy begins with what students have learned and helps them link knowledge from the curriculum with their everyday lives. Fobes and Kaufman (2008, pp. 27-28) state four essential functions of critical pedagogy. Firstly, critical pedagogy attempts to eradicate the teacher-student contradiction. As the teachers and students have a significant gap in their relationship, it reduces the gap and places them as companions and working mates. Critical pedagogy leads teaching-learning activities in collaboration with teachers and students. It avoids the misconception that the teacher knows everything and students know nothing. Students are not passive learners, passive listeners, or the blank sheet of paper for the teachers to fill in. Secondly, it promotes a problem-posing dialogue (instead of a banking/lecturing style) that originates from the learners' lived experiences (generative themes). Critical pedagogy strongly discourages lecturing and rote learning. Learning is linked with students' real-life situations. Further, it fosters epistemological curiosity in both teachers and learners. Critical pedagogy focuses on activity-based learning where students participate actively, work on it, and learn. The other function they mention is that it strives for praxis: reflection and action of the social world to transform it. As the teacher facilitates students to learn something, they plan, practice, reflect on the practice, learn from one another, and meet the goal. Therefore, they say that critical pedagogy is both a form of training and a form of action. It encourages students to reflect upon their development and learning.

School systems and classroom activities have several situations which produce and promote oppression. These situations should be converted. To transform this situation, the oppressed must confront reality critically. The role of education policy and the school system in unveiling reality plays a vital role in transforming oppressive

situations. The education policy, school system, and the role of the oppressed people in confronting reality critically matter for transformation. Until and unless the hegemony is not discouraged, expected transformation is not possible. Freire (2005) mentions, "The concrete situation which begets oppression must be transformed" (p. 50). It is a matter of a system of practice.

In a society where oppression exists, there are layers of oppressors. Today's oppressed will become tomorrow's oppressors. The practice of such transformation should be checked. For this, the rules that constitute oppression must be replaced with those constraints that place the oppressed and the oppressors in the same position. According to Freire, the oppressor exists within their comrades. The issue of reducing the oppressive situation and promoting social justice is the central part of the study. As Freire (2005) talks about "the necessity for constant control" (p. 59), education policy should empower its mechanism to subvert humanization.

Oppressed people have distinct characteristics. Baker-Shenk (1986) describes seven characteristics of oppressed people. One of them is their ambivalence in choosing to be free from the oppressors or be like them. If they decide to escape away from the oppressors, they break their silence, become free and self-determining, and can speak and act on their thoughts. This is a challenge for them to go against the oppressors. If they choose to be like oppressors, they adopt the oppressors' norms, values, and ways of thinking. Such people have some attraction towards the oppressors. The following characteristic is self-depreciation. Oppressed people feel that they are weak and unproductive. Oppressed students' perceptions that they are weak, good for nothing, and incapable of learning anything disheartens their participation and performance. The third one is that they feel inferior. They distrust themselves and their group members. The fourth feature is horizontal violence. Due to

the oppressive situation, the oppressed people feel frustration and despair. Though it is the result of the oppressors, they cannot express it while treating the oppressors, but they pour this aggressiveness into their peers. This is like the Nepali proverb '*Bhaalu ko ris Khaniyaa maathi*'. The other is the oppressor's fatalist attitude (Freire, 1970). The oppressive situation makes them docile and passive. It is due to their belief that 'It is the result of my misfortune.' They adapt to the situation, feeling they can do nothing against it. The sixth one is emotional dependence on the oppressor. The oppressed people think that oppressors are needed for their survival. Their life becomes even more complicated without them, so they cannot go against them. Last but not least, there is a fear of freedom. They are afraid of losing their dependence on the oppressor. Feelings of fear, inferiority, and weakness make students depreciate and reluctant. They also lack confidence. On the other hand, the oppressors have a pejorative view of the oppressed (Baker-Shenk, 1986). They view the oppressed as if they are inferior, incapable, and untrustworthy. The school environment should discourage such views of the oppressive students. Only when the oppressed students are convinced and assured do they become convinced to struggle against the oppression. The school system should create an environment for the students to praise themselves. Furthermore, it is necessary to motivate and make them enthusiastic through student-friendly learning activities from the areas of their study that promote their participation and performance.

We can find traditional and participatory types of education systems. Freire (1970) discusses the banking concept of education and problem-posing education. The first one is suffering from narrative sickness. In this model, education has been the exercise of domination. The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable; he explains the chosen learning contents

completely with the sonority of words and forces students to comply. Students receive meekly, memorize mechanically, and store in their minds. They are know-nothing, have to follow the teacher's orders and try their best to meet the chosen standard. The more accurately they express the stored content, the better-graded learners they become. The teacher, the depositor, bestows knowledge as a gift to the students they consider to know nothing. On the other hand, problem-posing education is a humanist and liberating praxis. In other words, it liberates students by avoiding alienation. Freire (2005) mentions that it entails at the outset that the teacher-student contradiction is solved (p. 79). In this method, education is the practice of freedom that promotes collaboration and cooperation. The teachers are cognitive, not narrative. They present materials, work with students, and create actual knowledge. Students are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves and the world. Then, they feel challenged and obliged to respond to the problems. As the practice of problem-posing education breaks with the vertical pattern characteristic of banking education, teachers are the partners of the students in their relationship. As a result, students do not feel any domination or hesitation to work and consult with their teachers. Students in a friendly and fearless environment are motivated to concentrate their efforts on the problem. This method involves students in real-life situations and helps them develop their critical consciousness and creative power.

Education is a never-ending activity, so everyone learns since no one has a predetermined future. According to Freire (2005), "problem-posing education affirms men and women as beings in the process of becoming –as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality" (p.84). Everyone knows themselves as unfinished and incomplete, and then they become revolutionary and dynamic. The journey of their study begins with the situation they are in. The situation is an object

of their cognition. When they engage in the situation, they are involved in the inquiry process and learn from their decision-making. The teacher has to direct their movement of inquiry towards the pursuit of the entire humanity. It is possible only through fellowship and solidarity, not in isolation and an antagonistic relationship. Education is a never-ending activity, so everyone learns since no one has a predetermined future.

The use of dialogue in education makes students critically conscious and innovative. Freire (2005) states, "Dialogue characterizes an epistemological relationship; thus, in this sense, dialogue is a way of knowing and should never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task" (p.17). He further says, "Dialogue is never an end in itself but a means to develop a better comprehension about the object of knowledge" (p. 18). Freire argues, "Curiosity about the object of knowledge and the willingness and openness to engage theoretical readings and discussions is fundamental" (p.18). Here, he does not mean an over-celebration of theory. "Dialogue is an existential necessity. Furthermore, since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialogues are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized..." Freire (2005, p. 88). Furthermore, since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialogues are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized..." (p.88), he further states, "Dialogue cannot exist in the absence of a profound love for the world and people" (p.89). As dialogue exists with humility and cannot be sentimental, one must love the world, life, and people to enter it. If one of those who dialogue lacks humility during learning and acting, their dialogue is broken. People can dialogue when they perceive their own project and accept others, regard themselves as others, and are open to and accept others' contributions.

Dialogue exists with hope, love, faith, humility, and critical thinking. Hope is deeply rooted in one's incompleteness. This incompleteness stimulates them to search for completion. Freire (2005) mentions, "Founding itself upon love, humanity, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence" (p. 92). The person who dialogues should be critical and take dialogue as humans' power to create and transform. Teachers and students have a horizontal relationship in a dialogic classroom, and both learn from one another. The students enjoy learning interactive dialogues in the content of their choice and in their own world, where they feel free from any sort of discrimination, domination, and isolation. In short, through interactive activities, the students can transform their lived experiences into knowledge and use already acquired knowledge to unveil new knowledge (Freire, 2005).

Dialogical action makes students critically aware of ongoing situations and social practices. Matusov (2009) talks about dialogical and anti-dialogical action. No one becomes an oppressor or the oppressed by birth, but the situation in which people grow and their actions make them oppressors or the oppressed. The real and concrete situation of the oppression is connected with anti-dialogical action. Freire (2005) states, "Dialogical action is indispensable to the revolutionary superseding of that situation" (p.138). Conquest is one of the characteristics of anti-dialogical action. As an anti-dialogical individual aims at conquering the vanquished, he imposes his possession on them. Divide and rule is another characteristic of anti-dialogical action. In the words of Freire (2005), "As the oppressor minority subordinates and dominates the majority, it must divide it and keep it divided to remain in power (p.141). They use different means of oppression (such as cultural action and violence) for oppression.

Freire also describes the reason why educational plans fail. One of the reasons is that writers design the educational program according to their understanding and views of reality and ignore the situation of the people to whom the program was directed. The people in a situation have a particular view of the world, and the designed program cannot address their views of the world. Such programs support class-based society and promote horrendous human conditions. In the words of Freire (2005), “Such a program constitutes cultural invasion” (p.95).

When students get an appropriate environment, they apply and practice already-generated knowledge. And then they can generate their knowledge. Real learning occurs when students study, discuss with their peers, and apply it in real-life situations. Gijsbers and van Schoonhoven (2012), Leadbeater (2008), Learnovation (2009), and Redecker and Punie (2013) state, “Pedagogies that support deeper learning include personalized learning strategies, collaborative learning, and informal learning” (Scott, 2015, p. 2). Such pedagogy is the demand of 21st-century learners. Scott (2015) also states that 21st-century learners’ strategies include that children learn at school; they can learn from their peers, seniors, and juniors from the society they live in and even from unfamiliar people on the way, in the market, or anywhere they come in touch. Accordingly, learning is not limited to school only. Educational activities should be fun and learning on the one hand and real-life and ICT-connected on the other.

Critical Pedagogy and Existing Practices

Every society has an oppressive structure, and so is a school and language classroom. Critical language pedagogy helps to reduce such situations and promotes a fair and equitable environment. Crookes (2013) claims, “Critical pedagogy emerges from the interaction of theories and practices of language teaching that fosters

language learning...” (p.8). It is a justice-oriented praxis. Jeyaraj (2014) defines critical pedagogy in ELT as “a practice that challenges oppressive structures in society, with the hope of bringing forth self and social transformation (p. 15-16). Crookes (2013) uses the term critical language pedagogy for critical pedagogy in ELT. Similarly, for the term critical pedagogy in ELT, Sung and Pedersoon (2012) use Critical Practices in ELT, and Pessoa and de Urzeda Freites (2012) use Critical Language Teaching and Critical Literacy Teaching by Lau (2012). Critical pedagogy does not discuss a particular method or teaching technique but the way of running teaching techniques and how to run classroom activities beyond a particular method or technique. In the words of Jeyaraj (2014), “Critical pedagogy extends beyond a set of fixed methods or techniques” (p.31). It is a way of liberating education. He further states Wink’s (2000) words, “Critical pedagogy is not a way of doing, but a way of living” (p. 31). Students learn by living themselves. The role of the pedagogy is to reduce the discomfort and injustice that students feel and experience in their lives.

People experience some superiority or inferiority because of the treatment based on gender, race, class, religion, linguistic background, and ethnicity. Social injustice, inequality, and domination emerge and develop not only across the differences in gender, race, class, and ethnicity but also within the group. Sigdel (2017) concludes, “Familial, socio-cultural, economic and classroom environment are the bases where language dominance appears and flourishes” (p.25). A friendly environment, participatory classroom activities, and life-related learning content promote students’ learning. Despite the possibility of developing textbooks or learning materials from the local context, the contents and learning materials are imported from distinct cultural backgrounds. The imported contents and learning materials are unfamiliar and more powerful elements that create and promote

domination, injustice, and inequality. To promote students' participation and get their views, learning content should be from their own socio-cultural background. Koirala (2022) focuses on connecting technology with the local context so that the students grow from their world and compare their knowledge with that of other sources. Moreover, if the content is from the area of the students' needs and interests, they participate more actively. Crookes (2013) argues, "The availability of a good textbook or locally developed materials will make a considerable difference to the confidence of a teacher taking on a new course" (p.9). Borrowed knowledge, the banking teaching model, and parrot learning make students like tamed animals.

Schools also face student-related challenges in promoting praxis-based pedagogy in Nepal. One of them is freedom and students' interest. In this situation, the students feel liberated and let to do whatever they want; they ignore learning and waste time doing unproductive activities. It is because the learning contents are beyond students' interests and real life. Critical pedagogy focuses on linking knowledge from the curriculum with real-life situations and the instructor's construct of learning opportunities to the students, respecting their voices. The next challenge is the assessment system. As critical pedagogy promotes learning through the reciprocal exchange of teacher-student discourses (Fobes & Kaufman, 2008), the teacher's role is to link knowledge of the curriculum with students' everyday lives. Nevertheless, teachers must make their teaching exam-oriented and textbook-limited rather than real-life-oriented. The teachers are educated and trained to lead praxis-based, student-centered teaching-learning activities but in the traditional way. Similarly, the teachers discuss practice-based activities but follow traditional teaching methods. The third one is power relations. It is a great challenge for them to equalize the power relation. There is a significant gap between teachers and students in Nepal. The students,

particularly the disadvantaged ones, feel and experience inferiority and cannot equalize themselves with their teachers and some of their peers. They have risks and hurdles to equalize with them and proceed ahead in their study. The teachers can make the classroom student-friendly and lead them to face new challenges. The students become more enthusiastic and confident if they encourage and facilitate risk-taking activities. The fourth challenge is breaking off the traditional teaching and learning trend and socializing students with new learning experiences. Students feel comfortable with teachers' notes and ready-made exam capsules in this situation. They feel difficult and hesitate to participate in different learning activities. Fobes and Kaufman (2008) state, "Initially, many students are more comfortable with the traditional model of compulsory note-taking and the regurgitation of facts" (p.27). Although some students can bring a change in their social life, such as by getting a job, it is a big challenge to create hope in students (especially those from dominated and marginalized social groups) to use their education to transform their social reality. Last but not least, the challenge is grading free-rider students. Free-rider students are the students who benefit from group grades without doing their part of the work. They are a problem. The teachers have difficulty in grading such students. However, even though evidence-based assessment, a fair and transparent assessment system brings such free-rider students on the right track to some extent.

Similarly, schools have teacher-related challenges to promote the praxis of critical pedagogy. Traditionally, teachers are respected as the ones who have learned more, experienced more, and can better educate their students. Until and unless teachers are responsible and accountable, school education cannot be improved. The Sanskrit adage, "*Guru Brahma guru Bishnu Gurudev Maheshwor! Guru sakshyat param Brahma tasmai shree guru wey namo.*" proves the status of the teachers in

Nepal. Both the teachers' status quo and the government's treatment of the teachers are contradicting and discouraging for the praxis of educational activities. The ongoing school education practice has been like '*sasu arhai bahu, bahu arhai kutta, kutta arhai eta na uta!*' This is the result of the dominant practice of a top-down approach. As the teachers have to follow the concerned authority's instruction, they usually treat students the same way they are treated. The teachers are instructors, evaluators, order givers, and respected school personnel. They have a dominant role as superior people, lecturing in the class, giving notes, and preparing students for the examination. The students usually view the notes given and try their best to score better marks. The teachers also help their students when they have trouble in their studies, especially in the areas they have difficulty understanding. Whatever they do in the class is unquestionable, and it is not easy to de-center authority. Can they equalize their status (superior status) with that of students? Can the learner replace their belief in knowledge? Can an emperor become a gardener? Do the teachers have sufficient facilities and access to lead the classes as they are trained and taught? Can they feel comfortable when students disagree with them? Can they decenter their authority in grading and assessment? Until and unless the teachers self-analyze the questions mentioned above, they cannot cultivate children's inner talents. Fobes and Kaufman (2008) state that teachers can ask students to create a grading rubric for praxis project assignments in class. Creating such a rubric is time and effort-consuming and requires thoughts and experimentation. Are teachers ready to provide additional effort? Fobes and Kaufman (2008) mention modeling and maintaining epistemological curiosity- the endless questioning, the awareness of our 'unfinishedness' as a challenge of critical pedagogy. A banking (lecturing) approach

is more manageable than discussion-based (problem-posing) teaching. Are the teachers ready to embrace such a more complicated and labor-intensive task?

There are institution-related challenges that affect the promotion of critical pedagogy. Firstly, the institution is mainly responsible for creating a child-friendly learning environment, but the people who lead the institutions lack the appropriate intellectual level to lead the teachers. The teachers have more and better qualifications and experience but have to follow the order of those who are less qualified and less experienced in the field. The bureaucratized practice without sufficient knowledge and experience cannot make educational practices emancipatory and justifiable.

According to Mauksch (1986), classroom size, classroom arrangement, and support facilities for teaching activities are based on institutional policies and practices, rarely on teacher demands or influence. When bureaucrats do not respect and follow the real needs of classrooms, teachers cannot maximize the implementation of the pedagogical essence: organizational structure, an institution's process, and classroom management guide institutional activities. Bureaucratic practices are less supportive of teachers' ability to employ critical pedagogy significantly. Fobes and Kaufman (2008) state the result as "Often classrooms are not conducive to discussion with little or no space for small group" (p. 30).

The next challenge is centralized practice. "Centralized control of book orders, filled before class meeting dates, may deter students' input into grass-roots curriculum development" (Sweet, 1998, as cited in Fobes & Kaufman, 2008, p. 30). Teachers' compulsion to follow the center's guidelines and order from implementing textbooks to the evaluation process discourages the practice of a critical pedagogical framework. In other words, the teachers are obligated to follow hierarchical order and are rarely encouraged to implement new practices.

Finally, the hierarchy of the class-based society has severely affected the school environment. Shudak (2015) blames Freire's utopian idea of critical pedagogy for making the school environment awful and creating chaos instead. It is because of the deeply rooted class-based society that cannot be overthrown suddenly. It is a slow and steady process. People in the lead, including the teachers, are prone to discriminatory and favorable attitudes such as nepotism and favoritism. Another challenge to implementing critical pedagogy is intellectual and moral power in the leading people. Avoseh (2009) states that the purpose of any education that "fosters critical thinking is to equip individuals with the intellectual and moral powers to confront and dismantle the structures" (p. 128). It is hardly possible for the people in power to lose their superior hierarchy and establish themselves at the grassroots with the ordinary people. Shudak (2015) mentions, "Freire posits that to surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its abuses so that through transforming action they can create a new situation" (p. 465). It is against the will and welfare of the people in power. When people in the lead favor hierarchy, the system should hook such leading people. In Nepal, a top-down model of education is practiced because of the hierarchy-based society, the organizational structure of schools, administration practices, and the information circulation system so "decision-making power has virtually remained at the central government level" (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2002 as cited in Khanal, 2016, p. 36). It has made the banking model of education highly dominant and critical pedagogical praxis dominated. Therefore, this study critically analyzes the praxis of top-down and bottom-up education systems and attempts to discourage the banking model of education and promote learner-centered, real-life related, and problem-solving-oriented education.

Dynamics to Influence Students' Learning

Students have different pace of learning and level of understanding. Their personal, familial, and social factors affect their learning. In addition to these guiding factors to influence their learning, their intelligence, learning through constructivism, the influence of motivation, transformative learning and critical pedagogy, 21st-century pedagogy, task-based learning, existing classroom activities and classroom distraction, classroom discourse, and assessment and students' learning are discussed.

Intelligence in Students

Educational institutions should open the space for different educational activities to nurture students with their diverse intelligence, particularly those of Tobias (1992). Intelligence is the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills appropriately and accurately. In other words, it is the ability to deal with cognitive complexity (Gottfredson, 1998). As all students do not have the same level of intelligence in the same areas of learning, school education should cultivate their intelligence in diverse areas. For this, the idea of multiple intelligence is worthwhile. American developmental psychologist Howard Gardner developed the Multiple Intelligence theory between the 1970s and 1980s. Jane and Carmen (2004) state that Gardner (1999) and his research associates have identified nine types of intelligences: mathematical-logical, verbal-linguistic, musical-rhythmic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual-spatial, naturalist and existential. Every person has all of these intelligences. Some have more significant potential in some of them, while others may have better chances in others. Schools should create an environment to nurture students with all of the bits of intelligence. Although the students possess all types of intelligence, only linguistic and mathematical-logical have been valued and tested in our formal education system. These bits of intelligence can be nurtured and

strengthened or ignored and weakened, but to prepare students for global challenges and opportunities, schools should address all of them; otherwise, students' intelligence will be diminished. As Arnold and Fonseca (2004) mention Armstrong's (1999) statement, "Each of these frames is autonomous, challengeable and trainable" (p.120); students who have extra talent in one or more intelligences can be encouraged and empowered by them. Hence, all types of bits of intelligence are to be addressed. Gardner's (1992) multiple intelligence evolved as a reaction against the conservative and biologically driven view (Jane & Carmen, 2004), which believes that only intelligent students in learning tasks are more likely to succeed at school. Further, the evaluation system has promoted rote learning in students. Students' intelligence can be nurtured with the highest potential only when the school creates an environment for developing all of the intelligence mentioned above in the curriculum, from classroom activities to the assessment system.

The mathematical-logical intelligence is the ability to analyze problems and issues. In other words, it is the skill to analyze problems logically, identify solutions, and solve mathematical-logical processes confidently. It enables individuals to use and appreciate abstract relations (Tobias, 1992). He further claims that people working in science, mathematics, and philosophy require this intelligence. In short, it includes the skill of deductive reasoning, detecting patterns, and logical thinking. The second is verbal-linguistic intelligence. It is the ability to understand and use both spoken and written language. In other words, it is the extent to which one can use language skills. People with this intelligence are sensitive to the words' meanings, sounds, and rhythms. The people like poets, journalists, and authors require this skill. The traditional way of teaching involves explaining the topic and its key points, providing students with notes, and asking them to prepare for the examination.

Organizing a poem/ story writing program and leading the students to prepare for the program makes learning more participatory and engaging. The third one is musical-rhythmic Intelligence. It is the ability to produce pitch and rhythm and appreciate various musical expression forms. As Tobias (1992) says, “Musical intelligence allows people to create, communicate, and understand meanings made out of sound” (p. 6). People such as composers and instrumentalists have this intelligence. Although schools have some such programs under extra-curricular activities, this type of intelligence is not part of the assessment to upgrade students’ potentiality. The Bodily-kinesthetic Intelligence is the skill to handle the body and objects excellently. This intelligence allows individuals to use all or part of the body to create products or solve problems (Tobias, 1992). People who are athletes, surgeons, dancers, choreographers, or craftsmen have this intelligence. This type of intelligence is not part of the assessment, so it is devalued and ignored. Interpersonal Intelligence is understanding, analyzing, and responding to others’ motivations, moods, and desires. People working in psychology, sales, and teaching require this type of intelligence. An interpersonally intelligent person understands others’ moods, feelings, or temperaments and treats them appropriately. Despite its need and demand for a civilized society, our formal education system has not prioritized such intelligences. Intrapersonal Intelligence is the ability to understand and self-reflection. People with this intelligence know their own feeling, needs, strengths, and weaknesses. It is the ability to use knowledge to guide their behavior. Although this type of intelligence empowers a person for their status and career life, it is not assessed and focused in the context of the education system in Nepal. Visual-spatial Intelligence is the ability to form a mental model of the spatial world. In other words, it is the skill to visualize with the mind’s eye. People working in sculpturing, navigating, engineering, painting,

etc., require this intelligence. Gardner proposed naturalist intelligence in 1995. It is the knowledge of natural surroundings—the ability to differentiate and classify living beings and non-living things. Naturalist intelligence helps to recognize and categorize plants, animals, and other objects in nature (Tobias, 1992). Existential Intelligence, also known as spiritual intelligence, was introduced by Danah Zohar in 1997. It is the ability to transcend material, to sanctify everyday experience, and to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems. As it is impossible to codify quantifiable scientific criteria, Gardner chose not to include it in his multiple intelligences.

All the students may or may not have interest and talent in all of the areas of intelligence mentioned above. Every student has interests and potential, at least one or more. By providing such opportunities through different programs, teachers can support students flourishing. Our traditional educational practices have prioritized only a few in-classroom activities and assessments. As a result, students with talent and potential in other areas are ignored and isolated. The system has no plan or concept to sublimate and modify students' inner talents and potentialities. Therefore, this study attempts to provide learners with various opportunities to grow with their inner talents.

Learning Through Constructivism

Constructivism lays high emphasis on learning through experience. People construct knowledge from their experiences and interactions, so knowledge is not directly transferable from one person to another. In other words, knowledge is actively built, not passively received by learners. According to {Shermila, 2013 #244}Shermila XX (2013), in constructivism, knowledge is not seen as a commodity to be transferred from an expert to a learner. However, it is constructed through active involvement and interaction with the environment. Similarly, Liu and Matthews

(2005) argue, “The constructivists hold the fact that knowledge is not mechanically acquired, but actively constructed within the constraints and offerings of the learning environment... (p.387). Therefore, interacting with others and exchanging ideas leads them to construct knowledge. On the other hand, Vygotsky (1978) claims that “both the social structures and mental structures turn out to have very definite historical roots” (p.132). Students’ historical and social backgrounds and personal and familial circumstances influence how they construct meaning. The existing educational setting has little interaction-oriented environment. He further talks about two developmental levels: the actual developmental level and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The first refers to the “functions that have already matured” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Similarly, the second refers to the level of potential development. A student’s learning proceeds from her actual developmental level to the ZPD.

The human mind is different from that of other living beings. It cannot be understood in isolation. For this, socio-cultural context is essential. In other words, humans are the only living beings who can change their inner world and the world around them. For this, consciousness is necessary. Vygotsky (1978) defines “consciousness as an object of the psychology of behavior” (p. 5). Similarly, Popkewitz (1998) describes Vygotsky’s focus on language as an instrument to exchange social experiences among themselves. Accordingly, students have their beliefs, feelings, and experiences through language and construct knowledge when they encounter a situation and can re-construct it while interacting with others. It is not sure whether students construct actual knowledge all the time. In the words of Bodner et al. (2001), “Knowledge is no longer true or false; it either works or it does not” (p.3). The environment or situation can lead students to construct true or false

knowledge. In this context, Vygotsky (1978) asserts that learning occurs through social interaction with a skillful tutor.

Bodner et al. (2001) have mentioned three problems with constructivism. One is that constructivists are in a dilemma about whether the real world exists. The next problem is that constructivist theories prevent us from saying that a student is wrong or right. Last is constructivism, which ignores the roles of those who influence learning. Students cannot participate properly if teachers have underdeveloped democratic attitudes and behavior (Anilan & Anagun, 2010).

Students participate actively in those activities that are interesting and life-related and are enriched with a variety of learning resources from the area of their talents and level. In contrast, exam-oriented teaching-learning, teacher-student gap, and insufficient communicative and collaborative culture cannot make learning interactive. Furthermore, such a school setting cannot support the constructivist framework. Cook et al. (2002) identify the problem of constructivist theory, saying, "Conflicts between theory and practice" (p.402). There is no connection between the theoretical orientation and its practices, no congruence between schools and universities, but a big gap between curriculum designers and teachers, between learning content and the students. The education system, particularly in underdeveloped countries like Nepal, is still traditional, theory-based, and exam-oriented. Every subject of a grade/level has a particular course for an academic year. As usual, the teachers and students must work out the course, complete it, and prepare for the examination every year. Teachers list the significant areas, explain them, and prepare the students for the examination. Similarly, students, as our culture demands, have to prepare well and score good marks, for which they should prepare by memorizing the answers to the questions that are likely to be asked in the

examination. In other words, the teachers are pressured to finish the course and prepare their students for examinations, particularly the paper-pencil test. The students are stressed to pass the examination with better scores. Such a trend in educational practices does not empower teachers and students. Hence, the curriculum replaces such teacher-centered, exam-oriented rote-learning with the ones in which the teachers have students participate, enjoy, perform, and self-evaluate the programs or activities with their facilitation.

Influence of Motivation in Education

Motivation is vital in promoting students' participation and performance in educational activities. In the study, I used the theories and principles of motivation of Graham and Weiner (1996) to determine the roles of motivation in educational activities. Motivation is "the study of why people think and behave as they do" (Graham & Weiner, 1996, p. 63). It is a hidden power that stimulates him or her to perform better than their usual performance. People's need or desire energizes their behavior and directs them toward a goal. Williams and Burden (1997) affirm Gardner's definition of motivation as the blend of attempts and longing to accomplish the learning target. Motivation is an abstract phenomenon inside a person that cannot be directly observed. From a person's behavior and responses in different environmental situations, we can observe their motivation to some extent (Madrid & Cañado, 2001). Motivation is an internal abstract fact that influences individuals' needs and beliefs and modifies their attitudes and interests to achieve the desired goal. It is an internal power that creates a desire, and the desire leads him/her to be dedicated until he/she achieves the goal.

The learners, who are psychologically and internally active to achieve specific goals, work actively, perform better, and meet the target. It makes them satisfied and

activates them to work further. In addition to different types of motivations, Graham and Weiner (1996) have discussed two types of motivations: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation emerges from inside or from within the individual. When an individual is self-determined to achieve something, s/he is intrinsically motivated. It is an initial interest in a task. Dailey (2009) states that if a student completes an activity for his/her interest or enjoyment without any outside pressure, this is called intrinsic motivation. According to Graham and Weiner (1996), a reward enhances a person's feelings of self-determination and competence. Then, the reward context is intrinsically motivating. The student who is intrinsically motivated to learn makes other factors less effective. In other words, intrinsically motivated children struggle persistently to achieve their goals.

Extrinsic motivation is the immediate reaction that the teacher applies in the classroom to encourage students to perform better. As motivation fosters learning, extrinsic motivation is an additional force that stimulates the students and leads them to meet the goal. In extrinsic motivation, one has to participate in an activity not for the joy of it but to accomplish some external goal (Ryan & Deci, 2000); (Noels et al., 2003); (Dailey, 2009). Extrinsic motivation includes symbolic and tangible rewards: grades, medals, gold stars, food, and money. There are two motivating factors: encouraging factors and discouraging factors. Reward, thanks, appreciation, positive feedback, and supporting behavior are encouraging factors. They have a positive impact on children's enthusiasm. Punishment, criticizing, scolding, and dominating /insulting behavior are discouraging factors. They hurt children's excitement. Sometimes, encouraging factors can have a negative impact, and discouraging factors have a positive impact. It depends on how students perceive the feedback.

Among the aforementioned motivational factors, Dailey (2009) has mentioned four key motivational factors: a positive attitude towards the L2 community, the enjoyment of learning, the ideal self, and external pressures. Every society has an attitude toward the L2 community. The community members with a positive attitude towards the community will be motivated to learn the language and vice-versa. Secondly, when learning becomes fun and interests the children, they will be motivated to learn more. He claims that students will be better motivated to continue their studies when they enjoy learning. The content, classroom environment, teachers, and friends are the determining factors whether students enjoy learning or not. Thirdly, a person's ideal determines how a learner is motivated. Students' ideals are also a factor that influences their enthusiasm for their studies. He talks about learners' perceptions and beliefs within themselves and their target. Finally, external pressure is vital in motivating students to learn.

Transformative Learning

Transformative learning emphasizes fostering significant changes in people's perception of themselves and their world. It involves a profound, structural shift in the basic premises of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Therefore, it is a profound process of change. Mezirow (2003) defines transformation as critical reflection, whereas Freire explains it as conscious raising (Enkhtur & Yamamoto, 2017). Being influenced by Freire's concept of critical awareness, Habermas's (1981) idea of domains of learning and Kuhn's (1922-1996) idea of paradigm change (Mezirow, 2003) introduced transformative learning theory in 1978. (Jeyaraj, 2014) states Cranston's (2011) definition of transformation as "a deep shift in perspective, which causes habits of mind to be more open, penetrable and better justified" (p. 127). As learning theories describe how people learn, transformative learning theory describes

how learning occurs in adults. In other words, transformative learning describes how adults learn and make meaning. Every learner has three developmental levels of learning. In the first level, the learner can do without aid or guidance. The second is the one the learner can do with someone's guidance; the last is the level that the learner cannot do even with someone's guidance or support. Vygotsky (1978) talks about the actual developmental level and the level of potential development. The first indicates where the learner is, and the next indicates the highest level of development that the learner can reach with someone's guidance and support. The zone of proximal development is "the distance between the actual developmental level... and the level of potential development" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)— the smaller the gap between the levels, the more development the students have made.

Every student has a worldview of the world based on their upbringing, sociocultural situation, and schooling. One's worldview is different from that of others. They have difficulty changing the established belief system as it is deeply rooted in their unconscious mind (Bargh & Morsella, 2008). Transformative learning occurs when the students' experience influences them persuasively to replace the already set worldview. When they encounter a situation, they experience it; they critically analyze and change their beliefs. The changed belief modifies their worldviews and brings a change in their behavior. Students' experience of the socio-structural environment, interpretation, and understanding helps them generate meaning that guides their behavior and way of life. Christie et al. (2015) mention Mezirow's statement, "Transformative theory explains how adult learners make sense or meaning of their experiences, how social and other structures influence the way they construe that experience, and how the dynamics involved in modifying meanings undergo changes..." (p. 10). Although students are exposed to the same environment,

they experience and interpret it differently. Their socio-economic and individual factors influence them in shaping their worldviews. Enkhtur and Yamamoto (2017) mention Mezirow's (1991) claim as

Transformative learning involves an enhanced level of awareness of the context of one's beliefs and feelings, a critique of their assumptions and particular premises, an assessment of alternative perspective, a decision to negate an old perspective in favor of a new one or to make a synthesis of old and new, and ability to take action based upon the new perspective, and a desire to fit the perspective into the broader context of one's life. (p.199)

Mezirow has described the development of communicative skills as an essential element of transformative learning. With their communicative skills, the students can have rational discourse, which somewhat solves internal and external conflicts. Christie et al. (2015) state Mezirow's argument, "...rational discourse demands complete and accurate information, freedom from coercion or distorting self-deception..." (p. 12). Rational discourse occurs only when the participants are assured of equal rights and opportunity, rational consciousness, the skill to argue with evidence and accept others' viewpoints, and the ability to develop consensus.

Transformative learning has different components. For example, Dirkx (1998) classifies the development of transformative learning into four components: transformation as consciousness-raising, transformation as critical reflection, transformation as a developmental process, and transformation as individuation. Paulo Freire developed transformation as consciousness-raising. In the name of social norms and values, mainstream education adopts political, social, and economic oppression and interferes with students' creative power. Freire recommends an alternative emancipatory pedagogy that focuses on problem-posing to raise critical consciousness

in the learners. Jack Mezirow created transformation as a critical reflection. Critical reflection changes perspectives. Transformative learning occurs when there is a shift in perspective and noticeable changes in students' actions. Enkhtur and Yamamoto (2017) describe Mezirow's interest in how adults develop perspective transformation. It is the process of being critically aware of situations in which our expectations conflict with those we feel and experience. As we are aware, we make our own understanding of the choices. Larry Daloz introduced transformation as a developmental process. Enkhtur and Yamamoto (2017) argue, "The process of transformation starts with a disorientating dilemma that requires reflection and then, subsequently, action" (p.199). The students' encounter with a confusing situation gives them some experience, reflection, and action, and they respond to the situation. Boyd (1991) introduced transformation as individuation. In his opinion, transformative adult learning is "a process of individuation, becoming aware of our unconscious selves that are often shadowed by the ego, and accepting them through reflection and internal dialogue"(Enkhtur & Yamamoto, 2017, p. 201).

It is uncertain that transformative learning can always result in predictable and intentional outcomes. Teachers' ongoing attention and facilitation are needed to ensure transformative learning results and expectable outcomes. As "Giroux (1993) has described 'educators as transformative intellectuals' because they take a critical stance toward their own practice and the practice of others to engage in debate and inquiry" (Fischman & McLaren, 2005, p. 426), teachers' role determines the outcome of transformative learning. The classroom should be a comfort zone to support the students to construct knowledge. Then, they observe the ongoing situation, critically analyze it, compare it with already generated meaning, and construct new meaning.

The creation of such an environment from policy making to assessment is today's demand.

Post-Method Pedagogy

Post-method pedagogy emphasizes flexibility, context-sensitivity, and the agency of teachers and learners. In this pedagogy, teachers are reflective practitioners who can adapt any teaching strategy to meet their students' needs and interests. It results from the insufficiency of a particular method for efficient learning outcomes. In other words, it emerged as a discontent with language teaching methods. Dissatisfaction with the learning outcomes has forced teachers and pedagogical researchers to seek effective teaching-learning methods. Post-method pedagogy is accessible from the use of any particular method. It encourages practitioners to produce knowledge from their local context and use innovative practices. Chen (2014) describes three features of post-method pedagogy. Firstly, it pursues an alternative method, not an alternative method. Teachers can use efficient, workable ideas to promote learning achievement and lead learners to meet their goals comfortably and speedily. Secondly, it promotes the teacher's autonomy. The teachers, being enabled and empowered to promote their local practices in their autonomy and theorize them, can innovate new and workable methods from the insights of their practices and established methods. Finally, he talks about principled pragmatism, which is systematic, principled, and critical. The learners, teachers, and teacher educators are co-explorers in post-method pedagogy. They work together and collaboratively. All the teachers construct classroom procedures from their earlier knowledge or experimental ideas. In other words, they can use principled strategies to promote learning outcomes. According to Kumaravadivelu (2001), a post-method pedagogy must (a) facilitate the advancement of a context-sensitive language education based

on a proper understanding of local linguistic, sociocultural and political particularities; (b) rupture the reified role relationship between theorists and practitioners by enabling teachers to construct their theory of practice; and (c) tap the socio-political consciousness that participants bring with them to aid their quest for identity formation and social transformation (p. 537).

Post-method pedagogy is flexible, dynamic, and open-ended in that the teacher can use any method or technique to lead the students toward the goal. In other words, teachers can develop and use any method for making learning enjoyable and goal-oriented. They do not have to confine their teaching to a particular method in this pedagogy. They are free to use any procedure (established one, newer one, their own, or blending them) to promote students' learning. Praxis of critical pedagogy, on the other hand, talks about collaborative and life-related learning in a friendly and justifiable environment.

21st Century Pedagogy

21st Century pedagogy is essential to prepare school children for adaptability and life-long learning, technological proficiency, collaboration and communication, critical thinking and problem-solving, global awareness and cultural competence, and creativity and innovation. Scientific discoveries have significantly changed how we live, work, play, and learn, but the education system in Nepal has not prepared students with twenty-first-century skills. It is responsible to do it. Traditional approaches, which emphasize memorization and application of simple procedures, neither advance learners' critical thinking skills nor enable them to cope with global challenges. Advanced scientific discovery has made the world like a city, and people around the globe like the people living and doing something in the city. Only people with 21st-century skills can deal with the challenges and enjoy opportunities.

Accordingly, educational institutions are expected to provide education that enables their students to compete for global opportunities and enjoy them. Scott (2015) states, “Formal education must be transformed to enable new forms of learning that are needed to tackle complex global challenges” (p.1). Teachers and educators require additional skills to support learners in developing essential skills for global opportunities.

Students require diverse skills to cope with endlessly emerging facilities and opportunities in this changing global world. Fadel (2008) states three skills are needed for this era: learning and innovative skills; information, media, and technology skills; and life and career skills. Learning and innovative skills include critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, and communication and collaboration. The students who exercise activities that expand their critical thinking become more confident, aware, and self-reflective. They also have mental workflow rather than rote learning and memorization. Activities for exploring a concept from multiple perspectives, cooperative learning, group projects, discussion, and activities in which students exchange their viewpoints are some of the activities that help young minds enhance their critical thinking. From such activities, students seek possible options and choose the best one to solve the problem they encounter. Sinay (2018) states Weiss and Legrand’s (2011) definition of innovation as “a process, an idea or a product which is directed towards achieving a sustainable outcome that can improve what people do or how they do it” (p. 19). Critical thinking is the source of creativity, creativity is the source of innovation, and ultimately, innovation is the application and implementation of creativity; classroom activities to promote such activities are needed to develop students’ learning and innovative skills. According to Legrand (2011), “innovative thinking is the process of solving problems by discovering,

combining and arranging insights, ideas, and methods in new ways” (Sinay, 2018, p. 19). Both creativity and innovation are affected by the environment where students live and learn. Scott (2015) states that twenty-first-century instruction is based on three pedagogical principles: personalization, participation, and productivity. As learning may occur outside of school in the playgrounds, libraries, museums, community centers, local businesses, or nearby farms, students’ learning strategies should be enriched so that they learn from one another, for example, from peers, from inter-generational partnerships, from the community and so on. Both creativity and innovation are affected by the environment where students live and learn. Fadel (2008) states that three skills are needed for this era: learning and innovative skills; information, media, and technology skills; and life and career skills. Learning and innovative skills include critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, and communication and collaboration. By practicing the activities that expand the students’ critical thinking, they (the students) become more confident, aware, and self-reflective. They also have mental workflow rather than rote learning and memorization. Activities for exploring a concept from multiple perspectives, cooperative learning, group projects, discussion, and activities in which students exchange their viewpoints are some of the activities that help young minds enhance their critical thinking. From such activities, students seek possible options and choose the best one to solve the problem they encounter. Sinay (2018) states Weiss and Legrand’s (2011) definition of innovation as “a process, an idea or a product which is directed towards achieving a sustainable outcome that can improve what people do or how they do it” (p. 19). Critical thinking is the source of creativity, creativity is the source of innovation, and ultimately, innovation is the application and implementation

of creativity; classroom activities to promote such activities are needed to develop students' learning and innovative skills.

The following skills are information, media, and technology skills, which comprise information literacy, media literacy, and ICT literacy. Today's students should be educated in information, media, and ICT literacy. Due to advanced information technology, people have access to plentiful information. As all the information may not be helpful and appropriate, students require the skill to access, evaluate critically, and choose appropriate valuable information for their needs. Students should understand the procedure, the reason, and the purpose of media construction. Their ability to analyze and interpret the media is equally important. As time passes, various technologies and tools come into use with slight or significant changes. They also need the ability to update along with the changes.

The third and last skills are life and career skills. They include flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cultural, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility. In this age of digital technology and knowledge, the education system should develop a curriculum, classroom activities, and evaluation system to empower students with these skills. The ultimate aim of education is a happy career life with appropriate social status. Education in this changing world should enable students to have flexibility and adaptability, social and cross-cultural skills, initiative and self-direction skills, productive and accountability skills, and leadership and responsibility skills.

Although different activities are conducted in school for students' academic and general competencies, they are judged only based on their achievement in academic competencies. In other words, the general competencies known as transversal or generic are ignored while assessing a student. Asian countries generally

have this assessing trend. Tam and Trzmiel (2012) further assert, “Asian education systems focus on academic achievement and rote learning” (p.2). Transversal competencies refer to the skills that are often not measured but are required for the holistic development of learners. They encompass all the skills (21st-century skills, soft skills, generic skills, and non-cognitive skills), values, and attitudes. According to Rauber (2007), (Heckman & Kautz, 2012), and Tam and (Tam & Trzmiel, 2018), “...transversal skills are as important predictors of success in school and career as academic abilities” (p. 1). However, they are often not measured as academic competencies. Today’s demand is a system of education that can offer students a variety of opportunities for acquiring competencies and skills, the competencies and skills that enable them to find the appropriate way to deal with complex situations in the future. Although a global internet-based economy offers many more educational opportunities, teachers and educators, particularly in Nepal, follow traditional approaches. It is also due to a lack of facilities. More importantly, it is the result of a lack of visionary leadership.

Task-Based Learning

Task-based learning engages students in meaningful real-world tasks, promoting active learning, collaboration, and practical skill development. It emphasizes learning through communication and interaction. In this approach, the students are asked to work on a particular task in their autonomy. It is similar to critical pedagogical praxis in that both focus on collaborative learning. With the idea of learning a language meaningfully and practically, Prabhu (1987) developed task-based language teaching in the 1980s. A task is simply a piece of work imposed on the students as a duty. It is a job responsibility as well. Oxford (2006) defines a task as “an imposed task, duty, or piece of work” (p. 95). He says, “The task is an

outcome-oriented segment of work in a curriculum or lesson plan” (p. 95). In other words, it is what we do in our daily lives, whether at home, work, or anywhere else. According to Long (1985), a task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or others, freely or for some reward (Nunan, 2006, p. 14). In the context of teaching and learning, a task is a piece of work that students, under the guidance and facilitation of a teacher, perform and achieve the goal. Task-based learning is a well-planned learning activity with fixed objectives, content, and working process. The teacher provides an activity where students engage, perform a task, and achieve the goal. The activity, which is a task, here involves a meaningful use of language. Nunan (2006) defines a task as “a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language” (p.17). As the main focus in English language classrooms is communicative language use, learners can use a variety of language structures to achieve the task. One of the significant issues of task-based syllabus is sequencing. A task is a work that we do for a particular purpose. As the proverb says, ‘An empty mind is the devil’s workshop,’ students begin ill-manner practices when their minds are free and frozen. Activity-based learning keeps children engaged in result-oriented activities. They are practical and motivating. In task-based teaching methodology, content selection and sequencing are the main concerns of course design as they address the issue of what to teach. Methodology, on the other hand, addresses the issue of how to teach. Ellis (2006) mentions Kumaravadevelu’s (1993) argument that “methodology becomes the central tenet of task-based pedagogy” (p. 79). According to him, the methodology involves lesson design and participatory structure. Lesson design is the procedure that describes how the activities of the syllabus are changed into actual lessons. Participatory structure, on the other hand, is concerned with how teachers and

students play their roles in the lessons. Ellis (2006) argues, “The design of a task-based lesson involves consideration of the stages or components of a lesson that has a task as its principal component” (p. 80). It consists of three principal phases: pre-task phase, during-task phase, and post-task phase.

The first phase consists of different activities that teachers and students must do before the second phase. It is a “pre-task and concerns the various activities teachers and students can undertake before they start the task...” Ellis (2006, pp. 19-20). They frame the activities during this phase, plan time, and rehearse similar tasks. Ellis (2006) says, “The purpose of the pre-task phase is to prepare students to perform the task in a way that will promote acquisition” (p, 21). The more life-related and child-friendly the task, the more motivated and enthusiastic they become. The teacher introduces the topic and defines it. Learners engage in the activities and prepare for the main task. This phase is run through interaction with students—the steps are broken down into smaller steps, leading the class to the expected outcome. S/he performs a similar task and guides students to perform the main tasks. As Ellis (2006) says, to respond to cognitive and linguistic demands, the teacher can prepare students by performing similar tasks for support, providing a model, engaging in non-task preparation activities, or strategic planning of the primary task performance.

The second phase is also known as the task phase or task cycle. It is the period when students perform the activities that were planned during the pre-task phase. It is obligatory as students’ actual learning takes place during this phase. The during-task phase has two methodological options. According to Ellis (2006), they are task performance and process options. There are also three task performance options. One is the task performance option, done under time pressure or in students’ own time. The teacher can allow the students to complete the task within the time limit or in

their own time. If time is limited, we can see students' natural language, but if time is unlimited or students have their own time, they can use more complex and more accurate language. For task performance accuracy, students need their own time. The next task performance option is to allow students access to the data input or make it optional while performing a task. Some examples of task access to data input are the tasks to show the difference, describe and draw, and identify information gaps. The task in which data input is optional includes retelling or recalling a story. The students can add pictures or text while narrating a story. The task that includes pictures or text is more accessible to narrate than the one that does not. The third or last one is introducing surprising elements to the task. In this task, the students who gave initial information were asked to work on talking with one another. After a while, they are provided with additional information. Decision-making and story completion are some tasks to be given to the students. The process option, on the other hand, differs from the task performance option. In the words of (Ellis, 2006), "Whereas performance options can be selected in advance of the actual performance of the task, process options must be taken in flight while the task is being performed" (p. 28).

The final phase, the post-task phase, is the follow-up process. The students get evaluated, get feedback, and refine their performance. A task-based lesson focuses on students performing a task. If the task is student-friendly, they are better motivated to perform. Otherwise, they are reluctant and do not complete it by heart. Accordingly, the task should be students' life related and their needs and interests.

The post-task phase takes place only after the completion of the during-task phase. In this phase, students repeat their performance if needed; they get a reflection from the task, and they focus on forms. According to Ellis (2006), it has "three pedagogic goals: (1) to provide an opportunity for a repeat performance of the task,

(2) to encourage reflection on how the task was performed, and (3) to encourage attention to form...” (p.36). Repeating a task improves students’ performance in many ways. When students repeat a task, they improve their performance. They speak more fluently and more confidently than previously. The condition of the repeat can be the same or modified. To encourage reflection, the teacher acts as a chairperson and asks students how the performance was, what was planned, and how it should be done. When the teacher asks students to present their report, they get feedback from themselves and their peers.

Task-based teaching seeks the converse text, discursive practices, and social practices. The converse text should be learner-centered, the discursive practices should encourage students’ meaningful engagement, and the social practices should focus on solving social trouble.

Nunn (2006) describes the theoretical support for students to learn English as an international language. Atomistic exercises are the parts of an exercise; exercises are the holistic units of a task. An exercise is an activity that practices a new piece of knowledge. It is a prerequisite to practice a task. Tasks, on the other hand, include more activities. They engage students in different interconnected practices: practice, acquire, and use language meaningfully and creatively. They have exercises that include the activities or practical part of a skill, sub-skill, or a piece of knowledge. Nunn (2006) mentions Bygate’s (2003) definition of Tasks as “activities which practice the whole integrated skill in some way” (p. 70). The isolated tasks in themselves do not promote students’ learning sufficiently. At the same time, task-based learning has holistic units. In other words, exercises or tasks are interconnected. Task-based language assessment is equally important as it influences students’ participation and performance. How meaning is conveyed is more important than

grammar and vocabulary. In other words, assessment of grammar and vocabulary knowledge is insufficient. In addition to this linguistic competence, students' sociolinguistic, strategic, and discourse competence are equally essential to be assessed. For this, Mislevy et al. (2004) have introduced the ECD (Evidence-centered Design) Framework (also known as the conceptual assessment framework. In dialogical activities, learners are likely to present their views vaingloriously. To empower the students with evidence-based logic or reasoning skills, an ECD (Evidence-centered Design) framework is needed.

Today's students are required to develop various skills (21st-century skills) to meet the demands of a technically advanced and globally competitive world. ECD is an assessment design process to measure such skills. It is a theoretical construct that produces valid and reliable assessments to measure numerous unobservable achievements of learners. The achievements are related to knowledge, skills, values, feelings, and beliefs. ECD makes assessment valid and reliable as it collects information to make accurate inferences about learners' competencies and other qualities from their performance. ECD has four models: student model, evidence model, task model, and assembly model.

The student model, also known as the examinee model, as Mislevy et al. (2002) define, refers to a piece of machinery- a set of variables in a probability model for accumulating evidence for backing claims. Claim in assessment is the meaningful statement describing what students know, learn, and achieve concerning the context. It identifies the variables that describe the achievement of the students. In contrast to the claim, "student model is a mathematical structure containing variables and a joint probability distribution for them" ((Mislevy et al., 2002, p. 8)).

The task is goal-directed human activity. The task model is the plan of the ways to get information, the information that provides evidence about students. In the words of Mislevy et al. (2002), task models are schemas for ways to get data that provide evidence about students” (p. 5). Teachers can use task models to collect information about students’ proficiency and justify arguments. The task model develops actual activities in the context of the learning environment. They include the components needed for the completion of the assessment task. It provides a framework for making and describing the situations in which students perform. Its variables clearly describe the features of tasks. This model includes a specification chart for the environment, and the work students produce.

The evidence model consists of two components: evaluation and measurement. As a task can have many tasks situations, students are involved in the task situation or the work product. When they participate, they say, do, or create something in the task situation or work product. The evaluation component mainly focuses on extracting critical student performance features. Mislevy et al. (2002) state, “Evaluation rules for complex performances, and rubrics for rating scales, in particular, represent choices about what is valued and how it is to be evaluated” (p. 12). They further mention that the assembly model “specifies how individual tasks are combined to produce an assessment” (p. 5). It refers to a piece of machinery—a set of variables in a probability model—for accumulating evidence and backing claims.

The assessment system influences teachers’ teaching and students’ learning. As the primary goal of formal education is to complete a level with a better grade, all teachers want their students to pass with better grades or better marks, and students want the same. Our time-bound examination system of assessing academic

competencies forces both of them to prepare for the same. It is the main cause of ignoring and devaluing other students' intelligences.

Existing Classroom Activities and Classroom Distraction

The students and the teachers have a clear roadmap for an academic year. They have subject-wise prescribed textbooks and an annual written examination system for an academic year. Both the teachers and students focus on preparing for the annual examination from the textbooks. The classroom activities of such exam-oriented teaching-learning are confined within the course and mainly within the areas likely to be asked in the examination. Accordingly, teachers usually explain the content, provide readymade answers, and ask students to prepare for the examination from the notes given. How well the students write during two or three hours of examination is more important than how well they can perform a task in the field. This repetitious teaching makes students mechanical and promotes distraction.

Classroom distraction occurs mainly due to flaws in content, environment, teachers, and students. (Frisby et al., 2018) define classroom distraction as “those behaviors that challenge the attention, focus, and information processing of students” (p. 1). Scholars have discussed different distracting behaviors. Specific behaviors that disturb students and teachers to perform their tasks enthusiastically in the classroom also affect their understanding. Scholars like Boice (1996) and Fried (2008) talk about side conversations, confrontational behaviors, compulsively communicating, cheating, allowing cell phones to ring, student challenge behaviors, student misbehaviors, and off-task behaviors as distracting. Such distracting behaviors emerge due to problems in content, classroom management, classroom activities, and content delivery. Myers et al. (2015) talk about anti-citizenship behaviors as sources of distraction. Teachers’

misbehavior to the students, incompetence in content and its delivery, laziness, and offensiveness also divert students' attention.

The nature of the content, classroom environment, and the teachers' presentation determines distraction or interaction in the classroom. Frisby et al. (2018) assert that classroom distraction occurs mainly due to cognitive load. They talk about three types of cognitive load: intrinsic cognitive load, extraneous cognitive load, and germane cognitive load. The intrinsic cognitive load represents the difficulty level of content and students' previous knowledge or experience. Extraneous cognitive load refers to the teacher's presentation and learning distraction. Due to teachers' poor teaching strategies, the distractions in students' learning increase. Finally, germane cognitive load discusses how deeply students process and store information. In other words, students can process and store information in depth. The students lose concentration when they find content beyond their interest and level. It ultimately causes distraction.

Classroom Discourse

Discourse is written or spoken language in which immediate socio-cultural contexts are embedded. It is the language used in real-life situations. Discourse has different meanings in different disciplines. It encompasses what is said and written, the immediate social context or situation, and the broader historical, social, and cultural context. Discourse, as Clark (2013) claims, "takes into account the invisible but regulated structures and forces through which the ideas, or the underlying ideology, of a society are shaped, as much as the formal and sociolinguistic properties of speech and writing, and the texts they produce." It also includes non-verbal or symbolic meaning.

Classroom discourse is the communication between teacher and students and among students. Gonzalez et al. (2008) and Lloyd et al. (2016) define classroom discourse as an essential learning component. It includes the interaction between teacher and student as well as student-student interactions. The interaction promotes learning as they have to listen to others' ideas and respond to them; for this, they should study and be clear about the topic they interact. Classroom discourse refers to all forms of talk that we can find in a classroom or other educational setting. Paul and Sibonile (2011) define discourse as the type, genre, or context of language used. From the discourse, students construct their own understanding of the world. The hierarchy level between teacher and students and among students makes a difference in how they construe and construct their understanding of the world.

Transformation of knowledge depends on how the discourse takes place and what hierarchy they maintain while participating in the discourse. As social structures are separated and reproduced in how participants interact with one another, students from inferior groups hesitate to participate actively and confidently. It is the result of a deeply rooted caste-based, class-based, and gender-based society when students have a healthy exchange of perception and experience that promotes meaningful interaction, which ultimately constructs knowledge. Chapelle (2013) states, "Culture and socialization play a key role in how students are perceived by their teachers in the classroom" (p.3). Teachers treat their students in the way they perceive them. Cazden (1988) mentions three questions that classroom discourse analysis can try to address: How do patterns of language use affect what counts as 'knowledge' and what counts as learning? How do these patterns affect the equality or inequality of students' educational opportunities? What communicative competence do these patterns presume and foster?

Nepal is a multilingual country, and most schools have multilingual classrooms. Each classroom has students from diverse socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds. In multilingual classrooms, the students whose home language is Nepali have better achievement than those whose home language is other than Nepali (Khanal et al., 2022). A person who can use and understand three or more languages is multilingual. Multilingual people may speak and understand languages with different levels of proficiency. He or she may speak one language best, but one can only write in one language. He or she can use each of the languages in different situations. For example, one is at home with family, one is at work, and the other is for shopping. A multilingual classroom consists of students who speak different languages and have different levels of understanding. Language and culture are interrelated, like flesh and blood. Language is a tool through which we exercise our culture; that is why pedagogy is set in and shaped by culture. Language and culture are intricately interwoven, so one cannot be separated from the other without losing the significance of either language or culture. In recent days, multilingualism, which is defined as speaking two or more languages, is a worldwide growing phenomenon. Rai (2020) opines, “Multilingual education focuses on using more than one language in instructional pedagogies” (p.2).

Due to 21st-century advanced technology, people have opportunities for better careers in different parts of the world. It promoted multilingualism. Farr et al. (2009) state that many countries currently have significant multilingual populations in their workforces and educational systems due to increased mobility and closely linked economies. They also claim that the demands of international commerce alone have created a large amount of interest and attention to multilingual education and training programs. In the case of Nepal, people need to learn the dominant language, not their

mother tongue, because their mother tongue, the minority language, has no support for their career advancement and better opportunities.

In recent decades, multilingual, multicultural, and multi-ethnic communities have been endangered of losing their richness, and they want to save them from extinction. On the other hand, school populations, especially in industrialized countries, have rapidly changed as globalization and inter-continental migration enrich the classroom composition regarding cultural and linguistic variables (Farr et al., 2009). English is the common language among them, and they need to learn English to widen their links. As they learn English, they will be better influenced by the impressive practices of English culture, and their own culture will be under its shadow.

The political scenario has been changed in Nepal since 1990. After the restoration of democracy, the nation legally recognized multilingualism. Then, it has further amplified this increment in classroom diversity. Internal and external migration has promoted the number of multilingual students in the classroom in search of better opportunities. As modern technology shrunk the whole world and brought people together, everyone has easy access to compete for opportunities worldwide.

Multilingualism is common in, for example, some countries of West Africa (e.g., Nigeria, Ghana), Malaysia, Singapore, and Israel. It is common because there are more than 100 languages they speak. It is not unusual in Nepal, where most people are multilingual. In multilingualism, what is more interesting is how a society becomes multilingual. Anyanwu et al. (2013) state that four reasons make a society multilingual. One reason is that if a child is born and brought up in a bilingual or multilingual society, he or she automatically becomes a bilingual or multilingual. The

second reason is business. The next is expanded opportunities for employees in other countries or communities, and the last is migration. In such a situation, schools are more likely to have multilingual students. Multilingual classes are more challenging to manage than monolingual and bilingual classes.

With the ICT facilities, people worldwide have access to opportunities anywhere. As a result, the multicultural context is everywhere, not only in schools but also in business. It is a situation in which an individual or group has more than one set of cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes. Olagbaju (2014) states that the government has a crucial role in promoting or demoting indigenous languages; its policy should encourage learning indigenous languages. An education program aiming at developing cultural pluralism is sometimes introduced as multicultural education. In a cross-cultural context, the class either has bilingual teachers with students from different cultures or native English teachers with students from another culture, and teachers and students are from the same culture. Still, the content is from a different culture.

The attitudes of the community to favor the language of power in society are at odds with developmental evidence that children learn best from the starting point of their own language(s) and provide materials and interaction in multiple languages that all participants do not necessarily speak are the areas where hegemony works.

Assessment of Students' Learning

Assessment in education is the evaluation of students' performance. "It is a tool designed to observe students' behavior and produce data that can be used to draw reasonable inferences about what students know" Pellegrino (2014, p. 68). It is used to discover what students have learned and what they still have to learn. Teaching learning activities are highly affected by what and how they are assessed. As mark

sheets are recorded evidence of student's performance and a part of their status, students and teachers always do their best to improve it. For this, ill practices to be a better grader have grown. Such traditional assessment systems for teaching and learning have influenced students' study. If the teachers design and implement educational activities appropriately, the activities can positively inspire teaching and learning. I firmly insist on "We need less dependence on rote learning, repetitive tests and a 'one size fits all' type of instruction, and more on engaged learning, discovery through experiences, differentiated teaching, the learning of life-long skills, and the building of character..." (Pellegrino, 2014, p. 66). The ongoing assessment system should be replaced with those that Pellegrino (2014) focuses. The educational process should equip students with the competencies to cope with the increasingly complex world. The assessment should evaluate these competencies. The ongoing assessment system only represents academic competencies, particularly textbook-related and examination-orientated capabilities. Although schools run curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities, only curricular competencies are assessed. As a result of it, schools are not promoting activities for the students' holistic development.

Two types of assessment, formative and summative, are used to assess students' performance. Formative assessment, or evaluation, is a formal and informal assessment procedure that teachers conduct to monitor students' learning, provide feedback, and improve their achievement. It is an ongoing evaluation during the educational process. It is diagnostic as it offers extended feedback. Babincakova et al. (2020) state Scriven's (1967) claim that "The role of formative evaluation is to discover deficiencies and successes in the intermediate versions of a new curriculum" (p. 37). It informs the teacher and students about their achievements and feedback for further improvement. Its primary purpose is to identify real situations and promote

teacher's teaching and students' learning. Babincakova et al. (2020) describe formative assessment as "an interactive process that should serve as a tool for improving the teaching and learning for all who are involved – the teachers, to know how to adapt next lessons, and the students, to know the areas of improvement" (p.88). On the other hand, summative assessment is applied at the end of a particular part of the teaching-learning process to make a decision. The teachers and students usually focus their teaching and learning on summative tests and ignore the parts of the textbook that are unlikely to be involved in summative tests and examinations. As its emphasis is on standardizing assessment, it is popular. Students' academic competencies are evaluated through summative assessment, and transversal competencies are ignored. This trend has established that what grade students achieve is more important than what they learn. The assessment system must reverse this trend.

We can use various forms of assessment to evaluate students' performance. Serrano et al. (2018) discuss alternative assessment methods (self-assessment, peer assessment, consultative assessment, and participative assessment). Such forms of assessment raise self-awareness, consciousness, and reflexivity. When they are evidence-based, they become more authentic and student-friendly.

Theoretical Premises

As a theory explains why things happen as they are, it "provides a model or map of why the world is the way it is" (Strauss, 1995, as cited in Anfara & Mertz, 2014, p. 13). Under theoretical premises, I have used critical theory to see things from multiple perspectives without any biases, social dominance theory to examine how the inferior group experiences hegemony and discrimination, and social justice theory to

see the strategies to maintain a fair and equitable environment in the schools, more particularly in the classroom.

Critical Theory

In the study, I have used critical theory as a foundation to examine pedagogical practices from multiple perspectives, particularly from the perspective of the oppressed. I have analyzed how power is exercised, hierarchy is maintained, and the dominated is empowered in educational activities.

The theory originated in the Frankfurt School and developed through different trajectories. It has become one of the leading theories for social advancement. It has roots in Hegel's work, Kant's critical philosophy, and Fredrik Engel's Communist Manifest, which are critical theory's roots (Abraham, 2014). Hegel (1770-1831) attempted to address people's problems of freedom in society, the identity of thinking and being, the universality of connection, and principles of development. Kant believes that knowledge is an activity that takes place with its principles. According to this theory of cognition, sensations and the mind are the sources of knowledge. A person's actions are guided and led ahead through their own will. Karl Marx, a German philosopher and critic, affirms that humans should be led by reason, not by fatalism.

A group of scholars from this institution promoted a critical theory of society. They emerged as the third generation of the Frankfurt school. Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979), Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969), Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), Leo Lowenthal, and Erich Fromm (1900-1980) are the main contributors of the first generation; Jurgen Habermas represents the second generation; and Axel Honneth (1933-till now) belongs to the third generation. According to Garlitz and Kögler (2015), Axel Honneth represents the third generation

of Frankfurt school. He emerged as a new center, with different strands or readings of who else belongs to the third generation. Jürgen Habermas (1929-present), who belongs to the second generation of the Frankfurt School, describes three faces of inquiry. Sirotnik and Oakes (1986) discuss his three faces of inquiry: the empirical or analytical, the interpretive, and the critical. Empirical inquiry produces objective knowledge, interpretive inquiry produces subjective knowledge, and critical inquiry produces well-reasoned analysis and understanding from multiple perspectives. Honneth, who represents the third generation, developed the theory of recognition (Garlitz & Kögler, 2015). As they state, Honneth's increasingly influential theory of recognition builds on insights from the early Hegel (1770-1831) and George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) to construct a threefold understanding of recognition: love or emotional recognition, respect, or moral recognition and esteem or sociocultural recognition..." (p.385). The first builds self-confidence; moral recognition forms self-respect, and sociocultural recognition promotes self-esteem.

Social Dominance Theory

In a multilingual society, we find different social groups. Social dominance theory works with these social groups. Each group is different from another because they have distinct identities and worldviews. The groups have their status and ways of practice. According to Pratto and Sidanius (1999), "Social dominance theory argues that inter-group oppression, discrimination, and prejudice are how human societies organize themselves." (p. 418). As each group wants to be better and superior per their norms and values, the struggle for upward mobility occurs, and dominance begins. Islam and Walkerden (2015) view social domination theory as a theory of social and inter-group relations and focuses on how people develop hierarchy-supporting belief structures to support institutional dominance. The theory involves

studies of those who are likely to hold such attitudes. This paper studies how such attitudes influence students' participation in English language classrooms.

Each society consists of different groups. They are based on hierarchy. Pratto and Sidanius (1999) stated that human group-based social hierarchy comprises three different stratification systems. They are the age system, gender system, and arbitrary set system. Out of these three systems, I focused on the last one. In an arbitrary-set system, socially constructed categories are hierarchically arranged. The socially constructed categories include race, caste, ethnicity, nationality, social class, religion, or any other distinction. These arbitrary sets can be created to associate power and legitimacy with social categories.

Social Justice Theory

Social justice is the foundation to make a classroom a safe place. Rawls (1999) defines justice as the fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges in society. For a justifiable environment, maintaining equality and equity plays a great role. Both equality and equity are prerequisites to maintaining social justice. Equality sees all people as equal with the concept that no one is different and should be treated similarly. Everyone should have equal rights, equal access, and equal treatment. Equity on the other hand sees the difference between students and recommends treating them according to their needs and interests to equalize them. Accordingly, equity is the unequal treatment that makes all equal.

Equality is a relative term that can be understood only in a concrete context. Inequality is a universal phenomenon. The protest against inequality and for equality seems to have emerged from the time inequality originated. Every society has different categories of inequalities: natural, cultural, social, and political. "All human societies are characterized by social inequalities in terms of class, status, power, and

gender” (Frisby et al., 2018, p. 14). They also argue that every person is born free and equal and they are free and equal in their rights. We can see two types of inequalities: natural inequalities and social inequalities. We cannot escape from the inequalities gifted by nature. Social inequalities are created by the society we live. They are based on birth, wealth, knowledge, religion, etc.

Equality is a multifaceted issue. One of them is the opportunity to learn. If children get opportunities for learning, they will learn to some extent regardless of their socio-economic situation. The other issue is including all the students in the mainstream of education. Students have different levels of understanding and performance within and across the group (e.g. gender, ethnic, or geographic groups). We can promote their involvement, by providing them with access to curriculum, instruction, and resources. The creation of child child-friendly environment plays a vital role in maximizing inclusion. Wilson and Bertenthal (2006) talk about alternative assessments. The availability of resources is a striking issue in developing or underdeveloped countries like Nepal. Accessibility to different resources influences students’ learning. If a student has access to benefit from all of the resources (textbooks, library, online resources, etc.) in their comfort, they can learn better. Service is another issue that needs to be addressed to enhance students’ learning.

Equal treatment promotes equality only when the students are equal in their study level, and learning capacity. Gupta (2020) argues, “Injustice arises as much from treating unequal equally as from treating equals unequally” (p. 15). As students are already unequal due to their personal, socio-economic, and cultural differences, they need to be treated unequally. Equal treatment assures equal results only when the students are equal in their level of starting, capabilities, needs, and interests. All students are/should be the same in the eyes of a teacher. S/he should treat all the

students equally regardless of their differences in their gender, race, and socio-economic situation. In the case of teaching-learning activities, equal treatment is not sufficient for all the students to achieve the minimum threshold due to the diversity they have.

Equal treatment cannot assure all students' equal results as they have different understanding levels and diverse paces of learning. Moreover, students' personal, social, and familial situation affects their learning. Some students learn in one shot of teaching while others cannot. The students who are, due to various reasons, slow or unable to meet the minimum threshold require supplementary support so that they can flourish along with the better ones. Castelli et al. (2012) state that the preventive and compensatory measures implemented to guarantee equal opportunities and equal treatment are not sufficient to guarantee equal results for all. Equity is necessary to accelerate the students' lingering pace of learning. Field et al. (2008) claims, "Extra resources also need to be channeled through schools to help disadvantaged students" (p.7). Accordingly, equity is a fair discrimination. The education system should trace the paths where students continue learning at their own pace and freedom. In the meantime, collaborative classroom activities in which students learn from one another are equally important. Castelli et al. (2012) state Benadusi's (2006) interpretations of equity into six different ideas: pure meritocracy, equal treatment, inter-individual equality, minimum threshold, equality between social groups, and advantages for the disadvantaged. Under meritocracy, rewards should be based on merit. Crawford (2010) states, "The notion of meritocracy as Australian value is that everyone should have equal opportunity to improve their lives and to chase rewards based upon their talent and hard work" (p. 4). It makes students become better and better and get rewarded. On the other hand, the weaker or the less talented become comparatively

weaker and weaker and demotivated. Additional incentives and support are needed to lead them to the better ones.

Social justice is the fair and justifiable treatment. In other words, it focuses on fair distribution and equitable treatment to everyone in society. Van den Bos (2003) defines social justice as the fair and equitable distribution of power, resources, and commitments in society to all people, regardless of race or ethnicity, age, gender, ability status, sexual orientation, and religious or spiritual background. When all the people in the society have equal access and power, they are less likely to experience domination and discrimination. Adams (2016) states, “Social justice is both a process and a goal” (p. 3). Its goal is full and equal participation of all. However, political, cultural, and economic aspects affect people’s participation in society. Social justice is the fair and justifiable treatment. In other words, it concerns fair distribution and equitable treatment of everyone in society.

Diversity in race and culture are the trademarks of our society which affect social harmony and influence the learning opportunities of students. Ethnic minority children, particularly those from low-income households are more likely to live in slum areas and experience more violence than those from mainstream. Students come to the classroom with a variety of beliefs such as racial and cultural worldviews. These beliefs are the foundation to create prejudices. Unless teachers promote teamwork, cultivate harmony, and create a ground to respect one another, discrimination and domination will exist consistently. Teachers should foster equality and inclusion to benefit from this diversity. Inequality can be reduced by creating a supportive environment for positive behaviors and promoting a sense of belongingness.

Review of Previous Studies

The empirical study attempts to gain knowledge through direct or indirect observation and in-depth interviews related to experience. I reviewed the studies on the four themes: emancipation and empowerment in education; social justice and conscientization; educational policy and practices; and the lived experience of students and teachers in this data-driven study.

Studies Related to Emancipation and Empowerment in Education

Creative and innovative teaching-learning is possible only through emancipating and empowering students and teachers in educational activities. Dhakal (2014) explored intensive classroom activities in Nepalese schools. He found that teachers' and students' cultural matters come from their life experiences, histories, and culture in the classroom. Firstly, students experience inferiority or superiority due to the differences in languages and cultures. Although Dhakal (2014) claims, "Cultural disconnect can occur when individuals from different cultures interact" (p. 228), he says nothing about the teachers' role: how they have responded and how they should respond to empower the students from minority cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Secondly, the nature of the teacher-student relationship affects student empowerment. positive relationship among them improves students' participation, cultivates their learning ability, and helps them meet their goals. (Dai, 2024). The teachers are educated, informed, and trained to promote their relationship with the students. So, they are expected to have better relationships with the students. However, it has been highly affected by a hierarchy-based society as Bhandari (2012) in his study on 'Everything Opposite!' argues that the teachers do not do what they are expected to do in the classroom. He also mentions that the teachers are following the traditional way of teaching as they were taught. Moreover, he has given key ideas

on how to engage students in the learning text. However, he has not said what motivates and forces them to do what they are expected to do in the classroom. Thirdly, teacher-student empowerment is highly affected by socio-political dominance. After the declaration of Nepal as a secular state in 2063, Nepali elites resiliently maintain influence, adapting to political shifts, ensuring dominance, stability, and safeguarding interests amid evolving political dynamics (Stabilisation Unit, 2018). This dominance is omnipresent everywhere. Khanal (2014) found a “frustrating picture of the implementation of the decentralization reform in Nepal due to problems such as the political and elite takeover/ capture of the policy” (p. i). He further adds that they have a less supportive role and misused teacher selection authority at the local level. Although decentralization is an option to meet certain pre-conditions, hierarchy-based practices are highly influential in school-level policies. He, talking about the bottom-up approach in policy-making, discusses the ill practices of power-sharing ignoring the attempt “to diagnose the ground reality in the local context” (Khanal, 2014, p. 198). The study has said nothing about the measures for promoting the bottom-up approach. Similarly, Kafle (2013) has explored educational leaders’ lived experiences and concluded that institutional schools were not sufficiently prepared to adopt the spirit of distributed leadership. The participants had traumatic experiences as top-level leaders, enigmatic experiences as middle-level leaders, and pathetic experiences as bottom-level leaders. The study has not explored any efforts to break hierarchy-based practices and to maintain justice in the schools.

Another challenge of empowerment is racial discrimination. Despite promises and slogans to eliminate racial discrimination, the schools lack effective programs to reduce discrimination and promote a harmonious environment. Poudel (2007) finds that children from *Dalit* (untouchable) people make relationships with non-*dalit*

children by developing a schooled identity. This relationship has the potential to challenge and contest discriminatory ideologies. He further suggests that “developing inclusion involves a process of understanding and changing exclusionary and discriminatory power relations” (p. IV). Though it is an option for promoting inclusion, it cannot dishearten the discriminatory practices meaningfully. Socio-cultural factors are so powerful with dominant elites that the schooled identity cannot overcome the stereotyped cultural identity that manipulates the children from dominant elites.

In transformative learning, teachers teach teaching-learning content with different ends in view. They use different educational strategies. The teachers are not instructionally oriented Shrestha (2022) provides six practices of transformative learning. The first one is learning beyond the classroom setting. He has not explored what type of learning content or educational activities encourage students to learn or work on the learning content outside the classroom context. The second practice is learning through critical reflection. During the critical reflection period, the students are encouraged to describe and analyze the topic or theme critically. For this, the learning needs to be evidence-based. Evidence-based learning and teaching, EBLT for short “connects learning to evidence-based methods, strategies, and processes, through nurturing a systemic institutional culture” (Emplit & Zhang, 2020, p. 3). The next is learning through a disorienting dilemma. It talks about the creation of confusing situations in which students experience a crisis or encounter new information which leads them to think of new ideas critically viewing their values, beliefs, and assumptions. Fourthly, I learned by writing about myself and others. The other is learning through perspectival meaning-making, and finally, learning through envisioning.

Oppression cannot be eliminated. However, it can be reduced. Connolly (2009) found that oppression is omniscient and omnipresent. So, the personal perspective of the educators underpinned by direct experience of oppression influences classroom practices. In terms of the critical reflective dimension of praxis, critical knowledge is needed for a wider base. Otherwise, it remains within a closed circuit. Oppression can be reduced through various interactive and engaging classroom activities. Breunig (2006) found that promotion in dialogue use (particularly the problem-posing method of dialogue), the use of group work, classroom negotiation, and journal writing are the means to engage students. Developing a classroom community is central to the praxis. Praxis-oriented classroom practices and the use of alternative assessment and evaluation methods keep students engaged and make them goal-oriented. Self-identified critical pedagogues also talked about the issues of safety and inherent risks of engaging in praxis.

Ensuring the agenda 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) is "a key to transforming a society which is equitable and inclusive" (Gandharba & Pant, 2023, p. 3) has been a slogan but its practice in the real ground is still unsearched. This study has attempted to address this issue.

Studies Related to Social Justice and Conscientization

Social justice and conscientization are closely related concepts in the context of education and social change. Reynolds (2015) found that the struggle to work towards an education of critical consciousness is difficult due to deeply rooted hegemony. The pedagogues and/or the students who struggled to create a space for critical dialogue and move towards critical awareness were in target of the ultra-conservative groups and likely to be fired or paused for promotion or pay rise. He

does not talk about the practiced attempts for justifiable and emancipatory educational practices.

Conscientization is the process that promotes individual awareness of social, political, and economic contradiction. And then, it develops a critical understanding of social reality. Bishowkarma (2021) has explored pedagogical practices in multilingual classrooms but failed to investigate the students' experiences of these practices. In addition, the study does not include how the students experience the teachers' pedagogical strategies; and how learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented the strategies were. This study has explored how learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities can be developed and applied.

Role overload and a lack of emancipation and empowerment are the main causes of teachers' weak performance in nurturing students. Adhikari (2014) has explored that teachers' increased stress causes lower performance. It was also found that the more satisfied the teachers were, the better their performance was. Teachers' stress and dissatisfaction affect their performance and behavioral role in the classroom. However, he has failed to search for the effects of the teachers' emotional status and the students' understanding of the teachers' emotional status.

Studies Related to Educational Policy and Practice

Teachers can align educational policies and practices with the goal of social justice and conscientization to create a more equitable and transformative educational system. K.C. (2022) has found a vast gap in early-grade teacher education and pedagogical practices in a multilingual context. He has also found that the government's language policies and teacher education have not significantly supported the teachers' (teaching) professional practice in the field. Schools have introduced the EMI policy but have not prepared the teachers through teacher

education, training, and orientation to implement it. The use of the EMI policy in classroom activities reduces students' active participation due to mainly two reasons: firstly, they cannot understand English as well as their mother tongue/ home language and secondly, they cannot speak it as fluently and perfectly as their mother tongue. Feasible and comfortable language as a means of communication promotes students' participation in the class, whereas EMI reduces student's communication. The more dialogue the students have, the better they learn.

Praxis of critical pedagogy is not possible in the top-down system of education. Boegeman (2013) found that critical pedagogy is not the primary agenda even for critical pedagogues. Teachers were not implementing it consciously in the classrooms. However, their curriculum had the potential to improve transformative action. It is an enduring and hard road to bridge the theory-praxis gap. The researcher has asserted that if we appoint a critical teacher, they can influence hundreds of students exposing them to a school of thought. It is very difficult to challenge the status quo and incorporate transformation.

Curriculum expects efficiency which requires knowledge, skills, and competency. However, existing educational practices have focused on knowledge only, and the others are ignored. Koirala (2077), discussing about four components of formal education: knowledge, skill, competency, and efficiency, says that it has been difficult to acquire knowledge; we are in search of skill; curriculum is designed for competency; and efficiency is the expectation. Efficiency is not possible without knowledge, skill, and competency. Our education is entangled within the first component. Koirala (2077) further states seven of today's expectations: practical study, international quality, useful learning skills, maximum use of modern technology, sustainable and employable education, search for ancestral knowledge,

mainstream education, and easy access to education. It is not impossible but those who want to make it impossible have a stronger influence than those who want to make it possible. This study has been carried out to explore the situation of the aforementioned components from participants' lived experiences and seek measures from meaning-making of participants' sense-making.

Studies Related to Lived Experience

The extent of learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities can be explored from both the students' and teachers' lived experiences, not only from teachers' perspectives. Subedi (2020) has explored the transfer of pedagogical knowledge in classroom teaching. The study is delimited to the health teachers' perspective only, as well as the teachers of community and constituent campuses of Bagmati province. It has not explored the students' experiences of their teachers' pedagogical knowledge practice in the classroom. This study is different from his in the sense that it primarily focuses on school students' experience of educational activities.

Going through the methodological section of different research, I have flecked the methodological gaps for the study. How the students learn and understand could be explored vividly only from the students' and teachers' meaning-making of their experiences. Breunig (2006), in her study 'Critical Pedagogy as Praxis,' has used interviews with critical pedagogues, course syllabi, and focus group discussions to collect data in appreciative inquiry. From the information in such a way, it was impossible to explore how student-friendly, learner-engaged, and justifiable the educational activities are. Jeyaraj (2014), in her study on 'Critical Pedagogy in Higher Education: Insights from English Language Teachers' focuses on four aims: to explore critical pedagogues' numerous experiences while practicing it in isolation, to

gain an understanding of the knowledge and experiences of critical pedagogues that they should share with others around the world, to understand how critical pedagogy can be better practiced, and to explore the reasons why some teachers reject critical pedagogy. She has not explored how school students experience and make sense of educational activities. In this study, I have explored how the school students have made meaning of the educational activities they experienced. The data collection methods used in the study were completely different from those of Jeyaraj (2014). I used in-depth interviews, observations, and focus group discussions. I used email and Skype phone calls to collect data. The study recommends traveling without maps to understand better how to practice critical pedagogy (Jeyaraj, 2014). That is to say; students learn better when teachers lead them along the path that the teachers themselves travel as if it is their first journey in the path. Similarly, Boegeman (2013), who used multiple case studies as research design; observation, classroom documents, and interviews with teachers as data collection method; and history teachers teaching in nine and ten classes were the research participants, has not explored the students' experiences and understanding of teaching-learning activities. To capture students' experiences and meaning-making of educational activities, students' lived experiences could matter. Kafle (2013), in his doctoral study on 'Lived Experience of Educational Leaders in Nepalese Institutional Schools: A Distributed Leadership Perspective' used in-depth interviews, observation, and protocol writing as data collection methods from the teachers and leaders from institutional schools, which could not sufficiently support to investigate students' meaning-making of their experiences about students-friendly and goal-oriented educational activities and justification in the classroom.

Home and school environment, socioeconomic situation, and level of parental education and awareness are influential in making educational activities participatory

and inclusive. Panta (2018) has explored that poor economic status, low parental awareness, and negative attitudes of families and or communities are the main challenges to inclusion. The study has not addressed the issues of inclusive education, particularly the meaning-making from the students' lived experiences.

The last is the values of critical pedagogy. Jeyaraj (2014) has explored how the five values of critical pedagogy, theoretical, pedagogical, religious, departmental and institutional, and dominant political values, have inspired teachers to become critical pedagogues. However, she has missed exploring these values from the students' perspective. This study has examined how these values have influenced the students and the teachers to perform their roles.

Research Gap

In the previous chapter, I have spotted theme-wise slits in pedagogical practices. This chapter describes the unsearched crack(s) to be explored thematically and theoretically at the policy and practice levels.

Teachers are empowered with formal education, training, and conferences. Besides, they are experienced with the content and the context of school education. Despite their discussion on various seminars, workshops, webinars, and training for student-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented classroom activities, some pedagogical barriers have continued the traditional education practices. One of them is teachers' inept behavior and their status quo (Mobbs & Tashjian, 2022). The teachers expected to be role models for students' learning have no learning attitude. So, students lack a stimulating learning environment. Secondly, students are unwilling to learn because the content they have to learn and the classroom practices do not match their needs and interests. The learning content is only for cognitive development or academic competencies, not for transversal competencies. Thirdly, students feel and experience

superiority and inferiority among themselves and with their teachers. They, particularly the inferior ones, hesitate to interact sufficiently with their teachers and some friends. Therefore, they generally work hard and center their study on rote learning, mainly when examination routine approaches; they take extra classes, leave or postpone other work, and prepare for two- or three-hour paper-pencil tests. Further, students do not have access to different sources and support services. All the factors mentioned above have made students reluctant to study enthusiastically. Besides, the classroom setting is neither gender-neutral nor economically or culturally neutral. The students have no sense of belongingness and ownership in the classroom. They are not assured of equity and justice in the class and school. Accordingly, the teachers have challenges in leading classroom activities with justice-oriented praxis and student ownership.

The existing pedagogical practice has not prioritized emancipatory and justifiable environment meaningfully. The teachers are educated with theoretical knowledge, trained with the essence of child rights, learner-friendly learning environment, empowerment-oriented educational activities, and reflective-based oriented. However, they embrace teacher-centered teaching-learning activities. The teacher's existing effort is insufficient for learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities. On the one hand, critical pedagogy engages “teachers and students in a critical, dialectical examination of how existing curriculum, resources and approaches to teaching offer students a perspective on the world that serves to marginalize certain voices and ways of life” (Couch, 2017, p. 132), teachers have some other factors that have hindered them from applying the theoretical, and experiential knowledge and skills in the real ground. Some of the factors are socio-cultural factors, high-stakes testing, and dominance of traditional trends of teaching-

learning practices. However, no research exists to “make explicit the socially constructed character of knowledge, and ask whose interests particular knowledge serve” (Couch, 2017, p. 132). In other words, no study has been carried out on behalf of students: what sort of activities they want in the class, what sort of learning content, and what assessment motivates them to work on the learning content enthusiastically.

From the policy level, the government provides scholarships for students and teacher training to make classroom activities child-friendly and goal-oriented. Different programs and events have been initiated to make school education child-friendly, student-empowering, and innovation-oriented. However, students are not excited to go to school and participate enthusiastically in classroom activities and have not experienced such a harmonious environment in the school. This study is an effort to explore the key insights for making educational activities learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented: the pedagogy in which students learn from one another in their autonomy and achieve the designed objectives. There is no study to replace stressful exam-oriented teaching-learning with one that leads teachers and students to teach and learn from one another in a justifiable environment and meet the goal. The praxis of educational activities that are student-friendly and goal-oriented is still unsearched from students’ and teachers’ lived experiences in the context of Nepal. In other words, the study aims to address the gap in guiding students to develop transversal and academic competencies through justifiable emancipatory empowerment tailored to their specific needs, interests, and talents.

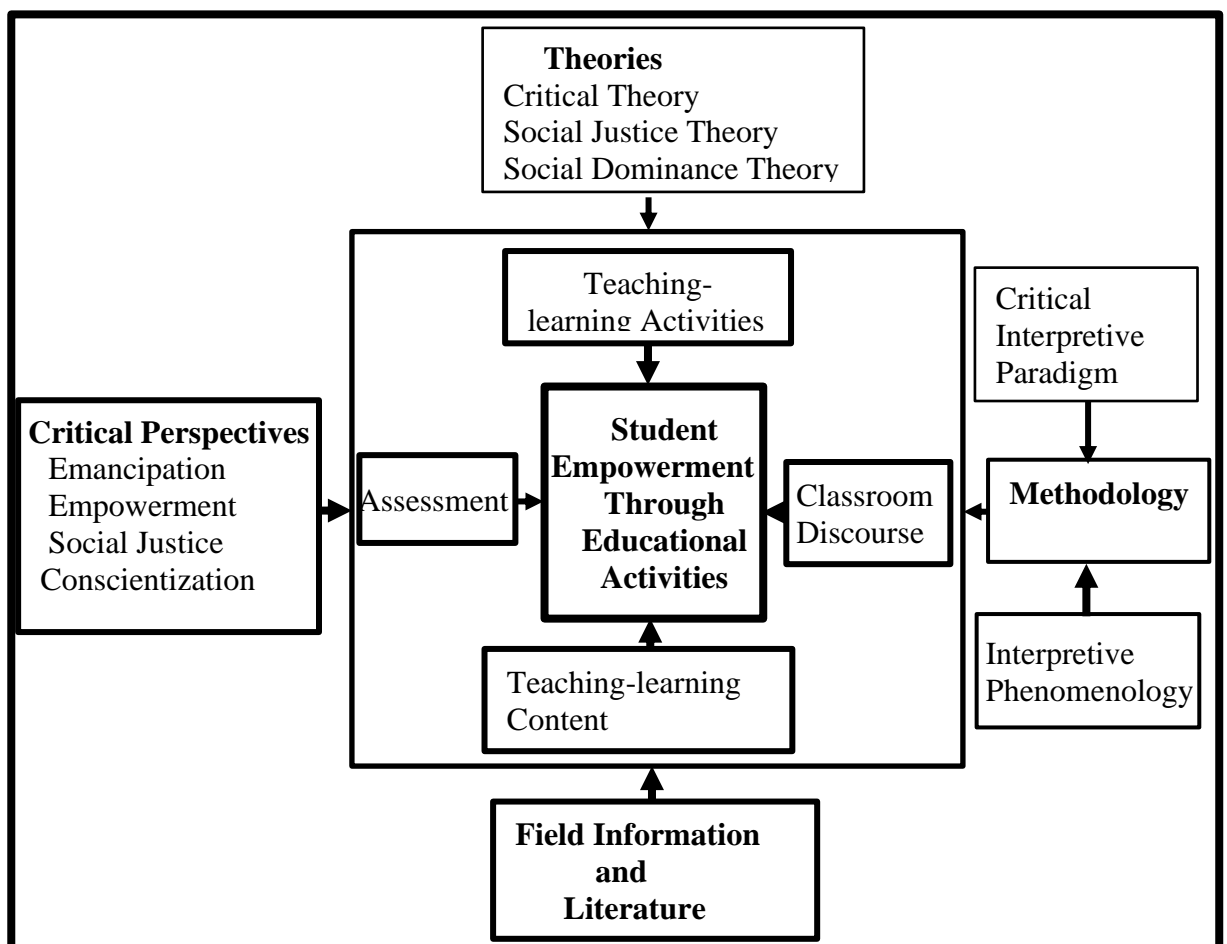
Conceptual Framework

Students learn better and more meaningfully when they are made responsible and self-governing. With the belief that the praxis of critical pedagogy makes

classroom activities student-centered, justifiable, and goal-oriented, this study, from the participants' lived experiences, was carried out to explore the insights for making educational activities learner-centered, self-governing, and goal-oriented. For this, I have used three theories as theoretical lenses to interpret it. They are critical theory, social dominance theory, and social justice theory, which are used to understand the praxis of critical pedagogy from the lived experiences of the students and teachers.

The detailed conceptual guideline is presented diagrammatically below.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study



Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the critical perspective of pedagogy with its philosophy, concepts, historical development, and potentialities for educational

practices in the context of Nepal. Then, I discussed different dynamics that influence teachers' teaching and students' participation in teaching-learning activities. Under dynamics, I attempted to discuss intelligence in students, learning through constructivism, the role of motivation, Mizerow's transformative learning and its connection with critical pedagogy, the need, and practice of post-method pedagogy, 21st-century pedagogy, and task-based learning. Then, I talked about existing classroom activities and students' participation and classroom distraction, classroom discourse with its impact on students' participation in teaching-learning activities, and the role of assessment in students' studies. After that, I discussed three theories: critical, social dominance, and social justice. To see the role of language policy in education, I have discussed the Nepal Government's policy and its impact on society and school education. Finally, I have summed up the chapter with the conceptual framework.

Chapter III

Research Methodology: Philosophy, Paradigm, and Design of the Study

In this chapter, I have explained the methodology, which encompasses the foundational assumptions, principles, rules, and techniques that guide researchers in making their work accessible for analysis, critique, replication, repetition, adaptation, and selecting appropriate research methods. The methodology I adopted in the study incorporates phenomenology as the philosophical framework, critical interpretivism as the research paradigm, and interpretive phenomenology as a research design. Under the research design, I have described the context of the study, research sites and participants, research tools, and information collection methods. In addition, I explained how I maintained quality standards and ethical considerations, and finally, I described how I extracted and interpreted data from the field.

Phenomenology as Philosophical Framework

To understand the essence of the praxis of educational activities, I have chosen phenomenology as a guiding philosophy. Out of two types of phenomenology, Husserlian descriptive phenomenology, and Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology, I preferred the second for three reasons. Firstly, Husserl focuses on the human mind over the body or the world, whereas Heidegger's phenomenology connects the mind and the world. Secondly, a phenomenon for Husserl is "the thing itself- not a generalization, an approximation, a representation, or a deduced outcome" (Vagle, 2018, p. 30). In other words, it is what shows itself. In contrast, describing participants' experiences is insufficient to make meaning and find the essence of the phenomenon expected to be explored. In the context of teaching-learning activities, I wanted to explore the participants' sense-making of their experiences and make meaning of their sense-making. It is possible only by interpreting the phenomenon

derived from the participants' lived experiences of educational activities. I interpreted their lived experiences as being in their socio-cultural and historical context. Finally, Husserl emphasizes bracketing the researcher's experiences. I could not study educational activities by bracketing the world because the activities are always in the world. For Heidegger, "our being is being in the world" (Vagle, 2018, p. 31). As an experienced teacher, teacher educator, and scholar, I wanted to follow hermeneutic phenomenology as it "enfolds the mind and the world together, treating them as interconnected" (Vagle, 2018, p. 32). Interpreting participants' lived experiences, sense-making, and policy documents helped me identify the essence of educational activities in the school. The study intended to "clarify the conditions that can lead to understanding" (McManus Holroyd, 2015, p. 1) so that I could explore the essence of educational activities through the participants' sense-making.

Philosophy is related to the logical analysis of knowledge in different disciplines. It required a philosophical stance. I have made my philosophical stance in terms of ontology (reality), epistemology (knowledge), and axiology (value) to frame a better understanding of knowledge and link philosophy with this research study.

When I get involved in an event or activity, I encounter the environment, the people, and their language and behavior. Then, I, along with my worldview, construe the environment, the event, and the people's role. It leads me to make a sense of the context and make meaning. My understanding of the situation differs from others due to the difference in our perceptions and worldviews. This happened during classroom activities as well. During the fieldwork, I was aware of the meaning-making process from the fact that the participants encountered events in the classrooms and developed their understanding differently. Each student's meaning-making process differs from others; they perceive and interpret the same incident differently. Therefore, I believe

in the versions of multiple people and their realities, the realities of the participants' sense-making of their experiences. For me, ontology is related to the nature of reality, and the realities are always multiple (Yin, 2016). I developed my understanding of the world by interpreting the environment in which I was brought up and the people around me and their influence on me, as was the case of my participants. According to Heidegger, "humans are hermeneutic (interpretive) beings capable of finding significance and meaning in their own lives" (Draucker, 1999, as cited in Wojnar & Swanson, 2007, p. 174). For me, ontology means "the study of being" (Regan, 2012, p. 290), where 'being' refers to Dasein: "'da' meaning 'there' and 'sein' meaning 'to be' or 'there being'" (Heidegger, 2003 as cited in Regan, 2012, p. 290). For Heidegger (1969), dasein is "the human way of being in the world" (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007, p. 174). For me, knowledge is a subjective phenomenon, i.e., personally meaningful. So, the research participants develop different meanings from their own diverse experiences and socio-cultural and politico-economic makeup. The reality of an event or social phenomenon can differ from person to person and from context to context. So, it was in the case of my research participants.

Out of Freire's ontology of being and becoming, I believe in the ontology of becoming. It is "infused with hope for change, transformation, betterment" (Shudak, 2014, p. 995). If a student is disobedient, it is not only his/her fault but also of their teacher to some extent. He/ she can be reformed, and the teacher is responsible for working with him/her toward modification. For this, understanding his/her meaning-making of being disobedient is necessary.

Since people cannot abstract themselves from social and political contexts, they are involved there and experience what they encounter and make sense of the experiences. "Epistemology is concerned with ways of knowing and learning about

the world” (Ormston et al., 2013, p. 6). This study emphasized the nature of knowledge generated from participants’ sense-making of their lived experiences. For example, stories emerge from the self and are composed and received in context (Riessman, 2009). Therefore, participants’ stories were collected to explore the essence of educational activities. In this sense, each person has his or her reality and worldview. The essence of educational activities was explored by interpreting the context, participants’ experiences, and worldviews.

For me, axiology refers to the value that school students and their teachers have on a particular issue, i.e., teaching-learning trends and culture, along with other practices in educational activities. Heron (1996) argues that our values are solely responsible as a guiding reason for all our actions. My values were fixed, and so were my participants. This research is value-laden, and I recognized the value systems of my participants. I valued the individual perception and realization of participants about critical pedagogy. During the study, I explored my values and beliefs, along with the values and beliefs of my participants. In the context that the same behavior can be highly valued in one social context, partially accepted in another situation, and taboo in another, I gave due respect to each participant’s views and experiences. It helped me to understand the participants’ meaning-making process.

Critical Interpretivism as Research Paradigm

I have adopted a critical interpretive paradigm as a methodological guideline. A paradigm, as defined by Willis et al. (2007), is “a comprehensive belief system, world view or framework that guides research and practice in a field” (p. 8). The study was concerned with finding the meanings through the critical interpretation of participants’ lived stories, socio-economic and historical context, and their sense-making. It was a critical interpretation of emancipation, empowerment, justice, and

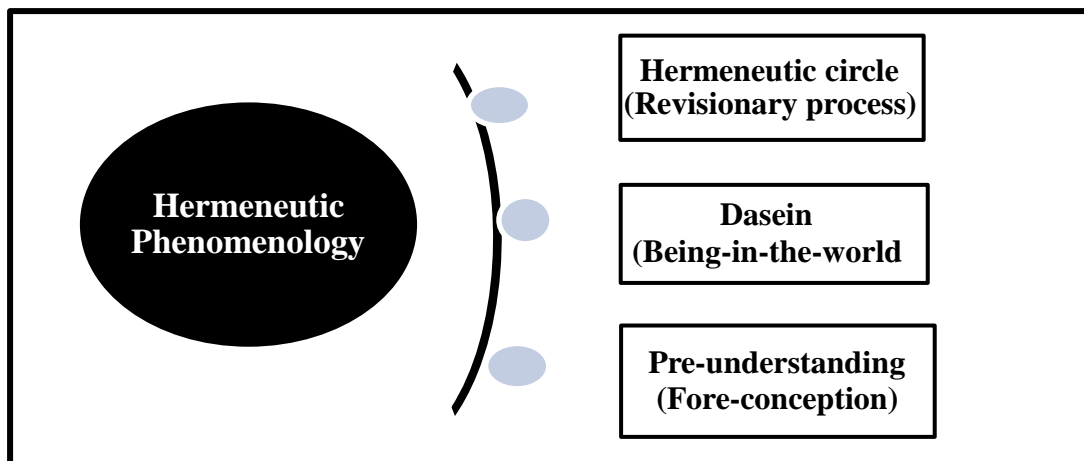
conscientization. According to (Given, 2008), “Interpretative inquiry focuses on understanding the meanings, purposes, and intentions that people give to their actions and interactions with others.” (p. 459). I attempted to understand students’ worldviews and perceptions by critically interpreting their lived experiences. In the words of Pozzebun (2004), “Being critical may simply imply probing taken-for-granted assumptions inherent in the status quo by being critically reflective” (p. 278). Interpretive approaches analyze how a specific social reality has been formed. On the other hand, critical approaches focus on power dynamics, knowledge, and ideology in social practices. In addition, my focus was on multiple perspectives, subjectivity, and independence of the individual thoughts of participants. I explored meaning-making from various realities, the realities of the students’ and teachers’ lived experiences of educational activities over different times in the school. This means that meaning-making through interaction is insufficient for exploring the states of conscientization, justification, emancipation, and empowerment in school education. For this, exploring the role of power dynamics, inequality, and the pursuit of social change is necessary. Therefore, I adopted a critical interpretive paradigm as a methodological guideline to identify and interpret social problems such as status quo and hierarchic-based behavior reflected in educational activities.

Interpretive Phenomenology as Research Design

I used interpretive phenomenology as a research design to address the issues mentioned in the statement of the problem and fulfill the gap stated in the second chapter. I have chosen phenomenology to guide me in understanding the students’ and teachers’ lived experiences, their interpretation of the experiences, and sense-making. Then, the essence of the phenomena from their subjective realities was explored. Following the phenomenological study, I adapted hermeneutic phenomenology as the

research strategy. Being a teacher, a teacher educator, or a researcher, I have my own lived experiences of such phenomena in similar situations. Therefore, I could not bracket my preconceived knowledge while interpreting the data, and so I embraced “interpretive (hermeneutic) phenomenology” (Peoples, 2021, p. 27) as the research design. The fact that “Heidegger’s phenomenology stresses that phenomena are lived out interpretively in the world”(Vagle, 2018, p. 32) supported me in exploring the measures for making educational activities learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented.

Figure 2. *Research Design of the Study*



I found interpretive phenomenology an appropriate research design to explore the ground reality of educational activities in community schools. The management says there is no deformity from the management side. Similarly, the administration claims it has done its best. On the other hand, the teachers say they have performed their roles with the best effort. However, the quality of education in community schools is far below the expected level. The government of Nepal has activated the policy of ‘decentralization of education,’ thinking that local people can identify the real problem and necessity and find better alternatives as a solution. With this belief, the government has passed a plan “to transfer all public schools to local communities”

(Carney et al. 2007, as cited in Rao & Georgas, 2015, p. 48) in the long term. From the management side, schools have well-qualified and trained teachers who are expected to implement best practices, and the teachers claim the same. Therefore, I wanted to explore the ground reality possible from the concerned students' and teachers' lifeworld.

Context of the Study

I have described the context of the study in terms of research sites and participants. I have selected five community schools (S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5) purposively from Chandragiri Municipality, Kathmandu, as research sites for the study. None of the schools was identified as 'the model school.' I had easy access to the schools because they were familiar with and convenient to me. I selected 15 participants: 10 students and five teachers from the schools. I purposively selected ten grade-eight students, two students (one girl and one boy, particularly from those who are oppressed, isolated, and left behind), and five teachers from each school. Grade eight students are in the puberty stage at the age of around 13 or 14. It is a period of drastic social, mental, and emotional change (Crockett et al., 2019). The teachers were cryptonyms as T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5. The teachers, particularly the research participants, were well qualified, trained, and had at least seven years of experience. Similarly, the students selected as participants were from diverse socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds and low socio-economic classes. According to Peoples (2021), the typical sample size is 8 – 15, depending on the context. She further states that "saturation is the goal rather than the number of participants" (p. 48). For the study, the goal was saturated with information from 10 students and five teachers from five schools. Therefore, I full-stopped the size with the number. The

demography of the student and teacher participants are in Tables 1 and 2, respectively.

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of Student Participants With Pseudonyms*

SN	Student	Sex	Cast/L1	Family Situation	Origin
1.	Pratikshya	F	Brahman/Nepali	Literate, AE, Sup.,	Dhading
2.	Prajwal	M	Chettri/Nepali	Lit., Sup and Co but St.	Kathmandu
3.	Bipana	F	Chettri/Khas	Labor class, live with father, step-mother, works as a servant in the family, Literate,	Bardia
4.	Bikal	M	Janajati/Tamang	He lives in a poor family with a sister and brother; the father drinks	Dhading
5.	Jamuna	F	Brahman/Nepali	Weak and nervous Conflicts in the family,	Kailali
6.	Janak	M	Janajati/Tamang	Weak and nervous. The family is poor. He loves singing and dancing	Nuwakot
7.	Vawana	F	Dalit/Maithili	Poor and illiterate family, like a subaltern in the family, weak, nervous, and frightened	Siraha
8.	Varat	M	Dalit/ Khas	Poor family, illiterate, tunnel farming, loves singing Deuda, playing	Kalikot

				games, and weaving	
				baskets, weak in study	
9.	Chinmaya	F	Janajati/Tamang	She lives with her father, Sarlahi stepmother, and own brother. Weak and nervous, has life skills, a determined girl, enjoys dancing.	
10.	Chetmani	M	Dalit/Khas	Poor, working-class family, fond of caricature	Lamjung

Note. L1 = Mother-tongue, AE = Aware of Education, Sup. = Supportive, Co. = Cooperative and St.= Strict, Ins.= Institutional school, Com. = Community school.

All the student participants belonged to the working class and used to live with their families and relatives who temporarily migrated to Kathmandu and lived in rent. They used to have rare support and insufficient care in the family and experience insult and isolation in the school and the classroom.

The following table shows the demography of the teacher participants. Two teachers were indigenous, and the other three had migrated from outside the Kathmandu Valley to the Kathmandu district.

Table 2. *Demographic Profile of Teacher Participants*

Teacher participant	Gender	Qualification	Experience	Subject	Features
T1	F	M. A. B. Ed.	10 yrs.	English	Eng., Opt., St. & Con.
T2	M	B. Ed.	12 yrs.	English	Pes., Lib.

T3	M	M. Ed.	7 yrs.	Social Studies	Lib., Opt., Fri., and St.
T4	F	M. Ed.	27 yrs.	Social Studies	Tra., Pes., and about to retire
T5	M	M. Phil	8 yrs.	English	St., Eng. and Opt.

Note. Lib. = liberal, St. = Strict, Pes. = Pessimistic, Opt. = Optimistic, Eng.=

Energetic, Tra. = Traditional, Con. = Confident, Fri = Friendly

Research Tools

I prepared and employed observation guidelines, interview guidelines, follow-up interview guidelines, and FGD (Focus Group Discussion) guidelines as the tools for collecting information. I prepared field notes while observing the classes, recorded the interviews, and maintained a diary of FGD (Focus Group Discussion). The guidelines were reviewed and modified as the situation demanded. I embraced observation guidelines to get more information: the information that was not possible only from interviews. I did it to enrich the description, making it precise and concise. Some parts of non-verbal means of communication and environmental settings provided additional information to make the description dense and detailed. In addition, my involvement in different programs and events (such as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities) with the participants helped me to be friendly and familiar with them so that they, without any hesitation and fear, told me about their experiences. The interview guideline led me to the path so that I could lead my communication with the participants on the track toward the target. It guided me to lead the talk (follow-up interview in the areas focused. FGD guidelines helped me raise the issue and encouraged the participants to raise their voices and exchange ideas on the issues raised.

Although Yin (2016) states, "...data are the smallest or lowest entities or recorded elements resulting from some experience, observation, experiment, or other similar situation" (p. 138), they are the building blocks of the phenomenon in my study. I followed legal procedures to collect sufficient information from the selected area. Firstly, I had a letter from the Graduate School of Education (GSE) to give to the selected schools. When I gave the letter to the headteacher, I got consent from the school and contacted the teachers. Due to the effect of the second phase of COVID-19, the schools were closed, and online classes were run. To be closely in touch with the students and the teachers, I had a consensus with the school and concerned teachers. Then, I started teaching the students in virtual classes. The opportunities became a milestone for me to be in close contact with the students and the teachers, to observe teaching-learning activities, and to build rapport with them; as Kabir (2016) states, "...the interviewer builds rapport with respondents, getting respondents to open up and express themselves in their way" (p. 213). After teaching for three weeks, I told them the purpose of my study and took oral informed consent from them as well. Assuring them of confidentiality, I began to communicate with them through Viber, Messenger, or WhatsApp. It became an opportunity to ask questions on Messenger, Viber, or WhatsApp. Then, they began to communicate with me freely. When the lockdown of the COVID-19 second phase was over, I had face-to-face communication with the students and teachers. Then, we had friendly and comfortable communication. In this way, besides face-to-face communication, I communicated with the participants through social media and succeeded in becoming familiar with their personal, familial, and socioeconomic contexts. These aha moments of the initial data collection phase inspired me to modify interview, observation, and FGD guidelines.

Information Collection Method and Procedure

The procedures of information collection I employed in the study were interviews, observation, and focus group discussion. After being familiar with the school family, I interviewed the participants in conversational mode with open-ended questions. In other words, I embraced an in-depth interview as a method of information collection to make the conversation with the participants open-ended and discovery-oriented so that I could obtain detailed information about the issues I raised in the study. It was an unstructured, in-depth interview; as Vagle (2018) states, "...it tends to be the most dialogic, open, and conversational" (p. 136). In addition to the interview with selected research participants, I communicated with other students, teachers, SMC (School Management Committee) members, parents, and nearby concerned stakeholders to get more and more information to make the description thick and dense. I developed interview guidelines to maintain consistency and streamline the information collection process.

The next method of data collection I employed was observation. According to Peoples (2021), "65% to 70% of communication is conveyed through nonverbal cues" (p. 51). Observation is an essential way of capturing more information in a non-audible context. So, I led overt and non-participant observation in three schools where I was an observer only for the initial phase of information collection and covert and participant observation in two schools (and in the later phase of data collection in the three schools) where I led collaborative teaching with the teacher participants. It led me ahead as "Heidegger focused on 'Dasein' literally meaning 'being in the world'" (Shahbazian, 2015, p. 6). Besides, I collected information from my observations outside the class, such as in the playground and at the gate during arrival and departure times. I developed observation guidelines for conducting observation

consistently, making the information collection process targeted and effective, and getting accurate information.

The last method I used to collect study information was Focus Group Discussion (FGD). It is, as Kabir (2016) defines, "...an in-depth field method that brings together a small homogeneous group to discuss topics on a study agenda" (p. 221). This method helped me to explore a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. According to Given (2008), it is "a form of qualitative interviewing that uses a researcher-led group discussion to generate data" (p. 352). It was the discussion among the participants on the issue of the "Life world of educational activities." Peoples (2021) states that focus groups "offer some distinctive benefits over individual interviews" (p. 51). I conducted two types of FGDs: FGD with students and FGD with teachers. The first consists of all the students of the class, including the student participants. The next FGD was with the teachers. It included the teacher participants and all the teachers interested in the school. I ran twenty FGDs with students and ten with the teachers, four and two, respectively, in each school. In the FGD with the students, the participants were grade-eight, two of whom were selected as research participants. All the participants were activated to engage in meaningful conversation during the discussion. They were also given meta cards to write information about their experiences that they wanted to tell me secretly. In the first two FGDs, I felt the students had something they did not want others to know. For such information, they were provided meta cards. At the end of the discussion, they were asked to drop the meta cards into the paper box placed on the table or chair in front of the classroom. In the FGDs with the teachers, the teachers were motivated to share their experiences, and they were also provided pens and meta cards to write down the information they wanted to keep secret. At the end of the discussion, they

were asked to drop the meta cards in the paper box. I developed FGD guidelines to maintain consistency in conducting the FGDs, ensure the discussion is on track, and create a comfortable and respectful environment for the participants.

Quality Standard

I was aware that every research should be valid and reliable. It could not be an exception. I followed trustworthiness and authenticity to make it valid and reliable. Trustworthiness has four notions: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Credibility is an alternative to internal validity, transferability is an alternative to external validity, dependability is an alternative to reliability, and conformability is an alternative to objectivity.

Out of eight procedures: prolonged engagement and observation in the field, triangulation, peer review, negative case analysis, explanation of research bias, member checking, detailed description, and external audits (Cresswell and Poth, 2017, as cited in Peoples, 2021), I have employed the first two and the seventh ones to maintain validity and reliability. During the data collection phase, I visited the schools regularly, stayed there a long, engaged in different activities, and observed multiple situations in a natural setting. While in the schools, I communicated with the participants repeatedly and with non-participant people as well. It provided me with detailed information for making thick descriptions. I collected sufficient life stories, field notes, and narratives, including people's behavior and context, from the participants in the field. Then, I presented them precisely in detail without missing any important information because a thick description is a detailed account of field experiences (Geertz, 1973). I maintained fairness by presenting all valued differences, views, and conflicts as accurately as they appeared while collecting information. I have described the context "showing the complexity of the lived world of

participants” (Peoples, 2021, p. 60) to make the description thick and enriched. For me, the participants’ voices and life stories were more authentic than any other sources of information.

Ethical Considerations

The protection of participants from possible harms and risks and their empowerment to express their experiences and understanding were essential for me during the research period. For this, I maintained ethical considerations throughout the research process in the way Hill (2005) says that ethical considerations must be considered throughout the research process. To seek in-depth information on a phenomenon from the field without any harm or risk to anyone, I, being open, friendly, and sincere, have maintained harmony with the participants and led the data collection process ahead in an open-hearted and supportive environment. It played a crucial role in having long-term and close contact with the participants, sustaining interest and avoiding boredom in the participants, and encouraging their expression from the beginning to the end of the study. I have maintained ethical issues with informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality (Arifin, 2018).

Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Informed consent is the crucial issue while managing the interview (Patton, 1990). I informed all the concerned participants, teachers, and school administration about my research plan. I also told them I was there with them to search for the problems they faced that should be solved. I never forced my participants to go against their wants and interests. Only after obtaining permission from the authorities and consent from the participants did I start the journey of data collection. I also told

them that they could quit their involvement as a participant in the research at any time they wanted.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

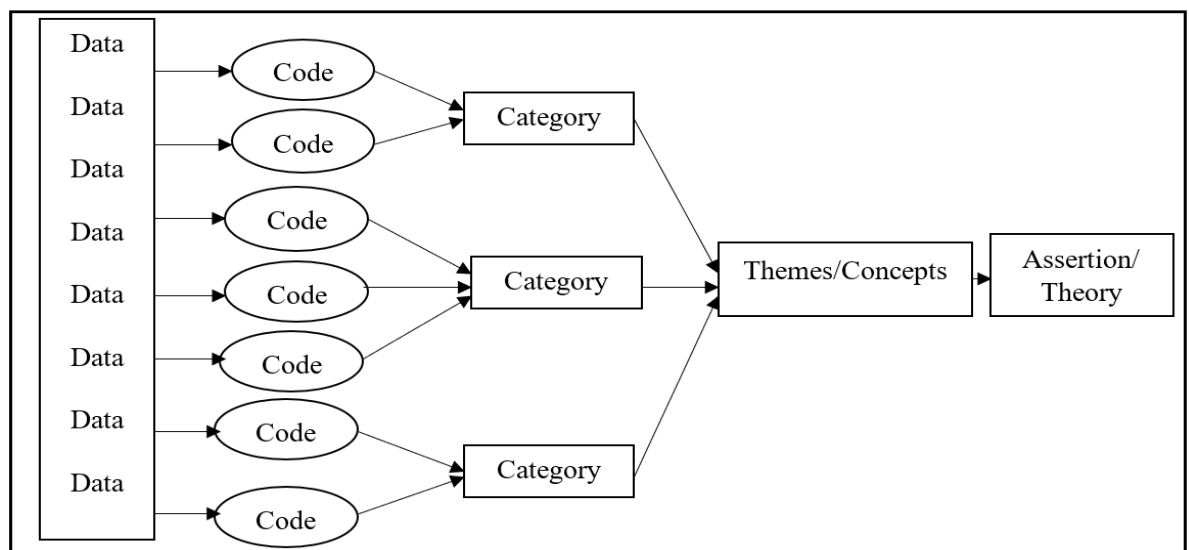
Anonymity is necessary to protect the research participants with due respect. Similarly, confidentiality was maintained with “an established principle in research ethics and professional codes” (Given, 2008, p. 111). I assured them of anonymity and confidentiality throughout the study. I maintained anonymity using pseudonyms and cryptonyms. The student participants were pseudo-named Pratikshya, Prajwal, Bipana, Bikal, Jamuna, Janak, Vawana, Varat, Chin Maya, and Chetmani. The other names mentioned in this paper are the pseudonyms of the people. The schools and the teacher participants were crypto-named as S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5 and T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5 respectively. The non-participant people with whom I communicated, received information, and used it in the research were kept anonymous, and pseudonyms were given to them. In collecting information, “promises of confidentiality are necessary to seek sensitive data” (Given, 2008, p. 111). I made a promise while taking informed consent to keep the information received from the participants secret within me. I used it only for research purposes following Hill's (2005) method to maintain confidentiality, such as keeping the recording file safe, giving pseudonyms to the participants, and not giving specific information about the participants in the report. I maintained confidentiality in two ways: assuring them about the confidential situation and involving them in the work. Moreover, I maintained secrecy in collecting, presenting, and analyzing information.

Coding Steps and Procedures

“A code is a researcher-generated interpretation that symbolizes or translates data” (Vogt et al., 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021, p. 6). After transcribing/translating

the data received from the participants, I coded the text going through it. I broke down segments of the text data into smaller units during coding. At the same time, the code is “the ascription of a category label to a piece of data that is either decided in advance or in response to the data that have been collected” (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 559). I moved back and forth while coding and recoding the information. After coding data, I organized and grouped them based on their similarities into categories, from the category to themes or concepts and assertions or theories. Codifying is “a process that permits data to be divided, grouped, reorganized and linked in order to consolidate meaning and develop explanation”(Grbick, 2013, as cited in Saldana, 2021, p. 13). The figure given below shows the way I followed while coding.

Figure 3. *Data Coding and Theming*

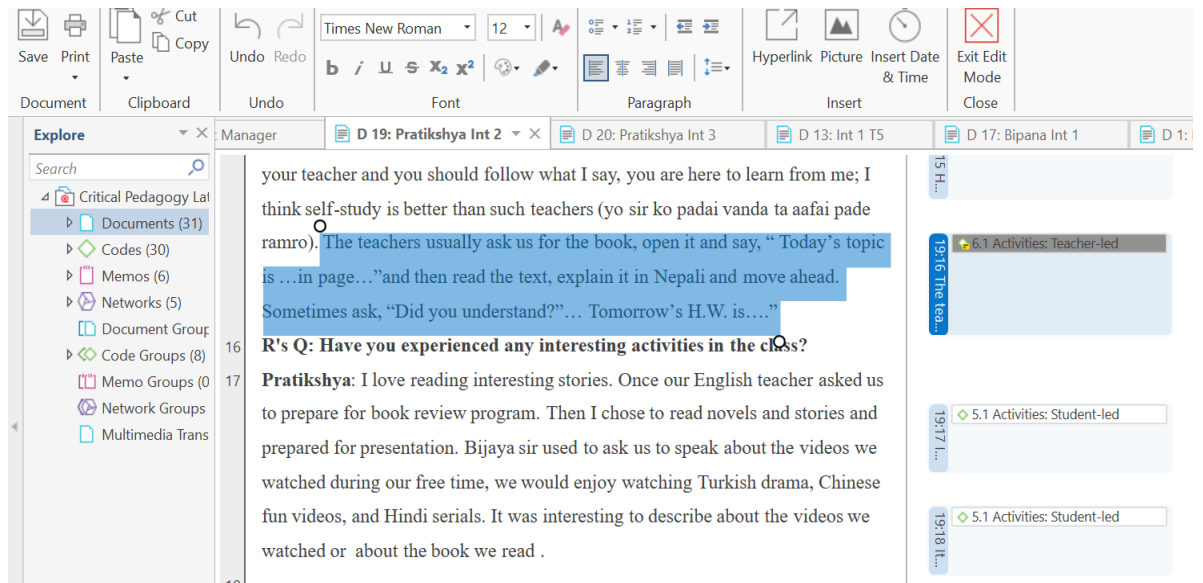



Source: Saldana (2021).

I used ATLAS.ti 9, a computer software (CAQDAS), to code, merge, recode, splint, group, and network the data received from the field. Firstly, I added the Word document to the ATLAS.ti 9 software. In the software, I worked on data: coding, naming, re-coding, merging, splinting, and networking. Then, I exported the

report. After exporting the report, I worked it out manually. A sample of the use of ATLAS.ti 9 is presented in Figure 4.

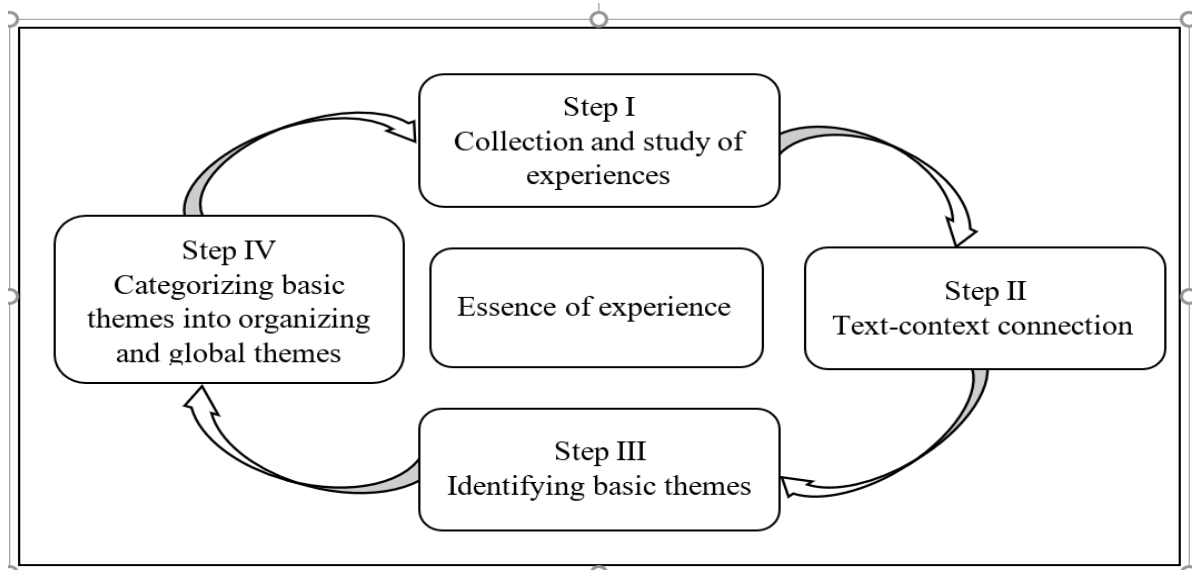
Figure 4. A Sample of Coding in ATLAS.ti 9



Note. Use of ATLAS.ti 9 for coding the data transcribed. In this figure, the last coding on the right bottom side,  5.1, refers to the first (local) theme of the fifth organizing theme in the 19.18th document managed by the ATLAS.ti 9 software in the computer.

Data analysis, an integral part of qualitative research that functions as evidence, helped me discover and confirm the truth. I studied the collected information seriously and grouped it into different themes after coding and categorizing it. I interpreted the data based on similarities and differences within the established theories, facts, and findings. Before analyzing the information received from the field, I followed the steps in Figure 5.

Figure 5. *The Steps of Phenomenological Study*



Note. The steps followed in the Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenological study.

To analyze the information collected from observation, online communication, interview recordings, and field notes were transcribed and translated. Then, the data was organized by the research questions. It was analyzed, paying due attention to what participants had said throughout the information collection period.

Out of three structural forms of Husserl (1900-1/1997) as described by Sokolowski (2000): “the structure of parts and wholes, the structure of an identity in a manifold, and the structure of presence and absence” (Langdrige, 2017, p. 5), I adopted the first one. In a hermeneutic circle, “the parts inform the whole, and the whole informs the parts”(Peoples, 2021, p. 52). Using the hermeneutic circle, I interpreted the participants’ lived experiences and meaning-making with related theories and literature to generate meaning.

Chapter Summary

The chapter addresses my journey from the data collection planning phase to the data analysis process. Firstly, I presented the philosophical framework guiding me to conduct the research. Then, I described interpretive phenomenology as the study's

research design and presented the study's context with a demographic profile of the participants and research tools used while collecting data. After that, I described how I embraced observation, interview, and focus group discussion under data collection methods and procedures. Then, I described the procedures I followed to make the research valid and reliable under the topic 'Quality Standard.' After that, I have described how I maintained ethical considerations and the coding steps and procedures I followed in the study. I have also explained how I benefitted from using ATLAS.ti 9 while coding to report exporting. Finally, before summarizing the chapter, I have presented the figure, which reflects the steps I followed from the information collection phase to theme development.

Chapter IV

Explication of Field Information and Evaluation

Setting the Context

This chapter has described the context, the information gathered from the field, and the fundamental concepts of critical pedagogy developed from the information. It also depicts the socio-cultural and structural situation of the society and the context of schools where the students were nurtured and educated. Then, it precisely mentions the research participants' lived experiences of how school education was delivered and practiced. To explore teachers' and learners' experiences of educational activities, I observed the field, conducted focus group discussions, interviewed ten students and five teachers as my research participants, and communicated with parents, school management committee members, local people, and other students and teachers of the schools informally to receive more and more information. It helped me to make the report dense and concise. After coding the information gathered from the field, I merged and recoded them into thirty codes. Then, I categorized the thirty codes and grouped them into eight themes. The eight themes are termed as the organized themes. Finally, I grouped the organizing themes into four global themes: classroom discourse, learning content, classroom activities, and assessment. After that, I connected the findings with the essence of the phenomena. The themes, local, organizing, and global, are presented with the information from which they were developed.

Classroom Discourse

Classroom discourse is the communication between teacher and students and among students. In other words, it is a means of communication that the teacher and the students use to communicate with each other. Baker and Ellege (2011) state,

“...the use of discourse refers to the type, genre or context of the language used” (p. 15). The classroom discourse, which includes language, context, and behavior that teachers and students use, influences students’ participation and learning. For example, minority students, especially the weaker ones, are treated in such a way that they are left out as they have no forum to utilize the linguistic practices that they were socialized in. The use of language and behavior, though they look or sound simple and tiny, influence students’ perception, participation, and performances significantly. For example, “We use eye contact to signal to others that we are ready to speak, or we use it to cue others to speak” (Sutrisna, 2020, p. 31). The teacher has positively and negatively influenced students through verbal communication, non-verbal cues, gestures, head movements, facial expressions, and eye contact. Teachers’ use of non-verbal means of communication is more potent than their verbal means of communication. For example, a student who greets the teacher excitedly remains excited the whole day if the teacher responds to them happily but gets demotivated and shrinks back if the teacher ignores their greeting or responds dominantly. The information that the participants have experienced in the study has been categorized into two organizing themes: Empowering discourse and hegemonic discourse.

Empowering Discourse

The empowering discourse the teachers and the students have experienced in the schools is inspiring and productive. It has encouraged, empowered, and led students to work ahead enthusiastically. According to Al-Smadi and Rashid (2017), “an effective classroom discourse involves successful negotiation of meanings not only between teacher and student(s) but also between student(s) and student(s)” (p. 164). Even a single word, transient behavior, or simple bodily expression can have a motivating or disheartening influence on students and teachers who work and perform

different tasks in the school daily for a year or more. Students quickly understand their friends' or teacher's discourse in the classroom and respond appropriately, sometimes speaking, muting, ignoring to react, and so on. From the study in schools, I found that student-friendly behavior, a harmonious environment, and engaged activities were motivating and inspiring. They are described as motivating behavior, motivating environment, and motivating task.

Motivating Behavior. Motivating behavior influences students and teachers to work excitedly and improve their performance. Motivating language and behavior stimulated students to participate and perform their roles excitedly and curiously. Motivating behavior consists of teachers' and students' supportive and encouraging ways of treating one another. Consequently, the students work excitedly and meet the goal. It includes both verbal and non-verbal means of communication, as Prajwal said:

She (the teacher) is very strict in the class. She is pretty friendly and supportive when we talk individually. She asks us about H. W., my family, and my interests. She listens to us and supports us in our problems. She sometimes plays with us during the break or sits nearby to watch us play. She also calls my mother sometimes to talk about my studies at home. (1:14 ¶ 15 in Prajwal Int 1)

Students like helpful and supportive teachers. They feel happy and proud while playing or working with the teachers. Similarly, Bikal said, "*Ramesh sir is strict but never insults us; never scolds and punishes us; always gives us work and supports us to do it but calls them, who neglect the task, in the front and say something about the task*" (3:10 ¶ 9 in Bikal Int 1). The students frequently encounter confusion and obstacles while learning or doing their work. During this time, they need support and respect from those who help them in such difficulties. Similarly, students feel

frightened and nervous while performing a task and are likely to make mistakes despite familiarity with the presented content. They feel empowered when they get supportive clues from the teachers who are there to observe their performance. In the words of Bikal:

One day, it was my turn to go in front of the class and describe our work (the work given to the group Bikal) from the chart we prepared. In my turn to describe our work in front of the class, I was very nervous, but he (the teacher) supported and encouraged me to explain. It reduced my fear. (3:18 ¶ 11 in Bikal Int 1)

The students learn enthusiastically when they have a teacher's support; as Ronald (2012) said, "Motivating teachers create a positive, upbeat, compassionate classroom where the emphasis is on learning" (p. 6). The teachers have also used stars, ticks, and pictures (of butterflies) in students' work to praise their homework or classwork. Similarly, students are motivated by kinesics communication. For example, smiling facial expressions, supportive eye contact, and encouraging gestures were used to appreciate students' work and motivate them to do their work even better. Behaviors like paying attention to them, appreciating their work through verbal and non-verbal cues, hearing and sharing experiences, and playing or working with them have motivated students to work enthusiastically.

Above and beyond, the students, particularly the weaker ones, hesitate to speak and ask the teachers when they are confused and having difficulties. They do this because of the hierarchical status they have in the class and the society they live. They want the teacher's support and ask them. In this situation, the teachers' treatment determines whether they ask them next time. The teachers may ignore, just support, or support and motivate them to ask such questions next time. If supported

and motivated, they feel happy and are encouraged to ask for solutions when they encounter a problem in the days to come; as Janak said, *“During the time I was unable to do homework, I asked her (a teacher) to support me in doing the homework, she supported me to do it and encouraged me to ask for help when needed”* (5:11 ¶ 12 in Janak Int 1). Moreover, the students like friendly teachers who share their experiences or let them (the students) share their (students’) ideas and experiences. They also prefer the teachers who play and work with them, as Prajwal remarked:

One day, she (a teacher) talked to me and shared her experiences of school life. She also asked me about homework, my family, and my interests. I began to like her from the day she talked to me personally, supported me in doing homework, and played with us (Prajwal and his friends) during the break.
(18:13 ¶ 8 in Prajwal Int 2)

The students enjoy real-life related learning content, particularly those from their context. Besides, the teachers’ encouragement and appreciation have a significant role in motivating students; as Pratikshya said, *“He (a teacher) always encourages us to speak, appreciates our work, and supports our ideas. He also clarifies our ideas with reasons”* (19:9 ¶ 3 in Pratikshya Int 2). She added that the teachers’ supportive and friendly behavior motivates students to work enthusiastically. In addition to the teacher’s behavior, the head teacher’s role is equally important in encouraging and empowering students. Janak, recalling his experience of a program, said:

One day in the initial phase of the year, the headmaster came to our class and told us to decorate the classroom. He also told us that the best-decorated class would be awarded. With our class teacher’s support and guidelines, we divided our roles and began to work on decoration. With my painting skills

and my close friends' paperwork skills, we prepared different pictures and paper models. We also watched videos of well-decorated classrooms on YouTube. During the observation day, a group with the head teacher visited all the classes, appreciated our work, and motivated us to work even better.

(26:2 ¶ 3 in Janak Int 2)

The leader's dual role of maintaining hierarchy and supporting and encouraging the inferior group has led everyone to work enthusiastically following the system. Being appreciated by the superior, the students were more enthusiastic. Some teachers force their students to embrace their ideas, whereas some give their students their ideas and lead them to work with any ideas they (the students) find better. Despite teachers' belief and trend to laden their ideas and reject students' vision, some teachers accept their students' ideas and motivate them to move ahead with their ideas, as Janak said:

We rejected the work that the teacher had advised us, saying, "Let us finish the work as our plan and then compare it with what you (the teacher) say." Two days later, grade nine students had done as our class teacher had said. He told us to see the work of class nine. Later, the teacher and I visited their (nine) class and compared that with ours. Then, he (the teacher) said, "Yours is different from theirs (grade nine students'), so continue it. Later in the class, the teacher asked us where we got that idea from. I replied that we had learned from your (teacher's) mobile, watching YouTube videos. (26:4 ¶ 7 in Janak Int 2)

Sometimes, students have better ideas than their teachers. By respecting such ideas, teachers can motivate them (students) to have more ideas in the coming days.

Some teachers hesitate to accept and appreciate their students' new and creative ideas. This attitude seems to have been guided by the top-down model of education.

The students want the activities in which they can enjoy. They were found better motivated to perform their roles in the class when they have the work from the area of their interest and talent, as T5 said:

Last month, I asked the students to choose an activity to perform in the classroom. Everyone (all the students) shouted. I asked the girl who had said, "I want to sing a song." I called her in front of the classroom and asked her to describe and sing the song. She explained the song and began to lead the class. She was the same girl who rarely used to submit homework and participate in classroom activities. (13:17 ¶ 4 in Int 1 T5)

During the initial phase of the academic year, a few students were in the class without books, and the teachers, having no such load, wanted to implement what they had learned. Both the students and teachers enjoyed the class because there was no pressure to work more and be controlled by anyone else. Teachers' friendly behavior and their offer of choices for the students to select a particular task and work on it have better motivated them (the students) to prepare and perform the task enthusiastically.

Similarly, teachers' attitudes, getting up, and behavior have affected students' attitudes toward learning. The teacher is not only there in the class to deliver the content, finish the course, and prepare students for paper-pencil tests but also to motivate them to participate and perform their roles in the class and to lead them to grow with 21st-century skills as Pratikshya said:

He (the teacher) leads us to have much fun in every lesson and teaches us some new and exciting things with the lesson every day. He reads a lot and

motivates us to read other exciting books. I like his tidy get-up, attention to everyone while speaking, and polite behavior. He admires and supports every student in their needs. Seeing him, we feel glad and want to do studying (uhaalai dekhesi nai khusi laagxa, padna man laagxa). (24:5 ¶ 3 in Pratikshya Int 2)

Teachers' role in motivating students to work in class is more important than their content delivery. Students are not ready to listen to teachers' long lectures and instructions. Students learn more from teachers' working habits and attitudes than what they deliver in the classroom.

Inspiring Environment. In an environment where the students are assured that they are safe and have a friendly environment, they become willing to take risks and struggle in their studies. Then, they become even more motivated and are ready to struggle ahead to meet the goal. Like the proverb 'When in Rome, do as Romans do' implies, students perform their roles as the environment posits them. Besides, the students need a supportive and encouraging environment to work excitedly. A neat and clean school environment with sufficient playground, spacious classrooms, and well-equipped labs and library has created an inspiring environment. Moreover, friends' cooperative behavior, teachers' caring treatment, and administrative staff and H.M.'s polite and supportive behavior have also created a motivating environment in the school. In addition, five components were found to have created a motivating environment.

One is using a notice board to encourage students to create something they can. For example, asking the students to put something as their creative work, i.e., a story, joke, song, poem, etc., on the school notice board as a part of their assignment

or assessment motivates them to create and put it there anonymously or mentioning their names as Bikal said:

When we saw stories, jokes, comedies, and songs written by students stuck on the board, they (stories, jokes, comedies, and songs) lured us to go and watch them. Once, I wrote a list of IQ questions and put them on the board with a pseudonym. Our maths teacher asked us who Pujan (my nickname) was in the class. I remained silent and frightened. Later, the teachers said, “The questions are interesting and puzzling. After some time, they told me that it was me to put it there in my handwriting. From that day onward, I created something new and put it on the noticeboard, as everyone had to do. It is an excellent and exciting work because we can write what we can and stick it there. In a story, I have described what a baby wants at home and in school.

(3:19 ¶ 13 in Bikal Int 1)

The noticeboard, a platform for the students to learn from one another, makes them more productive and enhances their communicative and creative skills. Such practices are rare and less important part of the school’s yearly plan. They were created during the initial phase of the academic session to increase enrollment.

The second component to create an inspiring environment in the school is library management and its use for promoting self-learning. The library creates a motivating environment in the school. If encouraged by well-managed library provisions, teachers can motivate students to benefit from them. Management in the library influences students’ motivation, as T3 said:

All the books used to be stored in sacks and racks in H.M.’s office, but now, we have racks full of books in the library. The majority of the books were bought for students. I took students to the library last month. Although they

were not interested in going there initially, they wanted to take a book with them when they looked at different books. Then, I told them to read what they took and share in the class. Some of them shared. This incident motivated them to go to the library and enjoy reading story books. (15:3 ¶ 4 in Int 3 T3)

The students learn from the people they see, meet, and live. They also learn from the people with whom they pass the time doing different things. Equally, the surrounding environment teaches them a lot. When the students see others studying or doing something in the library, they become motivated, as Bikal recalled:

Seeing her (a teacher) studying in the library, I went there and asked her for a book to read. She gave me a book and asked me to read and prepare to tell others in the class. It inspired me to read the book and remain in touch with her. (23:3 ¶ 3 in Bikal Int 2)

The library is one of the options that creates curiosity in the students. Clark (2016) states, “No two curiosities are aroused in the same way” (p. 416). So, encouraging children to visit the library refreshes them and provides many more insights and learning opportunities. In the library, children, following the library rules, can choose a book from the library and read, read/work on the computer, or do their assignments. Selecting a book from their (children/students) choice rather than others’ choice better motivates children to read. The students like the teachers who “provide choice and social opportunities to enhance their interaction with learning materials” (Ronald, 2012, p. 6). Library use should not be an overload for the students but a part for refreshment and entertainment.

The third one is the use of dialogue from students’ interest areas. When the students are assured of an environment where they feel as if they are in a world of their own, they have more and more opportunities to contribute in the classroom in a

variety of ways because they become more active and can perform better as it is the area of their interest. Also, because it is part of their work that they have already experienced, they are better motivated to put their ideas and arguments into action and move ahead toward the target. "Dialogue is a mode of communication characterized by an open exchange of ideas and meanings" (Given, 2008, p. 212). When the teacher, as a part of refreshment or passing time, asks the students to exchange their experiences and perceptions on topics in a particular area, they interact more enthusiastically than on the topic from the textbook; as Pratikshya said,

"He (the teacher) allows us to talk about any topic we like, but we have certain rules and regulations for it." One day, he said, "Today's turn to talk is of the students from the second last bench of the right side; All the others have to keep quiet and can speak when your turn comes." When he said so, the students from the second last bench whispered with one another and decided to talk about a picnic they enjoyed in Tribhuwan Memorial Park in Thankot. During the talk, they, turn by turn, spoke and described the picnic they enjoyed. When they finished their talk, Milan sir (a teacher) asked other students from their group to say something about a picnic they experienced. When the bell rang, he told us to write in English about their talk about the picnic they had experienced. It was interesting (19:11 ¶ 5 in Pratikshya Int 2).

Such interactive activities motivate students to say something that they have experienced. Having a chance to describe their experience as different from others, they also have a leading role. The role makes them sincere and responsible. Therefore, sharing ideas or experiences makes students curious to learn, active to participate in discussion, and confident to interact with others. In short, dialogue-based activities create an appropriate environment for the participants to interact with the feeling of ownership and having a responsible role.

The next component for creating a motivating environment in the school is the teacher's nature and attitude, which creates a sort of environment for students to perform their roles; as Pratikshya said, *"I feel quite comfortable talking with Kiran sir (a teacher), but feel a beat nervous with Hari sir (a teacher) as he is strict and ruder. Furthermore, Muna Miss (a teacher) is quite friendly. So, I have no hesitation to talk with her"* (20:2 ¶ 3 in Pratikshya Int 3). Therefore, "Teachers' behavior, traits, and skills are the most important factors that affect the student's participation in the classroom (Kazi & Aziz, 2019, p. 4).

The last is the group work environment, which is a part of the preparation for performing their roles in the program or the class. The students enjoy working in groups and become ready to prepare for risk-taking activities. In this context, Pratikshya said:

It was my first time speaking in front of the class. I was nervous but found it very interesting. The teacher gave us a group task to prepare at home and perform the next day. We (our group) gathered in a room and planned for the next day. I prepared the whole evening and went to school on time to share my work with my group. We did not know how time passed but became engaged in the task to be performed tomorrow (the following day). (24:4 ¶ 9 in Pratikshya Int 1)

The exchange of ideas and mutual understanding among the students to support each other in their group, from planning to closing, has created a harmonious environment in the class. The teachers' role is to create enthusiasm in students to complete their roles with their best effort, support, and teamwork with the students, and their sole aim is to perform perfectly and effectively motivate students to work enthusiastically.

Finally, the home environment influences students greatly. Bipana has a similar voice:

I was only the daughter of my parents. I used to think that no one was happier and luckier than me. I used to have my parents on the right and left of my bed when I got up. When we finished our daily chores, we sat for study. My mother used to take me to school and support me in every way. My father was very supportive. He would teach me to be bold and committed. Every learning phase was fun and conditional with some reward or praise. When I lost my mother and got a stepmother, I lost everything. Now, I am like a slave in the house. (21:7 ¶ 5 in Bipana Int 2)

Without their mothers, children perceive themselves as subalterns. Despite hard work to overcome discrimination, they feel disempowered and uncomfortable (Awasthi, 2022). Children who have lost their parental environment in the family are so sensitive and critical that they have become hopeless and have seen the dark world ahead. The school is the place, and the teachers are the people who awaken and empower the defeatists. Nevertheless, the pedagogy is too poor to support and empower the beaten hearts.

Using a noticeboard, library practices, dialogue, and discussion, the teacher's positive nature and attitude, group work, and supportive family situations at home have created a motivating environment. Besides, the concerned authority's visit and appreciation have motivated the school environment. However, the concerned SMC, head teachers, teachers, and administrative staff are vital in creating a motivating environment. Their commitment and accountable responsibilities with an oath, 'If we do not do now, who will do and when?' has been a must. Therefore, it is necessary to make the concerned stakeholders responsible and accountable.

Motivating Task

In motivating tasks, the students are excited to work and become ready to face possible challenges. The students were found to be more engaged when the activities were student-friendly, when they were from students' interest areas, when they were risk-taking, and when the activities were performance-based. The teachers were found to run student-friendly activities not as a part of the course but as a part of refreshment. In the words of T4:

I (the teacher) run student-friendly activities when the school reopens after a long holiday, and most of the students have not arrived yet, or sometimes when I have no mood to start a new chapter and want to pass the time. (12:13 ¶ 11 in Int 1 T4)

Students are more engaged in such activities because they have already gained knowledge and skills. They become motivated to try their best at an even deeper level because they have some knowledge and interest in the activities. Connecting learning content with student-friendly activities is challenging for teachers and concerned authorities.

Secondly, the students were found to be better motivated in the activities that were from their interest areas than those the teacher wanted and directed as T3, recalling one of his grade eight classroom teaching during the initial phase of the new academic year said:

It was during the initial phase of the academic year. I (T3) conducted an introduction program in pairs and prepared a list of interesting classroom activities. I asked them to choose which one we could do the next day. They shouted. Some said singing, some said dancing, some said acting, some watched videos, etc. For watching videos, I told them to select one of the

English videos from a list I had selected. After collecting students' talent, I led them to plan and run the task for the next day. The homework for them was to write about their performance. The students were excited. (14:15 ¶ 7 in Int 2 T3)

In such activities, students were found to be prepared to move ahead and meet the goal, as Pratikshya said:

I always remember the teaching of Kiran sir (a teacher) in grade 7. He used to ask us to choose and watch one of the videos from a list and explain what was there in the video. Every Friday, we used to have no class, but we presented and discussed the videos we watched. The videos were exciting, and it was exciting to explain what we watched. It was pretty easy to answer the questions asked by friends, but it was difficult to answer some questions he (the teacher) asked. (24:7 ¶ 15 in Pratikshya Int 1)

Such activities in the class not only refresh students but also motivate them to study as a part of preparation. Being motivated to plan, organize, and run the activities from the areas of their need and interest, they become ready to take risks and face possible challenges. Pratikshya, remembering an awareness program of a group of people from an INGO, said:

They came to run an awareness program in which they ran exciting classes. They showed us videos, gave us tasks, and supported us to perform the tasks given. They supported us individually, never got angry, never insulted us, and always motivated us to perform the task. It was my first time speaking in front of the class. I was nervous but found it very interesting because it was what I did. (24:3 ¶ 9 in Pratikshya Int 1)

The students want to create an identity from some risk-taking activities, the activities from their interests and talents. They were found to embrace risk-taking activities only when free from fear and were assured of a safe and supportive environment.

The last one is group-based activities, which provide sufficient opportunities for the students to learn from one another. In this type of activity, the students, as a part of group performance, prepare, correct, practice, and perform as Pratikshya said:

The sir (a teacher) told us to prepare a show (dance/ caricature/ drama/comedy or something else. Some planned a drama, some to show a dance, some to act as caricatures, etc. We decided to perform an English drama, showed it to the teacher, and finalized it by getting the teacher's feedback, rehearsing, and preparing thoroughly to perform the task in the program. (19:12 ¶ 7 in Pratikshya Int 2)

In such activities, students were found to work in their world and consult their teacher when they were confused and encountered problems. In motivating tasks, students' whole mind, body, and spirit fully engage in learning.

In addition to student-friendly activities, activities from students' interest areas and group-based activities, brainstorming tasks, game-based tasks, and ICT-based activities are found to be motivating. Such motivating tasks are conducted not as a part of regular classes but as a part of refreshments or scheduled programs. That is to say, they have no significant role in grading. So, their connection with curriculum, learning content, and assessment is necessary to promote motivating tasks.

Hegemonic Discourse

Hegemonic discourse refers to the existing practiced culture with the belief that the students are incapable and qualified enough to disagree and criticize their

teachers' viewpoints and the administration's decision. It is true that the teachers, compared to students, have far higher qualifications, more knowledge and experiences of different walks of life, and far better knowledge and skills of the course because they have already gone through it and experienced it many times in different ways. Therefore, students, novices in the course, lack the knowledge and experience to debate and disagree with their teachers. Because of this deeply rooted concept of the banking model of education, the ongoing education practices have overcome the essence of 21st-century pedagogy. The students' frequent experience of their teachers' saying, "Don't you know such little things?" humiliates them in their studies. Low-proficiency students get demotivated because irresponsible teachers "refuse to encourage, care about, and communicate with students" (Gao & Liu, 2022, p. 4). The students dislike the teachers who dominate them and treat them dominantly. Conversely, the students are not obedient to the liberal teachers; they become unruly with such polite teachers. So, polite and liberal teachers have difficulty maintaining discipline in the class. Therefore, the students want their teachers to be firm in preserving discipline and responsible, reliable, and trustworthy. This is due to the poor mechanism for leading educational activities. The participants' experiences of hegemonic discourse in the study have been elaborated in three local themes: dominating behavior, dominating environment, and dominating task.

Dominating Behavior. Dominating behavior is using language and behavior in the form of power and status in communication to influence others. It includes verbal and non-verbal means of communication, actions, and reflections. Everyone in the school has a hierarchical status. That is to say, the SMC (School Management Committee) is superior to the head teacher, the head teacher is superior to the teachers, and the teachers to their students. Due to their socio-economic and personal

status, the students also have a hierarchy within themselves in the class as it is in society. The superior group treats the inferior one in a dominating way. The teachers and some students were found to treat the inferior ones authoritatively in different ways.

Firstly, bullying is a dominating behavior that the students have experienced in and outside the class. The use of nicknames is quite popular among teachers and students. The teachers use nicknames to dominate and control the class. Prajwal, a smart-looking boy, said:

The English teacher in my previous school used to tease and insult me. One day, he teased me, saying, “How long did it take to set your hair?” when I forgot to do my homework. He never pays attention to us and looks only at the girls. In this school, He was the teacher who used to call me, saying, ‘foppish (Oh, Jhilke),’ occasionally. (1:22 ¶ 5 in Prajwal Int 1)

Such use of nicknames is found to have haunted students even when they see the teacher on the way outside the school. Similarly, the students have also given a title/nickname to almost every teacher. Similarly, the use of dominating and insulting actions with detestable words was found to hurt students, as Bikal said:

One day, the sir (a teacher) asked me what he had taught us just before. I could not answer the question because I was thinking about the incident in which he had insulted me, saying, “Your brain is filled up with dirt and filth, is it” (Dimaag ma gobaar varioko chaki ki ke ho?). (3:9 ¶ 7 in Bikal Int 1)

The students always have a sort of respect for their teachers. They have no courage to go against them but accept their insult and domination without any immediate verbal reaction. However, they keep it in mind with some hatred towards them. The teachers see some students, particularly those who have higher status than

others, dominate their friends through different verbal and non-verbal means of communication, as T4 said:

Last year, during sports week, I ran a singing and dancing program in the class; after some students' shows, I asked Bipin (pseudonym) to show an English dance. I asked him to describe the song he danced. He described what the song meant. Later, I asked him why he could not answer the questions from the book, although they were easier than the song. He told me that he had a problem in the class. Even during the class, some boys beat, poked, and bullied him so that he would do nothing in the class. (12:7 ¶ 9 in Int 1 T4)

However, the teachers have not performed any significant role in harassing such behavior and encouraging the inferior or the victimized ones. The teacher almost always runs traditional mechanical classes. Vawana said, *“He usually comes to the class, asks us about homework, teaches us, and gives us too much homework. In the past, he used to be friendly, cooperative, and run different mind-blowing activities but does nothing such interesting things nowadays” (27:3 ¶ 6 in Vawana Int 2).*

Moreover, the students are tired of the teachers who appreciate themselves, which depicts just the opposite of the proverb, ‘Actions speak louder than words’ as Pratikshya said:

One day, he (a teacher) scolded and criticized one of his friends while talking with a friend on the bench where he had sat. From that day onwards, we hesitated to talk to him. When we asked him a question, he asked, "What is in your mind? Why can't you understand such a simple thing? “He talked in a way that he could grab all that his teacher taught during his childhood.” (20:5 ¶ 7 in Pratikshya Int 3)

Secondly, physical punishment, insults, and threats are still practiced to dominate the students. Bikal, who lives with his drunken father and step-mother like a subaltern expressing his pain and compulsion in the family, said:

Even in the classroom, the incidents (mother's death, stepmother's behavior) come to my mind. I always try my best in my studies and to pass +2 (SLC) and stand on my arms. We are in a poor situation, but some teachers insult and dominate us. I never forget Hari sir's (a teacher's) beating, insulting, and domination. I hoped he would support and save us from others, but... (tears in eyes). (3:16 ¶ 17 in Bikal Int 1)

The teachers' insulting and dominating words affected the students' excitement and encouragement. Jamuna, a nervous girl suffering from parental conflict, said, "I also feel uneasy when friends quarrel and fight in the class. Sometimes, I cannot finish H.W. of the subjects, particularly of Purna sir (a teacher). He (the teacher) insulted us, saying something bad, 'flirt' for not doing H. W.'" (4:5 ¶ 4 in Jamuna Int 1). Similarly, teacher T3, recalling his trend of punishing their students for maintaining discipline in a large class, said:

I experienced being nervous in the class. 'being polite in the class does not work' (naram hudaa ta terdai terdhainan). One day, I went to the classroom with a stick, wrote a topic and questions under the topic on the board, and asked them to read the text and be ready to answer the questions on the board. My angry look and rude and strict voice made them keep silent. Despite some students' insolence, the trick worked well. I used to beat, threaten, and scold them from the day onward. Later, I started to scold and warn them individually, not in class or not in front of their friends. It is still working.

However, I satire and insult the group when they do not follow my orders.

(11:7 ¶ 5 in Int 1 T3)

Though such behavior of the teacher controls students and maintains discipline in the class, it has disheartened their excitement and discouraged them from participating in different classroom activities excitedly. Pratikshya, recalling her days during the initial phase in the school, said,

Rita Madam's class is not so attractive. She speaks loudly and threateningly, so we do not ask her questions. When she lets us speak, we ask what we have not understood. She clarifies and ends the class. Only three or four of us ask her; others do not dare to ask her any questions. Some friends ask us to clarify what they have not understood in class. (19:10 ¶ 3 in Pratikshya Int 2)

Such behavior, though it has controlled the class for some time, has developed a sort of hatred towards the teachers and the school. Also, when students do not participate, do not respond, and stay silent, they are neither excited to participate actively nor ready to learn.

Thirdly, teachers' partial treatment, ignorance, and negligence have hegemonized students. Because of the dominant treatment from the superior, the teachers have entirely controlled the students, as Janak said:

When I went to school, the teachers did not respond to our greeting, 'Namaskar.' They always tried to keep us in control. We are like subalterns: we cannot go against them. H.M. says, "Go to Class." Teachers say, "Read, read, and read." Only some teachers asked us to have fun in class. The teachers' continuous explanations in class made us feel tired, bored, and sleepy. (5:7 ¶ 8 in Janak Int 1)

Besides, partial treatment by teachers has also affected the students. The teachers have discriminated against students from the beginning, as Vawana said:

I came to school to study, but we could not learn well here because of noisy students, partial behavior from teachers, and an uncomfortable environment. One day, I greeted him, but he ignored me and responded to Bina's (pseudonym) greeting. The teachers support those who are physically smarter and mentally better than us. (6:6 ¶ 3 in Vawana Int 1)

Teachers are expected to treat all students equally, regardless of their level of study and socio-economic status. Even a small example of such behavior saddens students and affects their learning.

The fourth is martinet behavior. The administration and teachers want their students to obey their orders and rules completely, but they do not follow them alone. The educational activities in the school have tangled in chaos because of the teachers' status quo, the head teacher's supremacy, and the school management committee's conservative perception and ignorance of 21st-century changes. T1, describing dominating environment, said:

We (the teachers) have a less harmonious environment because of politics and minor conflicts among ourselves, so we continue to talk and chalk on board practices. I have to go to class, teach students, give them notes, and prepare them for examination. We have no encouragement or facilities to lead the students in learning through different learner-friendly activities. The learner-friendly activities are expensive, time-consuming, and noisy to disturb others. We know how to teach students, taking them to the library, computer lab, hall, etc. However, requesting others (for example, repeatedly asking for keys) is time-consuming and potentially complain-oriented. In the last meeting, the

administration told us to teach well, keep students within the classroom, not let them go out, and prepare them well for the examination. (9:8 ¶ 7 in Int 1 T1)

Although the teachers are familiar with post-method pedagogy, they are habituated and comfortable using the traditional banking teaching model. Moreover, the concerned authorities, despite their slogan ‘student-friendly participatory classroom activities’ tend to favor the banking model of education and appreciate the teachers who run such teacher-centered activities as T1 said:

In a meeting, SMC members appreciated the strict teachers who taught students by keeping them quiet and complained about those who led student-centered activities. One of their voice is, “Ram sir’s (a teacher’s) class is outstanding. He was teaching very well, making pin-drop silent in the class, but the other sir (the teacher who engaged students in different activities) was watching students talking and making noise. (9:11 ¶ 9 in Int 1 T1)

Another is teachers’ inept and futilitarian behavior, which has limited the students within exam-oriented teaching-learning, as T4 said:

We worked hard during our time. Whatever we do is meaningless because nobody understands our difficulty. Now, I am in the retirement phase. Why study in this retired-near-age? What should we study even now? Nowadays, I do not have any worries and have enjoyed teaching the same subject for many years. (22:1 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T4)

The teachers, who themselves are reluctant and limit their teaching within the course, particularly within the areas likely to be asked in the paper-pencil test, have created a dominating environment as T4 said, “We do not have such use of the library. Students have difficulty in reading the prescribed textbooks, doing H.W. and

preparing for examinations. Some extra-ordinary students borrow books and read” (22:3 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T4). The teachers themselves are not familiar with the advantages of library study. Their significant role in refreshing, motivating, activating, and leading them ahead in different learning activities is not possible to empower them and enhance their confidence from such persistent teachers.

Finally, the students experienced being hegemonized due to linguistic and cultural variation. Students from different linguistic backgrounds have varied pronunciations and accents. Because of such differences in their accent, they are dominated and affronted. T2, remembering his findings in the class, said:

Sometimes, I see some students teasing, insulting, isolating, or ignoring their friends due to their linguistic and cultural differences. For example, last week, Bina (a student) wept to say, "They teased and insulted me, saying 'taapaai' (you)." Tamang students pronounce tapaaai (you) as taapaai (you). Because of it, they are teased, insulted, and dominated... (10:5 ¶ 8 in Int 1 T2)

Similarly, the teacher has experienced his students’ pain of being dominated due to differences in accent. The accent from the mid-western region of Nepal, as T2 said:

The students from the mid and far-western parts of the country have different accents. They have unique and different pronunciations. Once, I asked a student, “Can you do it?” She said, “Jati try gareni shagdai shagdainaa (Despite great effort, I could not)”. Because of this difference in pronunciation, she is still teased, saying ‘hagdai hagdaina’. (10:6 ¶ 8 in Int 1 T2)

The students always have a fear of domination, whether through verbal and non-verbal cues or through (in)direct insult or isolation; as T3 said, “*I satire and*

insult in the group when they do not follow my order” (11:8 ¶ 5 in Int 1 T3). The teachers have a sort of compulsion to control the large class. It is a force for them to have a dominant role.

The teachers have a hierarchy within themselves and are inferior to the head teacher and school management committee members. The SMC members’ order has been indigestible for the teachers as T4 said, *“I felt quite uneasy when some of SMC members ordered us to teach in a dominating way without letting students make noise in the class”* (12:12 ¶ 9 in Int 1 T4). The teachers have children from parents who are illiterate, unaware of education, and careless. T4, being tired of illiterate parents, said:

Some parents, SMC members, teachers, or even some students usually ignore our honesty, politeness, or simplicity and respect for those who are over-smart and showy without any sense of honesty and intelligence. One of the parents, getting drunk, shouted, “The teachers do not teach well; they have no work.” Hearing his complaint and seeing SMC members and some guardians smiling at him, I felt uneasy and regret about being a teacher. (12:11 ¶ 5 in Int 1 T4)

The teachers are tired of and frustrated with the hierarchy-based school administration. They find quite a few people to appreciate their honesty and hard work. The environment and discourse force them to be dominant and inept. Similarly, T5, explaining the cause of liberal and polite behavior, said:

We have too many students in the class, and controlling them is difficult. They do not have a level of curiosity about the subject. We have no such wicked students, so controlling has been easy. Everything is normal; parents are aware of education but have no time to come to school, pay no attention to their children’s education at home, and provide minimum requirements to the

children and ask them to study well. I think it is because of poverty and the pressure of other work. (13:9 ¶ 4 in Int 1 T5)

To sum up, in a few words, the participants have experienced domination through different behaviors reflected from bullying, physical punishment, insulting, and threatening; SMC members and teachers' partial treatment, ignorance, and negligence; their martinet behavior; and linguistic and cultural variation. It was found that neither parents and teachers nor SMC and concerned authority have played their responsible and accountable role. As the proverb 'One flower makes no garland' indicates, a joint effort is required to establish a cordial and sociable environment and discourage dominating behavior.

Dominating Environment

Because of the dominating environment in the family, in the school, and in the classroom, the students participate and perform their roles with a defeated mentality. The students who have experienced a dominating environment have developed their perception similarly. They have learned to be led, not a leader, to become a follower and wait for others' orders to advance. In such an environment of a traditional model of education where "teachers are pillars of knowledge; they know everything and students know nothing" (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p. 78), students have always been inferior to teachers, think that the teachers know everything and deposit knowledge in them, and cannot disagree with their teachers. The students have also experienced that disagreeing or debating with the teachers and seniors will harm them at any cost somewhere else.

Concerning the proverb 'home is the starting place of love, hope, and dreams,' it stipulates that the home environment influences the children's education. Most students in community schools lack a supportive environment in the family. Their

parents themselves are not affluent and educated enough to support their children. The students, particularly those whose parents are less educated, heedless, and pay no attention to their children's education, have suffered from a dominating environment. They have to follow their parents' orders, work hard in the family and do not have time to study at home. In addition to this, parents' conflicts and violence in the family have haunted them, as Jamuna said:

I have no one to play with, study with, and spend time with. My father drinks and beats my mother. I cannot control this and begin to weep when I see it. Sometimes, they discuss and fight and are about to divorce. It has made me so sad and haunts my mind frequently. (4:13 ¶ 6 in Jamuna Int 1)

In a family where parents create an unfriendly and hostile environment, their children become victims and are likelier to lose their hearts to grow with their potential talent. The parents and guardians themselves have become victims of injustice as T5 said, "*Last year on the day of PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) meeting, One of the parents came in the meeting getting drunk, another was in an aggressive mood, and some spoke with pain and agony they have undergone*" (13:10 ¶ 6 in Int 1 T5). Children from such family backgrounds can grow with social skills and intellectual growth only when they have a supportive and fearless environment in the school. However, the school has many more challenges to establish such an environment. This is a challenge in the school beyond the teachers' efforts. So, it necessitates embracing "Freire's radical rejection of a class-based society" (Freire, 2005, p. 13) from planning to practice level and establishing a student-friendly, classless, justifiable environment.

Apart from home, the students are nurtured with knowledge and skills in the school. The school has an SMC to care for, manage, and lead the school as per the

guidelines of the local government and a headteacher with administrative staff to run financial, administrative, and educational activities as per the guidance of the SMC. H. M., with teaching and non-teaching staff, has a significant role in managing, mentoring, and monitoring all the educational activities in the school. Furthermore, every school has a PTA (Parent Teacher Association) to promote teaching and learning activities both in the school and at home. All of their joint efforts determine the quality of education. The more cooperation and collaboration they make, the more systematic and better the quality of education the school can have. Most schools are tangled with the conflict among them, their interest, and their negligence. As a result, despite qualified and experienced teachers, sufficient infrastructure, and facilities, they have been unable to provide the quality education as expected.

Although it is said that the teachers have sole authority to run different activities in the classroom, they are not encouraged and empowered to run different learner-friendly activities. So, they subdue their knowledge and experience to lead the students with 21st-century pedagogy due to the SMC members' order, as T1 said:

Teaching has been a frustrating job: we have to follow the orders of visionless people; we have to finish the course and prepare students by giving clear notes and preparing them for examinations through rote learning. Though the course is flexible, we have to follow the traditional trend of teaching. (9:6 ¶ 3 in Int 1 T1)

Because the teachers have to maintain discipline in large classes, finish the course on time, and prepare them for examinations, they ignore students' needs and interests, insult them, and even warn them scolding, "Can't you remember such a simple thing?" (8:16 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 1). As a result, the students begin to be frightened, suppress their curiosity, and keep silent in class; as Chinmaya said, "We

have to accept everything the teacher says and be scared to speak against their saying” (8:17 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 1). So, the students find themselves like subalterns, as Bipana said:

We are poor; sometimes, we do not have money to buy dresses, copies, or anything we need in school. Because of it, we feel tension and cannot concentrate on our studies. We have no one to understand our pain and compulsion. So, we keep silent, blame no one, and respond to no one in any way. It is because of our luck. (17:12 ¶ 3 in Bipana Int 1)

When the students do not get anyone to support and encourage them in school, they feel suppressed, isolated, and dominated. Then, they cannot bear the suppressing environment and search for potential options to escape, as Bipana recalled:

We are poor, but they do not have to feed, cloth, and shelter us; we are fat and ugly, but they do not have to feel uneasy; we are weak in study, but why don't they support us to improve our study and insult, dominate, and isolate. They have the salary to teach us, improve our education, and make us good citizens. Because of his (teacher's) insult and domination in the class, Meena (pseudonym) left the school. (17:14 ¶ 5 in Bipana Int 1)

The students with a poor, supportive environment in the family come to school with the hope of learning something but experience even more dominating treatment in the school. In such a suppressing environment, the students with a defeated mentality cannot concentrate on studying and learning anything, as Vawana experienced, “*We all wanted entertainment, but he forced us to open the book and began to explain. As nobody was interested in reading and writing, everyone was sitting by looking at the book, not at the teacher*” (27:1 ¶ 6 in Vawana Int 2). The teacher’s duty is not just to explain the text and give notes and capsules for the paper-

pencil test but to arouse students' curiosity, provide critical guidelines, and motivate them to struggle ahead and meet the goal.

The teachers commonly understand that being polite in class does not work. The teachers are pessimistic about the profession, as T4 said:

We have to follow the order of the SMC committee. The committee members do not know the essence of 21st-century pedagogy. This ignorance has forced us to embrace traditional ways of teaching. We must finish the course on time, give notes, and prepare students for examinations. We have no motivation to prepare our students for their life. We always force them to read the text and prepare for the examination. We rarely run activities to prepare them for their life. (12:8 ¶ 11 in Int 1 T4)

The concerned authority is unaware of the needs of the 21st century, which is changing the world for children. They provide limited expenses for instructional materials. Due to this, the management has not encouraged the teachers to run different curricular and co-curricular activities, as T5 said:

The administration says, "We (school) have no such amount to run different activities; you can do everything but be economical, keep students disciplined, and do not let them run out of the class," so we have followed the traditional teaching model. It is easier, more economical, and as per their interest. (13:11 ¶ 6 in Int 1 T5)

Despite their higher education and longer experiences, the teachers are inferior to SMC members who are pedagogically less aware and politically (s)elected. To empower teachers to nurture students with 21st-century skills, making them responsible and accountable with the necessary facilities is necessary. T5 further painfully said:

Some SMC members, especially politically biased ones, treat us as if we are their servants and they are the superior ones. They complained because I forgot to greet 'Namaskar' to a SMC member last month. In the staff meeting, he said, "We have some teachers who are stingy even to greet SMC members; how can they teach the students about obedience?" I am sick of this profession because of politically biased leadership. (13:13 ¶ 8 in Int 1 T5)

Inept behavior of the people in superior positions has affected the inferior's enthusiasm. Because of discriminatory practices of politics, the teachers, particularly those who ignore politics or favoritism and want fairness, are reluctant with their work, as T3 said:

Being a teacher is not as comfortable as it is expected. We have a different environment that we know only when we enter here. We are judged based on our political link, and how good we are depends on our link, not our performance. I am reluctant sometimes (kahile kaahi ta sir, jaangar nai marera aauxa). (14:13 ¶ 19 in Int 2 T3)

Instead of being motivated to lead their students to grow in social skills and intellectual advancement through different learner-engaged activities, teachers perform their roles with a defeated mentality. Teachers with pessimistic minds cannot perform their roles efficiently, regardless of their knowledge and experience. Provision for making them optimistic is necessary.

In addition, the students have also experienced a dominating environment, even in the library. The schools have not established their library as a study center for their students and teachers. Almost every school has a library, but the management has not utilized it in the way that it is a learning center. In some schools, it is

somehow hopeful, and in some, it is frustrating and has not been appropriately managed, as Bipana said:

We rarely go to the library. There are heavy books but nothing for us to read. The library neither has comfortable chairs or benches to sit and read nor sufficient study materials from the areas of our interest. It is dark, congested, and almost always closed. I have never seen anyone study there. (21:4 ¶ 5 in Bipana Int 2)

The schools have not developed libraries to motivate the students and teachers to enjoy learning there. The libraries in the school have quite a few student-friendly facilities such as reading books and a study hall. They have many heavy books donated by others and quite a few learner-friendly books. In addition, the libraries have poor learner-friendly environments. Despite creating a comfortable study environment to involve students in different learner-engaged activities, the school management has many more problems in the library, as T3 said:

We sometimes lead the students to the library, but they are not interested in borrowing books. Only the students who are better in the class borrow books. When we ask H.M. to bring more books for children, he says, "We have no budget, no trained manpower for library management." (15:4 ¶ 6 in Int 3 T3)

Every school requires sufficient space, manpower, and facilities in the library. The concerned authority is not prepared committedly to manage the library and provide a learner-friendly environment with sufficient materials and services. Correspondingly, the teachers were found neither using the library nor encouraging students to benefit from it, as T4 said:

We do not have such use of the library. Students have difficulty reading their textbooks, doing H.W., and preparing for examinations. The students who are

extraordinary borrow books and read. More than 70% of students never submit their H.W. Moreover, studying unnecessary books overloads the students. (22:2 ¶ 5 in Int 2 T4)

Although the library refreshes students, it is perceived as an unnecessary load. The students visit the library to find books that interest them and that they enjoy reading. It creates curiosity and develops study habits as they see others studying in the library. It has been a burden for the school. The management has not developed the library as a learning center where they enjoy reading and learning something. The teachers also have not used the library to promote students' reading.

In short, the family, school, and classroom environment have influenced students' learning. The H.M. in the school, the parents in the family, and the teachers in the classroom have many more challenges to create a learner-friendly environment. The challenges include parents' ignorance, the influence of politics, internal conflicts, and inept behavior of teaching and non-teaching staff, and the top-down model of education delivery system. However, students who have a motivating environment, at least in one of the classes, school, or home, are stimulated to thrive ahead in their studies.

Dominating Task

Out of the different activities run in the class, some are dull and tiring, while some are exciting and engaging. The students have experienced dominating tasks in the class. The tasks include teacher-dominant activities, assignments, and related activities. Although they have different needs, interests, and talents and want diversities in learning activities, they have undergone dominating activities, as Bipana said:

Sirs (teachers) order us to read, read, and read; it is dull. Teachers focus on the essential lessons and ask us to prepare for examinations. We always have the same boring classroom activities: listening to the teacher, reading, and writing. (17:30 ¶ 13 in Bipana Int 1)

The students are frustrated with long reading text, content-based listening text, and writing tasks. Since students have difficulty remembering everything in the textbook, they worry about the examination. In this way, the students, being loaded with different tasks from the interests of dominant elites, have been dominated. The teachers use students' weak points to keep them in control. The teachers also dominate students from students' weaknesses. They are familiar with students' strengths and weaknesses. Some teachers use students' strengths to promote their learning while others use their weak points to control them, as T1 said:

I do it by making use of students' weaknesses. For example, I once saw two students, one boy and another girl, hugging and kissing secretly. I reminded them of the incident using the words, "Shall I disclose everything?" to control them. From that day onward, they never made any noise in the class; instead, they looked quite sincere and loyal to my class. (28:1 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T1)

The teachers are pressured to control the students in the class, which has many students. To control them, they use different tricks. The tricks are dominating and insulting. The assignment is another pressure for students. The assignment is from a lesson from the textbook taught in the class. It is neither student-friendly nor part of the next day's classroom activities. The teachers give their students assignments after they teach the text, as Jamuna says:

I did not read the book borrowed from the library because I had difficulty completing homework. We have seven periods daily, and almost all the

teachers give us homework. If we do not do the homework, we hear sarcastic words or get punished. (30:2 ¶ 5 in Jamuna Int 2)

The students have experienced assignments as a burden, not as a part of reflecting on what they do during classroom activities. Chinmaya expresses the pressure she has undergone as:

The teachers teach us, give us notes and assignments, and highlight the possible questions likely to be asked in the examination. They are neither exciting nor easy to read. Reading our textbook makes us sleepy, tedious, and fed up because of the dull and lengthy content. (31:6 ¶ 10 in Chinmaya Int 2)

Moreover, the examination is another pressure for the students. The students have experienced that they have a heavy course and cannot prepare all the chapters well for the examination and find it quite difficult to guess the area to prepare for the examination, as Chinmaya recalls:

The examination is challenging and frightening. We cannot guess where questions are asked from. In the examination last year, I worked hard. I made notes and learned important lessons by heart, but questions came from another side I had not studied by heart, so I could not remember the points. Despite the complex study, I could not do well in the examination. So, I have no enthusiasm for working hard at my studies. (31:8 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 2)

The work teachers give students in the classroom, as homework or for the examination, dominates them. Because of the pressure of the examination, students embrace all the tricks to perform better in the examination. The students who cheat have good grades, and those who cannot cheat become weaker.

Students find their classroom captain's control more comfortable than the teacher's lecture or instruction. "During my visit to S2 school, I found students sitting

inside the class during the period they had no teacher to teach them. As I was observing from outside in the way, the students did not know I was observing them. I found them enjoying the class. Some were writing/ drawing or talking to each other, and so on. They had two captains who would try to keep them disciplined or let them go outside turn by turn. They had a rule to stay inside their class even during the period they had no teacher. When I entered the class and asked them about their leisure period, they said, "We stay inside the class doing what we like but cannot play, talk loudly, or do anything that disturbs others". Though it was boring to stay in the class without doing anything, they found it better than the teacher's lecture" (Field observation: 28/03/2022, 12:11). Like the proverb 'Empty mind is the devil's workshop' indicates, the students, having nothing productive to do, might feel bored and become excited to engage in risky behaviors, such as treating others ill-mannerly or experimenting with harmful or damaging activities. In such cases, they are more likely to engage in destructive or antagonistic activities. During leisure, the students might feel bored and become excited to engage in risky behaviors, such as falling into bad company or experimenting with harmful or damaging activities. Being engaged constructively, students can utilize the leisure time preparing to perform as "performing actions implies creativity in every day or scholarly settings, with its highest manifestation in the preparedness dimension" Elisondo et al. (2022, p. 7).

The students, under the control of the classroom captains, felt imprisoned and suffocated. However, they found it better than teacher-led classroom instruction. Today, personalized, justifiable, and goal-oriented classroom activities are in demand to replace teacher-led, monotonous instructions.

In short, the students have experienced the work that the teachers give them in the classroom as classwork, a part of an assignment at home, or notes to memorize to

prepare for the examination as a dominating task. They are compelled to do such work. It is a force for them. If ignored to complete the task given, the students are likely to suffer from teachers directly or indirectly in different ways.

Learning Content

The learning content includes study materials to be delivered to the learners. It can be a book, report, video, article, etc., that fulfills the designed objectives.

Learning content is “The topics, themes, beliefs, behavior, concepts, and facts, often grouped within each subject or learning area under knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, that are expected to be learned and form the basis of teaching and learning” (UNESCO-IBE, 2013 as cited in Kumar et al., 2021, p. 3). Learning content has two organizing themes: student-friendly content and tedious content.

Student-Friendly Content

In schools, students have subject-wise prescribed textbooks which include different learning materials to be studied. Some are welcoming to the learners, while some are not. The students work on them heartily and strive to meet the goal when they find them friendly and goal-oriented. To motivate students to work on the content, the teachers should open the space for them to work on it or play with it differently. For this, “providing multiple options for engagement is essential” (MOE, 2021, p. 136). It provides choices for the students in the textbook and leads them to work on it. The nature of learning content from the textbook determines students’ engagement: The more attractive the content they find, the more time they spend on it, and vice versa. Similarly, when they find the learning content interesting and useful, they work on or play with it even when they do not have class, homework, or no need to prepare for the examination. Xie (2021) also claims, “The more engaged the students are, the less bored they feel and the less monotonous they find the class

activities” (p. 3). Student-friendly learning content in the study has four local themes: Exciting activities from content, Exciting content, Exciting tasks, and Need-based exciting activities.

Exciting Activities From Content. Learning content, whatever its nature is, becomes student-friendly when it is mixed with student-friendly activities such as games and songs, as T4 expressed:

Students like games, rhymes, singing, and dancing, or action-oriented activities. In the activities, I (the teacher) led them to play table tennis with the reading text, breaking it into small pieces of information; they were more active and learned better. The students excitedly worked on the text to prepare for playing the game. They tried their best to remember the information as they had to say one piece from the text to hit the ball. From the day onward, I ran language games to excite the students to work in the class. They had a cheerful face and became ready to work when we told them to prepare for the game. (16:7 ¶ 8 in Int 4 T4)

On the other hand, the students find the content without exciting activities tedious and monotonous. For example, both the teachers and students have found the listening part of the grade eight course of English to be unexciting content. The listening part, as it is not important for examination, is devalued and skipped while teaching in the class. The same listening skill could be developed using student-friendly authentic videos or documentaries that the students like and enjoy. Students would enjoy the listening text if it were from students’ needs and interests, as Bipana (pseudonym) remarked:

Sir, I have no interest in opening a book to read in the house but always enjoy watching English cartoons, Chinese, Korean, and Turkish dramas, Chinese

fun videos, and Hindi serials on television or sometimes on mobile. I can talk a lot about Tom and Jerry. When I was small, I enjoyed watching Motu Patlu and Little Krishna. (17:31 ¶ 15 in Bipana Int 1)

It shows that the students prefer the listening text from their interest to the ones from their textbook. They have found that the listening text from the textbook is neither exciting nor valuable for them. They are designed from the interest of the coursebook writer, the dominant elites.

In addition to this, action-based activities created from the text to be studied make the content motivating and engaging. As T1 mentioned in his experience, “*I (a teacher) asked them to do something with the text. They created different things. Some produced comedy, wrote a song, developed the text in verse and chanted in Ramayan lyric, and made tiktok*” (28:4 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T1). The students are not interested in listening to the teacher’s explanation but want to do different things they want from the learning content.

The students want diversity in content that covers their wide-ranging interests and preferences. They feel lethargic from repetitive activities in class. The teachers lead the students to work on diverse activities that are related to their interests. Like the teachers, the students can lead them to the designed destination through diverse activities. In short, the teacher’s role or art of using content in different activities determines the students’ participation.

Exciting Content. Exciting content stimulates students to work on them. Whether the learning content is exciting or boring depends on the needs and interests of the students. The students work on such content even outside the time of their class, assignments, and preparation for the examination. The learning contents that include ICT and dialogue-based activities, songs, rhymes, videos, and problem-

solving events are found more exciting for the students, as Jamuna expressed her experience:

The poem 'Farmer's Longing (Kishan ko Rahar)' in Nepali was exciting. So, we enjoyed chanting the poem in class during the break. Similarly, some stories are pretty interesting. We used to practice chanting poems and telling stories in class when we had no classes, but in this period (subject/class), we had so many exciting stories and poems to enjoy during the break. So, we talked about the videos we watched and the tiktok we liked. (4:10 ¶ 12 in Jamuna Int 1)

The students had a bitter experience with the teacher's lecture in class. They enjoy learning through their experiences and observation. Nevertheless, the students find the content exciting when it is from the areas of their needs and interests, as Varat mentions:

Some lessons are exciting because they are exciting. Before the first terminal examination, while teaching technology (lessons from grade eight English), sir (the teacher) read the text. He explained it and gave us a note explaining the CPU, mouse, and monitor in a computer. We felt sleepy and tedious. The same thing taught by the computer teacher was so interesting because he took us to the computer lab and asked us to open a computer and described what to do with the mouse, CPU, etc. (7:4 ¶ 9 in Varat Int 1)

All the students do not find the same content exciting equally. It depends upon their needs, interests, and talents. They enjoy working on the content that they like and find interesting. Exciting content promotes self-study, as Varat further expressed:

We read exciting lessons even when we have no class, no exams, or no homework because they are exciting and valuable. One day, we were telling a

story in the class, the stories we read and heard from our friends and seniors. It was exciting to discuss the stories told in the class. When the teacher came to the class, ordered us to keep quiet, and began to explain the day's lesson, we felt sad and bored. So, from then onward, we sing, tell stories, or perform something in the class only when we are sure the period is leisure. (7:12 ¶ 9 in Varat Int 1)

The students work on the content outside the classroom when they find it valuable and entertaining. Not only the students but also the teachers find the learning content boring or exciting, as T1 expressed his experience:

I (the teacher) have found some lessons useful and student-friendly; some are too long for children and unimportant, so I have skipped them. Last year, I tried to make the classroom more interactive, but only four or five students spoke; most hesitated to speak in the lesson as it was long and beyond their interest. They are excited to speak when asked about their holiday, culture, or something from their life. Even the students from the last bench raised their hands to tell us. (16:10 ¶ 10 in Int 4 T4)

If they get content from their context, the students find it exciting. Likewise, when students get the content from imaginary worlds like science fiction and fairy tales, they feel exhilarated, as Bipana has remarked:

One day, the teacher told us a story, 'An Encounter with the Ghost,' and asked us to write a ghost story we had read or heard. The next day, every one of the students had written a story. The teacher asked us to tell the story in class without seeing our writing. It was exciting to hear different stories. Moreover, at the end of the class, he told us to write the story in English. It was difficult

to say the story in English, but everyone tried it because it was conditional compared to other stories. (17:24 ¶ 15 in Bipana Int 1)

The class, in which the teachers have started the lesson with the context of students or from the areas they have experienced and led them towards learning goals, has been more engaging and student-friendly. In case the teachers have a difficult task to teach, and the task is quite beyond students' interest, conditional learning has become worthwhile. In addition, the students find ICT-integrated content exciting as Bipana recalled her experience of a practical examination:

I was not interested in reading, but I have always enjoyed watching English cartoons, fun Chinese videos, and Hindi serials. I can talk a lot about Tom and Jerry. It was interesting when Bikal sir (a teacher) gave us a task to explain from the English videos we watched for practical examination. (17:25 ¶ 15 in Bipana Int 1)

Being led by such learning materials, the students enjoy learning, make their best effort, and meet their goals. Similarly, Prajwal, recalling his experience of stimulating ICT-integrated content, remarked:

Once, the teacher told us to choose an English video from the list he gave, watch it, and try to answer the questions asked. I chose a story, watched it in the house on my mother's mobile, and solved all the questions given. I watched the video three times because it was interesting, and one shot of watching was insufficient for me to answer all the questions. (18:9 ¶ 4 in Prajwal Int 2)

When the students have interesting content to learn, they enjoy learning by themselves and try their best to complete the task given. The existing textbooks contain less such learning content. He further expressed:

When she (the teacher) found us feeling bored and tired due to the hot summer weather, she showed us a video, led us to discuss the story we watched on the video, and gave us homework from the video we watched. It was pretty interesting we felt how fast time passed. I vividly recall how effortless and fun it was to learn stories from the videos. (18:10 ¶ 8 in Prajwal Int 2)

Although interesting stories are included in the textbooks, the students have not enjoyed them as expected. The teachers have also found their students more engaged in ICT-integrated learning content, as T2 has claimed:

When played an English video or cartoon and led them to work out on it, they were excited and could answer the questions given. When I gave homework from the videos, they attempted most of the questions. I have used such content in my own ways, not in the text, and only for practical examination. (29:4 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T2)

Some contents motivate students to create something from their talent and interest, as Chinmaya said, “From the story of the book, I have made a tiktok” (31:1 ¶ 4 in Chinmaya Int 2). She further expressed her experience as:

The storybook motivated me to read other books for entertainment and to make videos/TikTok videos. One day, I got a book for children named ‘Children’s Kitchen.’ Learning to work in the kitchen and making different foods was so interesting. From the book, I learned so many things about the kitchen. I have also read a book, ‘Chhori lai arti’ (Advice to Daughter); it is so helpful for a daughter in our society. After reading this book, I began to speak politely and precisely. (31:3 ¶ 6 in Chinmaya Int 2)

If the library contains several books from different areas, the students can choose the one that suits their interests and learn a lot from it. Library use can

stimulate the students if it is utilized as a place for refreshment and entertainment, as Chinmaya said:

The books from the library are more interesting than the textbook. Reading such books from the library is exciting, and they are helpful for us because of their contents and pictures. Such stories are exciting and valuable for our lives. (31:7 ¶ 10 in Chinmaya Int 2).

The students like the content, which includes rhymes and stories from the existing textbook, songs, videos, documentaries from YouTube, and student-friendly books from the library. When they find learning content exciting and valuable, they read and work out on it. The existing educational practice has confined teaching-learning within the textbook, discouraging using the library, *YouTube*, and other resources. Further, the schools have not developed their library to promote library study.

Exciting Task. Exciting tasks are engaging, entertaining, and challenging. Puzzles, IQ tests, work on pictures and charts, and language games are some of the exciting tasks the participants have experienced. They also include dialogic and participatory activities. Prajwal has expressed:

Bijaya sir (a teacher), usually during the initial phase of the academic session, before/after Dashain/long vacation, makes fun in the class: running the antakshyeri program, sometimes word meaning/ game, sometimes singing and dancing, and so on... The discussion on the activities we performed and participated in is exciting. It is more interesting to write our reflection on the activities we performed and participated in inside and outside the classroom. In such activities, we like to speak and participate. The activities, such as

games and discussions on videos/cartoons, we watched were quite exciting.

(1:23 ¶ 9 in Prajwal Int 1)

In such activities, students are free to work but have particular challenges in meeting the target because they must read other content for examination. In addition, Bikal said:

He (the teacher) told us a story, stopped in the middle, gave us some clues, and asked us to complete it. Initially, we had difficulty writing as we had stories in mind but had difficulty expressing them in written forms as no word came to mind to write. Later, after the teacher encouraged us to write what came to mind, we began to write. It was challenging to begin writing. (3:17 ¶ 9 in Bikal Int 1)

By organizing exciting tasks, the teachers have motivated the students to grow with 21st-century skills. However, such activities are limited within the classroom, during specific periods, and on certain days. It is because they have to prepare for high-stakes testing. According to Summerford (2009), “When students are engaged fully, the whole mind/body/spirit, into the academic learning classroom, nothing but magic will occur” (p. 14). The students will be ready and willing to tackle any new challenge. Such exciting tasks keep students engaged and help them develop their potential skills. For the promotion of such practices, reform in the assessment is necessary.

In short, the participants have experienced watching videos, documentaries, and discussions about them, performing and participating in different activities and discussions about them, and completing incomplete work that is more exciting and engaging. Classroom activities like these are occasionally conducted, but not as often as expected.

Need-Based Exciting Activities. The students learn enthusiastically when learning is made need-based. Teachers can motivate students to work on the task by implementing activities necessary for practical examinations during their free time. The notice to participate and perform their roles makes the students more excited. For example, when a notice for a singing and dancing program comes, the students interested in singing and dancing become excited. Bipana, who was fond of singing and dancing, recalls the programs of her interest and said:

I like singing and dancing very much. I remember the days when the notice came for us to write a story, poem, or song, put it on the notice board, and prepare to perform on the stage the following week. I wrote a song, put it on the noticeboard, and performed it on the day. Before putting it on the notice board, the teacher asked us to do it in class. It was not easy, but I performed it because it was needed to obtain practical marks. (17:27 ¶ 19 in Bipana Int 1)

The students work hard to perform in class, get feedback from their friends and teacher, and refine and make it even better for performing on the stage in front of an audience. Although the students have to perform on the stage in an organized program for five to ten minutes, they work on it for a long time with their best effort. Their self-esteem and desire for reputation or respect from others have motivated them to work even more excitedly in such activities. In other words, the students, along with their interest and talent, are motivated by esteem needs; as McLeod (2018) said, "...the need for respect or reputation is most important for children and adolescents and precedes real self-esteem or dignity" (p. 4). They prepare with their best effort because it is an opportunity for them to earn a reputation for their interest and talent.

The students have their own needs and wants in life. Bikal, recalling his experience of destitution and agony of not having a well-wisher even in the family, said,

One day, some people came to our class and asked about technical education: 'How can we empower ourselves?' They also told us about farming and described it as the most accessible and cheapest occupation to earn money. I am so poor and lonely, so earning money is my essential need. I decided to learn a lot about farming. From that day onward, I read a book about farming, the easiest way to earn money. The book has empowered me in some cases. The book has taught me how to run animal farming with a small quantity of money, how to grow unseasonable vegetables on the farm, and so on. (23:5 ¶ 12 in Bikal Int 2)

Students learn many things from family, society, and school. From this learning, they have developed a worldview. They dream of living a dignified life according to their understanding and potentiality. The prescribed textbook has not fulfilled the diverse needs of the students.

In short, the participants have found two types of content exciting: activities related to students' interests and the compulsion to fulfill them and the knowledge and skills they find essential for their lives.

Tedious Content

Students find learning content tedious when it ignores their needs and interests, when it lacks their movement and freedom, when it contains theory-based content that is beyond their level, or when it includes monotonous activities. From the past till now, "Teachers face too many classes, too many students, and too much administrative control" (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 2). Therefore, they cannot plan and launch activities that can make tedious content enjoyable. In the study, the

participants experienced different monotonous and unengaging learning contents. They are described into four local themes: tedious listening text, tedious reading text, tedious exercise, and tedious theory-based content.

Tedious Listening Text. Listening to a particular content becomes uninteresting for the students when it is beyond their context, interest, and level. The students have experienced the listening content of prescribed textbooks as difficult, boring, and tedious. Prajwal, recalling his experience of learning listening in class, says:

When he (a teacher) asked us to answer the question from the listening text of the book, we found it quite difficult and tedious. We could not concentrate on it. It was difficult as well. When the teacher played the record player, we could not understand the context and the text. (18:11 ¶ 4 in Prajwal Int 2)

The listening text from the textbook is not as per students' interest. Besides, the listening part is not significant from an examination point of view. The students enjoy watching cartoon videos, games, songs, and movies but do not listen to textbook text. Therefore, "Context of the subject area must be critically assessed" (Melling & Pilkington, 2018, p. 50). The teachers have experienced teaching listening as dull and complex, like T2's experience:

When I taught listening text from the textbook, they (students) felt the content was boring and difficult and could not answer the questions asked. They had to listen to the text and answer the questions asked, but most of them ignored to answer all the questions. However, the students were excited when asked to sing a song they watched in the video. (29:3 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T2)

The concerned authority has not modified the listening text, and the teachers have skipped it, saying it was not crucial for the examination. The students find the

learning content unfamiliar, strange, and beyond their needs and interests like the “knowledge is handed to them like a corpse of information -a dead ‘body of knowledge’” (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 4), without any connection to their real life. The teachers themselves are reluctant to teach the listening text because of the difficulty in managing materials to teach, as T3 says:

I have faced problems with materials such as speakers and projectors in class, especially when teaching listening. I have to manage the speaker to teach listening. I usually teach listening through my mobile. Last year, I taught two listening lessons and skipped others as I had no materials to use, and it was/is not important for examinations either. (15:2 ¶ 2 in Int 3 T3)

In conclusion, the students are not interested in listening to audio records from the textbook but are quite interested in watching videos or cartoons. Since students are unfamiliar with the background environment of the conversation in the textbook’s listening context, the contents are also beyond their interest. Both the teachers and the students have experienced the listening part of the text as a burden: neither exciting nor important for the examination.

Tedious Reading Text. Students are reluctant to read the text of the prescribed textbook because they are beyond their interest. “Reading comprehension is a complex text, which requires the orchestration of many different cognitive skills and abilities”(Sachran et al., 2022, p. 424). The existing reading texts are not as per the students’ interest. So, they find the reading content difficult and monotonous. The majority of the students do not go thoroughly from the reading content but prepare for the examination from the teacher’s notes and critical guidelines without reading the content of the textbook, as Jamuna said:

Some lessons were so complicated and tedious. Whatever attempt we made, we could not remember everything. So, we try our best to remember the points or notes given by the teachers. In the last exam, I made cheats (pieces of paper with answers to the questions likely to have been asked in the written examination) from the teacher's notes and copied them into the examination. We read the difficult lessons only from the teacher's notes. (4:11 ¶ 12 in Jamuna Int 1)

The students have experienced the existing reading text as brutal and against their interest. However, they are forced to prepare for paper-pencil tests. Because of the pressure to pass the examination, they are demotivated to read other books, as Bipana said:

We have no work in the library. It is rarely open. It was opened, cleaned, and colored last month. Some people had visited it, and they had also told us they had donated books for us. However, we have nine textbooks to read. It has been difficult to read all the books. One day, I read the lesson 'biography' three times but understood nothing and began to make cheats from the teacher's note for examination. We had difficulty reading our textbook and how we could read other books. (21:5 ¶ 7 in Bipana Int 2)

The students have a sort of detestation towards reading text as the content is beyond their needs and interests. Due to a lack of motivation, the students have no interest in reading other exciting books from the library; as Jamuna said,

Although we visited the library, we took no book to study. As the teacher told us to take one of the books from the library next time, I borrowed a book as other friends did but returned it without reading a single page. Because of too

many lessons from the textbook to read, I have a sort of aversion to other books. (30:3 ¶ 5 in Jamuna Int 2)

The students are tired of their textbooks. They have experienced reading a book as a difficult job. This lousy impression of reading is reflected in Varat's experience, "*When I see the text to read, my mind is filled up with aversion. The reading text is boring and difficult. They are neither exciting nor useful in life. So, we read them to pass the examination*" (7:18 ¶ 9 in Varat Int 1). This is because of the pressure of rote learning for students. The students are limited to the prescribed textbook. They are frustrated with reading other books because of the pressure to read textbooks in school, and they are frustrated with other books as well.

Because of the many textbooks to read, the content beyond students' needs and interests, and their lack of motivation to read, the students have found reading text an unnecessary burden. They are demotivated to read because they have seen quite a few people reading. Moreover, their teachers do not have reading habits; they have not connected reading text with different learner-friendly activities or linked reading books with classroom activities and assessments.

Tedious Exercise. Each chapter of the textbook has (an) exercise(s). The students, after reading the chapter, have to complete them. In addition, the teachers give them homework to complete in the house or classwork to do in the class. The students are excited to do and submit the assignment that they find easy and exciting. In contrast, they hesitate to do the assignment or the work they find challenging and uninteresting. The students are rarely motivated when the teachers connect refreshing activities such as playing and watching videos with complex and monotonous tasks. Instead, the students are found to have escaped the fun activities because of complex and long assignments.

Since the students do not have a study environment in their house, homework has tortured them. Assignments have been a burden not only for the students but also for the teacher. It has become an overload for the teacher to check all the students' assignments and provide feedback if all the students complete and submit their assignments. Students' assignments have been a burden for the teachers, as T2 said:

I used to collect students' homework and ask them (the students who had no homework) why they had no homework. Later, most of them started doing homework. It became a burden for me to check all copies, and later, I stopped compelling students to do it. Controlling more than fifty students, caring for them, leading them to attempt all the exercises, and satisfying their queries is difficult. (10:10 ¶ 6 in Int 1 T2)

Home assignments have become a burden for both the teacher and the students: teachers collect, check, and return with feedback, and the students complete the task given from the text, which is difficult and tedious. Similarly, classwork, when used conditionally, became a part of discouraging the weaker students, as T2 says:

When I gave them work and offered them to play after completing the exercise, most students felt the work was hard to finish. They found the exercise long and difficult. The better ones finished their work and ran out to play but did not help their friends. The weaker students could not complete the exercise and stayed inside the class without doing it. It became a punishment for the weaker. So, I stopped it. (29:6 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T2)

The exercises in the textbook and the assignments the teachers give are not student-friendly. It has become a pressure and torture for those who are weak and have no supportive environment in the family. As T4 says, *"I gave students a long exercise as homework; the students who could not attempt it were on the last bench.*

When asked, they told me that they had not understood the lesson. Seeing their tired and nervous face, I did not force them to complete the homework” (16:12 ¶ 10 in Int 4 T4). The students found the exercises tedious and stressful because of the long and challenging exercises, the unsupportive family environment, the task beyond the students’ needs and interests, and their weak level. On the other hand, teachers are overloaded with roles. Being reluctant to go through all the students’ assignments and provide sufficient feedback, the teachers give a complete answer and ask them to prepare for the examination.

Theory-Based Tedious Content. While creating theory-based content for students in school, it is essential to consider their grade level, background knowledge, subject matter, and its implicational part. Students find the reading text monotonous and hesitate to work on it when it is content-loaded and against the students’ level, need, or interest, as Pratikshya said:

He never makes fun in the classroom. He explains the text, gives notes, and tells us to prepare for the examination. One day, he told us how to write an essay, gave us some essays to read, and told us to prepare for the examination. I know the idea of writing a good essay. but I cannot write an essay practically. (24:11 ¶ 3 in Pratikshya Int 1)

Such teaching has made students message receivers or instruction followers only. The students want to work together or in their own way but detest being an information receiver or instruction follower. Similarly, the teachers have a monotonous role. As T1 said, *“During the Covid-II phase, we could not finish the course in time and were complaining. We have many students in the class. We cannot pay attention to every student. We must finish the course, give them clear notes, and prepare them for examination” (9:19 ¶ 3 in Int 1 T1).* Such coercion has forced the

teachers to embrace the top-down model of education. In addition to the heavy learning content, the concerned stakeholders and authorities have also forced the teachers directly or indirectly to lead exam-oriented classroom activities, as T5 said:

Parents' unnecessary complaints, SMC members' illogical talk, and pressure to finish the course and prepare students for the examination have led us to make theory-based teaching. Our SMC members have quite a little idea of teaching, particularly the changing pedagogy, but they always advise us to be strict and teach this way and that way. We have uneducated or less-educated parents who rarely come to school. (13:14 ¶ 6 in Int 1 T5)

Curriculum designers have to make the learning content flexible and logical to lead the students from the areas of their level, need, and interest to the target. Then, the students become excited to work on the content. For this, the students should have opportunities to select the learning content from the list. “The content thus constantly expands and renews itself” (Freire, 2005, p. 109). Textbooks that have confined teaching-learning activities to only paper-pencil tests have made teaching-learning monotonous, boring, and tedious. In the words of Xie (2021), “Boredom can be reduced by providing students with options so that they could feel more autonomous in the process of learning” (p. 3). The students, if they get the learning content of their own choice, can perform as leaders, and if it is not, they become just followers.

Teaching Learning Activities

The students have experienced curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities in the school. Curricular activities are closely connected with upgrading and are practiced as the most crucial activity, whereas the other two are for yearly programs. During the curricular activities, the teacher leads the class by explaining a lesson or a part of a text, asking students questions, and giving them notes and

assignments. They sometimes run discussions and student-centered activities that are teacher-led, not students-led meaningfully. The students have experienced them as boring, tedious, and demotivating. During this period, they forcefully attempt to listen to the teacher. They will likely lose their concentration and wait for the bell to ring. Secondly, they have practiced co-curricular activities. These activities could be made wholly student-led but are also teacher-led. For example, a quiz contest as a co-curricular activity could be planned, organized, and run by the students themselves with their teachers' direction or guidelines. The students themselves could be planners, organizers, participants, and audience. However, they are led by the teachers, who ask some students to sit as participants on the already managed benches and others to sit or stand as the audience. However, students experience such activities friendlier than the teacher's teaching in the class. Extra-curricular activities are highly student-friendly, challenging, and exciting. These activities, which could be made student-led and goal-oriented, are also teacher-led and run for the sake of events. In such activities, students could be led to work as organizers, participants, reporters, volunteers, or audiences. However, they are either participants or audience. Having no such unique role or duty, they participate in or watch the events, enjoy them, and go home. Furthermore, the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities have no noteworthy connection with assessment and academic competencies. Teaching learning activities have two organizing themes: student-engaged activities and boring activities.

Student-Engaged Activities

Engaging students in activities is a crucial aspect of effective learning. The activities that engage students in different activities involve searching, reading, and practicing to prepare for performing their roles. Such activities motivate students to

participate actively in class, perform their roles, and achieve their goals. “The more engaged the students are, the less bored they feel and the less monotonous they find the class activities” (Xie, 2021, p. 3). Despite their presence in schools’ yearly plans, student-engaged activities are not promoted significantly because they are time-consuming, expensive, and effortful. The organizing theme ‘student-engaged activities’ in the study has four local themes: student-led activities, action-oriented activities, ICT-centered activities, and need-based activities.

Student-Led Activities. Student-led activities encourage students to take on leadership roles in the classroom. The activities in which the students have significant roles, from planning to summing up a program, make them responsible and accountable. One way to make classroom activities student-led is the use of a library. Using the library, students can be motivated to run the activities from the reading materials of their choice to meet the target. Prajwal, explaining his teacher’s role to make them engaged in preparing for performance, said:

I always remember the teacher’s book review program, which I liked very much. It was exciting, and we enjoyed reading stories and learning from one another. We did not get textbooks during the initial phase of the academic year. The teacher used to take us to the library, ask us to choose a book, read it, and prepare to talk about the story later in our turn in the class. Initially, I felt nervous to speak in front of the class. Nevertheless, later, it became easier. Reading, saying, and listening to new stories was pretty funny. (1:11 ¶ 9 in Prajwal Int 1)

A well-managed library can be a powerful resource for learners of all levels and performances, as Prajwal said:

I like the library, period. It was during the initial phase of the academic year when we had no books. At that time, Milan sir (a teacher) took us to the library, asked us to choose a book, and prepare to say or write about the book or its picture. The task was quite funny to see colorful pictures of the book from the library and describe them. We had no pressure, but seeing different books, selecting one, and going through it was fun. In the beginning, I borrowed small books full of colorful pictures. If we found the book uninteresting, we would look for another book. (18:4 ¶ 2 in Prajwal Int 2)

In this situation, students are not forced to read a book; they can do what interests them. They can do anything they want but within library rules. Seeing others studying or doing some learning activities motivates them to do academic work. The library offers a variety of books, journals, multimedia materials, and online databases. This diversity caters to various learning styles and preferences.

The next student-engaged activities were game-based and performance-based. Game-based and performance-based activities can effectively engage students and promote their active learning. In this regard, Prajwal said:

Milan sir (pseudonym) used to take us to the ground, play videos, and ask us to follow its instructions; sometimes to the field to describe our experiences, and sometimes to a program organized in the surroundings where we had to work as a reporter, as a volunteer or as an observer. We had to describe what we did in the field when we returned to the class the other day and submit a report from the role we had. (18:5 ¶ 10 in Prajwal Int 2)

Assigning roles to students can have several positive effects on their engagement. It can make them active, responsible, and accountable. Not only outside

the classroom but also inside the classroom, the students have experienced different activities as engaged and action-packed as Prajwal says:

Bijaya sir (a teacher) sometimes usually during the initial phase of the academic session, before/after Dashain/long vacation, used to make fun in the class: sometimes running antakshyeri program, sometimes word meaning/ game, singing and dancing, and so on...and the discussion on the activities we performed and participated is exciting. It was more interesting to write our reflection on the activities we performed and participated in inside and outside the classroom. (1:12 ¶ 9 in Prajwal Int 1)

In such activities, the students are stimulated to work hard to prepare and perform their roles. Teachers conduct such activities to refresh students and motivate them to work on the textbook, not as a part of the assessment.

The students have experienced different ways of teachers' vocabulary teaching strategies, but the outdated, dull techniques are still dominant. Anagrams, odd-one-out, word meaning, and language games are vocabulary teaching techniques the students enjoy during classroom activities. Pratikshya talks about the odd man out with reason technique as an interesting vocabulary teaching technique, saying:

He usually teaches us in a friendly environment. One day, he taught us to use the odd one-out technique. The part of teaching 'odd one out,' in which the teacher led us to practice writing on board, was quite interesting. We would feel quite excited in such classes. I remember his teaching where he wrote words scrambled on the board and asked us to unscramble the letters and find the odd ones. I also remember his teaching to make another word from the letters of the word written on the board. (20:6 ¶ 9 in Pratikshya Int 3)

The students have experienced teaching reading skills using performance-based group work in the class, as Pratikshya says:

He (the teacher) conducted an exciting activity on a topic. In the program, he divided us into different groups; each bench was a group, and everyone had a role to perform. In our group, I had to define and introduce the given topic. Another had to describe the negative and challenging side of the topic; the next friend had to describe the positive and robust side, and the last one of my friends had to conclude with the answers to the possible questions. As the sir (teacher) said, "We collected information from the library, teachers, and the internet and prepared under each part of our work." Though I was not so good at speaking, with the support of my friends, I introduced the topic and performed my role well. (20:4 ¶ 5 in Pratikshya Int 3)

In such group work, the students enjoyed working because they had interesting topics to prepare and perform. Students enjoy working on the task given, especially when they have topics to prepare and perform. Engaging with the subject matter and finding it compelling can enhance their learning experience and motivation.

The third strategy for making classroom activities student-led is notice board use. A noticeboard can be a valuable tool to enhance communication, program or event organizing, and engagement in teaching and educational settings. It has helped announce important information, updating classrooms, learning resources, etc. Bikal mentioned his experience as follows:

When we saw stories, jokes, comedies, or songs written by students and stuck on the board, we got lured and went to watch them. Once, I wrote a list of IQ questions and put them on the board with a pseudonym. The teacher asked us who Poojan (my nickname) was in the class. I kept silent and frightened.

Later, the teacher said, “The questions are interesting and puzzling”. After some time, they found that it was me to put it there. From that day onward, I created something new and put it on the noticeboard, as everyone has to do for practical marks. (3:13 ¶ 13 in Bikal Int 1)

Using a notice board, the teachers motivate students to create something that fits their interests. To stimulate every one of the students in the class, the teachers have allocated certain marks for practical examinations. Using the notice board, the teachers encouraged the students to perform their writing from the stage. Bikal, recalling his stage performance, says:

The notice board made me excited to write a song as well. After some days of the notice to put our writing on the notice board, I wrote a song, 'What a baby wants at Home and in School.' In this song, I have also added ideas from friends' experiences. I wrote it and sang along, corrected it, and sang it in front of my friends in the class when we had no teacher and with the teacher in the class. Finally, after collecting their feedback and suggestions, I finalized it and put it on the notice board. It was the song that made me weep so many times and made me happy. (3:20 ¶ 13 in Bikal Int 1)

It was the song he had created and put on the noticeboard. Despite the challenge of being nervous and frightened, he enjoyed singing it as it was his creation, and he had the strong support of his class teachers and classmates. The students enjoy their own and friends' performing from the stage, but they need support and motivation from their teachers to face such challenges, such as performing from the stage during the initial public speaking phase.

The other strategy is stage performance, in which students select an activity based on their interests and talents and prepare to perform. The students were asked to say something about the activity before they performed as Jamuna experienced:

During the initial phase of the academic session, our social studies teacher asked us to perform one thing in our turn in front of the class. We had to describe and perform what we had told him as our talent and interest. (4:14 ¶ 8 in Jamuna Int 1).

Performance of play/drama, caricature, joke/comedy, singing, and dancing were found to be practiced. The students become hard working for the best performance from their side because they require planning and rehearsing such activities. They consult their teachers as per their needs to improve their presentation.

The fifth tactic is group work, in which a group is given a specific task. The group is a collaborative learning approach where students work collaboratively to achieve a common goal. Varat, recalling his experience of classwork, said:

She used to teach us using a picture, giving clues, or creating supportive context. She first used to show a picture and its description and asked us to discuss it in our group and write as many sentences as we could. Her teaching through videos or documentaries was enjoyable. (7:16 ¶ 13 in Varat Int 1)

Working in a group, each member can learn from one another. The students were found to be engaged in such group work. In such a program, the teacher's tiny clue can be a great asset for the students; as Chinmaya said:

In project work, he (a teacher) divided the class into groups, including talented and weak students, and gave us a task. During our work, he came to us and gave us key ideas. He also supported the groups who were slow to

finish the work. Because of his support, our group prepared the best report and stood first. (8:10 ¶ 6 in Chinmaya Int 1)

Chinmaya further said that the students who used to ignore her began to share their ideas with her. The organized programs, such as science exhibitions and fancy-dress competitions, were found to be even more collaborative and student-engaged. Recalling the origami competition, T3 said:

We had an exhibition program of paperwork. Class teachers were responsible for leading their children in performance. I encouraged students to make use of YouTube and their skills and prepare a variety of items. Because of some students and their parents' skills in paperwork, I enabled the students to produce different paperwork. Some students observed the class as outsiders, visited other classrooms and saw their products, and advised their group to improve the setup and make more new items. (14:9 ¶ 9 in Int 2 T3)

Science exhibitions, origami, kirigami, drawing and painting exhibitions, quiz contests, debates, and speech programs are some of the student-led activities practiced in the school. However, they were not wholly student-led. When the students are assigned a role to perform in a group, they learn collaboratively and become more responsible.

The sixth is a translingual technique in which the teacher tells the students or asks the students to say a story or a joke and asks others to write in another language, as Bipana said:

She teaches us science and social studies. She also involves us in different activities. She performs by herself and asks us to perform. While teaching, she sometimes sings a song in which the learning content is added. She tells us

stories, jokes, poems, and the life histories of famous people in English and asks us to say/write such stories in Nepali. (17:16 ¶ 7 in Bipana Int 1)

In such activities, students enjoy listening in the Nepali language and writing in English rather than the reversed way.

The last is using videos and documentaries to prepare for presentation and discussion. It is one of the best techniques practiced in the school to prepare students to build their confidence and lead them in dialogue. Recalling one of Friday's activities, Pratikshya said:

He (the English teacher) used to ask us to choose and watch one of the videos (song, rhyme, speech, documentary..., etc.) from a list and explain or perform what is in the video. Every Friday, we used to have no class but a presentation and discussion on the videos we watched, but later, it was stopped. In such periods, we do not know how fast time passes. (19:14 ¶ 13 in Pratikshya Int 2)

Students were more engaged in such activities when they chose the videos or documentaries. When they watch such videos or documentaries, they also learn pronunciation with a native flavor.

The participants experienced nine student-led activities. They are library use, fun and engaged activities, vocabulary learning, performance-based group work, notice board use, stage performance, group work, translingual technique, and video and documentary use in teaching and learning. The organization of such activities does not seem to have run well. They are still traditional. The teachers also have difficulty planning, managing, and leading students in such events. Besides, they are not very important for the examination. So, the teachers focus on traditional ways of teaching rather than such events and programs.

Action-Oriented Activities. The students become ready to take risks and face challenges if the activities are from the areas of their interest. Prajwal, recalling his experience of a book review program, said:

When I was in my previous school, some teachers used to take us to the library and let us select a book or a story on the computer. Seeing others take a book to read, I also borrowed a small one because we had to share what we read. The pictures in the book and a few sentences about the picture motivated me to read it, and I found it quite funny and exciting. As the teacher asked us, in my turn, I described the story in the class and, later, in a program. I still remember the book review program in which I had described the book, 'The Horse and the Snail. It was a new story for others but quite familiar to me.

(1:24 ¶ 25 in Prajwal Int 1)

The students select a specific genre to review, see its writing style, and improve their style. In addition to this, they interact with others, exchange their ideas, expand their knowledge, and build confidence. Secondly, group-based activities promote teamwork and collaborative learning. Though performance is mainly important, the activities for its preparation are even more critical, as Chetmani said:

Our English teacher told us to prepare a drama in English for stage performance. We discussed this in class and prepared different stories. After sharing all the stories created by the groups, We selected a story with the teacher's help and asked him to edit and refine the language for rehearsing. It was difficult because it had complex and unknown words. However, we prepared well by consulting the dictionary and practicing sincerely. We were afraid of making mistakes on the day of the presentation, but we made no such noticeable mistakes. Our jokes with acting made everybody laugh. We felt

thrilled when the audience shouted, saying once more. (2:6 ¶ 7 in Chetmani Int 1)

For the performance of such programs, the students work hard in their house, discuss with their friends, get feedback from their teachers in the class, and strengthen themselves. They feel free to work, make collaborative learning, have mutual understanding, and meet the goal.

Similarly, the students enjoy singing from the stage as Jamuna, a weak and maudlin girl who became an influential performer, said:

Although I am weak and nervous, I can sing well. I decided to sing a song because of Prabin sir's (a teacher's) support and motivation. I practiced and rehearsed in the house and even in the class in front of my friends and teacher. On the day of my turn to perform an English song, I was nervous, but with my friends and teacher's support, I dared to perform. As I, in my turn, began to sing 'We are the world, we are the children' with action. Everyone in the program began to sing with me. It was so interesting. Later, our English teacher asked me to perform it in the 'School Annual Program,' which encouraged me to learn other songs. (4:7 ¶ 8 in Jamuna Int 1)

Although it was a challenge for her, it became interesting because it was her choice, and she got support and motivation from her friends and teachers. Schools have many programs and events to empower their students with their talents, but the practice phase is too weak. This is because such activities have not been connected with assessment.

Moreover, Janak, recalling his moving around watching other groups' preparation, says:

The week our class had to prepare for Friday's program was exciting and challenging. Some were preparing for a caricature, some for a dance, and some for developing the content of a drama. As we had different groups preparing different activities for performance, the teacher moved around to motivate us, saying to make the Friday program more enjoyable than previous ones. He observed our performance and provided necessary feedback. (5:9 ¶ 6 in Janak Int 1)

Teacher's support and stimulation, inspection of what is going on, and suggestions as per their need have led the students' working towards the target. Besides, the classroom activities in which the teachers divide the students into different groups and lead them to prepare to perform their assigned roles are found to be student-centered. Such activities are not focused on in the schools as they are not supportive of the paper-pencil test, as T1 said:

We lead students to run different activities (debate, quiz contest, poem/song/ painting /drawing/origami practices) when we (the teachers) have few students in the class and no pressure to finish the course. We are happy to run such activities. However, we have certain limitations: no money for such activities, insufficient time, and no encouragement from the concerned authority. Despite students' interests and demands, we control them as they are less important for the examination. Before running such activities, we usually collect students' interests and talents and ask them to describe how they learn, write, or perform as their group is assigned. (9:12 ¶ 11 in Int 1 T1)

The students were genuinely responsible and accountable in such participatory or competitive programs. They want the assessment in which they are asked about the activities they organize, participate in, or perform, as Bikal said:

We were asked to choose one of the videos/ stories from the list we made in the class. We enjoyed it and obtained better marks in the examination because we had to answer the questions from the videos we watched, the stories we read, or the work we did in class. Nevertheless, they are only for practical examination. We must read books and recite all the essential formulas and points for the paper-pencil test. (23:2 ¶ 8 in Bikal Int 2)

Students can enjoy such classroom activities and meet their goals. However, such practices, though needed to be promoted, have not been encouraged. Taking a leading role is challenging for students, but they can do it if they start from the area they already know and perform in.

Learning items can be integrated with games and lead the students to play because they are fond of games. The use of language games such as TT games and balloon games in the classroom is fully action-based as Bikal said:

On Fridays, Mohan sir (a teacher) usually organizes engaging learning activities such as puzzles and language games. The balloon games and TT games were quite interesting. During the break, the teacher led us to play TT games to learn the names of places/ things and vocabulary, beginning with a letter. (23:4 ¶ 10 in Bikal Int 2)

Game-based learning activities promote students' creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. They also increase students' participation in learning activities, foster social and emotional skills, and motivate students to take risks and face challenges. Online games, on the other hand, help students understand the functions of computers.

In short, the students have experienced a book review program, individual and group work in the class as a part of the preparation to perform from the stage, game-

based learning activities, and participatory activities like paperwork and quiz contests as action-oriented activities. Since these activities are unimportant for paper-pencil tests and have no significant upgrade role, they are less prioritized.

ICT-Centered Activities. Information Communication Technology, an advanced means of communication, has influenced every walk of human life. ICT has creatively changed the way we live, the way we communicate, the way we learn and educate, the way we run a business, and the way we do anything else. It provides students and teachers abundant opportunities and access to resources to learn and apply 21st-century skills. ICT has been so influential that a man without computer skills seems illiterate. However, school education is still dominated by a traditional education system with no ICT-integrated curriculum, ICT-assisted teaching-learning activities, and ICT-integrated assessment. The students and teachers have found ICT-connected classroom activities friendlier, more accessible, and more engaging. Therefore, “A well-designed teacher training program is essential to meet the demand of today’s teachers who want to learn how to use ICT effectively for their teaching” (Ratheeswari, 2018, p. S46).

The participants in the study have experienced ICT use in teaching learning in four ways. One is the use of ICT as an online source in teaching-learning. The students are found to have understood better when the teachers use online sources, as Varat said:

We have a computer lab in the school. Some teachers sometimes take us to the lab. Sometimes, they play the videos for us and teach us how to operate them. We have sufficient computers in the lab but cannot use them in our leisure time. The computer teacher showed us, told us to use them, and explained

them. We understood clearly when the science teacher showed us the videos of how to make hydrogen gas in the lab. (7:5 ¶ 3 in Varat Int 1)

Similarly, the students have enjoyed learning stories from online resources. Prajwal, describing one of his exciting learning experiences, said, “*As we agreed, the teacher showed a video and gave a list of questions and a link to watch the video at home. They run discussions in the class, and led us to exchange ideas related to the content of the video*” (1:19 ¶ 23 in Prajwal Int 1). It motivated them to watch the video and complete their assignment, as it was also discussed in the classroom. When students watch a video, they understand and interpret it in their own way.

The second is students’ resentment against textbooks and craze with ICT. The students read the textbook not by interest but by force, especially during class, while doing assignments, and during the time to prepare for the examination. However, they were curious to work on the videos they watched even when they had no class, no assignment, or no need to prepare for the examination, as Prajwal said:

He (the teacher) took us to the computer lab and told us to choose any videos from the list, watch them, and describe what we understood. When the period was off, he asked us some questions and asked us to watch the same video at home and answer all the questions. (1:13 ¶ 11 in Prajwal Int 1)

In such work, the students having a choice were found to watch the videos and try their best to complete the assignment. Using videos in teaching and learning can be a powerful and versatile tool, providing various benefits for educators and students.

The third technique is the provision of ICT-integrated assignments. ICT-integrated assignments can be a dynamic and engaging way to incorporate technology into teaching-learning. T2 has found the students better motivated while using ICT in the class, as T1 says:

The listening part of the textbook is neither student-friendly nor likely to be asked in the examination. I have not taught them (students) the listening part from the textbook. Instead of them, I have used online student-friendly sources. They are excited to work on them. I have found the students better motivated when I gave them assignments after showing them different English videos (like All About Social Skills), cartoons (Taale of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny), or programs. (10:9 ¶ 16 in Int 1 T2)

The students perceived the listening part of the textbook as tedious, unimportant, and useless. When they find the part of the learning content of the textbook, particularly the videos on the internet, they are found to have compared them with that of the textbook as Prajwal said, *“I have already read ‘The first man on the moon is no more.’ its video in youtube is more exciting than that of the textbook. The video shows the real situation of the moon. The language in the textbook is difficult”* (1:21 ¶ 25 in Prajwal Int 1). The teachers can easily divert students’ attention toward goal-oriented activities if they have online learning fun activities, as T3 said:

We have nothing to teach from the textbook, so I take them (the students) to the computer lab and ask them to use the computer in their own way. As students passed or wasted time using Facebook, playing games, and watching videos, I asked them to play the 'Raam baaNa' game and warned them not to stop playing the 'Raam baaNa.' It is useful to develop typing skills and later dictation practices. As they wanted to be free from the class, they played Raam baaNa, a game for typing skills. (14:17 ¶ 15 in Int 2 T3)

However, the game is not related to the English course. It can become a tool to prevent the students from wasting time unnecessarily and lead them to practice

dictation. The students have found ICT used as a resource to learn and prepare for organized programs such as exhibition and stage performance programs. For example, Bipana, as a group leader participating in an origami competition, said:

Sometimes, he (the teacher) uses a computer to teach us to find a place from the map. He would tell us to start a computer, go to Google Maps, and give us the name of a place near our school and ask us to find it out. He used to give us hints about the places to explore on the map. (17:19 ¶ 9 in Bipana Int 1)

Teaching about exploring different places and describing how to get there is essential, but whatever online resources students and teachers have used are not authenticated by the concerned authority and do not have any significant role in grading. Despite such possibility in education, the paper-pencil tests have still been the dominant assessment tool, as Varat experienced, “*We have paper-pencil test even in the examination of computer*” (7:10 ¶ 7 in Varat Int 1). Another problem is the access to computer facilities. Though the schools have a computer lab, they are locked and out of easy access, as T3 has experienced, “*Taking students from the class to the lab, asking the guard to open the lab or looking for the key, opening the computer is time-consuming*” (14:11 ¶ 17 in Int 2 T3). Because of this botheration, the teachers limit the students within the class. Therefore, “Education needs to make an instructional shift to ensure our students succeed as future innovators” (Alismail & McGuire, 2015, p. 150). Appropriate use of ICT during classroom activities makes students more engaged and goal-oriented.

In short, ICT is a tool that leads students to meet the target from their needs, interests, and talent areas. Its use is both teacher and student-friendly. It is one of the best tools to shift the top-down to the bottom-up education system. It also provides opportunities for individualized or self-paced learning. ICT-integrated teaching-

learning activities, if managed to meet the 21st-century standard (Alismail & McGuire, 2015), can be a milestone for quality education. For this, ICT-integrated curriculum, teaching-learning activities, and assessment are essential. However, ICT use in the school has been limited to refreshments and extra-curricular activities.

Need-Based Activities. Need-based teaching-learning activities are designed to address specific learning needs and cater to the individual requirements of students. The students participate actively and learn heartily from the developed and conducted activities per their needs and wants. For example, the students who cannot complete simple tasks in their English class have completed even more complex tasks on the computer, such as finding a game they want and downloading it. It is because they are fond of games and despise textbooks. Because the students are curious about cartoon videos on mobile or computer or playing games in the field on mobile or computer, they work on such activities enthusiastically. Therefore, the students work enthusiastically on student-friendly activities in which the teachers have integrated learning content. In the study, the students were found to participate and perform devotedly in four situations.

Firstly, teachers' role and class environment determine students' interests. They work on the activities wholeheartedly and effortfully when they have a favorable environment, as Chetmani said:

In Milan sir's period, we enjoyed the class because of his friendliness, interactive class, and ICT use in the class. As we felt lazy and sleepy due to the hot weather and the difficult lessons to learn, he told us a funny story, gave us tasks, and waited for our response. We completed the assignment because he would tell us other stories after we all submitted the assignment he gave. (2:7

¶ 3 in Chetmani Int 1)

The students are interested in online activities such as games on mobile or computer and videos and participate fully when they find learning activities connected to ICT. Secondly, the students are interested in the activities they can perform something new from their side. Creating activities that spark curiosity, provide opportunities for students to showcase their skills, and present a challenge can be highly motivating. In other words, they become curious about the activities they find their performance to be an opportunity and a challenge. In sharing her group work experience, Chinmaya said, “*For making our group work better than that of others, we sat together, discussed, and planned after school before we left*” (8:7 ¶ 8 in Chinmaya Int 1). Such collaborative learning has made students critically aware and sincere in their work. Thirdly, the students were found to participate enthusiastically when the teacher made learning conditional, as T2 said:

Kiran sir's group formation and group-wise work were exciting. Everyone in the group would get equal marks for their performances. So, everyone had to support each member of the group. Hari (one of my colleagues), who had never sat with me and rarely spoke to me, began to teach me. He would lead me to practice presenting well and appreciate and clap when I performed well. Once, we had to perform a play in the school. When we got our roles in the play, we talked and divided each of our roles and work. As the work was fixed on the previous day, we sat together, discussed, and planned after school before we left for our better performance. It made me curious and frightened... (14:6 ¶ 11 in Int 2 T3)

In such group work, students work hard from their side and exchange their ideas as their performance is a part of prestige and grading. They employ their best

effort not to give anyone any chance to ridicule or criticize them for their performance.

Finally, the students were found to work sincerely and attentively when they were intrinsically motivated and conscious of education. T1, sharing the sincere, active attention of a girl, said:

Sometimes, I use IQ items to motivate the students. One day, I explained five vowel letters (a, e, i, o, u). Then, I asked them to find a word with all five vowel letters. All the students tried writing different words in their copy, but finding the right word was difficult. One girl sitting on the last bench and skimming the lesson to find the word with all the vowel letters (a, e, i, o, u) said, "Education. (28:3 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T1)

Teachers usually focus on the students in the first, second, and third benches and ignore the ones in the last benches. Students go to sit on the last benches of the class for different reasons. For example, some may not have time to study at home and complete homework, and some may be weak in reading and writing. A great teacher reads the students and their social and familial situation and treats and leads them in learning.

To sum up, in a few words, the participants have experienced that need-based activities have promoted students' engagement in classroom activities in four ways: firstly, teachers' friendly behavior and supportive role have stimulated students to work effectively; secondly, when students, without any domination, find it is necessary to participate and face the challenges; thirdly, when teachers make learning conditional: completion of specific work is necessary for fun and freedom; and lastly, when students are aware of education and feel it is necessary to learn and grow up, they are better engaged in the classroom activities.

Boring Activities

Boring classroom activities fail to engage students, lack variety, and may not effectively promote learning. The students start yawning or begin to look absentmindedly in the dull and unproductive classes. They have experienced monotonous activities, teacher-centered activities, and extended reading or listening texts as uninteresting. As the proverb ‘An idle brain is devil’s workshop’ indicates, students without activity-based or action-based work are likely to think of mischievous activities in school or class. Bullying is one of the results of such mind-numbing activities. The boring activities have four local themes: teacher-led activities, content-centered activities, monotonous activities, and exam-oriented activities.

Teacher-Led Activities

Teacher-led activities are based on the teacher-centered approach in which students have a passive role: sitting on the bench, listening to the teacher, and taking notes. The teacher-centered approach is “an educational system based upon rote learning and memorization”(Muganga & Ssenkusu, 2019, as cited in Baghoussi, 2021, p. 270). In this approach, the teachers are the experts in transmitting knowledge, and students are receivers of the knowledge. Therefore, “teacher-centered pedagogy is linked with top-down and hierarchal pedagogy”(Kitiashvili, 2020, as cited in Baghoussi, 2021, p. 270). In teacher-led activities, the teachers, talking in a monotonous voice all the time, made the students bored and sleepy, as Bikal said:

There are about 49 students in the classroom. Hari sir (pseudo name) teaches us without giving anyone any chance to speak. He lets us speak only after he finishes his lectures. Though I wanted to ask in the middle of his lecture, I could not speak and lost my curiosity to ask him at last, and sometimes, I forgot the question. It is tough to listen to him for a long time and remember

everything he tells us. During his class, we always feel passive and sleepy.

(3:1 ¶ 5 in Bikal Int 1)

Some teachers rarely make classroom activities interactive and student-centered. The students are frustrated with such teacher-centered activities because they have the same activities all day in the same way. Vawana, recalling her usual classroom trend, said:

Binod sir's class was so boring. We had no enjoyable activities in his class all the year. He used to appreciate himself repeatedly. We all used to feel sleepy (Uhaa ko period ma ta jhupu jhupu hunthyo). He used to read the text, explain it, and give homework from the exercise at the end of the text.... (6:12 ¶ 11 in Vawana Int 1)

Such supercilious teachers' vainglorious talk and their monotonous activities make students enervated. It also discourages the students' critical understanding. The fact that "Movement energizes and integrates the body and brain for optimal learning" (Summerford, 2009, p. 7), students want movement in the classroom.

Likewise, by giving lectures and too much work for reading, the teachers have made their students dull and mechanical. T3 has also expressed how he has led dull and unproductive classes, "*Most of the time, I read the text, explain it, give them keynotes, and ask them to read and memorize for the examination. I skip some parts of the book like listening to the text and focus on the important lessons or chapters*" (11:11 ¶ 10 in Int 1 T3). The teachers are compulsive in running such classes on one side; on the other, they find it difficult and bothersome to launch different activities. Explaining the lesson in their way is easier than planning, instructing students, and stimulating them occasionally with constructive feedback. Similarly, Pratikshya has experienced a traditional monotonous classroom. "*The teachers usually ask us for the*

book, open it, and say, “*Today’s topic is ...in page...*” and then read the text, explain it in Nepali, and move ahead. Sometimes, ask, “*Did you understand?*”... *Tomorrow’s H.W. is....*” (19:16 ¶ 15 in Pratikshya Int 2). “They (teacher) keep adopting the teacher-centered method because they encounter many constraints during their practice” (Baghoussi, 2021, p. 277). Despite their knowledge, training, and enthusiasm, they embrace traditional teacher-led activities because of possible restrictions.

Teacher-led activities maintain a hierarchy and make students followers only. They have not encouraged students’ active participation and collaborative learning. This changing world demands that dull activities be replaced with interactive, action-packed, and goal-oriented activities. However, despite their voice to make the school fully child-friendly, the concerned authority is not ready to create such an environment for the teachers to plan and run dialogue-based, activity-centered, and goal-oriented activities.

Content-Centered Activities. Content-centered activities are instructional strategies and exercises that deliver and reinforce specific subject matter or academic content. In content-centered activities, classroom activities are limited to the learning materials of the textbook, which is a comprehensive compiled set of learning contents. In such activities, the teachers have dominant roles and limit the activities within the textbook. Classroom activities, which are expected to activate and prosper the potential talents and creativity of the students, are limited within the textbook. Varat, tired of memorizing points and formulae, said, “*Khum sir used to teach sentence structures using formulas. He used to give us formulas, ask us to memorize them, and tell us how to apply them in sentences. It was difficult to remember all the formulae*” (7:15 ¶ 13 in Varat Int 1). Students have to remember formulas, their exceptional

cases, their application in different situations, and important points for better exam results. So, they are pressured to keep them in mind. Similarly, the teachers must give key points and capsules for the students to remember for the paper-pencil test. The teachers. T2 expressed his experience of difficulty in finishing the course:

We have difficulty in finishing the course. We have no class because of different holidays, strikes, examinations, and Covid-19. Due to the second spread of COVID-19, we had few classes, so we had pressure to finish the course by explaining the text and giving keynotes, but students could not answer most of the questions. The students said, "We understood nothing in the class." However, we upgraded them. (29:2 ¶ 2 in Int 2 T2)

The teachers mainly focus on finishing the course and preparing them for the examination. They have neither the time nor the opportunity to lead the students ahead with the knowledge and skills for changing situations.

Content-based activities have become traditional, teacher-centered, and hierarchy-oriented because the syllabus is designed with the belief that learning should start from what the experts think the students have already learned and should learn, not from what the learners have learned. The learning content should be redesigned to make classroom activities participatory and action-oriented. Content-based activities become learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented only when the textbook contains learner-friendly activities integrated into content to develop 21st-century skills.

Monotonous Activities. Monotonous classroom activities lack variation and creativity and fail to capture the interest and engagement of students. The school students have experienced monotonous classroom activities, the activities which are run continuously in the same way for a long time. Such classroom activities are

boring, mechanical, and unproductive. In other words, the students are tired of such traditional, teacher-dominant, and exam-oriented teaching-learning activities as Chinmaya said, “*We always have the same boring classroom activities: listening to the teacher, reading and writing*” (8:20 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 1). The teachers usually ask students to open the book, explain the content, and provide them with keynotes, but they rarely involve students in dialogue and discussion. Although “the adolescent passed through a turbulent, transitional stage, and that this was necessary for the ‘higher and more completely human traits’ to be accepted” (Coleman, 2011, p. 14), the students in the majority of the classroom activities are limited within teachers’ theory-based explanation. Furthermore, the students do not understand how the teachers expect them since the content is outside their familiarity, needs, and interests. Janak said, “*The teachers’ continuous explanation in the class makes us feel tired, bored, and sleepy*” (5:10 ¶ 8 in Janak Int 1). Despite the fact, “Effective teachers engage students in active learning: debating, discussing, researching, writing, evaluating, experimenting, and constructing models, papers, and products in addition to listening to and reading information, watching demonstrations, and practicing skills” (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007, p. 112), the teachers in community schools are still embracing and following traditional teacher-centered activities. It is also because of role overload and a discouraging environment to launch newly learned student-centered activities. T2 explains why they follow the traditional classroom activities, “*We have to teach six periods a day, check the student’s homework, and give them notes*” (10:3 ¶ 6 in Int 1 T2). The teachers have a familiar voice that they have no facilities and opportunities to design a well-functioning, respectful classroom where their students have a space to work productively.

Students were found to lose their attention because of the teacher's monotonous teaching, *"I saw students keep their books inside their bags soon after the bell rang, even while the teacher was teaching. They did not care about their teacher's teaching. From this, I understood they were interested in something other than the learning content and the teacher's instruction. The students, during their leisure period, did not open their books; they opened them only during the time they had class, as preparation for the examination, and they had to do H. W. However, they have repeatedly gone through certain student-friendly lessons."* (Field observation: 12/05/2022). The students, under the control of the classroom captains, felt imprisoned and suffocated. However, they found it better than teacher-led classroom instruction. Today, personalized, justifiable, and goal-oriented classroom activities are in demand to replace teacher-led, monotonous instructions. Literature

Exam-Oriented Activities. Although the teachers are well-qualified, trained, and experienced, they cannot make their classroom as student-centered and productive as they are expected because management and administration force them to follow the traditional way of teaching and prepare their students for paper-pencil tests, as T1 said, *"Actually, administration in the last meeting told us to teach well, keep students within the classroom and do not let them go out, and prepare them well for the examination."* (9:10 ¶ 7 in Int 1 T1) The head teacher, administrative head, and school management committee members have practically encouraged the teachers to make classroom activities productive. T1 once again said, *"H. M. told us to try our best to make the best result"* (9:17 ¶ 13 in Int 1 T1). However, the teachers run some student-centered productive classroom activities that are demanding to prepare children for a changing world but limit them as T3 clearly expresses, *"It is not in the course, is not asked in the examination. So, we focus less on them and prioritize on*

exam-focused teaching-learning” (11:10 ¶ 10 in Int 1 T3). The teachers skip some parts of the textbook as they are not asked in the examination, while some are highly focused because they are more likely to be asked. It has happened because the existing assessment ignores multiple intelligences and focuses on the one-size-fits-all type of assessment.

Assessment

Assessment in education is gathering and evaluating information about the student’s performance and understanding. It serves multiple purposes, including measuring learning progress, providing feedback, guiding instructional decisions, and assigning grades. More specifically, it is a judgment that evaluates how much the students have learned from the activities they have participated in and performed. Richards and Schmidt (2010) define assessment as “a systematic approach to collecting information and making inferences about the ability of a student or the quality or success of a teaching course based on various sources of evidence” (p. 35). Assessment in 21st-century pedagogy should dishearten possible ill practices and promote engaged learning. In the words of Pellegrino (2014), “The best assessments can accelerate the acquisition of these competencies (the competencies that are increasingly complex and changing world demands) if they guide the actions of teachers and enable students to gauge their progress” (p. 66). Such assessment practices are in the dormant stage, and paper-pencil, which prioritizes teacher-centered teaching, rote learning, and theory-based assessment, have been dominant. Through such traditional paper-pencil tests, assessing and capturing a student’s skills and intelligence is impossible. Therefore, reformation in assessment is essential. Although Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) state, “Effective teachers use many different tools to assess how their students learn as well as what the students

know” (p. 112), the school teachers in the existing context are less motivated to assess their students’ skills and intellectual growth in such a way.

Assessment is vital in significantly changing students’ learning, teachers’ teaching, and the administration’s governance. Sharma (2016) states, “To improve efficiency at the primary level, the Government of Nepal introduced the twin policies of continuous assessment and liberal promotion starting with the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) in 1999” (p. 4). The liberal promotion policy successfully increases the system’s efficiency and reduces dropout and repetition rates. However, it has not made the teachers responsible and accountable for motivating students to learn more enthusiastically. The primary defect of continuous assessment is the teachers’ irresponsibility, “No need to teach, no need to read, automatic pass.” The continuous assessment was expected to provide regular feedback to teachers and students, but it was not as successful as expected. Therefore, reforms in the assessment system are necessary. An assessment system becomes outstanding only when it assesses the overall learning achievement of the students, motivates both the teachers and students to participate actively and play praiseworthy roles, and provides sufficient feedback for the advancement of the whole system.

Stimulating Assessment

Stimulating assessments engage and challenge students, encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. They also reflect the takeaway message the students have set from their school education experiences. Co-curricular activities such as quiz-contest, book reviews, essay writing competitions, and extra-curricular activities like science exhibitions, classroom decoration programs, and stage performances have encouraged students to learn independently and cooperatively. It is not possible to measure exceptionality and

context-dependent human abilities; however, performance-based assessment can measure their basic knowledge and skills. Internal assessment has included such abilities. The stimulating assessment has five local themes: performance-based test, ICT-based test, group-based test, test from students' interest areas, and test from self-created activities.

Performance-Based Test. A performance-based test is an assessment method that evaluates an individual's skills and abilities by requiring them to perform specific tasks or demonstrate their knowledge in a practical context. In performance-based tests, the students are assessed for specific tasks given to them to prepare and perform in or outside the classroom. They are assessed individually, jointly, or in groups based on their single, dual, or group performance. Such performance includes stage performance, creative writing for notice board, and creative work for exhibition. Dividing students into different groups, schools invite them to participate in different events and programs organized in and outside the schools. In such club-wise participation, they enjoy hooting and shouting to encourage the students to participate in their group or club. The policy or the concerned authority has not planned and launched them systematically. Although such activities can be made participatory and goal-oriented, they are confined within the day organized. In other words, they have no connection with classroom activities and assessments. However, students get some marks in practical examinations from such performance as Chinmaya said:

He (teacher) sometimes, usually on Fridays, used to ask us (students) to sing a song or rhyme in the classroom. He (the teacher) asked us (students) to choose a song and a rhyme from a list, and we had to sing them in the classroom. After singing, we had to explain what the song or rhyme says. I enjoyed dancing because I could dance to the song as well. It would be interesting if

we had a more extended period and friends from other classes on the day. We prepared and performed during teaching-learning activities and got marks.

(8:11 ¶ 6 in Chinmaya Int 1)

The development and practice of such learner-engaged and goal-oriented activities in the classroom reduce students' boredom and the culture of class bunk.

Another example is cocurricular activities in which a program is organized, and the students are asked to participate and perform. Varat expressed his performance as:

In a practical examination, the teacher asked us to create something new that showed our talent. Some students created a comedy, Madan performed a caricature, and another showed a dance, but I submitted a paper-made, loved-shaped gift box. In another such examination, we had to make some items. I made origami items; one of my friends made a jug of clay; another made a basket of bamboo stripes; some made a wooden plow, and so on. (92:3 ¶ 4 in Varat Int 2)

In such exhibition programs, the students had to explain their creations as per the audience's queries. Varat further added that they found such work exciting. The more exciting thing was the challenge of explaining their creation to the observers and assessors. The students can be assessed based on their performance on different indicators; as T4 said, *"In the performance-based test, they obtain some marks from their attendance, work, and behavior they show inside and outside the classroom"* (12:9 ¶ 13 in Int 1 T4). A rubric is "a useful grading tool which can help instructors to grade students' work in a more consistent, reliable, and unbiased manner" (Chowdhury, 2018, p. 61). It can help the students identify their strengths and weaknesses. The concerned authority has not encouraged the well-managed use of

rubrics. The teachers do not have rubrics or clear guidelines for measuring student achievement in such existing assessment practices.

ICT-Based Test. The ICT-based test is an assessment method that evaluates an individual's proficiency and knowledge in information technology and communication. ICT dominance has increased in every walk of life because it provides several options and opportunities for everyone in their personal, professional, and social life; that is to say, its knowledge and skill have been a must for a better life. Students enjoy reading from online resources and working on them. They have experienced classroom teaching from the same textbook as boring, monotonous, and tedious, as well as diversity in the activities. The same class has become exciting and engaging when the teacher presents the same thing differently. Vawana, mentioning ICT use as a solution to cheating in the examination, said:

The examination of computer subjects is as fascinating as on the computer. In the first terminal examination, we had to write the answer on the computer following the given instructions. Nobody had any chance to cheat in the examination. Nevertheless, later, the teacher left the school, and another teacher came to teach us. He still asks us to write on paper, not on the computer. (27:4 ¶ 8 in Vawana Int 2)

Chinmaya, having a similar experience, explains, “*Our computer sir (teacher) took us to the lab, led us to work in computer, wrote questions on the board and asked us to perform the task in computer*” (31:10 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 2). Also, Varat expressed his experience of an engaged ICT class:

However, nowadays, our computer teacher never gives us notes but takes us to the computer and asks us to use and learn how to operate it. Last month, he asked us to study the chapter and practice on the computer and helped us

when needed. The teacher used to stay in the lab with us, working on the computer and helping us as needed. After completing the chapter task, He let us play or use the computer as we were interested. (92:5 ¶ 6 in Varat Int 2)

The students have found ICT classes more engaging, interesting, and worthwhile than the traditional ones. In contrast, they find traditional teaching of computer subjects boring and useless. The teachers' offer to enjoy using the computer as per their interest after completing their classwork has motivated students to work even more enthusiastically.

Group-Based Test. Group-based tests is an assessment or evaluation method in which students are tested collectively rather than individually. In other words, the students in group-based tests are assessed based on their performance. The group has a specific task(s) in which they collaboratively plan, prepare, and perform. Varat said:

Instead of a paper-pencil test, measuring from group work is better. In the first terminal examination, our math teacher gave us group work: each group had different questions from the chapter assigned. Each of the groups would score equal marks. One's mistake would affect whole groups' marks, so each one, especially the better ones, would support their group members. (27:6 ¶ 8 in Vawana Int 2)

The students are better motivated to work collaboratively when anyone in the group can be asked. For this, each group member needs to be prepared equally because one group member's answer is the answer of the whole group for measuring. T2 has found:

I (the teacher) run group work from time to time. We have to plan and give the work to each class group. The students in their group completed the task and submitted it to us. Once, when asked to work in a group, the students had to

work collaboratively to support one another in their group. When given individual tasks, they finished their work and ran out to play but supported no one. (29:5 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T2)

The students' mutual effort to learn from each other and reach their destination makes teaching learning student-centered, justifiable, and goal-oriented. In her experience of being motivated to obtain more marks, Chinmaya said, "Last examination, we had some interesting examinations. Science sir (teacher) gave each group a task and marks after we completed it. In the task, the students tried their best jointly to score more marks" (31:9 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 2). Similarly, Varat states the causes of teamwork:

Once, our English teacher divided us into five groups and asked us to select a video from a list and work on it. Such group work encouraged us to learn from one another and meet the goal. Since every group member could obtain equal marks, the better helped the weaker ones. I have found that group work is better than individual work. (92:7 ¶ 8 in Varat Int 2)

With the crux of the proverb "Two heads are better than one," group work that requires discussion and exchanging ideas develops communication skills and promotes intellectual growth in students. Both the teachers and students have found group work better than individual work. Group work promotes collaborative learning and mutual understanding. However, the teachers have taken it as a burden and rarely run such projects in the class. Because the teachers require more effort, time, and materials to run group projects, they limit them to discussion only. The students were found more confident and excited to work in groups, even ready to take risks at work and tackle complex problems.

Test From Students' Interest Area. Students have diverse interests and talents but are not adequately acknowledged or utilized in school. Recognizing and addressing these concerns to create a more engaging and inclusive learning environment is necessary. The students have few opportunities to perform what they want and have learned. When asked to perform something from their interest area, the students immediately become ready to perform what they know or have already learned. If it is beyond their interest, they hesitate and move back. The students in the study were interested in making *tiktok*, singing rhymes/ songs, playing games, and dancing to songs or music. They prefer outdoor activities to classroom activities, teacher's presence to absence, and other activities to textbook activities. Varat, expressing his experience of practical examination, said:

I have created a *Deuda* (a genre of Nepali song), and Nirmala and Binita have made a *tiktok* in a folk song with 77 districts, seven provinces, and their beauties and importance and scored good marks in the practical examination. The sir (teacher), though he appreciated our work, focused on reading the textbook for the written examination. (7:17 ¶ 3 in Varat Int 1)

The students who like folk songs want the same. Though such activities are student-friendly, they are rarely practiced in the classroom. *Deuda* is a Nepali song and dance genre popular in the Sudurpashim and Karnali provinces. To create a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment for these students, incorporating activities related to *Deuda* is worthwhile. People, regardless of age and gender, enjoy it during various festivals and celebrations as a part of their culture. Schools run different curricular and co-curricular activities on Fridays and occasions per the school's calendar. For example, T1 said:

When we let them free to do something from the textbook chapter to learn, they have shown their skill and talents. Once they have created different things from the chapters of their textbook. One of the students drew a picture and showed the story from the picture, while the other made a tiktok, the next developed a folk song, and so on. The students' comedian play from a lesson on Friday program was outstanding. The play was created by students, edited by me, and accepted to perform by the headmaster. (28:7 ¶ 2 in Int 2 T1)

Such activities are highly engaging, creative, and collaborative. Creative and collaborative activities foster motivation, teamwork, and a positive group dynamic. Promoting practice for such activities is learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented. It is necessary to standardize the assessment of such performances. Due to the lack of reliability and validity, the test is less valued than high-stakes testing.

Students have talents in diverse areas and are assessed in some ways. They are assessed on their performance, the performance from areas of their interests, and their talents. Using students' talents in assessment, though only in practical examination, has encouraged them to some extent to perform what they know and want. The teachers focus on academic competencies and prioritize fewer transversal competencies because the practical examination is less valued, and paper-pencil tests are highly valued in society.

Test From Self-Created Activity. Creating an assessment for a self-created activity involves evaluating the participants' performance and achieving the intended goal. Offering different options and opportunities stimulates the students to posit with creative work. Furthermore, the assessment from such self-created activity leads them to move ahead from the area of their interest and meet the goal. T1, describing how the students explain the poem in a self-created song, said, "*Last month as a work of*

practical examination, one of the students sang a song created from the text. It explained how many words, sentences, and lines the poem has and what the poem is about” (28:5 ¶ 4 in Int 2 T1). In such activities, the students can play or work with the text they must study. The more they play with the text, the better they learn it, as Jamuna experienced:

Last year, he (social studies teacher) told us to create something new from our talent and interest and perform in the class. As he told us to show one of our talents, like dance and caricature, for five marks, everyone in our class rehearsed their work when we had leisure period. It has motivated me to do something new and extra in the class. (30:4 ¶ 9 in Jamuna Int 2)

Such activities motivate the students to grow with their skills and talent.

Chinmaya has a similar experience of practical examination as she said:

Our vocational subject teacher taught us to make something given in the chapter, showed us some examples, and asked us to prepare them. In the class, we had different things to make from paper, clay, or wood, but we got no materials from the school and could not buy them ourselves, so we made only those we could afford. We prepared some of them, submitted them, and got good marks. (31:11 ¶ 12 in Chinmaya Int 2)

A vocational subject is an educational course that provides practical skills and knowledge directly related to a specific trade, occupation, or profession. Such activities encourage students to grow with transversal competencies. The concerned authority needs to promote the development and launch of more such activities.

Community schools have some subjects, like vocational and computer education, that promote transversal competencies. The students have strong interests

in transversal skills, which are for practical examination, but they are also under pressure for academic competencies, which are assessed through paper-pencil tests.

Vexing Assessment

The assessment that has annoyed, frustrated, and made the students worried about the paper-pencil test is termed a vexing assessment. The paper-pencil test, particularly high-stakes testing, is widely believed to be the most dominant and reliable tool for assessment. It has antagonistic pressure on students. Parents strongly believe in high-stakes testing and perceive practical examination as low-stakes testing. They demand high-stakes testing, saying, *“How do the students pass without a written examination?”* Their main concern is the result, mainly their children’s grades. Students' grades are their status and identity regardless of their transversal competencies. Instead of leading the students to grow from the areas they have already learned and assessing them from what they have learned, they are assessed from the areas they have not learned and beyond the areas of their needs, interests, and talents. Therefore, the students have experienced the existing assessment as discouraging and irritating. The vexing assessment has three local themes: exam as a pressure, exam as ill practices, and exam as a theory-based.

Students experienced paper-pencil tests as a fearful, challenging, or harassing task. *“It was the day of the examination. Students were coming to school for examinations. Some were with their bags, while others were without their bags. While waiting for the bell to ring, students discussed the possible questions and their answers. Some planned to meet in the toilet after the one hour when the bell rang; some to sit together, some to exchange the cheats they had brought, and so on. The teachers, on the other hand, were preparing to go to their assigned classrooms. During the first hour of the examination, the students were writing. However, some*

were waiting for the bell to ring. When the one-hour bell rings, some students plan to go to the toilet, some whisper, and some are busy writing. However, most of the students seemed as if they had not prepared for the examination. When the exam-end bell rings, the students come out on the ground and talk about their examinations (*Tero jancha kasto bhayo; yo question kasto garis...*). Some students who came out of the class without any talk with their classmates were hurrying up to go home. The students who answered all the questions in the examination looked delighted; those who did somehow better looked happy, but those who could not answer the questions looked sad and uninterested in talking with anyone else” (Field observation: 23/06/2022).

Examination as a Pressure. The existing examination practice, particularly the paper-pencil test as a tool of assessment, is found to have created a sort of stress and anxiety in students. The students attempt all options, whether morally wrong or illegal, for better performance in the examination. Before the examination, they worry about their parents, teachers, and friends and feel pressured to perform well for better results. Jamuna, recalling the heavy course load to study and difficulty remembering everything from the textbook for the paper-pencil test, painfully expressed, “*We cannot remember all the things the teacher taught. Last year, our English teacher asked simple questions, the questions we discussed in class. It was exciting as all the questions were from the lessons taught clearly and marked as important*” (4:12 ¶ 14 in Jamuna Int 1). The students’ pressure increases with the exam schedule. Varat expresses his experiences, “*When examination approaches, tension rises. It is difficult to study and remember all the things the teacher taught. Instead, practical examinations are easier than the paper-pencil test because everyone, whatever their performance, gets good marks*” (92:1 ¶ 2 in Varat Int 2). Nevertheless, they feel like

they are resting with a heavy load when the examination is over. Prajwal states, *“It is frightening. Some subjects are easy. However, it is quite interesting when the examination is over: we are free, no H.W., no pressure, just fun playing with friends”* (1:15 ¶ 17 in Prajwal Int 1). After paper-pencil tests, the students want to remain entirely away from textbooks and school education. The existing curriculum does not connect the learning content to students’ lives outside the school. The teachers, too, are under pressure to prepare their students for better results. It is crucial to balance the emphasis on grades with a focus on actual learning. Education is for knowledge and skill, not just memorizing information for examination. In context, teaching aims to achieve better grades in the examination through paper-pencil tests. However, the teachers have pressure to pressurize their students for better grades, and the students also have a sort of torture by their parents, teachers, and even their friends. T1 expresses:

In the last staff meeting, H. M. told us to try our best to make the best result. So, we focus on the part of the text likely to be asked in the examination. We have clear guidelines for finishing the course and preparing students for written examinations. (9:18 ¶ 13 in Int 1 T1)

Parents and even the concerned authorities are worried about their children or students’ grades from paper-pencil tests, not about what knowledge and skills they have achieved. T4, recalling last year's result, said:

In the past, students feared failing, but nowadays, they are free without fearing punishment and failure. Rare students fail in the result. If they fail the examination, we have to face many problems. *“Seven students failed the examination last year. Because of their results, SMC complained and asked us for clarification. They were*

neither regular in the class nor disciplined. Besides, we and other students had problems in the classroom”. (16:4 ¶ 4 in Int 4 T4)

Such an environment led the teachers to complete the course as soon as possible and focus on preparing students for better results. What the students learn is necessary, but the grade of the result is more important. In layman’s terms, better results, particularly better marks, make the students, their parents, well-wishers, and the concerned authorities happy and satisfied. It has made the teachers too liberal in marking while checking the students’ answer sheets.

High-stakes testing, a tool for assessment, focuses on theory-based knowledge rather than life skills. It ignores students’ needs and interests. Likewise, it focuses on rote learning and preparing students for the paper-pencil test. Therefore, there has been pressure and reformation for student-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented learning, which requires an environment where teachers and students are pressured to lead meaningful learning.

Ill Practices of Examination. Examinations are an integral part of the education system, serving as a means to assess students’ understanding and knowledge. However, certain ill practices associated with examinations can undermine the assessment process’s intended purpose and fairness. In context, the paper-pencil test is highly dominant in assessing how good the students are in their theory-based knowledge. The intention to obtain better grades has begot different ill practices. One of them is cheating. Since the students cannot remember everything taught in the class, they attempt to write from their nearby friends or copy from their books or notes given by the teachers or someone else. Prajwal, recalling how he benefitted from written examination, states:

I was with my friend on the same bench. He was good and could answer all the questions well. He showed me, and I wrote everything to him. In that examination, I had scored good marks in English. Nevertheless, in one examination, the other (second) terminal examination, I was with a dull friend I had to teach, but I could not teach him anything. Cheating is not good, but we want it. We cannot remember all the things we are taught. (1:17 ¶ 19 in Prajwal Int 1)

The students know cheating is not good but perceive it as a shared process. The students were found to attempt any practice for better results because “...the marks obtained in the examinations measure the teacher’s performance and students’ level of preparedness for subject-based assessments” (Sharma, 2016, p. 11). It has made even the teacher, as an invigilator, liberal during the examination. Such practice has encouraged underhand and idiot students and upset the honest and laborious ones. Vawana, expressing her bitter experience of how paper-pencil tests have distressed the students, repeatedly said:

Some friends can cheat, but I get frightened by cheating. Clever students can score good marks by cheating and asking friends. In the examination last year, Rita (pseudo name) solved all the questions by copying from the note given by the teacher. I could not answer some questions. Although she was weaker than me, she obtained better marks than me. (6:3 ¶ 5 in Vawana Int 1)

Because of the high influence of high-stakes testing, ill practices have disheartened honest students. She, expressing how honest students are victimized, further said:

We (students) could neither cheat nor write from others, so we could not score good marks in the last examination. Binod (pseudo name), who knows nothing

but obtained good marks, became third in the terminal examination. He (Binod) sat on the last bench and copied everything from the teacher's note. (27:5 ¶ 8 in Vawana Int 2)

Students, particularly those disciplined at an average level, fear and loathe such examinations. The assessment from the paper-pencil test has begotten evil practices.

The next ill-practice is that assessment from paper-pencil tests has affected the teachers. The teachers have to give the marks only when the students write something on the answer sheet. Due to the strong influence of liberal promotion policy, the teacher grants numbers even for the wrong answer, saying, "At least he has written something." Even in this situation, some students submit the answer sheet without answering most questions. High-stakes testing is one of the significant causes of drop-out. T4 mentions:

Last year, we had seven students who failed the exam. Because of their result, we complained. They were neither regular in the class nor disciplined.

Besides, there were problems in the classroom for us and the students. When he failed the examination, he left the school, and we felt comfortable. (16:5 ¶ 4 in Int 4 T4)

The other defect is the teacher's negligence. The teachers do not have the practice of maintaining records and leading them ahead in the areas of their needs, interests, and talent. T4 confidently said:

Students have written examinations and performance-based examinations. For written examinations, students have to sit for paper-pencil tests. In performance-based tests, they obtain some marks from their attendance, work, and behavior inside and outside the classroom. Though we have no filing

system, we can remember that we are always with them. (12:10 ¶ 13 in Int 1 T4)

Because of the lack of transparent rubrics for marking and teachers' negligence in keeping records, students will likely score different marks from their actual performance.

The fourth defect is the loose practice of a liberal upgrading system. Because of this system, teachers and students are not serious about their duties and responsibilities. T1 clearly states:

The students have no fear of failing and getting punished; we give them some assignments but do not force them to do it as it is difficult to check and respond to all the student's homework. However, students are upgraded without appropriate quality because of the liberal upgrading system. (28:2 ¶ 2 in Int 2 T1)

To motivate students and lead them toward perfection, they must participate, perform, and face challenges. However, the challenges should be learner-centered, justifiable, and goal-oriented. T4 asserts, *"In the past, students were afraid of being failed, but nowadays, they are free without any fear of punishment and being failed"* (16:1 ¶ 4 in Int 4 T4). When the students have fear and challenges, they become severe and prepare with their best effort to face the challenges and move towards perfection. The last is the omission of practice-based examination. Varat has remarked:

Last year, we had a teacher who would explain the content of the computer book and give notes. In the beginning, we found him very good. However, he began to ask us from the notes given. Later, he asked us to define monitor/

mouse during the examination. He never took us to the computer lab. (92:4 ¶ 6 in Varat Int 2)

The students knew what a mouse in the computer was and how to use it, but it was difficult for them to define it. such rote-learning-oriented content-based teaching neither encourages students to learn nor empowers them with transversal competencies.

The existing assessment system still has encouraged rote learning, a one-size-fits-all approach in instruction, and repetitive tests. Firstly, students are given a fixed text to read and assessed from a paper-pencil test. It neither reflects students' all types of bits of intelligence and talents nor any takeaway messages that the students have set from their experiences of school education. Secondly, the ongoing assessment has ignored information, media and technology skills, and life and career skills. Thirdly, the existing assessment practices have demoralized the students. The students have experienced being overloaded with the course outside their needs and interests. Although each student has a talent and potentiality in a particular area, such talents and potentialities are neither cultivated nor weighed through a formal assessment system. Finally, the assessment does not include students' knowledge and skills from all the activities (curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities) organized in the school. Therefore, the students have a sort of detestation and fear towards paper-pencil tests, an assessment tool.

Theory-Based Examination. In the theory-based examination, the students try to remember theoretical, philosophical, or content-based knowledge and write during the paper-pencil test. The better they reply, the more marks they achieve. Such a study focuses on rote learning, memorizing, and sighing relief from the grief after the written test. It discourages practice-based learning. In such an assessment, what

the students write during written examination is more important than what skills they learn and how well they implement what they learn. However, people in society believe that high-stakes testing is the only tool that assesses students' actual achievement, and the practical examination is unreliable and untrustworthy. Varat has mentioned his experience as:

We have paper-pencil tests even in the examination of computer subjects. Last year, I scored 22 in 25 full marks on the practical examination but only 30 in 75 full marks on the written test. Nobody had got less than 20 in the practical examination. We did not know how the teacher gave us such marks as we had no practical examination. (7:8 ¶ 7 in Varat Int 1)

The teachers think all the students should be equally treated and provide the highest marks without evaluating their performances justifiably. This is why assessment through practical examination is not accepted as a standardized test. On the other hand, Janak, who had different skills like painting, drawing, and paperwork but lacked binge and purge learning skills, said:

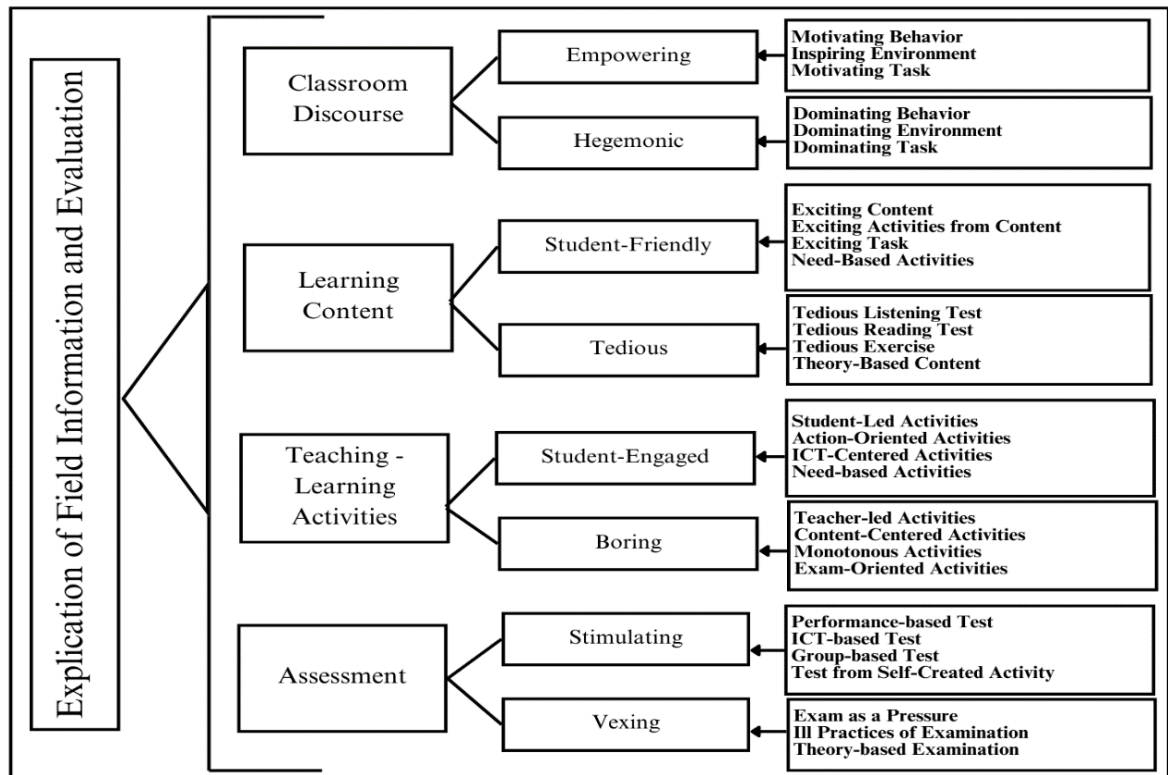
We are average students. In the last examination, I could not continue rote learning and memorizing essential chapters or benefit from cheating. As a result, I scored pass marks only. Sadly, such skills did nothing to help me score marks in the examination. (26:3 ¶ 5 in Janak Int 2)

Theory-based examination has discouraged students from growing with practiced-based knowledge and life skills. Assessment should assess students' distinct skills. In other words, "meaningful assessment of intelligence was not possible if students had little or no experience with a particular subject matter or type of material (Gardner & Haath, 1989, as cited in Harry, 1992, p. 15). Theory-based examination increases anxiety and tension in students, as Varat says:

In paper-pencil tests, we must keep many things in our minds. In the last examination, I could not store so many things and remember for the examination, and it made me sad. Because of pressure from parents and teachers, I began to murmur and babble during sound sleep and became sick and could not do better in the examination. (92:8 ¶ 5 in Varat Int 2)

In the theory-based examination, the students work hard to cram information into their minds and write during the paper-pencil test, and they get nothing as a take-away message for real life.

The figure given below concludes the overall findings of this chapter. Praxis of critical pedagogy in the study is the practice of educational activities regarding emancipation and empowerment, justification and conscientization, and transversal competencies and intellectual growth. It clearly shows the areas (classroom discourse, learning content, classroom activities, and assessment) researched to find out the essence of the practice of educational activities through students and teachers' lived experiences, more specifically, how emancipation and empowerment, justification and conscientization, and transversal competencies and intellectual growth are maintained and promoted in classroom discourse, learning content, teaching-learning activities, and assessment in particular. Figure 6 reflects the connection between the themes generated from the information collected and the critical components of theories adapted to address the issues raised in the statement of the problem.

Figure 6. Theme Development From Field Information

The figure describes the relationship between theories adopted in the study and the themes developed from students' and teachers' lived experiences of educational activities. Thirty themes were developed from the information collected in the field. The thirty themes are termed local themes. Then, eight organizing themes were created from the thirty local themes. Four global themes were developed from the four organizing themes. All the themes are presented to show their relationship with the participants' meaning-making of educational activities regarding emancipation and empowerment, justification and conscientization, and competency growth.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presents all the data received from fifteen participants' lived experiences and information collected from focus group discussions and observation.

In addition, information from non-participants was included. The shared information received from observation, participants, and non-participant people is described in the initial phase of each heading or subheading. The problem of '*code proliferation*' in the initial coding phase led me to work on them rigorously, recode, and merge. Then, I managed them into 30 local themes, the local themes into eight organizing themes, and the organizing themes into four global themes. The first global theme is classroom discourse, which has two organizing themes: empowering discourse and hegemonic discourse. The first has three local themes: motivating behavior, environment, and task. The next organizing theme also has three local themes: dominating behavior, dominating environment, and dominating task. They are described and analyzed using the information gathered from the field. The second global theme is learning content with two organizing themes: student-friendly and tedious content. Student-friendly content has four local themes: exciting content, exciting activities from content, exciting tasks (IQ, painting, drawing, singing, etc.), and need-based activities. Tedious content has four local themes: tedious listening text, tedious reading text, tedious exercise, and theory-based content. The third global theme is classroom activities, also termed teaching-learning activities, consisting of two organizing themes: student-engaged and boring activities (Lethargic activities). The first contains four local themes: student-led activities, action-oriented activities, ICT-centered activities, and need-based activities. The next 'boring activities' has four local themes: teacher-led activities, content-centered activities, monotonous activities, and exam-oriented activities. The last global theme is assessment, which has two organizing themes: stimulating assessment and vexing assessment. The stimulating assessment has four local themes: performance-based test, ICT-based test, group-based test, and test from self-created activity. On the other hand, the vexing

assessment has three local themes: examination as pressure, ill-practice of examination, and theory-based examination. All the themes, experiences, and information gathered in the field are described.

Chapter V

Intersubjectivity of Educational Activities

In this section, I have discussed the information collected from the field, related theories, policy documents, and participants' shared awareness and understanding of the school environment, learning content, teaching-learning activities, and evaluation practices with the essence of critical pedagogy. Critical theory, which examines societal problems such as status quo, supremacy, and power imbalance and aims at emancipating people through consciousness and self-reflection, has supported me in exploring participants' experiences of educational activities from multiple perspectives. Similarly, the social dominance theory has led me to find out the areas where the participants are likely to experience dominance, and finally, social justice theory has guided me to explore the challenges and options for maintaining equality and equity in the classroom and all the theories have supported me to depict the scenario of educational activities and explore the viable options for making educational activities self-governing, justifiable, and goal-oriented.

Intersubjectivity of School Environment

In the study, I have developed three aspects that affect the classroom environment: the education delivery system, classroom management, and teacher-created environment. As critical theory explores the actual situation of society since it is "set with the task of uncovering the social conditions under which knowledge about itself is articulated" (Thompson, 2017, p. 2), I have discussed the role of three factors that interfere with the school environment. Firstly, the existing administrative structure is guided by the praxis of dominant elites (Freire, 2005). In community schools, the School Management Committee (SMC) has a significant role in leading the head teacher for all the activities in their schools as per the guidelines from the

concerned authority. Being inferior to the head teacher, SMC, and local government, the teachers have a challenge developing a 'counter-hegemony' (Braa & Callero, 2016). On the other hand, the teaching and non-teaching staff have their roles in treating students from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Since the students experienced dominant treatment from teaching and non-teaching staff and even from their seniors, they hesitated to speak to them. Besides, they have their understanding and learning attitude, which affects their ability to participate and perform their roles in the classroom. The friendlier and more supportive the environment they get, the more active and enthusiastic they become to participate and perform their roles in the class. Secondly, the role of the teacher has influenced students' participation. The students were found to participate and perform their roles in the class when they found their teachers friendly and supportive and when they found the environment free of fear and discrimination. Above and beyond, the students have become more critical and creative when they get a favorable environment as "respect for the child" (Baker et al., 2001, p. 177). Otherwise, they participate reluctantly and perform their roles as a part of coercion. The teachers are role models for students' academic growth and nurture scholarly habits, a sense of humanity, and soft skills in students. The schools lack such a culture. They have a poor practice system to nurture justice, civilization, and humanity in children. For this, provision for effective practice of Transformative Educational Policy (Sabbagh & Schmitt, 2016) is necessary. Finally, the teachers have followed the banking model of education due to pressurized surroundings: the pressure to finish the course and prepare students for high-stakes testing, the pressure to maintain discipline in the class, the socio-cultural pressure to maintain hierarchical status, and the economic and traditional compression. They have no options to lead students in the way they intend

since they are compelled to control the students in the class, explain the content, check all the students' assignments, provide necessary feedback, finish the course in time, and prepare them for the paper-pencil test. From the eyes of the teacher, it seems that the teachers have worked harder than the students. On the other hand, the students feel pressured by the teacher or school's order and by pressure against their needs and interests. To make school education learner-centered, a collaborative effort from each stakeholder is necessary. In this case, what happens if we create a friendly environment and make them leaders? Each one is responsible for a specific task or role, particularly in the areas of their need and interest. What happens if the leaders facilitate the teachers in running learner-engaged educational activities as they intend, with the essence of a learner-friendly and justifiable environment? What happens if the curriculum designers, educators, and policymakers put their effort into designing action-packed educational activities that are highly learner-engaged and that are as per students' choices?

The education delivery system in schools is established in such a way as to circulate official ideas, the ideas of the dominant elites; whoever comes as a teacher with a new vision and creative ideas sooner or later converges with traditional trends. According to Tiwari (2021), "several factors in and outside the classroom such as learners and teacher variables, learning objectives, and targeted language skills, classroom context, composition, class size, duration, and learning facility affect the interaction" (p. 376). External factors include students' socio-cultural background, familial situation, curriculum, and school management system. even though "teachers can foster classroom participation by engaging students in discussions" (Kazi & Aziz, 2019, p. 10), they cannot foster it because of two reasons: high-stakes testing and organizational structure of the school. "The teacher needs to model an active,

skeptical learner in the classroom who invites students to be curious and critical... and creative” (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 8) to continue and promote praxis-based student-centered pedagogy and maintain an emancipatory and justifiable environment in the class. For this, teacher empowerment is a must. It is possible when the teachers are provided with appropriate authority and made responsible and accountable.

Classroom management determines the classroom environment, which influences students’ participation and performance in the classroom. The students have a sense of belonging to the classrooms managed by themselves; that is to say, when they manage a classroom, setting furniture and decorating it, they feel a sense of acceptance, respect, and support in learning. They have experienced a motivating environment in the class or school, particularly during the initial academic year phase, when they prepare for stage performance or participate in curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activities. During the initial phase of the academic session, a few students are present in the class and do not have books to study. If the teachers teach and lead the course ahead, they have to repeat the course taught when most students come regularly. To keep the students in the class and spread the whim they have regular class, the teachers converse with them, share their experiences, and ask them to do or perform something based on their interests and talents. The students turn by turn and perform: some sing a song, some dance, some tell the class a joke, and so on. These activities are student-friendly and are the beginnings of leading the students ahead in learning through praxis-based pedagogy. However, such activities are only for passing time and refreshing students in the class, not for the endpoint knowledge of formal education.

During the initial phase of an academic year, the majority of the students do not come to class; the teachers have no pressure to finish the course and prepare

students for paper-pencil tests; the students have a comfortable and friendly environment to share and perform their ideas and experiences and the teachers too become welcoming and create an approachable environment for the students. Lloyd et al. (2016) discuss the 'bidirectional model' in establishing teacher-student and student-student dialogue. In this situation, students "become equal and active participants with the teachers and peers"(Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 294). Although the teachers have not equalized them with their students due to the influence of a deeply rooted class-based society, they have become friendly in the class and let their students exchange their ideas freely. The teachers cannot continuously establish a comfortable and student-centered environment because of the influence of hierarchy-based social structure in the classroom. Therefore, an education revolution is necessary to establish a learner-centered and justifiable environment in the school.

The teacher-created environment determines students' participation and engagement in the classroom due to the teacher's effort. If the teachers become liberal and create a friendly atmosphere in the class, the students participate actively and perform their roles without hesitation. Otherwise, they have different roles from the teachers' roles. The students, though interested in fun and action-packed activities, perform their roles per their environment. Thi and Nguyen (2021) have mentioned four types of classroom management styles of Baumrind (1971). One is the authoritative style, in which the teacher limits and controls students but facilitates independence simultaneously. It is also called 'autonomy supportive'. The teachers in this style communicate with students using informal language. Thi and Nguyen (2021) claim, "Building a classroom environment that fosters students' independence in thinking and making choices with the support of teachers is the critical goal of this style" (p. 227). This classroom management style has fostered students' critical

thinking, making them freely engaged in their choices. The next is the authoritarian style, in which the teachers are the boss in the class. They become firm in limiting and controlling students in the classroom. This style has limited students' freedom and creativity. The third one is the indulgent style, also called the 'Laissez-faire' style, in which "teachers hesitate to enforce the rules" (Thi & Nguyen, 2021, p. 227). The teachers in this style try to be friends with the students and grant them the freedom to do their favorite things in the classroom. The last one is the permission style, in which the teachers have no limits or controls over students. Thi and Nguyen (2021) claim that permissive teachers always feel that preparation before class is not necessary" (p. 227). In the authoritative and indulgent style of classroom management, the students are more engaged and critical than in the authoritarian and permission style of classroom management. In an authoritarian style, the teacher is strict and does not understand students' needs, interests, and problems. In the permission style, the teacher is less responsible and lets students work freely. It leads students to work out of track.

Schools are to nurture and expand students' creativity for which "respect for the child, the stimulation of independence and enriched learning environment" (Wright, 1987 as cited in Baker et al., 2001, p. 177) is necessary. However, the existing educational activities environment is not sufficient for such practices. According to Baker et al. (2001), "...development of thought power is one of the major aims of education" (p.182), which requires deep thought and concentration. Although the concerned authority has educational institutions as responsible and accountable agents for leading students beyond simple mental activities and promoting higher-order thinking habits, its provision seems too weak to break the traditional top-down education model, establish an autonomous environment, and

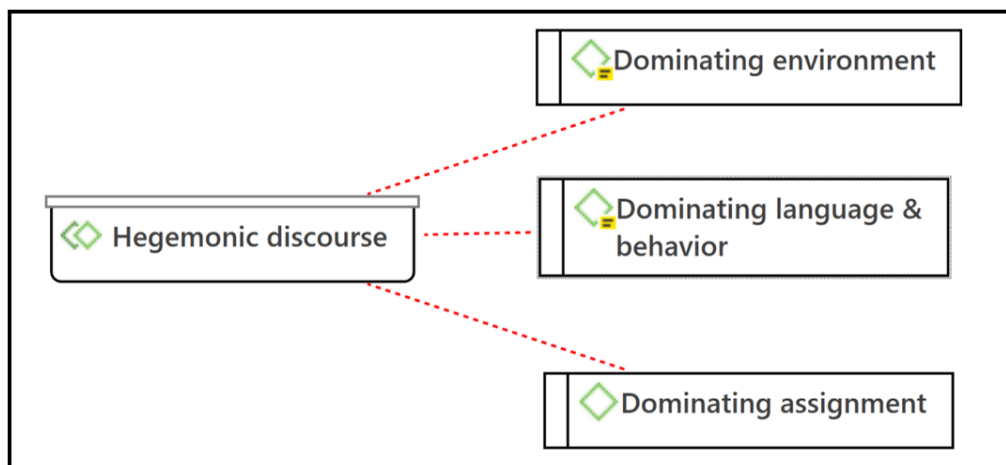
promote students' reflective thinking. In short, the students and teachers have performed their roles enthusiastically, and the concerned authority has created a motivating environment where the teachers find their students' performance as a part of their performance.




Language and Behavior

The language and behavior of the concerned authority have significantly influenced teachers' and students' participation and performance. Polite and respectful language and behavior motivate, and hierarchy-based demotivates the students and teachers. In this regard, the language and behavior of the teachers, students, non-teaching staff, and committee members (SMC and PTA) in the school are hierarchy-based. The hierarchy is reflected through the exchange of language and behavior between teachers and students and among students, teachers, and the non-teaching staff. In other words, authority is hierarchy-based, although Freire (2005) claims, "authority must be on the side of freedom, not against it" (p. 80). One of the tasks of critical theory is to reveal false ideology. Emancipation from the false ideology is the interest and necessary consequent of critical dialogue" (Sirotnik & Oakes, 1986, p. 220). From the participants' experiences, I have discovered the practices of both empowering and hegemonic discourses and the ideas to dishearten such practices in school education. The ongoing educational practice is found that the concerned authority through teachers have withheld students' opportunities to thrive towards their aims and goals because "schools encourage dependency, a hierarchical understanding of authority... (Eisner, 2002 as cited in Breunig, 2006, p. 15). The teachers and students experience dominance due to the difference in language and culture and hierarchy-based socio-economic status in the school, particularly within the classroom.

People experience inferiority due to language use in communication. For example, when a minority language speaker mixes words from the dominant language while using his/her mother tongue (a minority language), it is part of maintaining status. However, the reverse part is perceived as due to lack of knowledge. Due to the difference in their accent and language, students from minority linguistic backgrounds are insulted, criticized, and dominated by their teachers and even by their friends. The teachers, as they are superior to students, use nicknames for their students like a ‘foppish boy’ and flirt,’ which hurts students and demotivates them. The teachers’ supremacy and deeply rooted perception of the top-down education model remain dominant. The students rarely see their teachers studying in school, but they hear that they are erudite and always have such scholarly habits. The teachers’ martinet behavior is another cause of demotivating students.

Figure 7. *Hegemonic Classroom Discourse*



Note.  = Code group or organizing theme  = Commented code  = Code or local theme

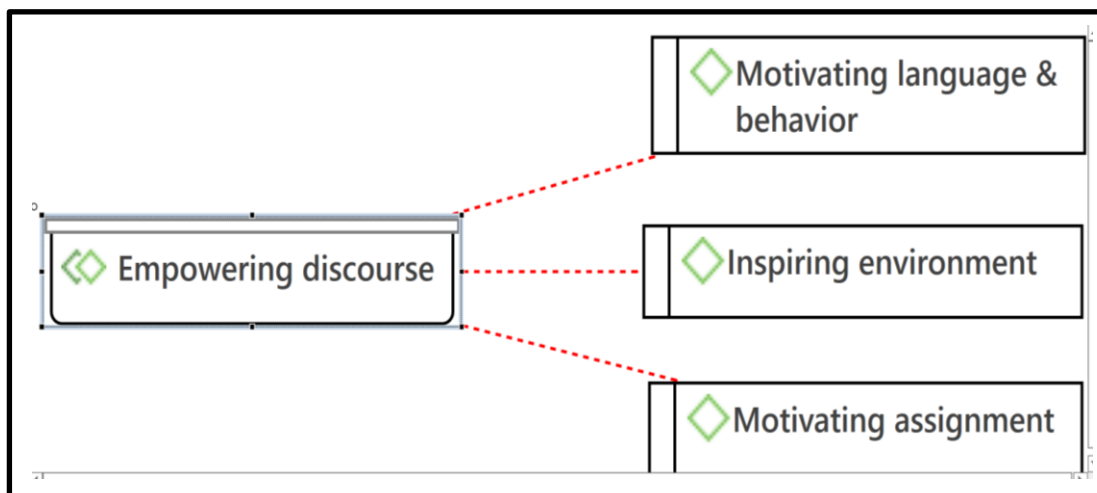
Non-verbal communication has influenced both the students and teachers positively and negatively. In the words of Bambaeroo and Shokrpour (2017), “Non-verbal communication is often more subtle and more effective than verbal



communication” (p. 53). For example, the teachers’ behavior of ignoring students’ greetings, queries, and requests for help or speaking loudly and rudely affects the students negatively. Although they respond nothing, they experience it bitterly and move back with defeated hearts. Therefore, school education should make students aware of the fact that “the world is unfair and full of multidimensional inequalities” (Plahotnik, 2014, as cited in Budnyk, 2023, p. 8). The generation in this global world requires conscientization of the situation and the capacity to deal with such a situation. Whatever educated and civilized a person is, he or she is inherited with an evil heart, so, in this century, “even in the civilized world, we face various forms of bullying or violence in educational institutions (or outside them or in the virtual world” (Budnyk, 2023, pp. 8-9). The school is the place to empower students with critical consciousness. Empowering teachers to work as critical pedagogues or transformative intellectuals, not as knowledge depositors in the empty vessels, learners’ minds, and creating a harmonious and justifiable environment is possible. I strongly agree with the adage of Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790): “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, and involve me and I learn” (Lopez-Rosenfeld, 2017, p. 1). Students learn better when they are involved in educational activities. The more actively they participate and perform their roles in different educational activities, the better and more meaningfully they learn.

Similarly, the teachers’ smiling faces, symbolic appreciation, and supporting/friendly behavior or polite speaking energize student participation and performance motivation. The teachers’ equal treatment, friendly behavior, and collaborative working nature have stimulated students to participate and perform their roles wholeheartedly. Also, the teachers’ role in stimulating students from the areas of their interest has developed motivating behavior in students. Knowledge does not always

flow down; it flows up; as Steinberg and Down (2020) say, “Sometimes knowledge flows from the bottom up” (p. 21). This knowledge flow process stimulates learners to be more engaged and responsible than the top-down flow of knowledge. The teachers’ role and the role of other concerned authorities have become a breakthrough for promoting the bottom-up process of knowledge. The middle way between the top-down and bottom-up process of knowledge seems more effective in leading the students systematically and smoothly, letting them feel that they belong to the educational activities. The bottom-up process captures students’ new creations and the activities from their choices, whereas the top-down process refines, authorizes, and authenticates their creation and selection. The teacher’s role in motivating students to lead a specific activity, particularly one based on their interest and talent, engages them in learning.

Figure 8. *Empowering Classroom Discourse*



Note.  = Code group or Organizing theme  = Code or local theme

Empowering discourse has motivated and inspired students and teachers to perform their roles with heartfelt effort. As Habermas argues, “the very idea of dialogue, no matter how ideologically distorted through unequal power relations between participants or through bad faith by one or more participants, presupposes

these ideals” (Sirotnik & Oakes, 1986, p. 220), development and promotion of dialogue-based classroom activities have vital roles in making students and teachers critical, evidence-based, and interactive. He further argues, “By entering into dialogue, ipso facto, we commit ourselves to justice, equality, truth, and autonomy” (p. 220). It is meaningful only when a justifiable environment is maintained. For this, the teacher is mainly responsible for maintaining a justifiable environment in the classroom. According to Garcia-Carrion et al. (2020), dialogic teaching-learning develops language and communication skills, promotes students’ critical thinking and reasoning skills, improves social inclusion and democratic values, and empowers students as agents of social change. Such educational activities engage students. Moreover, it leads them to the goal. The concerned authority was found weak in promoting empowering discourse in the schools.

The dialogic learning process promotes interaction between teachers and students and among students. As they interact and exchange their ideas and understanding, they collect more ideas, which leads them to generate meaning. “Meaning-making is always creative. Meaning-making occurs between at least two distinct consciousnesses that are oblique and non-transparent to each other” (Matusov, 2009, p. 2). Interaction in the classroom encourages students to participate actively and learn from one another. Repeatedly run classroom activities have been more tedious for the students than interactive classrooms, interactive classrooms with hierarchy-based teachers and students. The interaction has not always been as fruitful as expected because of differences in students’ levels, interests, and socio-economic backgrounds. However, the students enjoy if the repeatedly run activities are as per their students’ interest or level. In contrast, their participation differs if the activities are against their interest. The teachers have used different interactive classroom

activities to make the classroom interactive, student-friendly, and goal-oriented. They include demonstrations, debates, games, brainstorming, PowerPoint presentations, jigsaw activities, field trips, sketch notes, classroom projects, journaling, case studies, and stage performances. These practices include dialogues. “Dialogue is particularly energetic, focused, and productive when it centers on students’ personal experience, especially when the experience is one of exploitation” (Braa & Callero, 2016, p. 361). Although these practices are student-friendly and goal-oriented, the teachers are not encouraged to implement them. The teachers have implemented such practices only when they feel free and have no pressure from the school management committee and no pressure to finish the course in time.

The students are always inferior to teachers. As superior figures, the teachers have dominant roles and have dominated students using verbal and non-verbal cues while communicating. They use nicknames, insulting and egoistic remarks, and look down on the students. Equally, they use different facial expressions, eye contact, or gestures as nonverbal cues to convey messages and influence the students. The existing teacher-student interaction has followed the IRE (Initiation-Reply-Evaluation) pattern. Garcia-Carrion et al. (2020), stating the idea of Mehan and Cazen (2015), says, “The classrooms which have followed this pattern have excluded many minority students, as it does not encourage them to participate in the classroom talk actively” (p. 2). The classroom discourse in existing classes is like the IRE interactions as “In IRE interactions, the teacher dominates classroom discussion by determining the topic of discussion, leading the conversation, initiating questions, and providing evaluative feedback to student responses” (Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 294). The trend of pedagogical practices has strengthened the banking model of education. Through different verbal and non-verbal means of communication, the dominant

elites have promoted a hierarchy-based environment and their praxis with consent and coercion in the school. It is Gramsci's 'bourgeois hegemony (Braa & Callero, 2016, p. 359 as cited in Allman, 1988; Forgacs, 2000; Mayo, 1999). As members of the dominant elites, the teachers have a sort of force to maintain the hierarchy in society and the school where they live and work.

Lloyd et al. (2016) discuss the FLE (Facilitate-Listen-Engage) model as an innovative model to create a discourse-intensive community in the classroom. In this model, teachers work as facilitators. They engage students in the discourse to plan the lessons. In the listening phase, "teacher and students cohesively exchange information through bidirectional communication" (Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 291). During this phase, the students and teachers have a friendly environment to make everyone comfortable exchanging ideas. Similarly, they talk about the engage phase in which "the teacher purposefully provides opportunities for students to engage in rich discussions which stimulate the development of the community" (Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 291). The students become more engaged in the class where the teachers have followed the FLE model than in the class with the IRE pattern.

The teachers have dual roles: creating a student-friendly environment in the classroom and maintaining social hierarchy and discipline in the class. Following the first role, they must motivate students to participate and perform their roles without fear and discrimination. On the other hand, they are equally responsible for maintaining discipline in the class. They, or sometimes as students or a group, can have leading roles in the classroom. They are better motivated to work enthusiastically in those teachers' classes who treat students in a friendly way, leading them to play their roles confidently, appreciate their work with needy feedback, and empower them to move ahead. When students find their teachers are too polite and

liberal, they become unruly and neglect to follow them, participate, and perform their roles appropriately. Therefore, the students want friendly, supportive, and strict, disciplined teachers.

Classroom management determines the classroom environment, which influences students' participation and performance in the classroom. The students have a sense of belonging in the classroom that they manage by themselves; that is to say, when they manage a classroom, setting furniture and decorating it, they feel a sense of acceptance, respect, and support in learning. The students have experienced an inspiring environment in the class or school, particularly during the initial academic year phase, when they prepare for stage performance or participate in curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activities. During the initial phase of the academic session, a few students are present in the class and do not have books to study. If the teachers teach and lead the course ahead, they have to repeat the course taught when most students come regularly. To keep the students in the class and spread the whim that they have regular class, the teachers converse with them, share their experiences, and ask them to do from their interests. The students turn by turn and perform: some sing a song, some dance, some tell the class a joke, and so on. These activities are student-friendly and are the beginning of leading the students ahead in learning through praxis-based pedagogy. However, such activities are only for passing time and refreshing students in the class, not for the endpoint of formal education. This is because most students have not come to class yet; the teachers have no pressure to finish the course and prepare students for the paper-pencil test, and the students have a comfortable and friendly environment in which to share and perform their ideas and experiences. The teachers, too, become welcoming and create an approachable environment for the students. Lloyd et al. (2016) discuss the

'bidirectional model' in establishing teacher-student and student-student dialogue. In this situation, students "become equal and active participants with the teachers and peers" (Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 194). Although the teachers have not equalized them with their students due to the influence of a deeply rooted class-based society, they have become friendly in the class and let their students exchange their ideas freely. The teachers cannot establish this comfortable and student-centered environment continuously.

The teacher-created environment determines students' participation and engagement in the classroom. How the teachers maintain the classroom environment matters to students' involvement. The students, though interested in fun and action-packed activities, perform their roles based on their environment. Thi and Nguyen (2021) mention four types of classroom management styles of Baumrind (1971). One is the authoritative style, in which the teacher limits and controls students but facilitates independence simultaneously. The teachers in this style communicate with students using informal language. Thi and Nguyen (2021) claim, "Building a classroom environment that fosters students' independence in thinking and making choices with the support of teachers is the critical goal of this style" (p. 227). This classroom management style has fostered students' critical thinking, making them freely engaged in their choices. The next is the authoritarian style, in which the teachers are the bosses in the class. They become firm in limiting and controlling students in the classroom. This style has limited students' freedom and creativity. The third one is the indulgent style, also called the 'Laissez-faire' style in which "teachers hesitate to enforce the rules"(Thi & Nguyen, 2021, p. 227). The teachers in this style try to be friendly to the students and grant them the freedom to do their favorite things in the classroom. The last one is the permission style, in which the

teachers have no limits or control over students. As Thi and Nguyen (2021) claim, permissive teachers always feel that preparation before class is not necessary” (p. 227). In the authoritative and indulgent style of classroom management, the students are more engaged and critical than in the authoritarian and permission style of classroom management. In an authoritarian style, the teacher is strict and does not understand students’ needs, interests, and problems. In the permission style, the teacher is less responsible and lets students work entirely freely. It leads students to work out of track.

Promoting empowering discourse and reducing hegemonic discourse can make the school environment learner-friendly and justifiable to some extent. For this, polite and respectful language and behavior are solid tools for empowering students and teachers in their work.

Learning Content

The learning content that the students have found congenial includes interesting content, exciting tasks such as exhibitions and performance programs, and content containing the knowledge and skills needed. When the learning content is engaging for students, they work out on it by themselves not only during their class, during the time to prepare for paper-pencil tests, and as a part of assignments but also during the time they are free. As mentioned above, playing with the text even outside the time assures that the content meets the student’s needs and interests. The students have found the majority part of the existing learning content as Reynolds (2020) says, “Learning content designed for memorization and recitation under the watchful eye of a monitor gave way to a more evolved, object teaching design which was endorsed by the school and teacher reforms advocated in the common school movement” (p. 15), it requires to be replaced with the ones which discourage disruption that occurs during

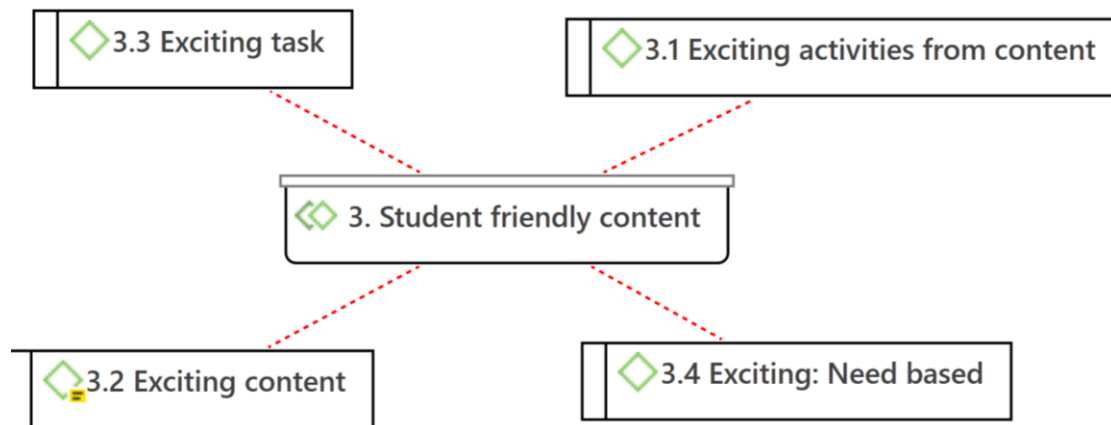
teaching-learning activities, connect the learners to out-of-school activities with in-school learning, and challenge anything taken-for-granted.

The next student-friendly content contains exciting tasks that allow them to construct their identity through learning and sharing. The students are tired of sitting on the bench, listening to teachers, following their orders, and reading the textbook. They want movement in the class with various activities, as “Movement energizes and integrates the body and brain for optimal learning” (Summerford, 2009, p. 7). The content containing exciting tasks such as exhibitions and performance-based programs makes students more engaged than the traditional banking education model, which includes monotonous activities. While engaging in different activities as a part of the preparation for the exhibition from their group or class or stage performance, the students try their best, consult different people as needed, and collaborate with their friends and teachers. Such an exhibition program includes a science exhibition program and the exhibition of painting, drawing, paperwork, handicrafts, and clay work. Learning is not just a corpus of knowledge but constructs identity and promotes relationships in the social world. According to Wenger-Trayner (2014), “Learning can be seen as how we negotiate a range of processes of becoming” (Abegglen et al., 2016, p. 4). Programs such as exhibitions and stage performances stimulate students to learn from books and exchange ideas with others, transform themselves, and construct their identities.

Finally, student-friendly content contains the knowledge and skills needed for daily life. They readily learn the knowledge and skills they need in their immediate situation. When the content contains knowledge and skills from students’ immediate needs and interests rather than the content that the experts think is necessary for them, they work out on it more enthusiastically. As Ferdig (2015) argues, “Education

content, curriculum and assessment for learning must be student-centered, relevant, authentic, constructive, and interdisciplinary” (p. 4); learning content involving different areas of knowledge adds variety to classroom activities and energizes them to work on them. In this digital age, students are interested in digital resources, “Content must be digital and shared widely” (Ferdig, 2015, p. 4). In short, completing a certain task(s) as a part of learning before entering the fun activities or games is even more workable in motivating students to learn.

Figure 9. Student-Friendly Content



On the other hand, the students have experienced the existing listening text of the prescribed textbook, long reading text from the textbook, the text beyond their need and interest, and theory-based content as tedious content. The existing practice of teaching listening is just like Rahayu and Apriyanti (2017) say, “despite the importance of the listening skill in foreign language learning, the teaching of listening comprehension has been neglected and poorly taught” (p. 89). One of the reasons is that listening is not so important from an examination point of view. The next reason is that listening to text is not student-friendly. Finally, the teachers and the students cannot easily access the materials and facilities to teach and learn listening skills. They further claim that the teachers present the listening text monotonously. They play the text and ask their students to listen to it and answer the questions, particularly

objective questions based on the text. “To acquire high-level listening skills, more exposure is given to the learners with a variety of listening comprehension” (Renukadevi, 2014, p. 62). For this, we can have several student-friendly videos or documentaries to play and discuss in class, but the relevant authority has not authenticated such easily accessible resources. Although Manalu (2019) found that “They (the students) were also motivated to read digital texts because of their availability (low cost), convenience, and accessibility” (p. 201), the concerned authority has not empowered community schools in Nepal to facilitate students to learn through digital access. Equally, the school management and the parents are not mentally ready to provide such facilities to the students in the school and at home, respectively. Despite the availability of digital facilities in the office and computer labs, the students do not have access to it.

Although Renuga and Mala (2015) opine, “To improve the teaching of reading, it may be useful to examine the teaching practice from the students’ perspectives” (p. 200-201), neither the concerned authority nor the teachers have examined the student’s perception of the existing teaching practices. They further mention, “Choosing books according to personal interests raises students’ level of motivation, encourages them to adopt a positive attitude and perform better in this regard” (Bozack, 2011; Gibson, 2010; Davila & Patrick, 2010; Jenkins, 2009; Nichols & Cormack, 2009; Merisuo-Storm, 2006, in Renuga & Mala, 2015, p. 200). Using a library period is one of the best options for developing reading skills in students. When students visit the library regularly, they see others reading in the library, borrow books to read, participate in different events organized by the library, and ultimately motivate themselves.

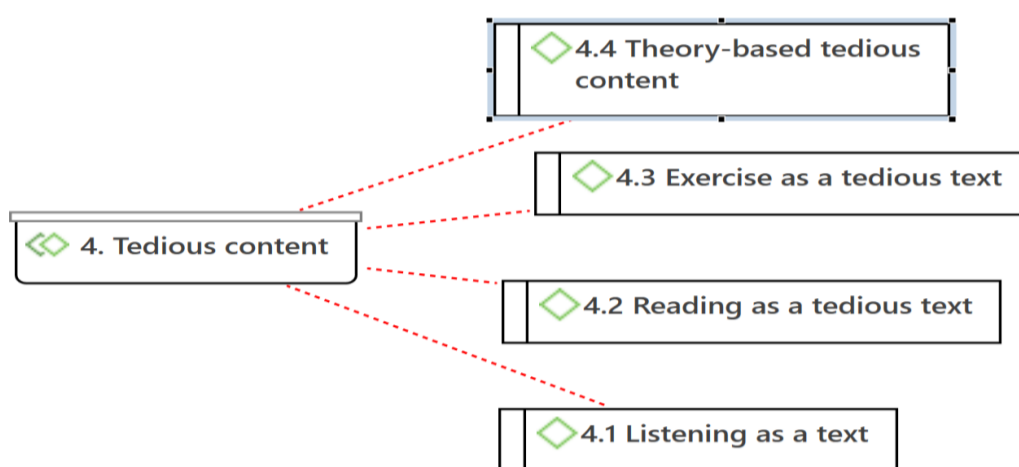
The content that provides students the opportunity to read their own world and connect their reading with the text makes them consciously aware and critical. Then, they can create a world from the text based on their reading of the world around them. In such context, students read the text, analyze it, generate new ideas, debate on them, propose their insights, and refine their understandings. The learning content in school education is poor in providing such opportunities. Pizzolato and Holst (2017) describe three contributions by mentioning mobile schools' outcomes as an essential part of the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST). The first is policy-making, in which "the schools allow for the development of a new generation of leaders organically connected to the movement" (Pizzolato & Holst, 2017, p. 108). The second is the curriculum and organizational structure of the schools. The structure uses the children's experiences as a part of the learning content. The children's experiences, the histories of working-class children, and the children from landlessness and rural upbringings are valued. These children are more active in the classroom activities. The third is its outcome. Later, "these schools represent the MST's engagement with the Brazilian state and the movement's attempt to occupy and transform state institutions" (Pizzolato & Holst, 2017, p. 108).

The existing learning contents, despite their bulky contents, are inadequate to educate students with the knowledge and skills needed for the 21st-century global world. Alismail and McGuire (2015) stating Paige (2009) said, "A 21st-century curriculum should blend knowledge, thinking, innovation skills, media, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) literacy, and real-life experience in the context of core academic subjects" (p. 151). The striking problem is the practice of curriculum through the prescribed textbook in the schools. Moreover, the students have already set learning content without any choice, and the teachers have repetitious

activities. In other words, neither the curriculum offers variety in learning content for the students nor are the teachers trained to present the content in various ways.

Though the students could not express themselves directly, they rejected theory-based knowledge, leading to repetitious activities. They would accept the content if it were offered in a variety of ways; as Ferdig (2015) said, “One piece of content could be offered in multiple and various presentations and teaching styles” (p. 4).

Figure 10. Tedious Content



In short, learning content should not be imposed by the dominant elites but drawn from children’s immediate needs and interests and their immediate environment, not from what someone else thinks it should be. Existing learning content is not successful in luring students to work on it. The concerned authority has not kept the learners’ needs and interests at the center while developing the curriculum and textbooks.

Classroom Activities

The students require a favorable and supportive environment as Usaini et al. (2015) claim, “supportive and favorable school environment enriched with enough learning facilities, and favorable climate makes students more comfortable, more concentrated on their academic activities”. Due to the lack of such a favorable

environment, students are not excited to go to school; they have not enjoyed classroom activities significantly; they feel happy when they hear ‘Tomorrow is a holiday,’ ‘The bell has gone,’ ‘Sir is absent,’ and so on. They rarely feel happy when it is time to go to school, when they see or meet the head teacher or teachers, when it is time to go to class, when they see their teacher coming to class, and so on. It is the result of the classroom activities that are against students’ needs and interests, against their deepened engagement, and any excitement and newness in the activities.

The existing classroom activities are not dialogic-oriented, although Matusov (2009) claims, “Education is dialogic” (p. 1). As the teachers, following the banking approach, provide their students keynotes or capsules for paper-pencil tests, they discourage search-based learning and make their teaching exam-oriented. The existing assessment system also seems to discourage dialogic teaching-learning. As Matusov (2009) argues, “Dialogue is impossible if a participant knows its endpoint in advance” (p. 3). In order to make education dialogic, assessment requires assessing students’ performance not from the endpoint knowledge but from their performance during the teaching-learning activities. During the process, the teachers let the students work in groups; they share their ideas and get new ideas, exchange them, and get new ideas again. Therefore, “dialogue is itself creative and re-creative” (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 3). such dialogic education enables students to cope with 21st-century challenges and compete for global opportunities.

Diversity makes dialogue enriched and empowered. Every classroom has students from distinct socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds, so this difference makes dialogue possible. The teacher has a superior role in making the class student-centered and goal-focused. As Matusov (2009) claims, “Dialogue is mediated by epistemological authority of trust” (p.408); the authority can lead the dialogue

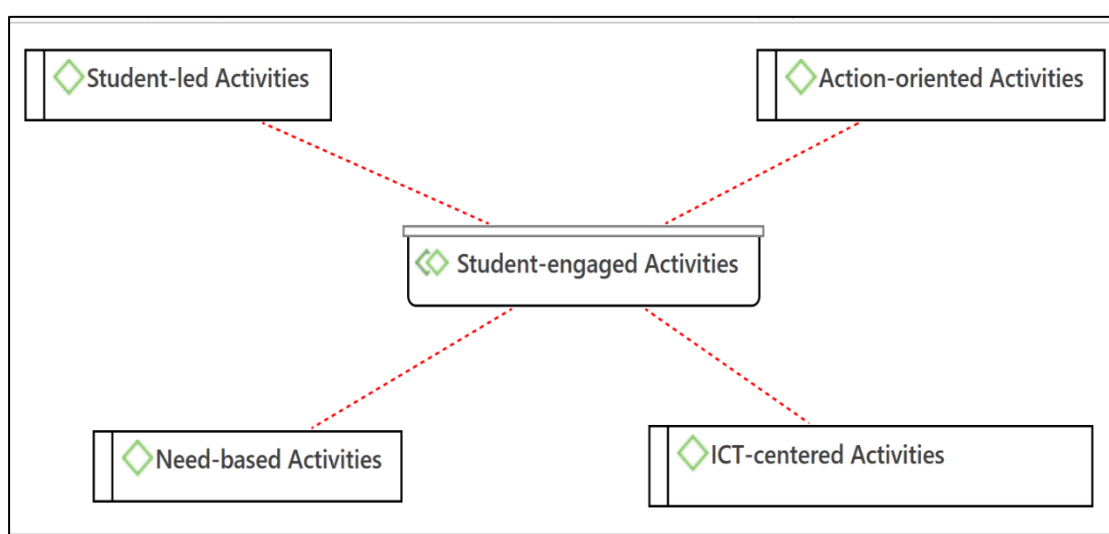
towards the goal of focusing on essential issues, connecting important voices, and introducing important facts. He further asserts, “Although, temporarily, the consciousness of the author (i.e., the speaker, writer) and the audience (i. e., listener, reader) do not have equal rights, as dialogue demands, -- this inequality promotes and makes possible the dialogue” (p. 409). Each student can have a leading role when the learning content is from their own socio-linguistic background. The opportunity to lead roles makes them more sincere and responsible as they have to satisfy others with their queries.



Actually, “allowing students time to discuss, analyze, and reflect on the reading in small groups of pairs” (Kent and Simpson, 2012, as cited in Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 292), makes students more engaged and leads them to work more enthusiastically on the learning content from the area of their interest than the reading text of their textbook. More particularly, the students are more engaged in the group work that includes planning, learning and sharing, action of rehearsal, feedback exchange, and performance. Such activities make students more engaged and creative. In other words, such activities make the conversation productive and promote a sense of belonging within the classroom. Every classroom has students from distinct socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds, so this difference makes dialogue possible. The teacher is superior to students in the class, so he or she can make classroom activities goal-focused.

Actual learning consists of knowing what to do, practicing how to do it, and changing understanding and performance. The existing classroom activities are against students’ needs and interests. As Freire (2005) argues, “Education is suffering from narration sickness” (p. 71); dialogue-based, problem-solving-based, and activity-based events based on experiment, experience, and performance are today’s demands,

but such student-centered activities are not significantly promoted. In the study, the participants experienced two types of classroom activities: student-engaged activities and boring activities. The first one includes student-led activities, action-oriented activities, need-based activities, and ICT-centered activities. The student-led activities reflect students' knowledge based on their leadership, participation, and performance skills.

Figure 9. *Student-Engaged Activities*



Note.  = Code group or organizing theme  = Code or local theme

The participants have experienced library use, noticeboard use, and fun and engaging activities as student-led activities. As perceived, the library is neither a burden nor an additional pressure for students. It is for refreshment, stimulating the sluggish minds, self-respect, and enhancing self-learning. When students visit the library, they see the peaceful environment, see others reading a book or working on the computer in their own way, and learn about the library culture. Library use can provide many opportunities for students. Oliver (2014) says, “While school libraries are very cognizant of the challenges they face with changing technologies and

practices, they can also identify with the opportunities available to them” (Oliver, 2014, p. 1).

However, schools have not equipped libraries to maximize students’ learning. By organizing different events, the school management can develop a library-use culture. Book review programs, motivational speeches, interactive activities, quizzes, and game-like activities are some student-friendly activities practiced in the school. Nevertheless, they are rare and not practiced as a regular part of education in community schools. As a result of advanced 21st-century ICT development, the digital library has brought a drastic change in the use of the library. Using this facility, students have benefitted from library use anytime they want from anywhere else. Furthermore, Wu et al. (2007), mentioning ELLE, an extensible digital library for language learning, claim that it “provides diverse kind of interactive practice exercises, and draws teachers into the learning experience by allowing them to submit materials for exercises” (p. 1). In such a type of library, both the teachers and students can add or share their creations, such as their contributions or responses, openly or maintain privacy. The provision of such facilities is to be promoted. Although people traditionally visit the library to borrow books, make notes, prepare for examination, and also for a peaceful study environment, it, in this 21st-century era, has been a place to visit for personal development, free stuff, different events and programs offered by the library, unusual discoveries, joining with like-minded people, and for quiet personal space. As Harisanty (2019) says, “Utilization of school library requires motivation” (p. 1); librarians can collaborate with the teachers to organize student-friendly library events.

Secondly, using a noticeboard motivates students to work better, establish self-esteem, and make their own distinct identities. A notice board, a pin board, and a

bulletin board are used in the school to post public messages and students' and even teachers' creative work. As Parker (1959) claims, "A child learns more from bulletin boards he has made himself than from commercial or teacher-made displays" (p. 362); they work and learn a lot before they display their work and learn more even after other people respond to their work. Cansever and Seyhan (2015) add the notice board as a means to communicate with parents, mentioning, "The boards can be seen as a bridge between children, parents, and classroom" (p. 91). The concerned people can exchange their views on the genre posted on the notice board. Communication through such noticeboards can have different information flow in the school, society, and the family.

Finally, fun and engaging activities such as language games and quiz contests are equally student-engaged. Games, as they are amusing and exciting, are highly motivating and engaging. Almost everyone, whatever their age and profession, loves playing. A game is a teamwork that activates its players, creates a funny environment with a competitive atmosphere, and encourages the participants to achieve the goal. There is loss and win, sadness, and happiness associated with performance. The amalgamation of learning content to games leads students to enjoy learning. As Alpar (2013) concludes, "Playing constitutes the heart of children's learning, and it prepares them for life" (p. 1248). Likewise, Thomson and Maloy (2022) argue that children become more creative when they play independently. Moreover, students' learning through playing increases their understanding level more than traditional methods. Creating such an environment, language learners, who feel they only enjoy it, can be activated to work in the classroom in meaningful learning. In addition, planning, organizing, and running student-engaging activities such as quiz contests makes students sincere and responsible. On the other hand, participating in the contest as

contestants makes students studious and critical. What is more important in student-engaged activities is students' collaboration and industrious work to achieve the goal before the actual events.

The other student-engaged activities are action-oriented activities. Science exhibitions, fancy dress competitions, and cultural programs; arts and crafts programs (which include paperwork, clay work, collage, and handicraft; and painting and drawing) have been practiced as action-oriented activities. In such work, students have become engaged wholeheartedly and play their roles. Such action-oriented activities make students creative and sincere. "Skills and techniques are the basis of social practices" (Thomson & Maloy, 2022, p. 23) and are primary, whereas education is secondary for life. Therefore, such action-oriented activities should be implemented from planning to the assessment level. Furthermore, they are student-centered and goal-oriented.

The third student-engaging activity that the participants experienced was need-based. As the students want refreshment and entertainment, they want movement and performance, particularly from their immediate need and interest, not the teachers' constant lecture and order sitting on the bench and listening to them. Also, they are tired of textbooks, long reading texts, and tedious exercises. According to Vandenkerekhove et al. (2019), students have three basic psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Autonomy talks about students' choices and psychological freedom. The next involves students' connection with others and a sense of belongingness; the final one refers to students' confidence level in dealing with challenging situations. They further claim, "When students' needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence are satisfied, students feel better at school, work harder in class, and are more autonomously motivated" (Vandenkerekhove et al., 2019, p. 4).

The classroom activities where students have self-governance, their needs, interest-related activities, and competencies built up from them are more inspiring and engaging. Students' movement in the class during classroom activities comes under action-oriented activities. The need-based activities determine how valuable and exciting the activities are in the class. Are they as per the student's needs and interests or against their needs and motivation?

Finally, ICT-centered activities practiced in the school have reflected the conservative perception of school management, administration, parents, and teachers towards ICT use. That is to say, they have a negative perception of ICT. Schools as education centers are in a dilemma about ICT use to maximize students' learning. Although ICT has brought a change in people's lives around the world, ICT practices are demotivated in schools. In other words, schools have not made classrooms ICT-friendly enough to educate students. It is due to fear of internet hazards, as Kleine et al. (2014) say, "Risks online include child pornography, grooming by a stranger, trafficking, software piracy, exposure to extremist content and cyber-bullying" (p. 13). However, some teachers have utilized ICT during their loose teaching time for refreshment, as a part of motivation, and for giving them a new taste of learning, particularly not as a part of the curriculum and paper-pencil test preparation. The concerned authority has not initiated any program to inform the parents, teachers, and children of the fact that ICT, if adequately used, empowers children, enhances their level of confidence and critical thinking, and promotes overall learning. "many technological tools can support different skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, collaborative learning, and the learning environment" (Alismail & McGuire, 2015, p. 153), they promote students' in-depth understanding, help them get meaningful feedback, and improve their quality. They further claim that portfolios,

WebQuests, Guizzes, Wiki, Google site, Digital storytelling, ePortfolios, SoftChalk LessonBuilder, Blog, etc., support ICT skills. Moreover, ICT provides a native flavor in teaching-learning listening, which is authentic, student-friendly, and goal-oriented. For example, while learning to listen, students learn a language with linguistic features that differ from their L1. As Renukadevi (2014) says, “The sound, rhythm, intonation, and stress of the language can only be perfectly adapted through listening” (p. 59), but for teaching listening skills with such quality, listening content with native students’ interest area has not been served. The text or content that does not include native-like flavor and students’ interests cannot develop their listening skills appropriately. For this, metacognitive strategies are helpful, as Renukadevi (2014) mentions, “The metacognitive strategies train the language learner to cope with the demands of listening” (p. 62). The students have found the existing listening text tedious since it does not meet their needs and interests.

On the other hand, boring teaching-learning activities, though the students dislike them entirely, have been practiced more and more because they are in the interest of school management, teachers, and parents’ belief that theory-based knowledge is essential. Under boring teaching-learning activities, the learners have experienced teacher-led, content-centered, monotonous, and exam-oriented activities. Baghoussi (2021) expresses, “Although teachers know the various teaching approaches, they have to adopt the teacher-centered method because of several constraints” (p. 268). One of the restrictions is large class. The teachers have a large number of students in a class. They have difficulty controlling the class; they cannot pay attention to every student. They have load-over-load: maintaining discipline as the administration wants, explaining the text in detail and giving clear and detailed notes, checking every student’s assignment, and satisfying them by answering their

questions. Additionally, management and administration complain to them for not keeping the class silent. In this way, the Teacher-Centered Approach (TCA), which “(TCA) has its roots in behaviorism”(Baghoussi, 2021, p. 270), is still dominant in schools even today. Transformation of TCA to SCA (Student-Centered Approach) is impossible with a single teacher effort. Provision of student-centered activities from planning to assessment is a must. “To cultivate dissident rather than consensual subjectivities of like-mindedness, we need to move toward experimental modes of being and becoming rather than fixed and stratified modes of thought” (Carstens, 2017, p. 40).

The next tedious activity is content-centered activities. Teachers usually confine their teaching to the content of the textbook. Most of the content is not in the student’s interest. Additionally, the teachers have followed traditional ways of teaching the content: reading the text, explaining it in detail, giving clear and detailed notes highlighting the learning area likely to be asked in the paper-pencil test, and preparing students for the test. Despite the whip through formal education, training, workshops, and symposiums to make classroom activities student-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented, the change has not been possible due to the teachers’ status-quo and inept behavior and dominance of the top-down ruling system in education delivery. The teachers are reluctant to reform the way they teach and have no enthusiasm for practicing new ways of teaching that they see and learn in teacher training programs. Another reason is the practice of the top-down approach from curriculum design to assessment system. Although “the ultimate goal of a critical pedagogy should be the transformation of consciousness and the subsequent action as a result of the shift” (Carstens, 2017, p. 467), teaching-learning activities have not shifted from teacher-centered to student-centered.

During adolescence, students have difficulty paying attention to a particular learning area continuously for a long time. They want variety. The adolescent (children between 13- 19 years) are in their transitional phase of physical and psychological development. As they, “during this phase, undergo multiple behavior changes like mood swings, rude attitudes, sadness, happiness, and positive or negative thoughts” (McNeely & Bose, 2014, as cited in Kiran & Fayyaz, 2022), they require both of their parents and teachers proper guidelines which can affect their overall personality, self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-independence. Providing them the opportunities to learn with responsibility leads them to accomplish well in their academic life. In addition, as they say, “Adolescents are busy working out who they are and where they fit in the world” (p. 30). Classroom activities and learning content based on such things make them more engaged and concentrated.

Role of Assessment in Educational Activities

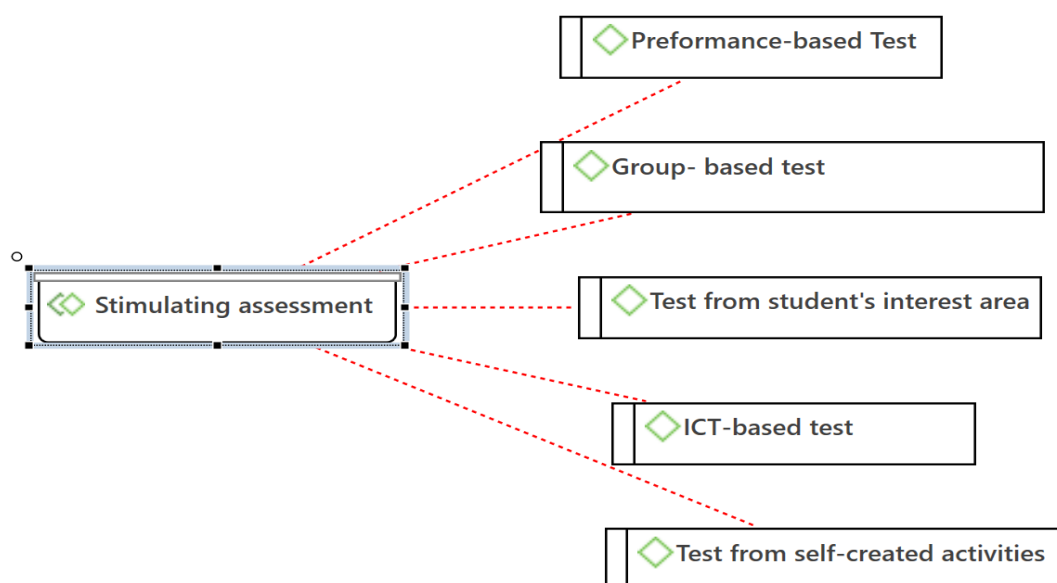
The existing assessment system assesses students’ learning achievement from the endpoint of knowledge, not from the process to the endpoint. An end-point assessment, also termed a summative assessment, does not value the students’ performance during the learning process. So, it neither motivates the teachers nor the concerned authority to lead the process as it was designed/expected to follow, nor does it assess students’ real achievement. Instead, it begets different ill practices. Therefore, the education delivery process needs reforming since it is not being led as expected. The targeted goal can be achieved easily when the process is led as intended. Assessment should also assess how the education delivery process is designed and led. The focus should be on redesigning the model and the system of schooling; as Kaput (2018) states, “It is time to design a system that takes into account students’ interests, learning styles, cultural identities, life experiences, and



personal challenges” (p. 7). In addition, the assessment system has been developed and led only for students’ theory-based learning achievement, not for evaluating how the teaching-learning activities are planned, arranged, and run and their influence.

Although both stimulating and harassing assessments are practiced in existing assessment systems, harassing one guided by high-stakes testing is dominant. The stimulating testing, particularly for grading students’ performance based on practical work, lacks consistency and fairness. Good grading from paper-pencil tests is the main target of an academic year's educational activities. So, the students try their best to achieve better grades. For this, they prioritize less actual learning and emphasize more on the strategies to obtain better grades; in other words, students’ participation, performance, and hands-on knowledge and skills are not important, and what is more important is their grading from paper-pencil tests. Because of the high priority on high-stakes testing, students’ scores are more important than their hands-on knowledge and skill. Amrein and Berliner (2002a) also conclude, “Although states may demonstrate an increase in scores on their own high-stakes tests, transfer of learning is not a typical outcome of their high-stakes testing policy” (p. 56). The existing assessment has prioritized assessing students’ grading from paper-pencil tests more than assessing students’ hands-on knowledge and skills. Serrano et al. (2018), on the other hand, focus on the assessment of the learning process, saying, “self-directed learning strategies allow the process of learning to be valued, rather than the grade alone” (p. 11). In addition to assessing how the desired goals are achieved, the assessment requires an evaluation of the process of learning: how critical, how authentic, and how transformative the educational activities are as Freire claims, “authentic learning is critical, rational, and transformative” (Serrano et al., 2018, p. 2). The development of the system to measure students’ experienced-based knowledge

through paper-pencil tests and theory-based knowledge through practical examination discourages the culture of rote learning and ill practices that occur during high-stakes testing. Developing an assessment model and encouraging students to engage in autonomous learning strategies is essential to discourage the traditional banking teaching model and make them autonomous learners. They become self-motivated learners when they have to be engaged in autonomous learning strategies for better marks or grades. To promote autonomous learning, reliable and transparent assessment is necessary. The students who were given the rubrics of a task for practical marks were more motivated than those who were just asked to perform the task. “Rubrics are useful grading tools that add reliability, validity, and transparency to assessments”(Chowdhury, 2018, p. 61).

Figure 101. *Stimulating Assessment*



Note.  = 'code group' or theme;  = normal code

The rubric makes assessment valid, reliable, and transparent. Developing and using such rubrics have been necessary for assessing students' performance, particularly the internal assessment. As assessment is the recorded evidence of one's

academic achievement, rubrics guide the teachers and students to conduct teaching-learning activities and prepare for the assessment. A rubric is a scoring tool or guide for evaluating students' performance. "A rubric is a useful grading tool which can help instructors to grade students' work in a more consistent, reliable and unbiased manner" Chowdhury (2018, p. 61). It is helpful for students as they can identify their level of performance. In the words of Chowdhury (2018), "A well-designed rubric can help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and be more objective about their quality of work" (p. 61). In existing assessment practice, teachers neither use rubrics nor have clear guidelines for measuring students' achievement.

Rubrics can guide students and teachers to meet the goal and avoid the drawbacks of the liberal upgrading system in school education. Assessment should assess the process, which reflects whether teaching-learning activities are performed wholly and appropriately and how they are performed. On the other hand, teachers should be made accountable for conducting teaching-learning activities. In other words, assessment should assess whether grading is based on the rubric.

The existing paper-pencil test, which promotes memorization and rote learning, assesses students' endpoint knowledge. It should be modified with the one that assesses the process of whether learning activities are adequately and appropriately run or not, as Curtis and Kukke (2015) remark, "We are examining our curricula at the activity level to assess whether or not each successive activity in a session is taking us in the direction of learning and application" (p. 5).

Assignment

The assignment is a work that the teachers give students to complete. It includes classwork and homework. Homework is the work the teacher assigns students to perform during non-school hours. Letterman (2013) claims, "Doing

written Homework' was among the most essential activities to students" (p. 114), as it is a part of the preparation for paper-pencil tests, particularly high-stakes testing. The more written assignments the students have, the more pressure they experience. However, the students prefer non-written homework to write one. They are more engaged in the non-written homework, which is part of the preparation for the next day's classroom activities. The students have experienced two types of assignments: motivating tasks and dominating tasks.

The students have experienced the tasks, including fun and challenging activities as motivating tasks, from the areas of their interest. They find fun and challenging activities such as stage performance, game-based activities, and ICT-related work entertaining and challenging. The stage-performance activities include speech, debate, caricature, singing and dancing, etc. The students require sufficient practice for stage performance-related activities. It makes them conscious of the content to perform, develop the concept of performance, rehearse, and collect feedback from their teachers and friends, and finally become ready to perform. In this preparation phase, dialogue occurs, particularly with teachers and classmates.

Teaching-learning, in the absence of dialogue, becomes incomplete. Matusov (2009) discusses two approaches to why dialogue is necessary in education. They are weak dialogism, a classroom discussion or debate, and radical, strong dialogism. We need strong dialogism, not the weak one, to make teaching lively and meaningful. Genuine education is impossible without dialogue as it moves ahead along with the dialogue and stops when dialogue halts. Freire (2005) also describes dialogue as "an indispensable component of the process of both teaching and learning" (p. 17). Dialogue makes teaching learning live and productive. Although Matusov (2009) asserts, "Dialogic method can be done once a week or one hour a day or not at all – it

can be dosed, scheduled, and well located in the classroom” (p. 75), dialogue can take place anywhere at any time physically and virtually, formally and informally, written and spoken, or through words or actions. He also opines, “Dialogue occurs not only through words but also through actions” (p. 81). Being critically aware and conscious of potential flaws likely to occur during the performance, the student or performer who has to perform from the stage or in front of the class refines it by having dialogues with friends, teachers, and someone else. Therefore, Matusov (2009) further says, “Dialogue is important to conscientization as a process of learning” (p. 128). Different forms of dialogue and monologue become goal-focused. When the students' minds deviate from learning and are occupied by the hegemonic clues, they become goal-focused, which is the goal they have to achieve in the classroom. According to Cuddon (2013), Plato describes Socratic dialogues as philosophical debates and dialogues that employ question-answer-based heuristics and dialects. However, “Lucian used dialogue for comic and satirical ends and as a form of entertainment” (Cuddon, 2013, p. 199). If such debates and dialogues are contextualized, the assignment for preparing the next day's discussion or debate motivates students to work on the area of the discussion or debate. The development of such dialogues is limited to existing educational activities.

The next motivating task is group work. In group work, students are free to search for different ideas in their own way to contribute to the group and solve the problem given. Group work promotes collaborative learning, mutual understanding, and teamwork because “Groups have more information than a single individual”(Burke, 2011, p. 88). When students have group work, they discuss the topic given. Before the discussion, they collect information to exchange. Burke (2011) further suggests that group encouragement is necessary to have assigned roles and

responsibilities. It is more challenging to be a slacker if the goals are clearly outlined for each member. The students in group work clearly understand the goal, exchange their ideas openly, feel belonging to the group, and promote a united effort to meet the goal. Each member, on their part, contributes to their group when they feel it is their duty or a part of the image; when they have distinct roles before and after discussion for solving the problem given; and when they have heterogeneity rather than homogeneity in the group. Group assignment works even more effectively if used with a jigsaw strategy.

The last motivating assignment or task that the participants experienced was ‘the self-creative activity (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). Providing platforms such as notice boards and webpages motivates students’ self-creative activities. When students get a platform to exhibit their creations, they see others’ work, create their own work, evaluate their task, and put or post it on the platform they have. Discussing and collecting feedback before placing or posting it on the board or webpage is even more dialogic. In such tasks, the students place themselves equal to their teachers and dialogue with them.

In short, assignments that include dialogues, especially radical ones, make teaching-learning emancipatory and critical. Curtis and Kukke (2015), talking about learning activities and application activities, state, “Application activities are the activities that give participants opportunities to apply what they learned in learning activities” (p. 7). When students have sufficient opportunities to share and apply what they have learned during learning activities, their learning becomes evocative. In this situation, learning activities and sometimes assignments or homework can become a preparation for (the next day’s) activities. So, the students will have activity-based assignments and do their assignments to perform the next day’s activities.

In contrast, the dominating tasks include pressurized work inside the classroom, homework from the textbook, exam-oriented rote learning tasks, reading long chapters, and listening tasks. The students find a task dominating when they find the work long and uninteresting or beyond their interest area, when they have not understood the instruction when they struggle with the materials, or when they find the work hard enough. Letterman (2013) found that “students felt homework should be included as part of their course grade” (p. 118). Then, the students become motivated to complete the assignment. Similarly, “homework interest is positively associated with homework completion (Cooper et al., 1998; Xu, 2008a as cited in Xu, 2012, p. 82) and academic achievement (Cooper et al., 1998). The students are significantly motivated by the type of assignment that is closely related to the next day’s classroom activities, the activities that include movement, interaction, or performance in the classroom.

Rubrics can work as a mirror in educational activities. It clarifies students’ level of learning and the target to meet. It standardizes teachers’ assessments and promotes consistency in grading. It also makes the parents familiar with their children’s level of learning and their target to meet. Most teachers use their own way of judgment while evaluating their students’ performance. Such evaluation practices are likely to be inconsistent and biased. To avoid such inconsistencies and biases, the use of rubrics is worthwhile. From the use of rubrics, students understand their level of performance and grading; as Chowdhury (2018) states, “Rubrics can serve as a valuable grading tool that can lead to consistent, fair, and more transparent grading” (p. 65). Through rubrics, teachers can clarify the study area and pedagogical goals of learning on the one hand, and on the other side, students clearly understand their learning target, where they are in their learning, and what they have to learn. In other

words, rubrics familiarize students with their strengths and weaknesses of learning; as Chowdhury (2018) says, “By using rubrics, students can analyze their work and decide to what extent it lives up to the standards set out by their teachers in the rubric” (p.65). In the context of measuring students’ level of performance in assessment, particularly in practical examination, the development and use of rubrics have been essential to make the assessment reliable and valid.

Measures for Self-governing and Goal-Oriented Activities

Self-governing and goal-oriented activities designed to enhance autonomy, motivation, and achievement among the students and teachers make teaching-learning emancipatory, conscientizing, and engaging. In addition to the fact that “academic performance is the core task” (Wang et al., 2022, p. 7538), students’ physical activities and interpersonal relationships are equally crucial for their psychological well-being. The core tasks are highly emphasized, but the physical activities and interpersonal relationships are in the shade of teacher-centered theory-based teaching-learning activities, which are ignored in the assessment. The educational activities must include all the activities to empower students with academic and transversal competencies, including 21st-century skills.

First, the school environment should be hospitable and motivating, and the students should feel like they are in their own world. It shapes students’ activities and behavior. When a student enters a school, he/she slowly learns what to do and what not to do; seeing others’ doing shapes his/her behavior and attitude to adjust to the environment. Like “goal-oriented self-regulation is beneficial to reach better academic performance due to the realization of academic goals” (Wang et al., 2022, p. 7534), the system of educational activities needs making self-governed. If attempts are made to promote psychological well-being (Shernoff, 2013), the school authority can

empower students to learn. Empowering students psychologically is more important than the delivery of education; as Shernoff (2013) claims, “Positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and cognition, activate creative thinking, and foster social competencies” (p. 15). For this, polite language, harmonious behavior, and pleasant environment play vital roles. Though soft skills are costless but mighty, the schools and concerned authorities lack the effort to promote them. In addition, they are weak in practicing the fact that ‘Respect to be respected.’ The concerned authorities have neglected to manage micromanagement to develop a pleasing environment and foster positive emotions in students, teachers, and students, which has made the school a dull, ugly, and inhuman place where students learn to dodge, bluff, fake, and cheat (Holt, 1969). If created by students’ ownership, small things in the environment can bring significant change.

Secondly, the content for learning, which is from the area of students’ needs, interests, and talents, is exciting and challenging. It is exciting because the students can enjoy and work on it with heartfelt effort. Similarly, it is challenging for the students to work on it and perform what the content is, why it is so, and how it is so. Moreover, the teachers lead the students toward the target. The students have a sort of frustration with the existing textbook because the contents are beyond the area of their interest and talent. The learning content, if designed from the areas of students’ interest, motivates them to work on it. For example, for a student fond of singing, a song or rhyme is better than an essay or a story. The students hesitate to work on content chosen by others, not theirs. More and more learning content from interdisciplinary areas is necessary to provide them with choice options. If so, is it possible to design a textbook that covers the contents from the students’ interest areas? Is it possible for a teacher to maintain individualized teaching? Is it possible to

run an examination? And so on. Doing this through teacher-centered teaching is impossible, where the students only receive knowledge. It is possible through heutagogy, a self-determined learning. It promotes a learner-centered environment, equips learners with lifetime-learning skills, and prepares them to live and learn in a web-connected world. To discourage the Nürnberg funnel (Blaschke, 2018) of teaching-learning trends and promote learner autonomy in the classroom, the promotion of heutagogic design (Blaschke, 2018) is necessary. In this design, students choose a topic of interest, work on it, consult different resources, and perform it in the classroom. The teacher, as a guide, provides the necessary support. Heutagogic practice encourages “the development of critical thinking skills and creativity” (Blaschke, 2018, p. 134). It empowers learners and enhances their critical thinking skills.

The activities, including learner-engaged events, ICT-related, and risk-taking activities, make educational activities self-governed and goal-oriented. The teachers who follow traditional methods usually deliver the content and tell their students about the process, but a critical pedagogue involves the students in the process of the events. For example, the topic ‘Pen is mightier than the sword’ is taught by explaining the text, asking students to go through it and answer the questions from each paragraph, and giving them some written task as an assignment. In such practice, “teaching is most often test-oriented rather than knowledge-centered” (Uddin, 2019, p. 109). In this way, preparing students for high-stakes testing neither helps them achieve good scores or grades (despite some exceptions) nor enhances their understanding and conscientization. On the other hand, a critical pedagogue asks the students to discuss the topic and leads them to organize a debate program. In the program, some will be organizers, some become participants, some will work as

reporters, and so on. The teacher facilitates, supports, and empowers them from behind the curtain. The students prepare to perform their roles, review the program, and write their reflections as a part of the assignment to be submitted. Some activities that engage learners are dialogue, classroom activities connected with real-life situations, learner-engaged out-of-book activities, hands-on-study activities, and problem-solving strategies.

Use of ICT in teaching-learning, learner-engaging, relaxing, and goal-oriented. Anyone without ICT skills is like an illiterate person in their personal, social, and professional life, so developing ICT skills in students is necessary. For this reason, the existing educational practices are too weak and insufficient, although they are somehow better than in the past. First, “learners need to be equipped with updated knowledge”(Ghavifekr et al., 2016, p. 39), enabling them to adapt as competent candidates for the changing global opportunities. A virtual learning platform provides learners several opportunities to learn from one another and access different resources. Although Ghavifekr et al. (2016) describe five challenges of ICT use in teaching: limited accessibility and network connection, limited technical support in the school, lack of practical training, lack of teachers’ competency, and limited time. Due to the lack of this, schools have banned students from using the internet but allowed the teachers to use it and waste time on social media, ignoring their duties and responsibilities.

Risk-taking activities also make students self-governed and goal-oriented. As students enthusiastically work on the content of learning from the area of their interest, they become ready to face the possible challenges of being a performer or leader, which is a difficult job. They are equally ready to answer the queries asked from the content. When facing creative risk-taking opportunities, they require a

friendly and supportive environment. Henriksen et al. (2021) also insist on risk-taking opportunities for students as it is “a pivotal pedagogical principle for fostering creativity and preparing learners for the adaptations and flexibility” (p.7). such opportunities make students even more sincere and hard-working.

Finally, the assessment provides students, teachers, and concerned authorities with clear guidelines for the goals, reflects students’ learning achievements, evaluates the process of educational activities, and motivates students, teachers, and concerned authorities with constructive feedback for its betterment. It can make educational activities well-led and goal-oriented. Through transparent and clear rubric guidelines, inform them of the target and their level of achievement. The fact that “the assessment target needs to change to evaluate that processing capacity” (Care & Luo, 2016, p. 5) is a challenge for teachers and assessment experts. Because the rubrics show students’ level of learning or performance, it leads them to self-evaluate their performance, promote their level of understanding, and then attempt more for better performance as it is the area of their interest.

Strategies for Making Teachers Responsible and Accountable

The teachers have a key role in making classroom activities as intended and expected. Until and unless they are responsible and accountable, change is not possible. They have experienced being inferior to SMC, PTA, and local government officials. Similarly, the superior treats them as if they are only for teaching students, maintaining discipline in class, completing the course on time, and following their directions. On the other hand, teachers receive more benefits from their personal, social, and political links than from their performance and contribution to the school. Their honesty and devotion do not matter; their political power and personal link matter. How active they make their students do not matter; how student-friendly and

goal-oriented activities they run does not matter; what matters is their capacity to maintain discipline in the class, detailed explanation of the text, and detailed notes or capsules for the paper-pencil test. The teachers opine that performing our duty as per their interest is better than running different activities and presenting our vision.

“Although teachers know the various teaching approaches, they must adopt the teacher-centered method because of several constraints” (Baghoussi, 2021, p. 268).

The concerned authority seems reluctant to break the constraints and create a favorable teacher environment.

Firstly, empowering and motivating teachers and students from policy to practice level to perform their roles can make them responsible and accountable. Creating a situation where the teachers find their students' performance as a part of their performance works better. It makes them even more active and stimulates the students in learning activities. Providing teacher-empowerment from their students' performance-based activities can bring a change. The teachers require training to develop diverse learner-engaged and goal-oriented activities. They also require full support and freedom to design classroom activities, launch them, or lead students to run the activities and assess students on their participation and performance. Though costly and time-consuming, it motivates the teachers to plan learner-engaged and goal-oriented activities and lead their students to participate and perform their roles actively. They will also be motivated to study and consult different resources in preparation for participating and performing their roles.

Secondly, the bottom-up education system model is needed to empower the left-behind children regarding their inherited talents and interests. In addition, promotion or upgrading through evidence-based assessment rather than teachers' and students' obsequious nature motivates them to perform their roles better. Strategies to

discourage nepotism and favoritism can somewhat mitigate the chaos. Developing a culture of ‘respect for others to be respected’ and self-respect motivates everyone to perform their roles with their best effort.

The next strategy is the organization of symposiums, webinars, seminars, and workshops for teachers and students to exchange their ideas and experiences. As teachers are found to have run different student-friendly activities after they come back from such programs, these programs, if organized in a school, not in a particular training hall, become even more effective. Practice-based training for the teacher is necessary. The training for the teachers to plan learner-engaged activities and lead the students to work on them is better than the training to deliver the content in the class.

Finally, the appropriate load for the teachers, sufficient facilities to organize different events and activities, and interactive programs with parents, SMC members, and supportive hands provide feedback, making them constructive and responsible. As Jomoad et al. (2021) claim, “Teachers are prone to burnout due to long hours of teaching and a heavy workload” (p. 48). They cannot perform their roles constructively. Because of role overload, they work lethargically. Therefore, they further conclude with the expectation that “the school authorities systematically provide a balanced work for teachers and review the workload of teachers as a move towards improving the quality of teaching in public schools” (p. 53). If teachers are encouraged to have sufficient facilities, they can organize different events and make teaching and learning student-engaged and self-governed. Collaboration, cooperation, and frequent interaction among the parents, teachers, SMC members, and supportive agencies familiarize them with the running programs and necessary support.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed five sub-headings: experience of school environment, language and behavior, learning content, classroom activities, and assessment. I discussed the participants' experiences with the school environment. The hierarchy-based structure has created a dominating environment, affecting students' and teachers' roles in their work. The teachers' role in the classroom through their language and behavior has influenced student empowerment, participation, and performance in the classroom. Classroom management is equally influential in motivating or demotivating students and teachers. Secondly, I have described how the participants experienced learning content and what sort of learning content can be learner-engaged, self-governing, and goal-oriented. Under classroom activities, I have discussed both student-engaged activities and lethargic activities. Then, I discussed the measures for making classroom activities self-governing and goal-oriented and strategies for making the teachers responsible and accountable. Finally, I talked about assessment's role in influencing the teachers' and students' work. I summed up the chapter that a well-managed, neat, and clean environment, respectful and supportive language and behavior, learner-friendly and action-oriented content with choice options, and stimulating assessment have motivated both the teachers and students in the school.

Chapter VI

Discussion of Findings

In this chapter, I have discussed the information collected from the field regarding educational activities regarding emancipation and empowerment, justification and conscientization, and transversal competencies and intellectual growth through a critical pedagogical perspective. I have also presented the challenges for implementing learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities in Nepalese schools. The challenges include school environment, language and behavior, learning content, classroom activities, and assessment.

Life-world of Classroom Discourse and Educational Activities

The school is a platform where children can join, enjoy different teaching-learning activities, and strive to meet their goals. Having students from diverse linguistic and socio-cultural contexts, schools have to as well as are expected to create a friendly and engaging environment where they collaborate, share, and work to meet the goal. On the other hand, the students have their status, wants, and desires. This diversity influences each other as they live, work, and share their worldviews and experiences. Hegemonic environment, language, and behavior have affected students' participation and performance. Their discouragement, respecting students' diverse interests and talents, empowers them to grow with expected competencies. This understanding of mine is aligned with the understanding of Adams et al. (2010) that the teachers and concerned stakeholders should be aware of the oppression that "cannot be understood in individual terms alone" (p. 6). Their roles in this context are expected to be dynamic and strategic to respect diversity and empower students like the essence of social justice in the basic structure of society (Rawls, 1999).

Firstly, the school environment and people's language and behavior determine students' participation and performance. The students want a justifiable and empowering teaching-learning environment where they can participate and perform their roles confidently and enthusiastically. Schools can lead students to construct their identities and grow up, offering many more opportunities for their interests and talents. Similarly, with their lived experiences, the students construct meaning "by the way they reify others and are reified by others"(Freire et al., 2009, p. 86). If I merge social justice theory with this statement, the school is not aware of how the students are reified and how they are mistreated and dominated. For this, the environment where the students "become equal and active participants with their teachers and peers" (Lloyd et al., 2016, p. 294) is essential to empower the left-behind students. Until and unless the influence of 'structures of dehumanization' (Monchinski, 2008) is disheartened, the students' meaningful participation and heartfelt engagement in learning is hardly possible. In addition, the teachers require motivation and empowerment to empower the left-behind students through a motivating environment and engaging activities. If I link the underlying value of social dominance theory, I came to this point of understanding that the concerned authority should be aware of the process of producing and maintaining prejudice and discrimination at different levels (Pratto & Sidanius, 1999).

In addition to polite and respectful language and behavior, the teachers' attitudes, appearance, and manners influence students' learning. For "our education should be the education of love"(Geng, 2017, p. 5643), the teachers should have moral cultivation "embodied two aspects: the love of the work and the love of the students" (p. 5643). Polite and respectful language and behavior are costless and effortless but have priceless effects on students. Behavioral expression of goodwill

fosters friendship and trust (Rawls, 1999). The concerned authority has been ungenerous and neglectful in developing such an environment in the school to make everyone enlightened and cultured. Whatever physical infrastructure and attempts are made in education, students cannot grow with quality education in an environment where they experience ‘ethnic cleansing’ (Freire, 2005). In this line, social justice theory highlights “cross-cultural differences in justice sensitivity and its psychological functioning” (Baumert & Schmitt, 2016, p. 157). To promote emancipation and conscientization, the first and foremost emphasis should be on the school environment and people’s language and behavior, which makes everyone feel loved and respected. The students, despite their frustration due to domination and discrimination in the family and society, can be empowered through school education because “anyone suffering from terror, fear, and doubts get their mentality changed into positive thinking if they are provided with encouragement or consolation carefully” (Ghimire, 2017, p. 220). Due to the lack of this fact, the students, particularly the left behind, are frustrated, reluctant, and pessimistic about school education. Ghimire (2017) focuses on the supportive and friendly relationship between the teachers and students, saying, “One of the ways of awakening ... is the affinity between the *guru* (teachers) and the disciple” (Ghimire, 2017, p. 217). In this line, critical theory suggests their harmony which includes “lack of contradictions and absence of superfluous” (Horkheimer, 2002, p. 190).

Secondly, the content of learning influences students’ empowerment. One of the reasons why educational plans have failed is that authors or curriculum designers design curriculum and learning contents as per their views of reality and have rarely thought of the ‘men-in-a-situation’ (Freire, 2005), the situation of the students in the school. The following reason is students’ reluctance and frustration with learning

content. The students enjoy working on content based on their interests and talents but work on the learning content lethargically and forcefully, not enthusiastically and inspiringly, when they are beyond their interests and talents. As “learning is not only finding information but also forming the attitude” (Molnár et al., 2018, p. 215), the contents of learning should direct activities from the point or from what the area the students have already learned or enjoyed to the target. Moreover, Reynolds (2020) opines, “All new learning content will be designed around mobile access” (p. 3). Likewise, Sumarní et al. (2019) focus on the ‘Child-Friendly ICT Textbook.’ However, the study found that students enjoy content from the area of their interest or talent, content that leads the activities based on physical movement, and that is performance-based, ICT-based, search-based, field-based, or group-based work. Such teaching-learning activities are expected more but practiced rarely.

Furthermore, educational activities based on student's needs, interests, and talents are necessary to discourage hierarchy-based identity because the student's behavior and participation differ based on their identity, the dominant group, or subordinated group identity (Adams et al., 2016). In this connection, in social dominance theory, discrimination at various levels results from a group-based hierarchy (Pratto & Sidanius, 1999). Students have perceived that dominant language and culture have empowered the children from the mainstream and ignored the left-behind ones. As a result, the left-behind children do not have appropriate opportunities to construct their identity through their skills and talents during the main focus of classroom activities. Inferior students perform and participate in the class in a subordinating and isolating way because “meaning negotiation involves processes of participation and reification” (Wenger, 1998, as cited in Freire et al., 2009, p. 86). When the students experience as if they are good-for-nothing, or when they are

bullied, dominated, or mistreated, they slowly and gradually find themselves inferior, as if they are workless without any skill and talent and develop a sort of abhorrence and reluctance and bunk the class and left the school. In this way, schools have faced the challenge of truancy, failure, and dropout problems in almost all classes. The effort of the concerned authority to make the school environment learner-friendly is not sufficient meaningfully. “Critical and liberating dialogue” (Freire, 2005, p. 65) with the oppressed (both the teacher and students), the truant (students), and the failed (students) are the sources for designing educational activities. The sources are found to have been ignored. To understand and transform educational practices (Sirotnik & Oakes, 1986), the teachers are expected to create a teaching-learning environment where the students enjoy educational activities and meet the goals. Understanding educational practices alone cannot bring a significant change. Transformation is a must to bring a change.

The students are tired of the teachers’ lecture in the class. It is not because they have no interest in studying but because the teacher’s lecture is monotonous. Furthermore, the content is beyond their need and interests. Since “children and adults are flexible and inventive in their action and thought” (Lerner & Damon, 2006, p. 313), the students enjoy classroom activities when they are as per their nature. However, their short instruction for them as a guideline to prepare and perform their roles is essential. Moreover, they enjoy the teachers’ out-of-course-talk, such as telling them a story, joking, or doing funny activities. such learner-friendly activities can be enriched by adding learning content. They also enjoy working on the learning contents or texts that bring movement to the classroom. the students are excited to work with the movement in the class. “Movement anchors learning through the body” (Summerford, 2009, p. 7). Moreover, it makes learning fun and engaging.

Central learning takes place during teaching-learning activities. students want engaging classroom activities that are learner-friendly, action-oriented, and challenging. Launching such activities promotes students' participation and performance. In other words, the more student-centered the activities are, the more engaged and responsible the students become. In such activities, the teachers can lead the students to plan, organize, participate, and perform their roles as assigned. The students become more motivated, responsible, and accountable in the class when they find classroom activities are from the area of their interest and talent. One of the greatest challenges is designing classroom activities that promote students' participation and active engagement and lead them to achieve their goals without any negative pressure and torture. In the context that assessment influences students' focus on learning, rubric development is necessary. It can make each student's grading/ learning achievement clear and transparent based on their participation and performance in the roles assigned. It promotes self-evaluation or evaluation from one another.

Meaning -Making of Educational Activities

Different teaching strategies at varied times are necessary to promote students' engaged learning. The teachers were found to have activated the better students, the students who are better than the average ones, and limited classroom interaction within themselves, ignoring the left-behind ones. The teachers were found to lack the ideas and skills to activate and empower the left-behind students. A think-pair-share strategy helps promote less-engaged students. In other words, think-pair-share promotes students' speaking ability (Usman, 2015). "The think-pair-share strategy can solve the students' problem in speaking skills" (Lyman, 1987, as cited in Usman, 2015, p. 38). It provides students with the opportunity to think about a given topic.

When they think of the topic and share their ideas with the pair, they “share their responses with others” (Usman, 2015, p. 39) in the class. This strategy is helpful in social studies and other subjects where the students use Nepali, an official language. However, in English, students have difficulty sharing their ideas. When allowed to use any language of their comfort, the students share their ideas using both English and Nepali. This technique is more comfortable than a single or a particular language, which is used as MOI (Medium of Instruction). In line with social justice theory, the concerned authority should be aware of “equitable treatment to everyone” (Sigdel & Sharma, 2021, p. 205) in the school or classroom.

Actual learning takes place during the process of learning to the end-point knowledge. The existing assessment does not evaluate how the ongoing process has worked. It only assesses students’ end-point knowledge. This assessment practice has motivated the concerned authorities, particularly the teachers, parents, and students, to focus on end-point knowledge. The end-point knowledge is assessed through the paper-pencil test. The assessment of learning, “the use of assessment to determine the extent to which students have achieved intended learning outcomes” (Black & Wiliam, 2018, p. 2), has disheartened the students. Assessment as learning, which describes students’ role “in monitoring and directing their own learning” (Hayward, 2015, cited in Black & Wiliam, 2018, p. 2), has encouraged students’ learning. The dominant high-stakes testing culture has blamed critical pedagogical assessment for lacking authenticity. “For Freire, authentic learning is critical, rational, and transformative”(Serrano et al., 2018, p. 2). The assessment system that reflects students’ critical, rational, and transformative knowledge and skills can make it authentic and valid. It is possible through critical pedagogical assessment.

Making the classroom environment emancipatory and empowering in large classes is challenging. Freire talks about the emancipatory classroom environment. Emancipatory classroom is possible only in a small classroom. However, it becomes chaos in a large classroom. For example, if a teacher leads a classroom consisting of more than fifty students from distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds liberally, it becomes unmanaged and chaotic. The work or part of work can be from the area of some students' interest and talent and can be tedious and irrelevant to others. It can be useful for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities but not for curricular activities all the time. In addition, the students require a certain extent of content knowledge at a particular level to meet the minimum threshold of the designed course. For this, only leading students ahead from the area of their interest may not be sufficient. Therefore, students require rigorous learning for certain levels of academic competencies. It may not be in the best interests of every student. Moreover, the teachers have to cover a wide area of knowledge to achieve a minimum threshold of a certain level per the objectives of the course or level. For this, teachers' "utmost aim is to cover all of the curriculums and make students memorize as much content as possible" (Baghoussi, 2021, p. 269). Some parts of classroom activities should include theory-based content with rigorous teaching-learning. It can be against some students' will. It is challenging for teachers to lead the 'docile bodies' (Saldana, 2013) and the stubborn ones. In addition, the students who are too young and not mature enough to know their future education needs may experience domination when the teachers serve certain content to learn. As "you cannot learn without goofing" (Stern, 1987, as cited in Raju, 2019, p. 3), children goof violently when they work in their world. During this goofing time, they naturally reify and are reified in the classroom. The situation reflects the socio-cultural context of the hierarchic society they grew up in. A teacher control

mechanism is necessary in this situation. Liberalism does not always work when the environment is chaotic. However, justifiable emancipation is a must.

The existing organizational structure has made the praxis of critical pedagogy challenging. We have hegemonic pressure in each layer of the community. Besides, due to their status quo and inept behavior, the teachers and concerned authority have not been as practical as critical pedagogy demands; for example, they cannot equalize students and lower-level employees. As “change effort must be practical” (Neumann, 2013 as cited in Giguere, 2016, p. 16) from the system to make everyone’s language, behavior, and attitude transferable. The world's transformation is possible through individual transformation; individual transformation is possible through school education because school is the place to initiate social transformation, which requires group action. Therefore, the implementation part of the praxis of critical pedagogy is a slow and steady process. For this, the curriculum design highly prioritizes practice-based, student-centered activities. This is the demand of the changing society. Its reflection in the assessment is essential. When assessment reflects students' and teachers’ roles during classroom activities, the curriculum designers, subject experts, and psychologists get feedback for designing an even better curriculum that makes the teachers constructive in creating risk-taking creative activities and leads students to be engaged and enjoy playing their roles.

Schools have faced many challenges in managing and moving ahead with the latest updates because of the government’s reluctance to take education as its foremost necessity. The teachers, as social-change agents themselves, are in an oppressive environment, feel inferior to superior authorities, and cannot establish the environment for the praxis of critical pedagogical activities. As critical pedagogy discourages oppression and motivates the marginalized, it requires empowerment and

democratic freedom. Therefore, the focus of the concerned authority should emphasize how learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented the educational activities are rather than how standard content the curriculum holds. The management of facilities to conduct practice-based activities is another challenge in the schools. Schools cannot always help students and teachers run such empowering activities since they have limited resources and facilities. They have limited budgets for managing resources and providing sufficient materials. Another big challenge is the discouragement to utilize the available resources. The students and the teachers do not dare to take advantage of the available resources for fear of breaking them or doing something wrong while using them.

The teachers and students experience the practice of student-friendly activities when they have few students in the class, when they have no mood to lead the course ahead, or when they have no appropriate situation to go through the textbook. The activities during these times are student-friendly and learner-engaged. However, they are neither goal-oriented nor exam-centered. They are only for passing the time, refreshing students, holding students in the class, or the teacher's experiment of what they have learned and shared during training or conferences. Developing a curriculum with the learning content to promote learner-friendly and goal-oriented activities is necessary.

Educationists, teacher educators, and experts earnestly request teachers for learner-engaged activities and practicable education through training, conferences, books, and research papers. However, school education is still traditional, teacher-centered, and theory-based. Koirala (2020) has depicted a school's inefficiency in creating a platform for teachers and students to share their learning and experiences. Similarly, Bhandari (2012), providing critical clues for engaged learning, advises

teachers to reform their classroom activities, calling the existing educational activities ‘everything opposite!’

Meaning-Making of Policy Practices

The deeply-rooted top-down delivery system and authoritarian instruction cannot be discouraged through request and order. However, it can be reversed by the chain of information flow for reflection and action not by authority but by system. For this, educational activities can be led systematically and smoothly only when the assessment, along with students’ intelligence, reflects their (students’) perception of classroom discourse, learning content, classroom activities, and assessment: In what extent learning content are learner-friendly and goal-oriented; in what extent classroom activities are learner-friendly/learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented; and in what extent the teaching-learning activities emancipate, empower, and conscientize the learners can be explored from the assessment are the main concerns for the concerned stakeholders. The perception of the students can be the ingredients for the curriculum designers and educators to reform the curriculum.

The constitution of Nepal, in clause 51 under policies of the state, has declared its policy for “making education scientific, technical, vocational, skill-oriented, employment, and people-oriented” (Secretariat, 2015, p. 36). The concerned authorities, educationists, teacher educators, and researchers in different seminars, conferences, and webinars advocate for practical, skill-oriented education. However, educational activities are traditional, theory-based, and teacher-centered, with slight changes. It is because of the high influence of the top-down model of education and the high-stakes testing.

In Nepal, schools have followed liberal promotion policies, and their educational activities should attract the students to participate and perform their roles.

“Automatic promotion may create a gap between student learning level and the syllabus, a gap that only grows over time in the absence of remedial education” (Pritchett & Beatty, 2015, as cited in Sharma, 2016, p. p.2). The schools have two challenges: to maintain the quality that the curriculum has designed and recommend for the next level of study with appropriate entering behavior. Designing learner-engaged educational activities, creating a learner-friendly environment, and empowering the teachers with the necessary skills and facilities to conduct learner-engaged classroom activities can enable students to transcend the minimum thresholds and make them eligible with required entering behavior for next-level learning. For this, educational activities should be made so learner-friendly and learner-engaged that their participation and performance will qualify them with the designed goal or target. To promote students’ admission and participation, the schools should have attractive programs such as free day snacks to attract the students to the school and funny, action-packed activities to stimulate students to participate in the educational activities and perform their roles. The connection of such activities with the assessment makes learning enjoyable and purposeful.

The practices of educational activities still need to improve at the policy level, although they seem strong in the eyes of policy and administration. This is because the concerned authority has yet to attempt to understand the essence of the student's interests and the compulsion of the teachers. The students have found the school environment less comfortable for acquiring, constructing, and using knowledge appropriately. They are taken like “‘little adults’ who may know less; children just think and speak differently”(Ansari, 2020, p. 3). Designing educational activities to promote students’ distinct abilities is necessary, replacing the belief that their mind is ‘tabula rasa’(Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017). Until and unless the fact of preparing students

for the specific interest of someone else is replaced with the system to cultivate and develop the learners' potentiality, educational activities cannot be student-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented.

Meaning-Making of Assessment

Assessment plays a crucial role in teachers' planning and launching of different activities to lead students toward the designed goal. China has followed “the holistic *suzhi* assessment scheme” (Luo & Chan, 2023, p. 4) to cultivate children's holistic development and discourage rote learning and high-stakes testing. Similarly, Japan has an assessment system to promote students' transversal and academic competencies. However, summative assessment, also known as assessment of learning (Borghouts et al., 2016), is highly valued and prioritized. Assessment for learning is also known as formative assessment. Although it is “a powerful tool for teachers to enhance students' learning” (Borghouts et al., 2016, p. 475), it has been used negligibly. The assessment that assesses both the students' multiple intelligences and the whole educational program is today's necessity.

All the concerned stakeholders strongly believe in marks or grades through high-stakes testing. They want better marks rather than students' actual hands-on learning. Therefore, after completing a level, the students lack transversal competencies expected to be achieved at the end of the level. In line with this, the existing education practice is guided by the essence of dominant elites (Freire, 2005). It forces the students to follow others' ideas and beliefs, discouraging them from generating own meaning. Similarly, they are assessed based on their ability to embrace their ideas and beliefs. Therefore, the practice of the evaluation process of learning through theory-based rote-learning oriented paper-pencil tests needs to be replaced with authentic learning, which is critical, rational, and transformative.

In short, the school environment, the teachers' and students' language and behavior, learning contents, classroom activities, and assessment influence educational activities. They are also influenced by one another. Furthermore, assessment, as the ultimate goal of education, affects how to lead teaching-learning activities. Therefore, it is essential that the concerned authority focus and systematize from the beginning to the end.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the findings resulting from participants' experiences and their intersubjectivity of educational activities with the theories of critical theory, social dominance theory, and social justice theory under three subheadings: experiences of Educational Activities, Sense-Making of Educational Activities, and Measures for Self-Governing and Goal-Oriented Educational Activities. Then, I explained the impact of the top-down and bottom-up education models. Finally, I ended the chapter with steps for improving educational activities in community schools.

Chapter VII

Conclusion and Implication

Conclusion

Educational activities have empowered students differently. Their nature and organization have determined the level of empowerment. The arrangement of classroom discourse, learning content, teaching-learning activities, and assessment has a significant role in empowering and disempowering students and teachers. Although the teachers have implemented student-empowering activities in their comfortable time as a part of their attempt to cultivate the students' talents and refresh them or experiment with their learning, most educational activities are guided by the banking model of education. Learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities cannot be promoted until the traditional model is reformed and modified. The existing attempts to make the educational activities student-empowering have not been as successful as expected since the practices from planning to practice level are guided by the essences of dominant elites but not by the essence of minoritarians.

Firstly, school environment and classroom discourse have affected student empowerment. The schools have many more challenges in creating and maintaining a welcoming environment, harmonious language and behavior, and sufficient opportunities to enjoy educational facilities, particularly for the left-behind ones. Minute things such as non-verbal behavior and the surrounding environment influence incredibly bring a significant change in empowerment. For example, the teacher's presence, which may be their participation or observation in the area where students work, reduces students' negligence and discipline. The school atmosphere can create a sense of belongingness and ownership in students and stakeholders if they are

involved and made responsible. The schools have a poor mechanism to create a harmonious environment, particularly for the students, teachers, and employees. In other words, the school environment has affected students and teachers to perform their roles. It is because of hierarchic-based social practices and the strong influence of the top-down model of education. In addition, children learn more from the environment, the language and behavior they encounter, or the activities they participate in and perform than the teachers' knowledge delivery. Therefore, establishing a student-friendly environment where they feel free from domination and discrimination is the first and foremost important to nurture them with their needs and interests. Correspondingly, the teachers have poor motivating and empowering environments to plan student-friendly or student-engaged activities. Motivating and hegemonic discourse have influenced teachers' teaching and students' participation and performance in learning. However, the hegemonic one is more dominant. Promotion of motivating discourse from the school gate to the classroom, family, and society is necessary. Minute parts of language and behavior greatly motivate or dishearten students' learning. Teachers' friendly behavior, smiling speaking, and supportive verbal and non-verbal cues have greatly motivated students to participate and perform their roles in and outside the classroom. On the other hand, teachers' status quo, dominating behavior, and irresponsible roles have disheartened their students. The school students are immature and unaware of the benefits of education. So, they are not sincere in their studies and do not pay attention to teachers when the content or learning activities are not in their interest. Their concept of studying for their parents or teachers can be modified only through student-friendly and learner-engaged classroom activities. How confidently and fearlessly the students play their roles during classroom activities is more important than how obediently and

rigorously they prepare for the paper-pencil test. How energetically the students work out in the text is more important than how well the teachers deliver the content and prepare the students for high-stakes testing. Standardizing the curriculum does not matter; what matters is how well it engages the students and teachers in teaching-learning activities and leads them to the target.

Secondly, the students prefer the learning content of their choice to the one from the dominant elites. They want to learn content that includes student-engaged activities, provides them with choice options from the events/activities to plan, organize, participate in, and perform, makes them self-governed, and leads them towards the designed target of the curriculum. The existing course could be more practical and motivating for the teachers to run learner-engaged activities. It contains more content, which has created pressure for the teachers to finish the course on time and prepare their students for examinations. On the other hand, the course has created a kind of reluctance and pressure in students since they are theory-based and high-stakes test-oriented. The provision of interdisciplinary learning content in the curriculum leads the students from the area of their interest to the targeted goal, providing them with opportunities to enjoy learning and meet the goal. Each student has at least a talent in a particular area. They can be academically cultivated by providing many more opportunities for their interests and talents. For this, the curriculum requires learning content from the areas of students' interest and talent. Leading students from the area they are familiar with and good at makes them more energetic and engaged.

Thirdly, teacher-centered activities are more dominantly practiced than learner-engaged ones. Providing yearly, half-yearly, quarterly, monthly, and weekly events and programs for students to plan, organize, participate, and perform their roles

makes educational activities learner-centered and self-governed. Nevertheless, these plans are not primarily focused. The plans, which reflect clear guidelines for the activities, students' roles, and rubrics for the assessment, motivate students to choose the activities and prepare for them to perform. By nature, children enjoy the activities of their own choice rather than others' choice. Therefore, developing and launching various student-friendly activities that offer students choices capture their interest, make them self-governed, and lead them to meet the goals of today's demands. Each (group) of the students has to be a planner, organizer, performer, participant, evaluator/judge, or reporter.

Finally, assessment is crucial in directing teachers' teaching and students' learning. It guides what to focus on in teaching and learning and how to score well. The existing assessment system assesses only the students' endpoint knowledge that they are expected to achieve. Because of this trend, several ill practices have emerged. Central learning occurs during the process and on the way to the endpoint, so the assessment must also reflect on the teaching and learning process. The next point is that assessing academic and transversal competencies is necessary, but the existing assessment system does not emphasize them equally. Despite the provision of practical examination, the marks of such examination are granted haphazardly; that is to say, it lacks validity and credibility. Developing rubrics and making assessments transparent and evidence-based make them impartial and free of halo effects. Moreover, finally, the provision for assessing students' multiple intelligence tests through computer-based, paper-pencil, and performance-based tests nurtures the students with both academic and transversal competencies.

In short, education content, curriculum, learning content, and assessment should be student-centered, relevant, authentic, constructive, and interdisciplinary.

Today's demand is the environment for teachers to provide sufficient opportunities for students to grow with their innovative and creative potential and 21st-century skills through engaged learning. The teacher's role is to connect the content and the context to the students and let them work out and explore something new because creativity sprouts suddenly and unknowingly. It does not wait for the perfect moment and extraordinary mind but fashions out of ordinary ones. It can occur when the students find the task, which is a part of the preparation for the next day's classroom activities, more exciting and engaging. How confidently and fearlessly the students play their roles during classroom activities is more important than how obediently and rigorously they work. How the students work out in the text energetically is more important than how well the teachers deliver the content and prepare the students for the paper-pencil test. The standard of the curriculum is not essential, but what is important is how well the curriculum engages the students and teachers in teaching-learning activities and meeting the goal. Leading to work in every step, from curriculum design to assessment practices, makes educational practices research-based but also self-governing and goal-oriented.

Implication

The recommendation for the implication results from the foundation of knowledge that emerged from participants' life experiences and understanding. As the study has captured *narration sickness* as a severe issue of school education, it has recommended some tips for policymakers, curriculum designers, concerned agencies, and teachers for making educational activities learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented. The study has the following implications.

Participatory, interactive, and engaging classrooms are always student-empowering and goal-oriented. In such classrooms, children enjoy the activities. They

find the same activity as a punishment and part of their interest. They enjoy it if it is their choice, but it is a punishment if someone forces them to do it. Therefore, they need to have choices. As the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) has subject-wise subject committees, the subject committee of a particular subject designs a curriculum and nominates an expert to write a textbook. Estimating what the students have already learned and need to learn, the subject experts develop a textbook. It is the expert's choice, not the student's choice, but a force for them to study it. If I were in the executive authority, I would encourage the subject committee to develop a bank of genre-wise learning content with choice options so that the students can choose any one, two, or three from each genre for study. The more choice options each genre contains, the better it becomes, as no two students have the same learning content. Though it is difficult for the teachers, even for the subject committee, it is one of the best options to break teacher dominance and make teaching learning student-centered and self-governed. When the teachers have distinct learning content for students, they study more, promote individualized teaching, and help them with self-study. Similarly, the subject committee collects genre-wise learning content, especially from students and teachers, and examines whether they are learner-friendly/ learner-engaged, justifiable, and goal-oriented. Only after the contents are found to be student-friendly, learner-engaged, and goal-oriented will they be included in the list of contents of the prescribed textbook. The students access them as choice options from the area of their interest.

Secondly, the arrangement for organizing different events or programs is necessary to break teacher-controlled classroom activities and promote student-led activities. When each student has an opportunity to choose a topic from the list of the contents offered, they prepare to present or perform the content of their topic. Actual

learning occurs during this preparation phase, during which they go through the content and take their teachers' advice, others' ideas and feedback, and online resources. This is actual learning for the students to grow with the knowledge and skills needed for the 21st-century global world. When the teacher plans schedules for students' presentations, participation, or performance, he or she also provides each student a role in the program: some as performers, some as program organizers, some as reporters, and some as critical analysts. Though the teachers are behind the curtain during the performance phase, it is their crucial role to plan different programs or events and empower students to rehearse, get feedback from others, and perform on the scheduled day and time.

Thirdly, the school can provide the students with various opportunities and roles to perform and assess them using assessment tools. As students have scheduled (quarterly, monthly, or weekly) programs or events with their roles, they also have to learn content that contains clear guidelines as per their roles as performers, reporters, evaluators, and something else performance and rubrics to be assessed. During the preparation phase, they can self-evaluate, find their level, get feedback from friends and teachers, refine it to perform on the scheduled day, and promote their grades. Their efforts and practices during the preparation phase become quite empowering and challenging as it is part of their selection; it is the part they have to perform in front of an audience and the part of the assessment. Their reflective writing, which is related to their performance, sharpens their writing. It is the writing about what they experienced. It also can become a capsule for curriculum designers to redesign the learning content.

This study has created noteworthy opportunities for further research. As it is just an eye-opener for breaking the banking model of education in the context of Nepal, five issues have emerged.

One of them is the issue of creating a self-governing, justifiable, and learning-oriented environment that encourages students to be curious, determined, energetic, and skillful learners. Despite the training and discussion to create a child-friendly environment in the schools, the schools still have many challenges to overcome the ugly, cold, and inhuman environment and create a friendly environment to encourage all the students' natural intelligence, curiosity, and confidence to some extent.

Creating a harmonious environment in the school and making the classroom atmosphere learner-friendly is challenging since it is a “collaborative effort between family and school” (Subedi & Shrestha, 2020, p. 11). Each team member's language and behavior, familial situation, and teaching learning atmosphere have a great role in this teamwork. If we can explore the measures for this, it will be a great asset for creating a harmonious environment both in the school and family.

The next is the content for learning. Students require learning content based on their needs and interests, level of understanding, and the expected goal. In other words, learning content is to be action-packed or student-engaged and goal-directed so that they will be learner-friendly. The content prioritizing field-based, experiment-based, teamwork-based, activity-based, or performance-based activities is more learner-engaged and goal-directed than the one emphasizing teacher-centered, theory-based, or high-stake test-oriented teaching. Developing content with such quality is a difficult task. One of the options for developing such learning content is a ‘child-friendly ICT textbook’ (Sumarní et al., 2019). When children find the content interesting or necessary, they enjoy working on it; such content is the demand of the

21st century's global world and provides new understanding and knowledge. Developing several learning contents with such quality and similar difficulty levels can be a part of further research.

The third one is the creation of teaching-learning activities that are so interesting and learner-engaging that both the students and teacher will prefer school days to holidays. Action-packed activities that are as per students' needs and interests, engaging, challenging, and part of preparation for performance need development.

The final one is a transparent rubric-based assessment. Out of three types of assessment based on purpose: assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning, the first one demoralizes the students; the second one takes place during the learning process with the teacher's advisory role. It tells the students where they are in their study, where they have to reach, and how to get there. Moreover, the last one motivates learners to work on a text or learning content, assess it by themselves or peers, and then work on it again for better grades. Two of the later assessments are student-friendly as they motivate them to learn more and more. The challenge of shifting high-stakes testing to one that motivates the students to work again for better grading and promotion with validity and reliability can be a part of further research issues. If rubric-based assessment is made transparent, all stakeholders are aware of the teacher's teaching, students' performance, and grading. Besides, it makes them clear where the student's performance is, the minimum threshold, and how the teacher's teaching is.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Consent Form for the Student Participants

Graduate School of Education, Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Consent of Student Participants in the Research	
Research Title	Critical Pedagogical Perspective on Educational Activities: Lived Experience of Students and Teachers
Researcher	Surya Sigdel Chandragiri -5, Kathmandu, Nepal
Supervisor	Professor Bal Mukunda Bhandari (PhD) Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu
Purpose	You are requested to be a research participant in this research study. The aim of the study is to illuminate the essence of educational activities in community school. During this period, you have to tell me your lived experiences of teaching learning activities in the school. In addition, your classroom will be observed; your interview will be recorded; you will share your experiences and understanding with the researcher in face-to-face and online communication as well.
Confidentiality	Research is always conscious of the risks and harms that the students are likely to be victimized by the information they give. Confidentiality will be strongly maintained using a pseudonym. All the information collected both written and recorded will be safely stored a file.

Risks and Benefits	<p>Since this study is concerned with educational practices as a whole and not the concerns of a particular person, no one will be affected. Therefore, participants have no harm or risk in this research. They may feel uneasy at the beginning due to unfamiliarity with the researcher. They have to do nothing against their will. No one will know what information you gave as you are pseudo-named. You as a participant have to contribute some of your free time</p>		
Right to withdraw	<p>You, as a participant, have no obligation to continue your participation in the study. You can withdraw at any time if you feel bored and uneasy.</p>		
Voluntary consent	<p>I have gone through all the information mentioned above and understood what the request is for. As there is no harm or risk for me because I participate in the study, I want to join the research as a participant</p>		
Participants' name	.....	Researcher's name	.....
Signature	.....	Signature	.....
Date	.....	Date	.....

(Adapted from Peoples, 2021, pp 157-160)

Appendix B: Consent Form for Teacher Participants

<p>Graduate School of Education, Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Consent of Student Participants in the Research</p>

Research Title	Critical Pedagogical Perspective of Educational Activities: Lived Experience of Students and Teachers
Researcher	Surya Sigdel Chandragiri -5, Kathmandu, Nepal
Supervisor	Professor Bal Mukunda Bhandari (PhD) Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu
Purpose	You are requested to be a research participant in this research study. The study aims to illuminate the essence of educational activities in community schools. During this period, you have to tell me your lived experiences of teaching-learning activities in the school. In addition, your classroom will be observed; your interview will be recorded; you will share your experiences and understanding with the researcher in face-to-face and online communication as well.
Confidentiality	Researchers is always conscious of the risk and harm that the teachers are likely to suffer from the information they give. Confidentiality will be strongly maintained using a pseudonym. All the information collected both in written and recorded will be safely stored a file.
Risks and Benefits	Since this study is concerned with educational practices as a whole and not the concerns of a particular person, no one will be affected. Therefore, participants have no harm or risk in this research. They may feel uneasy at the beginning due to unfamiliarity with the researcher. They have to do nothing

	against their will. No one will know what information you gave as you are pseudo-named. You as a participant have to contribute some of your free time		
Right to withdraw	You, as a participant, have no obligation to continue your participation in the study. You can withdraw at any time if you feel bored and uneasy.		
Voluntary consent	I have gone through all the information mentioned above and understood what the request is for. As there is no harm or risk for me because I participate in the study, I want to join the research as a participant		
Participants' name	.....	Researcher's name	.....
Signature	.....	Signature	.....
Date	.....	Date	.....

(Adapted from Peoples, 2021, pp 157-160)

Appendix C: Interview Guideline for Teachers/ Research Participants

As my study attempts to explore the critical perspective of educational activities and viable options for the promotion of learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented educational activities, I told the teachers teaching in grade eight about my research, and my role to perform there in the school and took consent. During the process of information collection, I maintained my ethical philosophies as a researcher and confidentiality completely.

I talked to the teachers separately formally and informally and took in-depth interviews with them. The open-ended interviews were guided by the following questions:

1. What different classroom practices do you employ while teaching English?
2. How do you build classroom community to make your classroom more student-centered?
3. How do you motivate your students to learn as you expect?
4. How do you create a democratic environment in the classroom so that the students feel a sense of ownership of their learning?
5. What procedures do you think to involve your students in the interaction process?
6. What alternative procedures do you employ to assess and evaluate your student's progress?
7. What experiential activities do you carry out to link the theory of teaching and practices in the classroom?
8. Have you carried out any action research on how students are performing in the classroom?
9. Do you think the teacher education that is given from the perspective of English language teachers at universities is helpful for the facilitation of classroom activities? How do you justify your opinion?
10. Do you think the trainee teachers during their short-term training receive any practical knowledge and skill to employ them in the classroom? Why and how?
11. Do you believe that you engage in classroom procedures that reflect the theory of critical pedagogy?

12. How do you provide your students with the opportunity to engage in an experiential activity that helps them to improve or modify?

13. What different challenges have you been facing while linking theory into practice?

Appendix D: Interview Guidelines for Students/Research Participants

As my study attempted to explore the critical perspective of educational activities through participants' lived experiences for making teaching-learning activities learner-friendly, justifiable, and goal-oriented, I collected information from grade-eight students as well. During the process of information collection, I met them and told them about my research study, and my role in the school. I also told them about ethical issues and confidentiality to be maintained. I took an interview following the following questions:

1. Explain your experience of the classroom activities in which you participated actively and performed your task.
2. How does your English teacher motivate you to participate in the classroom?
3. What sort of assessment/ evaluation procedure do you expect?
4. Write your experience of learning content that you enjoyed and learned.
5. Explain your experience of classroom activities in which you enjoyed collaborative learning and teamwork.

Appendix E: Guideline for Focus Group Discussion With Student Participants

1. Classroom discourse

Perception of language and behavior of your teacher in the classroom

Language and behavior of the people in the class that you like/dislike

Expected language and behavior

2. Teaching learning content

Learning content you like/dislike

Expected learning content

3. Classroom activities

Existing classroom activities

The experience of the classroom activities that you disliked/enjoyed most.

4. Evaluation procedure:

Existing assessment system

Flaws of the assessment system (especially a bitter experience)

Expected assessment system

Expected classroom activities in English language classroom

Appendix F: Observation Guideline

To find out the effect of non-verbal behavior, gestures, and environmental factors that affect students' participation and learning, I will observe the classroom both directly and indirectly. The observation areas are:

1. Classroom discourse
2. Teaching learning contents and students' responses to these contents
3. Students' participation and response toward the classroom activities
4. Students' participation and response towards the assessment system.

Appendix G: Transcribed Data of Interview With Student Participants

First Interview With Pratikshya (S1) on Classroom Discourse

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of feeling uneasy in the classroom?

Pratikshya: Oh, yes, sir. There are about 60 students in the classroom. One of our teachers is very boring, not strict at all, and moody as well. He never makes fun in

the classroom; never takes students out to play or for any work; never controls the class, and teaches us but we cannot understand his teaching. He always gives H.W. but never checks them. He frequently says, “I am your teacher and you should follow what I say, you are here to learn from me; I think self-study is better than such teachers’ teaching (yo sir ko padai vanda ta aafai pade ramro)”. He has neither a clear voice nor sufficient knowledge and also looks boring.

R.’s Q.: Tell me your experience of distraction in the classroom.

Pratikshya: distraction? Oh, yes. Friends’ noise, congested and uncomfortable sitting, conflict among the students, and some bad students’ naughty behavior in the classroom interrupt our concentration in the study (saathiharu ko hallaa, saanghuro ra apthyaro basaai, ek arkaa bich ko dwandwa ra kehi kharaab students ko naughty behavior le padna dhyaanai jaadaina). ... Sometimes, problems in the family create distractions in school. Some teachers’ rude behavior distracts our minds, and we cannot ask what we want to ask. Sometimes my own problem, sometimes boys’ behavior. Sometimes when class is not interesting, unnecessary things come to mind and create distraction.

R.’s Q.: Tell me your experience of distraction in the classroom.

Pratikshya: Noise in the class is the main cause of distraction. When there is noise in the class, I cannot concentrate on studying. A strict sir’s class is better than a noisy class. Conflict with friends in the class creates distraction. H.M. says, “Go to Class”; Teachers say, “Read, read, and read.” It makes us seat in the class, talk with friends and follow what teachers say. Absence of teachers is good for us because we do not have to hear ‘read and read’. ... We can make noise and talk with friends in the class. It's funny. Though going out refreshes us, we usually stay inside the class

talking about serials/ videos we watched, telling stories, and exchanging our experiences...

R'Q: Do you have any experience in the classroom where distraction is minimized?

Pratikshya: pause. Oh, Yes, ... but it was not in the class of our teacher. Once two people came from the Red Cross Society. They came to run an awareness program in which they ran classes interestingly. They showed us videos, gave us task, and supported us to perform the task when we needed it. They supported us individually, never got angry, never insult us and always motivated to perform the task. It was my first time speaking from in front of the class. I was nervous but found it very interesting. They gave us a group task and asked us to prepare at home and perform the next day. We (our group) gathered in a room and planned for the next day. I prepared the whole evening and went to school in time so that I can share my work with my group. We did not know how time passed but became engaged in the task of preparing for the performance the other day. Our usual class is not so interesting. In some classes, we feel it's too long to ring the bell (Kati bela ghanti lagla jasto hunxa).

R'Q.: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Pratikshya: pause. Oh, y-e-s. For me, math is the most interesting subject. When I was seven, I didn't understand math but now I clearly understand it. My interest in it is increasing day by day. The way he teaches is very good. He leads us to understand every topic clearly. He leads us to have a lot of fun and teaches us some new and interesting things with the lesson every day. He admires and supports every student in their needs. Seeing him, we feel glad and want to do studying (uhalai dekhesi nai khushi lagxa, padna man lagxa).

R's Q: Tell me if you have any other interesting class.

Pratikshya: When I was in grade 4, my English teacher was so good. She used to teach us well and clearly, speak politely, never got angry, take tests every week, award us in our progress, used to be strict with those who were naughty and lazy, call their parents and ask for them. One day when I saw her call my father and talk to him on the ground, I was frightened. Later she called me from the class, I was so nervous. But She praised my work, asked him about my studies at home and complained that I do not complete my H.W. always, and asked him, "Does she use her mobile a lot? Do not let her use it so much. She needs to use it sometime. (Dherai mobile chalauxa ki k ho, ali ali ta chalaunu parxa, dherai chalauna nadinu). "If you ask her to study in the house and check her study, she will be very good at studying. From that day onward, he gave me a lot of time to study and told my mother, "Let her a bit more time to study, Miss has said "She can progress." Because of this, I have time to study all the morning" (ali padne time deu ta eslai, miss le dherai pragati garxa." vaneki xa. ehi karanle maile ni vai le jastai bihan vari padna paeko xu).

R's Q.: Do you have such other interesting stories?

Pratikshya: Yes. I always remember the teaching of Kiran sir in grade 7, he asked us to choose and watch one of the videos from a list and explain what is there in the video. Every Friday we used to have no class but presentation and discussion on the videos we watched. The videos were very interesting and it was very interesting to explain what we watched and quite easy to answer the question asked by friends but it was difficult to answer some questions he (the teacher) asked. However, he stopped teaching because the headmaster told him to focus his teaching on the textbook only.

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of distraction in the classroom?

Pratikshya: sometimes, naughty and noisy students are the main cause of distraction. Most of the time, I always remember my mother's death, , before she died, told my brother "Take care of your sister and brother, never let them weep and remember me". Nowadays, we live with our stepmother (father got married) she hates us. My younger brother is with auntie (mother's sister) Even in the classroom, the incidents (mother's death, stepmother's behavior) come into my mind. I always try my best in my studies and pass +2 and stand on my arms. Even in this situation, some teachers insult and dominate us. Teachers are to support and save us from others but...(tears in the eyes).

First Interview With Prajwal

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of feeling uneasy in the classroom?

Prajwal: yes, sir. Teachers sometimes dominate and insult us. One day our English teacher asked me, "How long did you take to set your hair?" teasing me when I forgot to do my Homework. He never pays attention to us and looks only at the girls.

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of distraction in the classroom?

Prajwal: Sir actually, I am not interested in studying. I come to school because of work at home particularly in Tunnel farming. I like to talk with friends in the class because I cannot understand what the teachers teach. I find nothing interesting in the class, just visiting friends, talking, and playing with them. We have no videos, no storybooks, and nothing to play and enjoy in the school. I enjoyed his teaching stories from the video. We enjoyed and learned.

R'S Q.: Please tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Prajwal: Which interesting one, sir? (Jun pahile yad aayo tehi vana na). Sir, I always remember Sir's book review program which I like very much. It is interesting and we can enjoy, read and learn as well. During that time, we did not get books. Sir

used to take us to the library, ask us to choose a book, read it, and prepare to talk about the story later in our turn. It was quite funny to read, say, and hear new stories. My father gave me a book that he had brought from his office. As the book was very interesting, everyone in the class liked the story I told them in the class. We will read more if we get such an interesting book. Such books are more interesting than the books we have to read in class. As everyone has to select a story/ book, it is interesting to hear more stories. It is even more interesting to tell them a new story that they have not read. Bijaya (pseudonym) sir sometimes usually during the initial phase of the academic session, before/after Dashain/long vacation makes fun in the class: sometimes running antakshyeri program, sometimes word meaning game, singing and dancing, and so on...

R's Q.: Do you have any other such interesting experiences? If you have, please tell me.

Prajwal: Yes. Why not sir? Once Bijaya (pseudonym) sir told us to choose any one of the videos from the list he gave and took us to the computer lab and told us to watch. When the period was off, he gave us some questions and asked us to answer all the questions. He also told us to watch the videos again and again if we could not answer all the questions from the video we watched.

R's Q.: I would like to hear an interesting thing about your teacher.

Prajwal: Sunita (pseudonym) miss ko vanam sir?

R's.: OK.

Prajwal: I like Sunita (pseudonym) very much though she is very strict in class. She is quite friendly and supportive when we talk individually. She asks us about H.W.; about my family and my interest. She listens to us and supports us in our

problems. She sometimes plays with us during the break or sits nearby and watches us play. She also calls my mother sometimes to talk about my study at home.

R's Q.: How have you experienced examination?

Prajwal: Hey sir! It's frightening. Some subjects are easy. However, it is quite interesting when the examination is over: we are free, no H.W., no pressure, just fun in playing with friends.

R'Q.: Tell me about the exam you have taken and what you enjoyed.

Prajwal: Once, I was with my friend on the same bench. He was good and could answer all the questions well. He showed me and I wrote all to him. In that examination, I had scored good marks in English. but in one examination, the other (second) terminal examination (dosro traimasik parikshya), I was with a dull friend whom I had to teach him. I was very sad that I could teach him nothing...Cheating is not good but we want it. We cannot remember all the things we are taught. Some are so talented that they can remember everything the teacher taught. How is their mind?(Arule kasari samjhoka holan ta feri? sir uni haru ko ta dimag nai kati tatho ho k).

R's Q.: Have you experienced any such examination in which you enjoyed, learned, and did well in the examination?

Prajwal: Can we say the examinations which were run in the school by outside people, sir?

R's: Yes. You can.

Prajwal: Once, some people from the Red Cross Society came to our class and asked us what we wanted. We said, "A film." then they asked us, "We will show an interesting film or video and you have to sit for the examination tomorrow." As we agreed, they showed us a video and gave us a list of questions and a link to watch the

video on mobile at home and told us, "If you can answer all the questions tomorrow, you will get a prize. In the evening, I requested my mother to watch the video and answer the questions." The next day, we got a pack of snacks and those who could not answer the question watched the video again and got a pack of snacks each. It was interesting because it was an awareness program and useful in our lives to be safe from fraud.

R's Q.: Have you any experience of library use to motivate students?

Prajwal: pause. Long breath. Oh, Yes, sir when I was in previous school. Some teachers used to take us to the library and let us select a book or a story on the computer but we had to share what we read. It is quite funny and interesting. I still remember the book review program in which I had described the book, 'The Horse and the Snail. It was a new story for others and my uncle had taught me to describe it. It was quite exciting when the teachers taught us Ramban practice for learning typing and educational games. In the book, some lessons are interesting while some are boring. I've already read the chapter 'The First Man on the Moon is no more.' its video on YouTube is more exciting than that of the textbook.

First Interview With Chetmani

R's Q: What is a boring boring classroom? Tell me about your experience of your boring class.

Chetmani: A classroom becomes boring when the teacher is not interesting or difficult; when the content is not interesting; when it is a hot day; or when learning is stressful. Math is a difficult subject but the teacher teaches interestingly so it is interesting. Last summer, we felt sleepy in the social period because of boring teaching but felt enjoyed Maths even when it was a difficult subject.

R's Q: Can you tell me an interesting Math class?

Chetmani: In math, Geometry is a very difficult and boring subject but our new math sir takes us in computer class and teaches us interestingly. He taught how all the angles of a triangle are equal to a 100-degree angle by showing on the projector. He asked us to do it practically on the computer and in our copy as well. It is easy and interesting. It was very difficult to understand when our previous teacher taught us on the board only.

R's Q: Do you have other interesting classes as well?

Chetmani: Oh! ... Yes, sir. Once our English sir told us to prepare a drama in English for stage performance. We prepared a comedy and asked him to correct and refine it for rehearsing. It was difficult because it had difficult and unknown words, however, we prepared well by consulting dictionaries and practiced sincerely. On the day of the presentation, we were afraid of making mistakes but we made no such noticeable mistake. Our jokes with acting made everybody laugh. We felt very happy when the audience shouted with laughter saying once more, once more... Even after we came out of the stage everyone was looking at us and laughing...

First Interview With Bikal

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of feeling uneasy in the classroom?

Bikal: There are about 49 students in the classroom. Hari sir (pseudonym) teaches us without giving anyone any chance to speak. He lets us speak only after he finishes his lectures. I, though wanted to ask in the middle cannot speak lose my curiosity, and sometimes forget the question. It is very difficult to listen to him for a long time and remember all the things he tells us. During his class, we always feel passive and sleepy. In Mohan (Pseudo name) sir's class is too boring, noisy, and uncomfortable. He is not so strict and has no tactics. He teaches well but because of

his polite and liberal behavior, we have a lot of noise in the class and we are tired of some naughty students' misbehavior.

R.'s Q.: Tell me your experience of distraction in the classroom.

Bikal: We have noise in the class when polite and liberal teachers come. But when strict and rude teachers come to the class, it is silent, and everyone is disciplined but during such class, we get frightened and study well. During such a period, we cannot concentrate on listening; and the mind becomes engaged in thinking unnecessary things. One day, the sir asked me what he taught us just before, I could not answer the question because I was thinking about the incident in which the teacher had insulted me saying, "What is your brain filled up with (Dimag ma gobar variety chaki k ho)?"

R'Q: Do you have any experience in the classroom where distraction is minimized?

Bikal: Yes, When teachers give us work but do not inspect and mentor the class, the students neglect their work and waste time by talking and doing unnecessary things. Some teachers are strict, polite, and talented. Our Ramesh (pseudonym) sir is strict but never insults us; never scolds and punishes us; always gives us work and supports us to do it and asks them (who neglect to do the work) to come and say about the work. Because of this action, students keep on working.

R'Q.: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Bikal: For me, social studies class is quite interesting. One day he brought up a topic from our context and asked us to interact with one another. His group division and work distribution made us work actively. One day, it was my turn to go in front of the class and describe our work from the chart. In my turn to describe our work from

in front of the class, I was very nervous but he supported me and corrected my mistake while I was speaking.

R's Q.: Do you have such other interesting stories?

Bikal: Yes. When we saw stories, jokes, comedies or songs written by students and stuck on the board lured us to go and watch it. Once I had written a list of IQ questions and put it on the board with a pseudonym. Our math teacher asked us in class who was Pooja (my nickname) in the class. I kept silent and frightened. Later, the sir said, "The questions are very interesting and puzzling. After some time, they found that it was me to put it there in my handwriting. From the day onward, From the day onward, I have created something new and put it on the noticeboard.

R's Q.: Do you have such other interesting stories?

Bikal: Milan (pseudonym) sir's teaching in which he wrote scrambled letters or words on the board and asked us to unscramble, to find out odd one out and justify it was quite interesting. His teaching in which he let us play puzzle games was so interesting.

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of distraction in the classroom?

Bikal: Sometimes, naughty and noisy students are the main cause of distraction. Most of the time, I always remember my mother's death, , before she died, told my brother "Take care of your sister and brother, never let them weep and remember me". Nowadays, we live with our stepmother (father got married) she hates us. My younger brother is with auntie (mother's sister) Even in the classroom, the incidents (mother's death, stepmother's behavior) come to my mind. I always try my best in my studies and pass +2 and stand on my arms. We are in a poor situation but some teachers insult and dominate us. I never forget Hari (pseudonym) sir's insult

and domination. I had hoped he to support and save us from others but...(tears in the eyes).

First Interview With Jamuna

R.'s Q.: Tell me your experience of distraction in the classroom.

Jamuna: I have experienced this from time to time. Due to personal reasons (during the menstrual period, headache, stomachache), when I am hungry, When we are sick (mother, father, or anyone in the family). I also feel uneasy when friends quarrel and fight in class. Sometimes, I cannot finish H.W. of the subjects, particularly of Purna (pseudonym) sir. He insulted us by saying something bad for not doing H.W. Sometimes mind is distracted while we are learning. Sometimes something suddenly comes in mind and interferes with understanding. It particularly happens when the classroom is not interesting (teacher, learning content classroom environment).

R.'s Q.: Tell me about any other experience of distraction in the classroom.

Jamuna: Sometimes, my parents discuss and fight and are about to divorce. It has made me so sad and haunts my mind frequently. I never forget Hari's (pseudonym) misbehavior. From the day he insulted, ignored, and looked at me angrily, I have not asked anything of him. They always dominate and hate the weak and poor students and focus on the good ones only. Moreover, some students' behavior is not good. I feel frightened when teachers speak a bit louder.

R.'s Q: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Jamuna: I have experienced many more interesting things in the class. Our social studies teacher asked us to perform in our turn in front of the class at the beginning of the class. Each of us had to perform what we knew and had told him as our talent and interest. As it was my turn to perform an English song, I performed

“We Are the World, We Are the Children” with action. Everyone in the class began to sing with me and it was so interesting. Later, our English sir asked me to perform it in the ‘ School Annual Program’ which encouraged me to learn other songs.

R’s Q: Tell me another experience of an interesting class.

Jamuna: Milan (pseudonym) sir's computer class was very interesting. In the class he used to tell us what to do on the computer, warn us to use the computer carefully, and take us to the lab. We used to ask him when we were confused or had problems while using the computer. I always remember his saying, "Finish the work I gave and play until the bell rings." He teaches us to find and play different puzzle games in the computer.”(S5)

R’s Q: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Jamuna: As the poem ‘Farmer’s Longing (Kishan ko Rahar)’ in Nepali was exciting, we enjoyed chanting the poem in the class during the break. Some lessons were so difficult and boring. We read them only from the teacher’s notes.

R’s Q: Tell me your experience of an examination.

Jamuna: We are afraid of examination; if difficult questions were asked, we could not answer and face scolding, insult...blah-blah (Dar lagchha ni, sir; garo question aae, answer dina sakinna ani gali, insult, ... ke ke byehornu parchha). We cannot remember all the things the teacher taught.

First Interview With Janak

R'S Q.: Please tell me one of your teachers’ behaviors that you do not like at all.

Janak: I do not like our math teacher at all. I have never seen him happy and smiling. He never makes us laugh, always criticizes, and leads a boring class. I do not like him to come near me as a tobacco smell comes from him. He speaks dominating

us. He solves a question on the board and gives us to solve another but similar problem. He teaches well but we cannot capture his teaching. He teaches and asks us to do assignments. We either listen to him or do the work he gives. There is no other activities in his class. His class is better than those who let the students make noise in the class.

R's Q.: Do you have any interesting experience of teachers' work? If you have, please tell me.

Janak: Yes, sir. Bimal sir's class is very interesting. He makes fun of us keeping silent when he comes to the class, so all the students keep silent or ask others to keep silent as he comes to the class because he does something interesting if we are silent and sit in our seats. He is a singer, a comedian, a dancer, a caricature, and a person with multiple talents. He is not only a social studies teacher, he can teach other subjects as well. I have played table tennis with him. Once I was late in his class, and he asked me to sing a song or tell a joke in the class. I had no idea, then he asked me what I could do. Then I told him to sing. As I started to sing a song in the class, he supported me to sing. At the beginning, I was nervous but when he started to sing in a low voice with me I was motivated to sing loudly. Later, he said, "I had no such beautiful voice in this age but practice made me to sing well."

R's Q.: Do you have any boring experience in the school? If you have, please tell me.

Janak: Yes. When I go to school. the teachers do not respond to our greeting 'Namaskar'. They always try to keep our control in control. We are like subalterns: we cannot go against them. H.M. says, "Go to Class"; Teachers say, "Read, read, and read." Only some teachers ask us to make fun in the class.

R's Q.: I would like to hear an interesting thing about your teacher.

Janak: Sunita (pseudonym) miss' interesting thing, sir?

R's Q: OK.

Janak: I like Sunita Miss very much though she is very strict in class. She is quite friendly and supportive when we talk individually. I remember her asking me about H.W.; my family and my interests. She listens to us and supports us with our problems. She sometimes plays with us during the break or sits nearby and watches us play. She also calls my mother sometimes to talk about my study at home.

First Interview With Vawana

R.'s Q.: Tell me your experience of distraction in the classroom.

Vawana: In our society, money, power, and education are the part of prestige. I come to school to study but we cannot learn here well because of noisy students, teachers' partial behavior, and uncomfortable environment. One day, I greeted him, and he ignored me and responded Bina's (pseudonym) greeting. Teachers support those who are physically smart, and mentally better than we are. Teachers are to encourage all students in learning, to provide additional support to the weaker ones. But they treat us partially; how can they lead others in their study? Teachers' partial treatment and students' naughty behavior interfere with our study. Nobody understands why we cannot learn as we want.

R'Q.: Tell me about your experience of the final examination.

Vawana: The examination is very easy and interesting when easy questions are asked. When difficult questions are asked, it is difficult and frightening. Some friends can cheat but I get frightened of cheating but ask nearby friends. Clever students can score good marks by cheating, and asking friends.

R.' Q.: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Vawana: Some classes are interesting while some are quite boring because the teachers focus on the students who are good at learning and ignore to those who are weak and sit at the back of the class. We feel pleasant in the classes where the teachers focus on all the students equally and support the needy ones. Some teachers teach us through games, creating different groups. I like to learn from group work where we can work collaboratively (milijuli kam garna) and learn from one another. We usually feel bored and sleepy when teachers explain and ask us to listen to them

R's Q.: Do you have any such experiences? Please tell me if you have.

Vawana: I like teachers' teaching at the beginning of the session. When all the students have books, they focus on bookwork only. We usually have such interesting classes when there are a few students when we request and when they have no mood to start a new lesson.

R's Q.: Do you have any experience with boring classes? Please tell me if you have.

Vawana: Most of the classes are boring. Binod (pseudonym) sir's class was so boring everyone used to feel sleepy (jhupu jhupu hune). He used to read the text, explain it, and give homework from the exercise at the end of the text...

First Interview With Varat

R'. Q: How are ICT facilities in your school?

Varat: We have a computer lab in the school. Sirs sometimes take us to the lab. Sometimes they play the videos for us, sometimes they teach us how to operate it. We have sufficient computers in the lab but we cannot use them. sir shows us and tells us to use them and explains about them. Science sir sometimes shows videos of science class. Once he showed us the videos of how to make hydrogen gas. It was interesting and we understood clearly when he explained after the video. Similarly,

our social studies teacher showed the videos

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv9c8qeUbl4> and Kamal Gaule's video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUyzrHHhU4w>), taught us how to learn the

names of 77 districts, 7 provinces, and their beauties and importance. How interesting

it would be if all the teachers teach us in the same way. Nirmala and Binita

(pseudonym) have made a tiktok in the folk song with 77 districts, 7 provinces, and

their beauties and importance.

R' Q.: Tell me your experience of an interesting class in the computer lab.

Varat: I like the class of Kiran sir (pseudo name). He tells us everything in the class, tells us what to do on the computer, warns us to use the computer carefully takes us to the lab, and lets us use it in our way. He says, "If you do something wrong in the lab, I will not take you there next time." so we use it carefully. When we are confused or have a problem while using the computer, we call him. I always remember his saying, "Complete the work I gave and play until the bell rings". So we try to complete the task he gives as fast as we can and start to play the game. I like his teaching because he gives clear instructions, asks us to do it on the computer, supports us if we have any problem, and gives us time to enjoy playing or using it in our own way.

R's Q.: Please tell me an experience of your class in the ICT lab.

Varat: In the ICT lab, our computer teacher teaches us to use a computer. It is interesting because he writes on the board and asks us to do in the computer. Once, he asked us to play a game on the computer to develop typing skills. Ram Ban is an interesting game in which we can play and learn. We have a paper-pencil test in the examination of computers (ko exam kapi ma lekhera dine ho sir). Last year, we had a

computer teacher. He used to write on the board and ask us to do on the computer. It was quite interesting but he left the school.

R'Q.: How are the lessons that you learn in the class?

Varat: Some lessons are very interesting because they are interesting and practical. Some are boring as they are neither interesting to read nor useful in life just to read for examination. We read the lesson even when we have no class, no exam, or no homework to do because they are interesting and useful.

R'Q.: How are your teachers?

Varat: Jivan (pseudonym) sir is unfriendly, rude, and egoist. I do not ask him anything as he is very strict; he lets us speak only when he asks us a question after his explanation. He looks, sounds, and behaves unfriendly. He ignores us when we call him and overlooks us (tyo sir le ta bolauda suneni nasune jhai garxhha, hami tira ta herda ni herdaina.).

R'Q.: Have you any experience of your teacher's teaching grammar that you have just come out of grammar class?

Varat: Bijaya sir (pseudonym) teaches sentences by giving examples and clues for making sentences. we had a teacher last year, who used to teach sentence structures using formulas. It was difficult to remember all the formulae". We had another teacher in the same year. She used to teach us using a picture. She first used to show the picture and its description and asked us to show the picture to write as many sentences as we could.

First Interview With Chinmaya

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of distraction in the classroom?

Chinmaya: Sometimes, naughty and noisy students are the main cause of distraction. Most of the time, I always remember my mother's death, , before she

died, told my brother “Take care of your sister and brother, never let them weep and remember me”. Nowadays, we live with our stepmother (father got married) she hates us. My younger brother is with auntie (mother’s sister) Even in the classroom, the incidents (mother’s death, stepmother’s behavior) came into my mind. I always try my best in my studies pass +2 and stand on my arms. Even in this situation, some teachers insult and dominate us. Teachers are to support and save us from others but they insult and dominate us...(tears in the eyes).

R’Q.: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Chinmaya: I like Purna (Pseudonym) sir’s class very much. He makes class fun. He teaches us, leads us in funny activities, and takes us out to play after each chapter. He divides the class into different groups including talented and weak students and takes us to play out when we all in our group complete the chapter. He also supports the group that is slow to finish the work from the chapter. Because of his support, our group stood first though we were called a weak group. He sometimes, usually on Fridays, used to ask us to sing a song or rhyme in the classroom. He asked us to choose a song and a rhyme from a list and we had to sing them in the classroom. After singing, we had to explain what the song or rhyme says. I am fond of dance so I showed a dance with the song as well. It would be interesting if we had a longer period and friends from other classes on the day. If we had questions from such activities in the examination.

R'Q: Do you have such other experience? Tell me if you have.

Chinmaya: Kiran sir's group formation and group-wise work was very interesting. Everyone in the group would get equal marks for their performances. so everyone had to support each member of the group. Hari (one of my friends) who had never sat with me, and rarely spoke to me began to teach me. He would lead me to

practice to present well and would appreciate and clap when I presented or performed well. All friends used to be like their own friends. We had to perform a play in the school. When we got our roles in the play, we talked and divided the roles/ work. After the work was fixed on the previous day, we sat together, discussed, and planned after school before we left. It made me curious and frightened... His assignment for the group was equally interesting. He would give us group work from a chapter and would tell us to be free (play or watch a video) after we completed the task given.

R'Q: Do you have such other experience? Tell me if you have.

Chinmaya: Hari sir (pseudonym) teaches us without giving anyone any chance to speak. He lets us speak only after he finishes his lectures. I, though wanted to ask in the middle cannot speak lose my curiosity, and sometimes forget the question. It is very difficult to listen to and remember all the things he tells us. During his class, we always felt passive and sleepy.

R'Q: Do you have any other such experience? Tell me if you have.

Chinmaya: We have a very poor situation at home where we have no our mother. Sometimes, we, because of different reasons, cannot do all the homework but the teachers do not understand our problem and insult and dominate. kasari dominate gareko kasri insult gareko I feel quite worried, frightened, and cannot concentrate on learning in the class. The teachers are rich and powerful and we can do nothing. We have to accept everything the teacher says and be scared to speak against their saying. I think the government needs to train the teachers how to deal with the students who are like subalterns (niriha) both in the school and at home. We always have the same boring classroom activities: listening to the teacher, reading, and writing.

R'Q: Do you have any other such experience? Tell me if you have.

Chinmaya: Kiran sir always begins the class with simple questions from interesting things and links them with a lesson. One day he asked us to talk about an interesting place we visited and linked it with the lesson 'travelogue'. Mira (pseudonym) Miss, asked us to make a group 'Lumbini province', gave a map of the province and the words 'grabbed pronk', and asked us to find the names of districts from the letters of the words.

First Interview With Bipana

R's Q.: Please tell me your experience of classroom distraction

Bipana: We are poor; sometimes, we do not have money to buy dresses, copies, or anything we need in school. Because of it we feel tense and cannot concentrate on our studies. We have no one to understand this pain. so we just keep silent, blame no one, and respond to no one in any way. It is because of our luck.

R's Q: Do you have such other experience? please.

Bipana: sir, I am a person deceived by luck. We are like their (teacher's) son and daughter but why do they treat us like the stepmother's children? We are poor but they do not have to feed, cloth, and shelter us; we are fat and ugly but they do not have to feel uneasy; we are weak in studies but why don't they support us to improve our studies and insult, dominate, and isolate? They have got the salary to teach us, to improve our education level, and make us good men. Because of his (teacher's) insult and domination in the class, Meena (pseudonym) left the school.

R'Q.: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Bipana: Yamuna (Pseudonym) Madam's class is very interesting. She teaches us science and social studies. She teaches us and is involved in different activities. She performs different activities and asks us to perform. While teaching, she sometimes sings a song in which the learning content is added. She tells us stories,

jokes, poems, and the life history of popular people. For example, the life history of a Pakistani girl, Malla who was awarded the Nobel prize at the age of 18 for provoking child education.

R's Q: Do you have such other interesting classrooms?

Bipana: Yes. I had a very interesting classroom when I was in grade seven. He was a very strict teacher. He was very funny and helpful as well. He used to take us out of the classroom if we completed the task he gave all the days from Sunday to Friday. He used to take us to the ground, play a cassette player, tell us what to do with the cassette player, and ask us to follow the instructions. If we made a mistake, he would beat us with a bamboo stick. We accepted the punishment because it was funny and a chance to be out of the classroom. Sometimes he would teach us to find a place from the map. His teaching of paperwork from YouTube was very interesting. Nowadays, I still make different things from paper.

R'Q.: What sort of classroom do you want in your classroom?

Bipana: Teachers usually explain the chapter in their own way. We cannot capture and understand each and everything they say. So, we want them to use modern ways of teaching. We learned well when they ran different activities (debate, quiz contest, poem/song/painting drawing/origami competition). I like the classroom activities in which students can work and learn from one another and learn different knowledge and skills from outside the course as well.

R'Q.: How are the lessons that you learn in the class?

Bipana: They are good. But some parts are not so interesting and some are not important either. Some mean the listening part and... Teachers skip them as they will not be asked in the examination. Sirs tell us to read, read, and read; it's so boring.

Teachers focus on the important lessons and we prepare for them. We always have the same boring classroom activities: listening to the teacher, reading, and writing.

R's Q.: What sort of learning content would you like?

Bipana: During the initial phase of the academic session when we have no books, the interaction on stories (fairy tales, moral stories), video, and some series we have are quite interesting. Although they are interesting, they are not likely to be asked in the examination. I would like to read moral stories, imaginary stories, and fairy tales, especially the ones from our context. I enjoy watching Chinese/Korean/Turkish drama, Chinese fun videos, and Hindi serials. When I was small, I enjoyed watching 'Motu Patlu, and 'Little Krishna'.

R's Q: How do you pass your time when you are free?

Bipana: Sometimes chatting with friends, sometimes watching videos, sometimes making tiktok. I can use a mobile-only when my mother gives me to use it. I can dance. If there were some songs to sing and dance as well...If there were some questions from songs...

R's Q: What other things are you interested in?

Bipana: Sir, actually I like singing and dancing very much. I can write stories, poems, and songs and can sing songs as well (malai kabita lekhna, gaauna nachna tiktok banauna man parxa tara, yo exam ma audaina)

R'Q.: How are the lessons that you learn in the class?

Bipana: Some are interesting while some are boring. I already read the chapter. I have already read the lesson 'The First Man on the Moon' YouTube video is more interesting than the lesson we have in our book. When we have an interesting topic, we can read interesting lessons by ourselves but if it is boring and difficult, we cannot understand even what we are taught.

R'Q.: How are the lessons that you learn in the class?

Bipana: In English, some are important few are interesting but in social studies, there are many more interesting lessons. They are from our social context and related to our life for example our geography (like district, region, climate, etc.), and our society (language, culture, races, and social practices). The teacher is even more interesting because she usually takes us to the library, and computer lab to show different videos every week; it was conditional with our H. W.

Second Interview With Prajwal

R'S Q.: Please tell me your experience of an interesting class.

Prajwal: Which interesting can I say, sir? (Jun pahile yad aayo tehi vana na). Sir, I like the book review program in the class. It was during the initial phase of the academic year when we had no books. Last year, Milan (pseudonym) sir took us to the library, asked us to choose a book, and prepared to talk about the book or its picture. It was quite funny to see colorful pictures from the book and interesting to describe the pictures we like from the book.

R's Q.: Do you have any other such interesting experiences? If you have, please tell me.

Prajwal: Yes I have. Once sir told us to choose anyone of the videos from the list he gave and took us to the computer and told us to watch. When the period was off, he gave us some questions and asked us to answer all the questions. He also told us to let us watch other videos if we all answered the questions from the video we watched. We watched the video again and again. It was interesting but difficult to answer all the questions in a single shot of watching.

R's Q.: I would like to hear an interesting thing about your teacher.

Prajwal: Which one? ...the one of Sunita (pseudonym) miss?

R'S Q: OK.

Prajwal: I like Sunita very much though she is very strict in the class. She is quite friendly and supportive when we talk individually. She asks us about H.W.; about my family and my interest. She listens to us and supports us in our problems. She sometimes plays with us during the break or sits nearby and watches us play. She also calls my mother sometimes to talk about my study at home....

R's Q.: Do you have any other such interesting experiences? If you have, please tell me.

Prajwal: Milan sir (pseudonym) used to take us sometimes to the ground, play videos, and ask us to follow its instructions; sometimes to the field to describe our experiences; and sometimes to a program organized in the surroundings where we had to work as a reporter, as a volunteer or as an observer. His teaching of paperwork, and science lab work, from youtube was very interesting. I remember Bijaya (pseudonym) sir's teaching sentences by giving examples and clues for making sentences. But we had a teacher last year, who used to teach sentence structure using formulas. It is difficult to remember all the formulae. The students have learned contents that are as per our immediate needs and interests easily by ourselves but we have difficulty, despite the teachers' teaching, learning the content beyond our level, need, and interest.

Interview II With Pratikshya

R'Q.: How is interaction in your classroom?

Pratikshya: We have teacher-dominant classroom teaching. Some teachers are very polite and liberal so their class is noisy and unmanaged. I like Milan sir's teaching very much. In his class, students speak in their turn by raising their heads. When he lets a student speak, he keeps others quiet and lets them speak after he

finishes. He always encourages us to speak, appreciates and supports the student's ideas, and clarifies the ideas with reasons. When we pronounce it wrongly, he tells us different ways of pronouncing it and tells us the British or American pronunciation. Rita Madam's class is not so interesting. She speaks loudly and threateningly so we generally do not ask her questions. When she lets us speak, we ask what we have not understood. She clarifies and ends the class. Only three or four of us ask her; others do not dare to ask her any questions. Some friends ask us to clarify what they have not understood in the class.

R's Q.: Do you have any experience of funny interaction with your teacher or friends?

Pratikshya: Yes, sir. Milan sir, sometimes asks us to talk about the things we want. He allows us to talk about any topic we like but we have certain rules and regulations for that. One day, he says, "Today's turn is of the students from the last bench of right-second rows to talk; All the others have to keep quiet and can speak when your turn comes". When he says so, the students from the last bench whisper with one another and decide to talk about a picnic they in Tribhuvan Memorial Park in Thankot. During the talk, they turn by turn speak and describe their picnic. When they finished their talk, Milan sir asked other students from their group/bench to tell/ask something about their picnic. When the bell rang, he told us to write in English about what they talked about the picnic. It was very interesting.

R's. Q.: Have you experienced such interactive programs in your class?

Pratikshya: Yes. Milan sir, especially during no-pressure time usually after/before the long holiday, the initial period of the academic year or when they have finished a chapter and have no plan to start a new chapter, runs such interactive activities. One day, he said, "We talk about a program (that may be a drama, a

caricature, comedy, or something else that you are interested in) to show in the annual/Friday/enter-school competition program of the school. For this, he said, "Think of the program/activity you want to show in the program. After talking in the class, we decide and prepare for the show". The sir, when the bell rang, said, "Plan your activity and meet me during the break or in the class" It was very interesting. Some planned a drama, some to show dance, some to act as caricatures, and so on. We prepared in two days, got the teacher's feedback, and performed the task in the program.

R'. Q.: Have you experienced any disliked interaction in the classroom?

Pratikshya: Yes, sir. We had a teacher in our previous school. He would think he was the greatest and all knowing person in the world. He always wanted us to accept his ideas. When I argued with him, he scolded and criticized me saying, "What you know? I am this and that...later we stopped arguing with him. None of us would speak in his class as he would always criticize us and our saying. When he left the school, we felt happy.

R's Q: How have you experienced your best teacher?

Pratikshya: Milan sir is very friendly and helpful. He appreciated and encouraged us to study more and more. Seeing him, we feel happy and want to read or work with him (uhalai dekhesi nai khusi lagxa, padna man lagxa).

R's Q: Tell me such other interesting classes you have experienced.

Pratikshya: He (the English teacher) used to ask us to choose and watch one of the videos (song, rhyme, speech, documentary...) from a list and explain or perform what is there in the video. Every Friday we used to have no class but presentation and discussion on the videos we watched but later, it was stopped. In such periods, we do not know how fast time passes.

R's Q: Tell me such other interesting classes you have experienced.

Pratikshya: Hari sir (pseudo name) is very boring, not strict at all, and moody as well. He never makes fun in the classroom; never takes students out to play or for any work; never controls the class, and teaches us but we cannot understand his teaching. He always gives H.W. but never checks them. He frequently says, “I am your teacher and you should follow what I say, you are here to learn from me; I think self-study is better than such teachers (yo sir ko padaai vandaa ta aafai pade raamro). The teachers usually ask us for the book, open it, and say, “Today’s topic is ...in page...” and then read the text, explain it in Nepali, and move ahead. Sometimes ask, “Did you understand?”... Tomorrow’s H.W. is....”

R's Q: Have you experienced any interesting activities in the class?

Pratikshya: I love reading interesting stories. Once our English teacher asked us to prepare for a book review program. Then I chose to read novels and stories and prepare for the presentation. Bijaya sir used to ask us to speak about the videos we watched during our free time, we would enjoy watching Turkish drama, Chinese fun videos, and Hindi serials. It was interesting to describe the videos we watched or about the book we read.

Second Interview With Bipana

R's Q.: Do you have a library in your school?

Bipana: Yes, we have. We occasionally go there.

R's Q.: How is your library in the school?

Bipana: We rarely go to the library. There are heavy books but nothing for us to read. Actually, the library neither has comfortable chairs/benches to sit and read there nor sufficient study materials from the areas of our interest. It is dark and always closed. I have never seen anyone study in the library.

R'Q.: What do you do if you have to go to the library?

Bipana: We have no work in the library. Last month, it was opened cleaned, and colored. Some people had visited it and they had also told us they had donated books for us. But we have the textbook to read. It has been difficult to finish the textbook, how we can read other books.

R's Q: What do you think of ICT use in teaching learning?

Bipana: It is good and interesting. About five months before Bijaya (pseudo) sir had taken us to the computer lab and taught us science. We understood the lesson 'How to produce hydrogen in the lab when he taught us to show the video on the projector in the lab. Such classes are more interesting than the teachers' teaching only.

Third Interview With Pratikshya

R's Q.: How often do you communicate with your teachers and classmates in the class?

Pratikshya: I frequently talk with my friends, occasionally with other students in the class, and a few times with teachers. I feel quite comfortable talking with Kiran (pseudonym) sir, but feel a bit nervous with Hari (pseudonym) sir as he is strict and a bit ruder. Muna (pseudo name) Miss is quite friendly so I have no hesitation to talk with her.

R's Q.: Tell me your experience of interaction with Kiran sir.

Pratikshya: Kiran sir is very friendly. He conducted an interesting activity last year. In the program, he divided us into different groups, each bench was a group, and a job for every one of each group. In our group, I had to define and introduce the given topic, another had to describe the negative and challenging side of the topic, the next friend had to describe the positive and strong side of the topic; and the last one of

my friends had to conclude with the answers of the possible questions to be asked. As our topic was to discuss 'The Internet', I became responsible for introducing the Internet and defining it; the second one had to talk about the negative and challenging side of the Internet'; the third one had to speak about the positive and strong side of 'internet' and the last one had to be prepared for the possible questions to be asked. As the sir said, we collected information from the library, teachers, and the internet and then wrote down the key points of what we prepared under each part of our work. Though I was not so good in speaking, with the support of my friends, I introduced the topic and performed my role well. It was not so interesting but the role of going in front of the class and performing our duty led us to prepare well. Even more interesting about the program is the part of the comment group. At the end of each group's performance, the comment group would highlight strong and weak points in our performance.

R's Q.: Could you tell me about your communication experience with Hari sir?

Bikal: Hari sir is strict and looks angry in the class so we are afraid of asking him questions. If we did not understand what he taught, we asked the first/second, or third student to clarify what he taught. One day, he scolded and criticized one of his friends while he was talking with a friend on the bench he had sat, from that day onwards, we hesitated to talk to him. When we asked him a question he said, "What is there in your mind?; why cannot you understand such a simple thing?" He talked in a way that he could grab all that his teacher taught during his childhood.

R's Q.: Could you tell me an interesting classroom activities you have experienced?

Bikal: We like Kiran (pseudonym) sir very much. He usually teaches us in a friendly environment. One day he taught us using the odd one-out technique. The part

of teaching 'odd one out' in which the teacher led us to practice writing on board was quite interesting. We would feel quite excited in such classes. I remember his teaching in which he wrote words scrambled on the board and asked us to unscramble the letters and find out the odd one out. I also remember his teaching to make another word from the letters of the word written on the board. "we usually have such interesting classes when there are a few students, when we request him when he has no mood to start a new lesson and so on.

Fourth Interview With Bikal

R's Q: Tell me the interesting class you have experienced, please.

Bikal: Once, a foreign lady had come to school. She had brought many interesting books. It was very difficult to understand her voice but she told us to choose and read the book. She used to study in the library. Seeing her studying, I went to her in the library and asked for a book to read. she gave me a book and asked me to read and prepare to tell others in the class. It forces me to read the book to be in touch with her.

R's Q: Tell me one of your interesting experiences in the school.

Bikal: As it was my first school in Kathmandu, I felt quite excited on the first day in this school. The sir conducted an introduction program in pairs and made a list of things we were interested in and asked us to choose one to do on the day of our turn. The next three or four days were quite interesting: we had to perform what we had noted down in the list and see others' performances but later, he started the traditional teaching.

R's Q: Describe the classroom that you have experienced as one of the best ones.

Bikal: We were asked to choose one of the videos/ stories from the list or the work we did in the class. As we had to answer from the videos we watched, from the stories we read, or from the work we did in the class, we enjoyed it and obtained better marks in the examination.

Appendix H: Transcribed Interview With Teacher Participants

First Interview With T1

R'S Q.: What do you think of the teaching profession?

T1: It's okay, sir. It's good anyway. It is good in the sense that we are doing for the progress of students and the betterment of society. We always wish our students well study and move ahead with something good. On the other hand, it has been a frustrating job: we have to follow the order of the visionless people; we have to finish the course and prepare students by giving clear notes and preparing them for examination through rote learning. Though the course is flexible, we have to follow the traditional trend of teaching.

R's Q.: How do you maintain discipline in your classroom?

T1: ah ah... It is difficult to maintain discipline in the class if we become polite and liberal. We have more than fifty students in a class; we the teachers use a dominant role to maintain discipline in the class. I have used angry looks and a rude and strict voice to control the class.

R's Q: What is your experience that made you feel the job frustrating?

T1: Long breathing ... First of all, we have no harmonious environment because of politics, minor conflict between teachers, and talk on-board practices. I have to go to class, teach students, give them notes, and prepare them for examinations. We have no freedom to lead the students to learn through different learner-friendly activities. The learner-friendly activities are expensive, time-

consuming, noisy, and disturb others. We know how to teach taking students to the library, computer lab, field, and hall but they are time-consuming, parts to request others (for example asking for keys, materials, etc. again and again), and potentially complain-oriented. Administration in the last meeting told us to teach well, keep students within the classroom not to let them go out, and prepare them well for the examination.

R'S Q: How do you say to the administration that it wants you to teach well, and keep students within the classroom...?

T1: ... We have experienced it directly and indirectly during the communication with H.M. and SMC members. In a meeting, SMC members appreciated the teachers who are strict and teach students by keeping them quiet in class and complained about those who lead student-centered activities. One of their voice is, "Ram (pseudonym) sir's class is outstanding. He was teaching very well making pin-drop silent in the class but the other sir (name is kept secret) is watching students talking and making noise". The members who are unaware of pedagogy, particularly about group work and dialogue in the class are our leaders. When they say students outside the class, they ask, "Whose period is it?"

R'S Q: Have you any experience of satisfied teaching?

T1: Pause. Oh, Yes, sir. Why not. We lead students to run different activities (debate, quiz contest, poem/song/painting /drawing/origami practices) when we (the teachers) have few students in the class and no pressure to finish the course. We are very happy to run such activities but we have certain limitations. Before running such activities, we collect students' interests and talents and ask them to say how they learn and to write or perform as their group is assigned.

R'S Q: Have you any experience leading student-centered activities?

T1: Yes, sir. I run different student-friendly activities from time to time. Sometimes we take them to the lab, sometimes to the library, and sometimes to the field. What we do on the computer is not in the course and will not be asked in the examination, however, we do it as a motivational part. Such activities stimulate students even to make theory-based learning. Sometimes we use out-of-textbook content to refresh and motivate students, they are more energetic to work on such topics. Directly and indirectly, we are forced to lead exam-oriented classroom activities. In the last staff meeting, H. M. told us to try our best to make the best result. so we focus on the part of the text that is likely to be asked in the examination. We have a clear guideline in which we have to finish the course and prepare students by giving clear notes and preparing them for written examinations.

First Interview With T2

R's Q: How do you think of the teaching profession?

T2: It's okay, sir. But it is not as good as a civil servant's job and another job. Our job is a tedious one without any extra income.

R's Q: How do you say it is a tedious job?

T2: We have to teach six periods a day, check the student's homework, and give them notes. If all the students do their homework, we cannot finish copy-checking. It is one of the reasons why we cannot force and encourage students to do their homework.

R's Q: What sort of uneasiness have you experienced due to students' language and behavior in your classroom?

T2: I have students from different sociocultural backgrounds. They are really from low socioeconomic backgrounds. They have a less comfortable study environment in their house. Some students particularly the ones from typical

indigenous languages and cultures have unusual accents and behavior. Sometimes it creates laughter, sometimes indigestible environment, and sometimes misunderstanding. Sometimes I see some students teasing, insulting, isolating, or ignoring their friends due to their linguistic and cultural differences. For example, last week Bina (pseudonym) wept saying, "They teased and insulted saying 'taapaai' (तापाई)" Tamang students pronounce tapaaai (तपाई) as taapaai (तापाई). Because of it, they are teased, insulted, and dominated. Once when I asked a student, "Can you do it?" She said, "जती ट्राइ गरे नि श्दै शह्गदैन (Despite great effort, I could not do)". Because of this difference in pronunciation, she is still teased saying 'hagdai hagdaina' In the dialectical khas language, /s/ is pronounced as 'sh'.

R's Q: Have you experienced any trouble because of your punishment or insult to the students?

T2: Sometimes I feel uneasy. Because of the fact I told the parents about their children's incomplete H.W., noise in the class, and asking others for snacks, two of the students left the school. One day while going to school, I met Rajan (pseudonym) and asked him why he left the school. He said, "You may remember what you told my mother. Saying, "Why should you go to school while you do no homework, make noise in class disturb others, and eat others' snacks? From today onward, no school just work in the farm". His saying, "Because he complained to my father, I had to leave the school" made me frustrated with the profession. My intention was not to make him leave the school but to bring him on track... I had said so for his improvement.

R's Q: What role do you, as a teacher, have in your class? Do you have any experience of feeling superior or inferior in school or class?

T2: As a teacher, I have a superior role in the classroom, but I play a supportive role in activating students in their learning. I always lead the students to follow my instructions and let them speak if necessary in their turn or when I allow them to speak. Sometimes, I usually do this when we have no teaching or learning activities in the class, I let them speak but it is chaos because of the noise.

R's Q: Do you have any experience of taking students to the library, or computer lab??

T2: Yes. but I take them to the library only when we have a few students in the class, when we have no mood to start a new chapter, or when they request me. When I take them to the library, they do different things there. Some take a book to read a story, some to see pictures, some read newspapers and magazines, and so on. The homework I gave them to write what they read, did, or found in the library has brought them in line and concentrated on finding something to write. However, our library does not have sufficient student-friendly books or magazines like *Wisdom* and *Youbamunch*.

R's Q: Have you experienced any part of the text as irrelevant, boring to teach, or student-unfriendly?

T2:: The listening part of the textbook is neither student-friendly nor likely to be asked in the examination. I have not taught them. Instead of them, I have used online student-friendly sources. I have found the students were better motivated when gave them assignments after showing them different English videos, cartoons, or programs.

First Interview With T4

R's Q: How do you think of the teaching profession?

T4: Actually, it was my interest to be a teacher. I am proud to be a teacher. I like reading. In teaching, we have to read or learn something so that we can teach them well. Parents have sent their children to us with a belief to make a good man. We are there in the school to mould the clay into a shape for the nation.

R's Q: Have you experienced any incident that makes you feel uneasy?

T4: Yes. Some incidents have made us dominated, isolated, or insulted. Some parents, SMC members, teachers, or even some students usually ignore our honesty, politeness, or simplicity and respect for those who are over-smart and showy.

R's Q: What sort of uneasiness have you experienced due to students' language and behavior in your classroom?

T4: We have children, especially from the working class. They treat us in the way they are grown up. Children learn not actually what they are told but from others' way of working or doing something else. If we educate them about our behavior and working, they can modify their attitudes and working style.

R's Q: What role do you, as a teacher, have in your class? Do you have any experience of feeling superior or inferior in school or class?

T4: We have no such good culture where people do not judge a book by its cover. We hear only when someone speaks loudly and rudely; pay attention only when they speak aggressively; and value those who are over-smart and showy. I feel quite uneasy when some of the SMC members order us to teach in a dominating way without letting students make noise in the class. Students learn more when they interact with one another. Rote learning cannot promote students' talent and creativity. Last year during the time of sports week, I ran a singing and dancing program in the class. After some students' show, Bipin (pseudonym) asked me to show a dance to an English song. I asked him to describe the song he danced. He described what the song

meant. Later I asked him why he could not answer the questions from the book as they were easier than the song. He told me some boys beat, poked, and bullied him so he would do nothing.

R'S Q: What is your experience of existing education practices?

T4: We have to follow the order of the SMC committee. The committee members do not know the essence of 21st-century pedagogy. This ignorance has forced us to embrace traditional ways of teaching. I, as a teacher, have to finish the course in time, give notes, and prepare students for examinations. We have no motivation to prepare our students for their life. We always force them to read the text and prepare for the examination. We rarely prepare them for their life. We usually run activities to prepare for their life when we have no textbook, when we have no pressure to finish the course, or no pressure to keep them within the classroom. I run student-friendly activities. such activities are run when school reopens after a long holiday and most of the students have not arrived yet or sometimes when I have no mood to start a new chapter and want to pass the time.

R'S Q: What is your experience of assessing students?

T4: In the past, we had written examinations for assessment but nowadays, students have 50% marks from their presence and work performance. They obtain some marks from their attendance, work, and behavior they show inside and outside the classroom. Though we have no filing system, we can remember that we are always with them.

First Interview With T5

R'S Q.: What do you think of the teaching profession?

T5: It is okay. It is as usual; you are quite familiar with it. I think there is nothing I have to say. But, we have too many students in the class and it is difficult to

control them. They neither have a level nor any curiosity in study. We have no such wicked students so it has been easy to control. Everything is normal; parents are aware of education but have no time to come to school, pay no attention to their children's education at home, and just provide minimum requirements to the children and ask them to study well. I think it is because of poverty and the pressure of other work.

R's Q: Do you have any experience that made you feel the job was a frustrating one?

T5: Not, actually, but sometimes it happens because of parents' unnecessary complaints, SMC members' illogical talk and traditionally deeply rooted concepts, and pressure to finish the course and prepare students for examinations. Our SMC members have no idea of pedagogy, and particularly about the changing pedagogy. However, they always advise us to be strict and teach this and that way. We have uneducated and or less-educated parents who rarely come to school. Last year at the PTA meeting, One of the parents came into the meeting getting drunk, another was in an aggressive mood, and some with pain and agony they have undergone. All these prove that the students do not have a favorable study environment. Similarly, we have pressure to finish the course, and to control the class as there are many students and cannot pay attention to everyone. When I see the face of a student, then a sense of pity comes into my mind, and cannot give them any work and tell them to do what I can. I have not been able to entertain the students while teaching in the class. The administration says, "We have no such amount to run different activities, you can do everything but be economical, keep students disciplined, and do not let them run out of the class", so we have followed the traditional model of teaching. It is easier, more

economical, and as per their interest. We know this is not a good way of teaching even in this changing world but we can do nothing, just follow the trend.

R's Q: Have you experienced any sort of language and behavior of other teachers, SMC members, and parents that make you feel dominated, isolated, or insulted?

T5: Yes, sir. Some SMC members, especially politically biased ones, treat us as if we are their servants and they are the superior ones. I forgot to greet 'Namaskar' to a SMC member last month. He, in the staff meeting, said, "We have some teachers who are stingy even to greet SMC members; how can they teach the students about obedience?" Even the teachers are politically divided into different groups. Even the students can say the political inclination of a teacher.

Second Interview With T3

R's Q.: How are your classroom activities going on?

T3: It's going on well. Sometimes interesting, sometimes boring, and so on.

R's Q: When is it interesting, and when is it boring?

T3: Especially during the initial phase of the session, it is interesting because we have no pressure to finish the course; we have new students; the routine has not been finalized; the students do not have textbooks, and so on. We could do better if we have some sort of encouragement to do creative things, appreciation for the better work, and non-political support. We are judged based on our political link. How good we are depends on our link, not on our performance. I feel some reluctance (kahile kahi ta sir, jangar nai marera aauxa). We have to check students' HW, hear some silly parents' scolding, and some SMC members' unreasonable advice and arguments. I feel bored when students make noise in the class, when students do not understand what I teach, when we have pressure to finish the course.

R's Q.: Please tell me about one of your exciting classroom activities.

T3: At the beginning of the session, students do not have books, and all the students are not present, so it is time to impress them. so we ask them what they want before we start the book. last year, I collected the students' exciting things in the classroom. Different students say different things. I asked them to write only what we can do inside our classroom. I conducted the introduction program in pairs and listed their engaging class activities. I asked them to choose which one we could do the next day. They shouted. Some said singing, some said dancing, some said acting, some watched videos, etc. For watching videos, I told them to select the one in English only. After collecting students' talent, I led them to plan and run the task for the next day. I had some fun in the class and summed up the class by asking them to prepare for the next day. The next day was the dancing day. I managed the sound system and song. It was very interesting to watch the dance but I asked them (before they danced) to say something about how they learned to dance and others wrote as their group was assigned. They also had to say why they chose the song/music to dance. Before their performance, I asked three students to write details of the program on the day so that they could tell us the other day. The next day, was the day of caricature and comedy. Before the program began, I asked the group of three who had written the details of yesterday's program to describe what had happened yesterday. After some interaction with yesterday's program, we started today's program. I ran such classroom activities for five days. I was told to begin the course. I stopped it and started my regular class. It was very interesting in the sense that students who came to school on the first day came regularly.

R's Q: Have you experienced such other interesting classroom activities?

T3: Yes, I have.... Once when I was a private school teacher, we had an exhibition program of paperwork. Class teachers were responsible for leading their children in performance. Despite no idea. I, making use of YouTube and the students' skills in origami and kirigami managed to teach them. Because of some students and their parents' skills in paperwork, I enable the students to produce different papers. Despite the lack of sufficient knowledge of the paperwork, I was able to motivate all the students to try their best for the presentation during the exhibition. As a result of it, the class I led came first in the exhibition. It was not because of my talent but because of my tactics.

R's Q.: I was very happy to hear about your skills in leading the students in different teaching and learning activities. I would be very pleased if you could tell me about such another experience.

T3: I usually once a week take them to the computer lab or let them play. As they enjoy it, I have made it conditional. I sometimes show them a film, a documentary, and sometimes course-related materials. Since it is not the part to study for assessment, I use it in my way. "...It is not in the course, is not asked in the exam, however, I take them to the computer lab so that they will be motivated to study actively."....

R's Q.: I was very happy to hear about your skills in leading the students in different teaching and learning activities. I would be very pleased if you could tell me about such other experiences.

T3: I, usually once a week, take them to the computer lab or let them play. As they enjoy it, I have made it conditional. I sometimes show them a film, a documentary, sometimes course-related materials, and so on. As it is not the part to study for assessment, I use it in my way.

R's Q.: Please tell me your experience of teaching students in the ICT lab.

T3: Paues. long breathing. We have nothing to teach from the textbook so I take them and ask them to use it in their way. As students passed or wasted time using Facebook, playing games, and watching videos, I asked them to play the game 'Ramban', and warned them not to stop playing the game 'Ram ban'. It is useful to develop typing skills. If they had word games like word unscrambling and meaning in 'Ram Ban', they would enjoy it more. Students are fond of games on the computer.

R's Q.: How often do you use ICTs in your teaching?

T3: Usually not. It is boring, lingering, and time-consuming. Taking students from the class to the lab, asking the guard to open the lab, or giving the key, and opening the computer is time-consuming. Furthermore, it disturbs other classes. Delivering the lesson to the students is neither lingering nor time-consuming. We have another risk that if students break anything in the lab if they make noise on the way to the lab, or if line/electricity is cut...

R's Q.: How have you experienced the teaching profession?

T3: Being a teacher is not as comfortable a job as is expected. We have a different environment that we know only when we enter here. We are judged based on our political link. How good we are depends on our link not on our performance. I feel some sort of reluctance (kahile kahi ta sir, jangar nai marera aauxa).

Third Interveiw With T3

R's Q: Have you experienced any problems in the learning content as a grade teacher?

T3: pause. Oh Yes. I have faced the problems of materials to facilitate my teaching. If the content is from the student's interest and their level, they work on even when it is not their homework, classwork, or part of preparation for an

examination. I have faced the problem of materials such as speakers and projectors in the class, especially for teaching listening. I have to manage the speaker to teach listening. I usually teach listening through my mobile. I teach them some parts and skip others. As they are not so important for the examination, I have not emphasized teaching them. If we have facilities of the materials such as speakers and videos to teach in the class, we can teach a bit better. However, we focus on the chapter and learning contents that are likely to be asked in the examination....

R's Q: How is the library in your school?

T3: It's good. In the past, we had no library. All the books used to be stored either in a sack or in H.M.'s office. but now we have racks full of books.

R's Q: How often do you use the library? and lead your students to use the library?

T3: I usually visit the library to read newspapers and some interesting books. We sometimes lead the students to the library but they are not interested in borrowing books. Only the students who are better in the class borrow books. When we ask H.M. to bring more books for children, he says, "We have no budget and trained manpower for library management. I have asked the Mayor for some budget for books and other study materials. When the budget comes, we will sit together and plan what to do with the budget."

R'Q: In short, how are you leading teaching-learning activities in your class?

T3: Paues. Long breathing. What activity we run is not important; how nice notes we provide them and how well we prepare them for the final written examination are more important than any other activities we do in the class. I'd better follow the traditional trend and shut up the student-centered activities as it is their (concern authorities) interest. we (the teachers) cannot persuade them with 21st-

century pedagogy and/or reject their decision; we are inferior to them despite our higher education and better ideas in our subject.

The library neither has comfortable chairs/benches to sit and read there nor sufficient study materials from the areas of our interest. It is dark and always closed. I have never seen anyone study in the library.

Second Interview With T4

R's Q: How is your school library?

T4: It's okay. In the past, we had no library but now we have a library with many books.

R'S Q: How often do you visit the library?

T4: To be frank, I rarely go to the library. We worked hard during our time. Whatever we do is meaningless because nobody understands our difficulty. Now, I am in the retirement phase. Why study in this retired-near-age? ... What should we study even now? Nowadays, I do not have any worries and I have been teaching the same subject for many years.

T4: Sometimes. We do not have such use of the library. Students have difficulty in reading their textbooks, doing H.W., and preparing for examinations. Some students who are extra borrow books and read. We have more than 70% of students who never submit their H.W. Moreover, studying unnecessary books is an overload for the students.

We do not have such use of the library. Students have difficulty reading their textbooks, doing H.W., and preparing for examinations. Some extraordinary students borrow books and read.

Fourth Interview With a Teacher Participant JT1/T4

R's Q.: How do you think of assessment?

T4: It's alright but there is no quality in students' writing. In the past, students were afraid of failing but nowadays, they are free without any fear of punishment and failing. Rare students fail in the result. If they fail the exam, we have to face many problems. Last year, we had seven students who failed the exam. They were neither regular in the class nor disciplined. Besides, there were problems in the classroom for both of us and the students. They neither study nor let others to study/ learn ('Na ta padxa na arulai padna dinxa ultai distrub matra garxa'). When he failed the examination, he left the school and we felt comfort ('usle school xodesi aananda vayo')

R'Q: Have you experienced any challenges while running the existing assessment?

T4: Students are not serious about the examination. We still have traditional types of questions and evaluation systems. Working as an invigilator is tedious. Sometimes during the examination working as a guard/invigilator, I feel sleepy, hope the bell rings soon, and expect students to finish fast and leave the exam hall. It is difficult to keep them silent and lead them to sit in their seat. We feel two hours in the examination has is a long. I sometimes spend the time reading the newspaper, using my mobile and so on. Checking copies is even more boring. The student's writing is so poor that we should try to find the areas to give marks. Students are weak but we have to prepare a better result at least to show because failing some students is challenging.

R's Q.: Do you have any experience of classroom activities in which students work excitedly and learn from one another?

T4: Pause. Oh, Yes. They work quite excitedly when they have learning activities with games, during planning for Friday programs, or while preparing for

some competitive programs like origami and quiz contests. When we show them a video and ask them to talk about the video, they participate enthusiastically and respond meaningfully. They usually request to organize such programs. We are habituated to hearing only when someone speaks loudly and rudely; pay attention only when they speak aggressively; and value those who are out-smart and showy. I feel quite uneasy when some of the SMC members order us to teach in a dominating way without letting students make noise in the class. They were our students but now ordering us. It is too insulting. We know what is their level but have to respect and follow their order.

R's Q.: How have you motivated students?

T4: pause. What to say, sir? After they completed the exercise, I told them to enjoy it as they intended. I let them work in their way...I have found some lessons quite useful and student-friendly; some are too long for children and not so important either so, I prioritize less to those which are less likely to be asked in the examination.

R's Q.: Please tell me one of the problems you have experienced while preparing the result.

T4: Pause. Preparing results is boring and challenging. The challenge students are weak but we teachers have to prepare them for a better result at least to show because failing some students is challenging.

Appendix I: Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion in S1

FGD P1: A discussion in which participants are requested to speak and write anything they want to say anonymously.

Question: How was your first day in this school?

S1: I had thought government schools were too dirty and unfriendly but later I found there is no significant difference between boarding schools and government schools. I found it quite good as we have no pressure to do H. W. I found teachers friendlier in government schools than in boarding schools.

S2: I was from a remote area school so I found it as a boarding school (as he is from a government school).

S: I was frightened and nervous when I entered the school for the first time. Everything was new; The school was quite neat and clean. When my father took me to the office, I found the school quite standard, and the head sir was quite a powerful man. I got admitted with a promise to study well and be a good student. Later I found the reality of the school: the toilet is so dirty; the teachers are a bit dominant; we have a frightening environment; we have to be safe within ourselves. They threaten us, tease us, and even order to do something for them.

S2: We have no one to save us if senior class students beat or scold us.

Question: What sort of things do you like to read?

S1: I like story books like fairy tales, science fiction, and life-related stories.

S2: I like to read moral stories, funny stories, and song/rhyme books. The lesson like the poem 'Kishan' and 'The Three Merchants' are very interesting.

S3: I like to read our textbook only when we have no time to finish the homework and when we have to do some work in the house as well.

S4: Sir, I do not like to read more books. The book itself is difficult, how can we read other books?

S5: If we had comedy or joke books, I would love reading them.

S6: Watching English videos are more interesting and easier to understand than the stories in the book.

Question: What do you want in your class?

S1: We want interesting activities. Talking about something from our interest like singing, dancing, painting, or drawing.

S2: Watching motivational videos and talking about them. Like the speech of Shristi, a blind 16-year-old girl...

S3: The teacher's teaching all the time is boring, so I like discussion, working in a group, or showing something in front of the class.

S4: I always remember our group work as a preparation for an origami competition. Our discussion and practice for the speech competition were equally interesting.

S5: We want a controlled class, teachers' interesting teaching, some fun activities, and so on sir.

S6: I want digital class, group work from preparation to performance, and activities like origami competitions and stage performances.

S7: I want extra-curricular or co-curricular activities rather than bookish activities. Bookish activities in which rote learning is focused is boring and tiring.

Focus Group Discussion II

How is your classroom? How is your friends' behavior? How are the teachers?

S1: It's nice. We are enjoying the class. We have good teachers, cooperative friends, favorable classroom environment.

S2: our classroom is not so big; there are 49 students in the class; the class is congested; and it is difficult to see what teachers write on the board, hear some teachers teaching, and face difficulty in understanding teachers' teaching as we sit on the bench at back.

S3: We should have the chance to sit in front benches; teachers should control the class; they should pay attention to the students at the back; and they should be supportive of those who are weak and left behind.

S4: All the teachers should be kind, friendly, and supportive like Madan (pseudo name) sir.

S5: I do not like rude, too strict, and too loose teachers. They teach us to be polite, honest, hardworking, and helpful but they are just the opposite.

S6: Some of our friends are thieves, naughty, and ill-mannered.

How is the teachers' behavior?

P1: We want strict but helpful and supportive teachers. The teachers use mobile and advise us mobile use is a bad habit. They always tell us to read and read but we rarely see them read.

P2: The teachers should know everything. They should look smart and impressive. Some teachers are passive, sleepy, and boring. The teachers' get-up, appearance, and behavior should be motivating for us. but we feel bored when some teachers come to the class. They always think we do not know anything. In some cases, we are better than they are but they treat us as if we do not know anything.

P3: They are great people. They know everything. We actually know nothing so we keep silently on the back seats. We cannot become great people so they took us down while speaking. perhaps we would do the same if we were in place of them.

Focus Group Discussion III

As the students preferred to writing to saying their statements in front of others, they were allowed whatever they wanted to do. some wrote and gave me the paper some spoke there in class

Students are afraid of telling about their experiences of being dominated, isolated, or hated as it can be leaked out and they can have certain kinds of punishment, threat, or warning. The students appreciate their friends, teachers, their school, and the facilities they enjoy in the school. They cannot speak against their classmates who treat them rudely and naughtily. Students cannot react to the teachers' hypocritical voice and behavior. Students cannot tell their teachers about the

misbehavior of their classmates. They are habituated to bear their teachers' and even some friends' dominations, scolding, or any kind of insulting behavior. The supremacy of the teachers, the better students, the stronger ones, and children from high-class family members have discouraged the inferior, the weaker, and the helpless (students) from speaking and participating actively. However, they are struggling with defeated hearts. It seems that the teachers, administration, structure, and environment have taught children to dominate the inferior and to be dominated by the superior; to respect power, and to have contempt for the powerless or helpless.

A Student's voice: I like to work in a group being accountable for action and responsible for the whole task. Here, we work in groups and make one accountable for an action.

B Student's voice: I would like the motivational type of unit/chapter.

C student's voice: We would learn better if we had a joyful lesson. While learning a joyful lesson, we feel how fast time passes. Learning from the computer would be a bit more interesting. I wish we had a technology-related class; We could learn from mobile, laptop, or computer and present what we learn from the given task.

D student's voice: practical, we would like to learn life-related new things. We want the things to do rather than the things to listen. while listening, we feel tired. In the case of homework, we would like to do what we know but our homework is always beyond what we know. It is also difficult and boring.

Appendix J: Field Note

Information Received From Field Observation

Observation in S1 on 28th March 2022 at 13:11

During my visit to S2 school, I found students sitting inside the class during the period they had no teacher to teach them. As I was observing from outside in the

way, the students did not know I was observing them, I found them enjoying the class. Some were writing/ drawing or talking to each other and so on. They had two captains who would try to keep them in discipline or let them go outside turn by turn. They had a rule to stay inside their class even during the period they had no teacher. When I entered the class and asked them about their leisure period, they said, "We stay inside the class doing what we like but we cannot play, talk loudly, or do anything that disturbs others". Though it was boring to stay in the class without doing anything, they found it better than the teacher's lecture. A sudden idea hit my mind about such a leisure period that if we could let them work as a preparation for a presentation or for something as a part of their study. If we planned to organize a program (science exhibition, poem/origami/ clay work/ painting/ drawing/ fancy dress competition, or stage performance program (speech, debate, singing/dancing/ caricature, etc., we could keep them more engaged.

Observation in S2 on 12th April 2022 at 10:47

It was a break time for the students. No teacher was on the ground, but the students played, ate, or talked to one another in their group. The ground was dusty and not so clean and comfortable for the students to play or stay there, but the students were enjoying there. When the bell rang, everyone ran to the toilet, the water tap, or the class, and lastly, everyone was inside the classroom. However, the teachers were hurrying and going to the class at a tortoise pace. Within five to seven minutes, the ground became a peaceful place without anyone or any sound.

Observation in S2 on 12th May, 2022 at 10:40

In my observation, I saw students keep their books inside their bags soon after the bell rang, even while the teacher was teaching. They did not care about their teacher's teaching. From this, I understood that they were interested in something

other than the learning content and the teacher's instruction. The students, during their leisure period, do not want to open their books; they open them only during the time they have class, as preparation for the examination, and they have to do H. W.

However, they have repeatedly gone through certain student-friendly lessons.

Observation in S3 on 28th April 2022 at 14:12

It was the day of sports week. Most of the students were on the ground. Some were playing, some were talking, some were in the class. When the teachers called them to attend in a fixed place, those who were interested in games went to the called place; those who were not interested went out of the school gate. The program seemed unable to attract all the students to join the program because they were not interested in the games of the program. From the observation of this program, one idea clicked in my mind. If they were given some roles (that may be taking photos, working as volunteers, reporting, or something else), they would participate there. The school has many student-friendly programs but they have not included all the students and the students' performance in the programs is not linked with assessment either.

Observation in S5 on June 23rd, 2022 at 14:56

It was the day of the examination. Students were coming to school for examinations. Some were with their bags, while others were without their bags. While waiting for the bell to ring, students discussed the possible questions and their answers. Some planned to meet in the toilet after the one hour when the bell rang; some to sit together, some to exchange the cheats they had brought, and so on. The teachers, on the other hand, were preparing to go to their assigned classrooms. During the first hour of the examination, the students were writing. However, some were waiting for the bell to ring. When the one-hour bell rings, some students plan to go to the toilet, some whisper, and some are busy writing. However, most of the students

seemed as if they had not prepared for the examination. When the exam-end bell rings, the students come out on the ground and talk about their examinations (Tero jancha kasto bhayo; yo question kasto garis...). Some students who came out of the class without any talk with their classmates were hurrying up to go home. The students who answered all the questions in the examination looked delighted; those who did somehow better looked happy, but those who could not answer the questions looked sad and uninterested in talking with anyone else.

Appendix K: Coded Data**Interview with Prajwal (S2)**

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of feeling uneasy in the classroom?

S2: yes, sir. Teachers sometimes dominate and insult us. One day our English teacher asked me, "How long did you take to set your hair?" teasing when I forgot to do my Home Work. He never pays attention to us and looks only at the girls.

R.'s Q.: Do you have any experience of distraction in the classroom?

S2: Sir actually, I am not interested in study. I come to school because of work at home particularly in Tunnel farming. I like to talk with friends in the class because I cannot understand what the teachers teach. I find nothing interesting in the class, just visiting friends, talking and playing with them. We have no videos, no story books and nothing to play and enjoy in the school. I really enjoyed his teaching stories from the video. We enjoyed and learned.

R'S Q.: Please tell me your experience of an interesting class.

S2: Which interesting one, sir? (Jun pahile yad aayo tehi vana na). Sir, I always remember sir's book review program which I like very much. It is interesting and we can enjoy, read and learn as well. During that time, we had not got books. Sir used to take us to the library, asked us to choose a book. read. and prepare to sav about the story later in our turn. It was quite funnv to read. sav and hear new stories. Mv father

11:10 | reall...
Activities: ICT ce

11:11
Activities: studer

- | + 10

gave me a book that he had brought from his office. As the book was very interesting, everyone in the class liked the story I told them in the class. We will read more if we get such interesting book. Such books are more interesting than the book we have to read in the class. As everyone has to select a story/ book, it is interesting to hear more stories. It is even more interesting to tell them a new story which they have not read. Bijaya (pseudonym) sir sometimes usually during initial phase of academic session, before/after Dashain/long vacation makes fun in the class: sometimes running antakshyeri program, sometimes word meaning game, sometimes singing and dancing and so on...

3 R's Q.: Do you have any other such interesting experiences? If you have, please tell me.

3 S2: Yes. Why not sir. Once Bijaya (pseudonym) sir told us to choose any one of the videos from the list he gave and took us to the computer lab and told us to watch. When period is off, he gave us some questions and asked us to answer all the questions. He also told us to watch the videos again and again if we couldnot answer all the questions from the video we watched.

1 R's Q.: I would like to hear an interesting thing of your teacher?

2 S2: Sunita (pseudonym) miss ko vanam sir?

3 R's.: OK.

R's.: OK.

S2: I like Sunita (pseudonym) miss very much though she is very strict in the class. She is quite friendly and supportive when we talk individually. She asks us about H.W.; about my family and my interest. She listens to us and supports us in our problem. She sometimes plays with us during the break or sits nearby and watch us play. She also calls my mother sometimes to talk about my study at home.

R's Q.: How have you experienced examination?

S2: Hey sir!It's frightening. Some subjects are easy. However, it is quite interesting when examination is over: we are free, no H.W., no pressure, just fun in playing with friends.

R'Q.: Tell me about the exam you have taken and you enjoyed ?

S2: Once, I was with my friend in the same bench. He was good and could answer all the question well. He showed me and I wrote all from him. In that examination, I had scored good marks in English. but in one examination, the other (second) terminal examination (dosro traimasik parikshya), I was with a dull friend whom I had to teach him. I was very sad that I could teach him nothing....Cheating is not good but we want. We cannot remember all the things we are taught. Some are so talent how they can remember everything the teacher taught.

How is their mind!(Arule kasari samjheka holan ta feri? sir uni haru ko ta dimag nai kati tatho ho k).

11:14 Sunita (pseu...
◇ D

11:15 when...
◇ E

11:17 He sh...
◇ E

11:18 ...Ch...
◇ E

dimag nai kati tatho ho k).

R's Q.: Have you experienced any such examination in which you enjoyed, learned and did good in the examination?

S2: Can we say the examination which were run in the school by outside peopl, sir?

R's: Yes. You can.

S2: Once, some people from Red Cross Society came to our class and asked us what we wanted. We said, "A film." then they asked us, "We will show an interesting film or video and you have to sit for the examination tomorrow." As we agreed, they showed us a video and gave us a list of questions and link to watch the video in mobile at home and told us, "If you can answer all the questions tomorrow, you will get a prize. In the evening, I requested my mother to watch the video and answer the questions." The next day, we got a pack of snacks and those who could not answer the question watched the video again and got a pack of snacks each. It was interesting because it was an awareness program and useful in our life to be safe from frauds.

R's Q.: Have you any experience of library use to motivate students?

S2: Yes, sir when I was in previous school. Some teachers used to take us to the library, let us select a book or a story in computer but we had to share what we read. It is quite funny and interesting. I still remember the book review program in which I had described the book, "The horse and the snail. It was a new story for others and my uncle had practiced me to describe it. It was quite exciting when the teachers taught us Ramban practice for learning typing and educational

for others and my uncle had practiced me to describe it. It was quite exciting when the teachers taught us Ramban practice for learning typing and educational games. In the book, some lessons are interesting while some are boring. I've already read the chapter 'The first man on the moon is no more.' its video in youtube is more exciting than that of textbook.

Int I with Chetmani

Int 1 with Chetmani (S10)

R's Q: What is a boring boring classroom? Tell me your experience of your boring class.

Chetmani: A classroom becomes boring when the teacher is not interesting or difficult; when the content is not interesting; when it is very hot in the classroom; or when learning is stressful. Math is a difficult subject but the teacher teaches interestingly so it is interesting. In last summer, we felt sleepy in social period because of boring teaching but felt enjoyed in Maths even when it is a difficult subject.

R's Q: Can you tell me an interesting Math class?

Chetmani: In math, Geometry is very difficult and boring subject but our new math sir takes us in computer class and teaches us interestingly. He taught how all the angles of a triangle is equal to 180 degree angle by showing on the projector. He asked us to do practically on computer and in our copy as well. It is easy and interesting. It was very difficult to understand when our previous teacher taught us on the board only.

R's Q: Do you have such other interesting classes as well?

Chetmani: Yes, sir. Once our English sir told us to prepare a drama in English for stage performance. We prepared a comedy and asked him to correct and refined for rehearsing. It was difficult because it had difficult and unknown words, however, we prepared well consulting dictionary and practiced sincerely. On the day of presentation, we were afraid of making mistakes but we made no such noticeable mistake. Our jokes with acting made everybody laugh. We felt very happy when the audience shouted with laughter saying once more, once more... Even after we came out of the stage everyone was looking at us and laughing...]

Int I with Jamuna

Int I with Jamuna (S5)	
2	
3	R.'s Q.: Tell me your experience of distraction in the classroom?
4	Jamuna: I have experienced from time to time. Due to personal reason (during menstrual period, headache, stomachache), when I am hungry, When we are sick (mother, father, or anyone in the family). I also feel uneasy when friends quarrel and fight in the class. Sometimes, I cannot finish H.W. of the subjects particularly of Purna (pseudonym) sir. He insulted us saying something bad for not doing H.W. Sometimes mind is distracted while we are learning. Sometimes something suddenly comes in mind and interferes understanding. It particularly happens when classroom is not interesting (teacher, learning content classroom environment).
5	R.'s Q.: Tell me any other experience of distraction in the classroom?
5	Jamuna: Sometimes, my parents discuss and fight and are about to divorce. It has made me so sad and haunts my mind frequently. I never forget Hari (pseudonym) sir's behavior. From the day he insulted, ignored, and looked me angrily, I have not asked anything to him. They always dominate and hate the weak and poor students and focus on the good ones only. Moreover, some students' behavior is not good. I feel frightened when teachers speak a bit loudlier.
7	R.'s Q: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.
3	Jamuna: I have experienced many more interesting things in the class. Our social studies teacher asked us to perform in our turn from in front of the class at the beginning of the class. Each of us had to perform what we know and have told him as our talent and interest. As it was my turn to perform an English song, I performed "We are the world, we are the children" with action. Everyone of the class began to sing with me and it was so interesting. Later, our English sir asked me to perform it in the ' School Annual
	of the class began to sing with me and it was so interesting. Later, our English sir asked me to perform it in the ' School Annual Program' it encouraged me to learn such other songs.
9	R.'s Q: Tell me another experience of an interesting class.
0	Jamuna: Milan (pseudonym) sir's computer class was very interesting. In the class he used to tell us what to do in the computer, warn us to use the computer carefully and take us to the lab. We used to ask him when we were confused or have problem while using the computer. I always remember his saying, "finish the work I gave and play until the bell rings." He teaches us to find and play different puzzle games in the computer."(S5)
1	R.'s Q: Tell me your experience of an interesting class.
2	Jamuna: As the poem 'Farmer's Longing (Kishan ko Rahar)' in Nepali was exciting, we would enjoy chanting the poem in the class during the break. Some lessons were so difficult and boring. We read them only from the teacher's notes.
3	R.'s Q: Tell me your experience of an examination.
4	Jamuna: We are afraid of examination; if difficult questions were asked, we could not answer and face scolding, insult...blah-blah (Dar lagchha ni, sir; garo question aae, answer dina sakinna ani gali, insult, ... ke ke byehornu parchha). We cannot remember all the things the teacher taught.
5	

Appendix L

Symbols Used for Nepali Sounds

Consonants

Devanagari Alphabet	Symbol	Example	English Translation
क्	/k/	Kamjor	‘weak’
ख्	/kh/	kharaani	‘ash’
ग्	/g/	gamalaa	‘vase’
घ्	/gh/	ghar	‘house’
ङ्	/ng/	rang	‘color’
च्	/ch/	challa	‘chicks’
छ्	/chh/	chhaataa	‘umbrella’
ज्	/j/	janaawar	‘animal’
झ्	/jh/	jharana	‘waterfall’
ट्	/T/	taauko	‘head’
ठ्	/Th/	Thag	‘cheater’
ड्	/D/	daaktar	‘doctor’
ढ्	/Dh/	Dhokaa	‘door’
ण्	/N/	waaN	‘arrow’
त्	/t/	tapaai	‘you’
थ्	/th/	thapaDi	‘clap’
द्	/d/	dahi	‘curd’

ध्	/dh/	dhani	‘rich’
न्	/n/	namiTho	‘unnasty’
प्	/p/	pahila	‘first’
फ्	/ph/	pherii	‘again’
ब्	/ba/	baliyo	‘strong’
भ्	/bh/	bhaisi	‘buffalo’
म्	/m/	masino	‘thin’
य्	/y/	yaak	‘yak’
र्	/r/	rangilo	‘colorful’
ल्	/l/	laamo	‘long’
व्	/w/	wokil	‘lawyer’
श्	/sha/	shakti	‘power’
स	/sa/	saphaa	‘clean’
ष	/Sha/	koSha	‘cell’
ह	/ha/	haamro	‘our’
क्ष	/ksha/	parikshya	‘examination’
त्र	/tr/	patrikaa	‘newspaper’
ज्ञ	/gyna/	gynaani	‘wise’
