

**SHIFTING THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN
NEPALESE SCHOOLS: AN ATTITUDINAL STUDY
OF ELT PRACTITIONERS**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education
In Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English**

**Submitted by
Shanker Dev Bist**

**Faculty of Education
Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal**

2015

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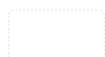
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RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCEPTANCE

This is to certify that **Mr. Shanker Dev Bist** has prepared this thesis entitled **Shifting the Medium of Instruction in Nepalese Schools: An Attitudinal Study of ELT Practitioners** under my guidance and supervision.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare, to the best of my knowledge, that this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research degree to any university.

Date:

.....

Shanker Dev Bist

DEDICATION

Dedicated

to

My mother who has devoted her life to make me what I am today.

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ABSTRACT

This research work entitled **Shifting the Medium of Instruction in Nepalese Schools: An Attitudinal Study of ELT Practitioners** has been carried out to find out ELT teachers' attitudes on shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English language in schools of Nepal. The researcher used non-random purposive sampling procedure to select forty ELT teachers teaching at different campuses in Kanchanpur district. Attitudinal data were elicited from them using an open-ended questionnaire. The data obtained were analyzed descriptively and interpreted using simple statistical tools. The study showed that most of the government-aided schools are not well-prepared to adopt English-medium instruction (EMI). It was also opined that there exist potential opportunities as well as threats of adopting EMI in Nepalese school education.

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an introductory chapter which includes background information of the topic, statement of the problem, objectives and significance of the study. Chapter two consists of review of related literature and conceptual framework of the research. Chapter three deals with methodology adopted to carry out the research. It consists of population, sample, sampling strategy, research tool, data collection procedure and so on. Chapter four encompasses analysis and interpretation of the results. Chapter five consists of the conclusion and implications of the study followed by references and appendix.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

%	:	Percentage
e.g.	:	For Example
EFL	:	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	:	English Language Teaching
EMI	:	English Medium Instruction
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
GON	:	Government of Nepal
MOE	:	Ministry of Education
MT	:	Mother Tongue
MTE	:	Mother Tongue Education
NEC	:	National Education Commission
NESP	:	National Education System Plan
NMI	:	Nepali Medium Instruction
NNEPC	:	Nepal National Education Planning Commission
No.	:	Number
P.	:	Page
TU	:	Tribhuvan University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The present study **Shifting the Medium of Instruction in Nepalese Schools: An Attitudinal Study of ELT Practitioners** revolves around the issues and debates regarding the medium of instruction. The key components of this part are described in the following way.

1.1 Background

Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic country. People belonging to different races and cultures dwell here. They speak varieties of languages, and through which they exhibit their own distinct identity and recognition. The first line of the national anthem "Of hundreds of flowers made we are Nepali . . ." glorifies the diversity ubiquitous from the high mountains to the plain terai of the country. The diversity is in terms of their languages, culture, race, occupation, life style and so on. Bhattarai and Gautam (2007) capture this scenario as:

Linguistically speaking, Nepal is considered one of the richest living laboratory, which has stored more than one hundred living languages distributed along the ecological-zones. (P.32)

The census report (2011) has shown that 123 languages are spoken within the territory of Nepal. They include Nepali, Maithili, Tamang, Newari, Limbu, Tharu, Gurung, Rai and so on. Taba (1922, as cited in Rai, 2005) describes the linguistic scenario of Nepal as:

The country of Nepal is world famous for several reasons. It is not only the fact that Nepal boasts of the highest mountains in the world, but Nepal also exhibits remarkable wealth of cultures and languages. Right

in the streets of Kathmandu the attentive observer can see a variety of costumes as well as hear a variety of languages spoken by visitors from the hills or from the terai. This is Nepal's unique heritage and wealth, a reason to be proud.

Among the languages of Nepal, Nepali is the national language which is mother tongue of nearly half of the total population of the country. It is the official language of the nation which is used in legal affairs, mass media, administration, and so on. It is remarkable aspect of the multilingual situation of Nepal that most of the Nepali citizens are at least bilingual speakers. Almost all of them can speak Nepali language. English language is also getting popularity among the people of new generation. It is highly favored in education, workplaces, technology and tourism. Thus, the conflict among the languages spoken in the country is transparent. This study revolves around such conflicts especially concerning the medium of instruction in schools of Nepal.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Recently, government of Nepal (GON) has proposed to shift the medium of instruction from Nepali to English in government-aided schools in a decade's time. And many of the schools and parents are happy with this decision. However, there exists a strong debate among the scholars on this matter. Some of them argue that EMI will help open the doors for more career opportunities and economic development, whereas others warn that it poses threats to the national languages and this will result serious problems in a long term. So, the problem of this research is issues of shifting the medium of instruction in Nepalese schools.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study had the following objectives:

- i. To find out the attitudes of ELT practitioners towards shifting the medium of instruction in government-aided schools of Nepal concerning the following points:
 - o Preparation of government-aided schools to adopt EMI
 - o Role of EMI in career gains and academic success
 - o Threats of EMI to national or local languages
- ii. To postulate some implications for policy as well as practice level.

1.4 Research Questions

The present research attempted to address these research questions:

- i. What are the attitudes of ELT practitioners towards shifting the medium of instruction in government-aided schools of Nepal?
- ii. How prepared are government-aided schools to adopt EMI?
- iii. What are opportunities as well as threats of EMI in Nepalese context?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is of national importance as it concerns with the issues of language planning in general, and medium of instruction in particular. It will be significant to policy makers, language planner, officials of MOE, administrators, teachers, researchers as well as students. As this study highlights the issues of shifting the medium of instruction, it will help policy makers formulate judicious policy regarding language teaching. Similarly, it will help teachers and administrators open their eyes and solve the problems of their schools. Moreover, students of different levels will gain insights about various matters such as language domination, language shift, language planning, linguistic imperialism and so on. It will also be significant for

textbook writers, researchers and speakers of different national languages. In this context, this study will be helpful to assess whether EMI is boon or bane for Nepalese context.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The present study had the following limitations:

- i. The study was limited to shifting the medium of instruction in government-aided schools of Nepal regarding these issues:
 - Preparation of government-aided schools to adopt EMI
 - Opportunities of EMI
 - Threats of EMI
- ii. There were 40 respondents from Kanchanpur district. They were ELT practitioners (teachers) teaching at different campuses of the district.
- iii. The research tool was an open-ended questionnaire.

1.7 Operational Definition of the Key Terms

The key terms used in the study are listed and defined as follows:

National Languages: All the native languages that are spoken in Nepal. They include not only so-called standard languages such as Nepali, but also all the minority languages which are spoken in different geographical parts of the country.

Unilingual policy: The system of giving official status and dominant role to only one language. By the term 'unilingual policy' the present study represents the MOE's proposal of adopting English as an exclusive medium of instruction in Nepalese schools.

Linguistic imperialism: Domination of one language over other languages in the multilingual speech situations. The term denotes domination of English over national languages of Nepal

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The literature related to the proposed study was reviewed under two broad headings.

2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature

A number of articles, books and writings have been inked by the supporters as well as opposers of EMI. They were reviewed in this section as follows:

2.1.1 Global Spread of English Language

The world is taken as a global village and English has gained the status of global language. World Englishes are different regional intralingual varieties of English spoken in different parts of the world. In fact, they have contributed a lot to maintain the global status of English language (Harmer, 2007).

Harmer (ibid.) says that the non-native speakers have outnumbered the native speakers of English, and World Englishes have become more popular than the so-called Standard English. The role and status of English have been flourishing in periphery-English countries (Kachru, 1983). Various high-functions are served by English, and it has gained more renown than any other language does in the world.

2.1.2 English Language Education in Nepal

The history of ELT in Nepal can be traced back to the establishment of Durbar School in 1854 A.D. by the then Prime Minister Junga Bahadur Rana after returning from his journey to Europe. Similarly, it was introduced in the higher education after the establishment of Tri-Chandra College in 1918 (Awasthi, 2003). Since then English language has been chosen as the most favored

foreign language in Nepalese education by various plans and policies implemented by government of Nepal.

2.1.2.1 English Language Education and Language Planning

In the history of Nepalese education a number of plans and policies have been made at different times. They all have discussed on and suggested the status of English language in Nepalese education differently.

Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) was formed in 1953 A.D. to forward suggestions for development of education in Nepal. The commission suggested that English needs to be started from grade four to Bachelor level as a compulsory subject. However, through its report in 1956, the commission recommended to remove English from the medium of instruction, which was in practice since Rana regime.

Similarly, National Education System Plan (NESP-1971) was also in favor of Nepali language as the medium of instruction. The plan brought a drastic change in education system by reducing the weightage of English courses (from 200 marks to 100 marks) set up by earlier systems. It also made English no longer a compulsory school subject but made a provision to opt for any of the United Nations languages (Bista, 2011).

After the restoration of democracy in 1990, Nepalese ethnic communities raised their voice for mother tongue education (MTE). The contemporary government implemented a language policy so as to encourage primary education in mother tongue as suggested by National Education Commission Report (NEC-1992). The commission also recommended Nepali as the language of instruction upto higher education level.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal-2007 asserts that all the languages spoken in Nepal are national languages. Nepali language has been regarded as the official language of the nation. But it is also acceptable to use other local languages in local bodies and offices.

2.1.2.2 Increased Use of English Language in Nepal

Unlike in the olden days when English language was limited to a specific purpose, it has entered into different domains of Nepalese lives. It is no longer restricted to classroom situation. It has now expanded its reach to various fields such as media, commerce, tourism, diplomacy and development sector. The craze for English education in Nepal has been mounting (Khati, 2013).

Increased use of English language in Nepal has been well depicted by Karn (2010):

The use of English has extended by leaps and bounds. English language institutes, English medium schools and colleges are mushrooming.

Some 50 regular publications, including dailies, weeklies and magazines, are regularly published in English. A large number of books, journals and periodicals are produced in English. Nepali literature—stories, essays and poems have been translated into English for wider readership . . . Until recently, English was taught as a foreign language. Nevertheless, its enormous demand and use have made it a second language... .

This sort of situation reflects that the significance of English has been mounting very rapidly. As English is the language of science and technology the youngsters use it massively in their daily lives. Cyber culture has fascinated them largely, so they use English for various social networks such as facebook, twitter and so on. Often, pidginized version of English and Nepali languages is popular nowadays. It is almost impossible to find any sector that is untouched by English language. Thus, it is obvious that English has widespread use in Nepal.

2.1.2.3 Language Shift in Multilingual Nepal

Language shift is a situation when the speakers of a language shift from using that language into using another one. This situation restricts the freedom of language choice, and the speakers' native language might have a threat. The speakers shift to another language to survive in the multilingual speech community. The speakers of minority languages tend to shift from their languages to any dominant and standard language because of political, economic, social and other kinds of factors and influences (Sharma, 2010).

As Nepal is a multilingual nation, more than 120 languages have been housed here. Among them Nepali is the dominant language and almost every one speaks it (Rai, 2005). It serves all the high-functions in the national context. In the past the nation followed unilingual policy, and as a result Nepali flourished whereas other languages suffered.

In the present situation, English language is expanding and strengthening its roots in Nepalese societies. People are highly motivated to learn and speak English for instrumental as well as integrative purposes. Apart from Nepali, English language is also getting dominant status in Nepal. As a result diglossia has appeared to be a feature of Nepalese societies. People use Nepali and English to serve high-functions where as their local languages are used for low-functions. Mostly, urban people are extremely fascinated towards English language. They are much concerned about their children's ability to speak English (Bhatta, 2012). They are found to speak in English with their children even in home environment. They do not have any emotional attachment with their own vernacular languages. They also feel ashamed of speaking their local languages in front of speakers of dominant languages. This kind of situation definitely leads to language shift, which then leads to language endangerment and language death in a long term (Holmes, 2008).

2.1.3 Nepalese Schools and Medium of Instruction

Since the genesis of formal education, medium of instruction has been one of the most debated issues in the history of Nepalese education. A number of plans and policies have been formed, and they all have forwarded various recommendations for appropriate medium of instruction in schools. There has always existed a systematic debate among different scholars on which medium to be chosen for instruction.

The Education Act – 1971 allows schools to adopt Nepali or English or both the languages as the medium of instruction without any legal restrictions. Based on this provision, there are two types of schools running in Nepal: English medium private schools (often known as boarding schools) and Nepali-medium government-funded schools. Most of the government-aided schools have adopted Nepali medium instruction (NMI) whereas English medium instruction (EMI) is regarded as the attribute of private schools. They teach all the subjects through EM except a subject, i.e. Nepali itself. On the contrary, almost all the government-aided schools use NM to teach all the subjects except English. So that the students from private schools are better in English in comparison to the students from government-aided schools. Bhatta (2012) mentions that the ability to speak English is regarded as one of the key indicators of good education by most of the parents. Due to this trend, there has been a rush into EM private schools.

Every year SLC examination creates a huge gap between the results of the two types of schools. Many of the students from government-aided schools fail in English subject. They too have difficulty in higher education due to weak proficiency in English. On the contrary, their counterparts from private schools do not seem to have such problems.

After realizing the aforementioned situations, the government of Nepal, Ministry of Education (MOE) has recently announced to make English the primary medium of instruction at all government-run schools in a decade's

time. According to them the vast majority of pass-outs from government-aided schools now struggling in higher education (and their careers) seem to believe their prospects would have been much brighter, had they been taught in English from early on.

The proposal of MOE has received mixed feedback. There are both supporters as well as opposers of the proposal. The formers support EMI as they think that it would help in career advancement, whereas the latter fear of long term effects of EMI on local languages of Nepal. Thus, this study aims to scrutinize the views of different concerned scholars and forward some better recommendations for resolution of the issues arisen.

2.1.4 Attitudinal Study in Education

Attitudinal study in education is carried out to elicit information from different people associated with the educational process in order to find out the way they view something related to education. It often has an evaluative purpose behind collecting and analyzing their attitudes, which helps illuminate important educational issues. Attitudinal study is commonly used in social sciences including education as a form of survey research. It is a general or superficial study of an issue or phenomenon.

Various sorts of research tools can be administered to elicit attitudinal data from the respondents. Among them the most common tools are questionnaire, interview, checklist and so on. The information collected from the informants is used for assessing different educational issues. The present study has involved an open-ended questionnaire to elicit attitudes of ELT practitioners (teachers) of Kanchanpur district. Their attitudes have helped illuminate the issues of shifting the medium of instruction in Nepalese schools.

2.1.5 English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Government-aided Schools: A Good Idea

The supporters of EMI in government schools argue that EMI is an individual as well as a national need. Karn (2009) emphasizes the need of EMI in Nepal through his article 'Englishization is a Bonus'. He argues that when the matter of nativization of the English language comes to the fore, linguistic and cultural imperialism seems to fade away gradually. The only need is to shape the English language in accordance with our own culture and soil. He further says that Englishization can prove advantageous if planned cautiously to meet national, linguistic and cultural needs. New English in Nepal can serve the function of expressing national identity if Nepalese culture is added to it. Hence, his ideas reflect the Czech proverb, "Learn a new language; get a new soul."

Likewise, Khanal (2013) argues that Nepali workers of today have been competing in the world marketplace for jobs. Hundreds of thousands of Nepalese leave each year to work overseas. As English is a dominant language spoken and understood in almost every country in the world, it has become a required qualification in getting jobs in the global context. Hence, EMI is desirable in our schools because being able to read, write and speak English has become a very important skill that a 'global worker' of today and the future needs to possess. Similarly, Graddol (2006) claims that the main reason for global language loss is not English language. English has the impact mainly on the status of other dominant national languages. This means, in our context, English language has threats on Nepali language, not on other minority languages. And it is Nepali language that threatens local languages, not English. In the same way, House (2001, as cited in Harmer, 2007) claims that the presence of English as a lingua franca actually provokes speakers of minority languages to protect and promote their own languages. Thus, it is not English but their negative attitude and lack of loyalty towards their local languages that threaten their local languages.

Moreover, the proponents of Content- Based Instruction (CBI) advocate in favor of EMI. They opine that if the subjects such as science, history, mathematics, etc. are taught through English medium, English will be simultaneously acquired as a bonus along with the content learnt. This view resembles the proverb, “Killing two birds with a single stone”.

2.1.6 English Medium Instruction: A Threat to National Languages

The opposers of EMI advocate in favor of national languages as the medium of instruction. In this regard, Mishra (2009, as cited in Poudel, 2010) argues:

When children are educated exclusively in a non-mother tongue language, they are prevented access to education because of the linguistic, pedagogical, and psychological barriers created. Thus, these exclusively non-mother tongue programmes violate the human right to education as expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child, among other human rights conventions.

This view reflects that children have the right to get education in their mother tongue (MT), and imposition of EMI violates the right. Similarly, Tumbahang (2014) mentions that children have basic interpersonal skills in their mother tongue. They can talk in their MT about the things which they can see and touch. If they are taught contextual things in their MT at school, they will be encouraged to learn. Then, they can learn subjects like geography, history, social studies and talk about abstract things like love, hate and honesty. They develop these abstract concepts on the basis of what they have already perceived in their MT. So, they develop cognitive academic proficiency in the MT if they are taught in it. They can easily transfer the abstract concepts to other languages like Nepali and English, and learn these languages faster.

Some other scholars view the expansion of English language as a form of linguistic imperialism. English as an imperialist language restricts the use of other national languages. Phyak (2010) argues:

. . . due to the socio-economic power ascribed to English, innocent children and parents are motivated to learn English while forgetting their own ethnolinguistic identity – which could have serious future economic and political implications. (p.6)

This view reflects the domination of English language over other languages, which leads to the danger of elimination of the dominated languages. The advocators of the ELT have developed some tenets of ELT which are regarded as the guidelines for every activity related to ELT. Phillipson (2007, P. 185) presents the key tenets as follows:

- i. English is best taught monolingually.
- ii. The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker.
- iii. The earlier English is taught, the better the results.
- iv. The more English is taught, the better the results.
- v. If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop.

While scrutinizing the tenets, they all are highly oriented to the promotion of English linguistic imperialism and elimination of the local languages (Sharma, 2010). The opposers of EMI opine that language reflects the culture and identity of its speech community. Nepal is a country characterized by linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity. Linguistic diversity is as essential to our multicultural nation as biodiversity is essential to the life on the planet. But the government of Nepal has proposed EMI in public schools. This kind of unilingual policy in education leads to the death of minority languages and their cultures which are dominated by the language and culture of powerful Anglophones. They also argue that it is not Nepali language that is responsible

for downgrading of standard of education in government schools, but it is the indifference and lack of devotion of teachers and concerned authorities towards their profession. Thus, they believe that national languages should not be punished, instead, effective initiatives should be inaugurated for their promotion and preservation.

2.2 Review of Empirical Literature

A number of researches have been carried out on using English language in education in EFL contexts. They have some connection with the proposed study. The review of the related empirical literature is as follows:

Ojha (2000) conducted a research on 'Language Planning in Education with Special Reference to ELT in Nepal'. He attempted to find out the position of English language in education planning and views of different education planners, head teachers and teachers towards it. His study found out that English was taken as a second and foreign language, and considered as the most important language for education in Nepal. However, the study did not encapsulate whether English language should be used as the medium of instruction or just a subject of study.

Timmis (2002) carried out a survey research in which the majority of the learners and the teachers from a large range of countries expressed a desire to speak English according to the native speaker norms, however, the survey also demonstrated a wish to retain the aspects of their own culture, such as accent, especially amongst Asian students. This study signifies that the participants wanted to learn English language without posing any threat to their native languages and identity.

Heugh et.al. (2006, as cited in Bhatta, 2012) carried out a research entitled 'Final Report Study on Medium of Instruction in Primary Level in Ethiopia'. The study found out that mother-tongue education is more effective in primary level and it suggested teachers not to use English as the medium of instruction.

Bhatta (2012) conducted a research on shifting the medium of instruction in schools. He used questionnaires and semi-interviews to obtain the data from 40 respondents. They were 4 administrators, 16 teachers and 20 students from 4 medium of instruction shifted government schools of Kathmandu district. He was interested to inquire the challenges the respondents faced after shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English. He found out that almost all of the respondents were happy with the new medium. However, his study could not encapsulate the issues of EMI related to the status of local languages. Hence, this proposed study revolves around the effects of EMI in career gains as well as identity loss.

Similarly, Khati (2013) conducted a research based on focus group discussion (FGD). The participants (EFL teachers) were included from five linguistic backgrounds: Magar, Newar, Hayu, Pahari and Tamang. Among the seven participants five were male and two were female. The researcher was interested to find out their attitudes regarding effects of English in creating more career and economic opportunities as well as their perception towards the development of their local languages. The three-four hour FGD was recorded and analyzed. Then, he found out that all the participants were highly attached to English to attain career gains and economically sound life. They were also found reluctant to use their local languages as they faced cultural inferiority among the speakers of dominant languages. At the same time, it was found out that these communities are losing their original linguistic flavor because of the hybrid use of local, Nepali and English languages.

The proposed study is different from the already existing researches in that this study attempts to find out attitudes of ELT practitioners regarding shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English in schools. The study inquires the validity of EMI which is proposed by MOE of Nepal.

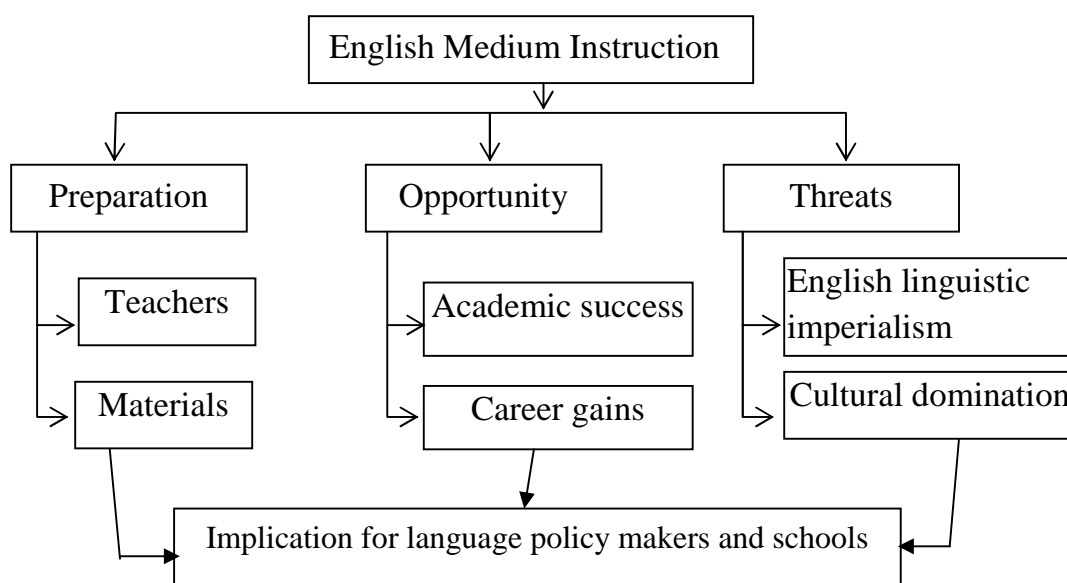
2.3 Implication of the Review for the Study

The review of theoretical literature has provided me with a theoretical background and has broadened my knowledge base in the research area. It has made me informed about the debates existed among various scholars on the medium of instruction in schools. Similarly, the review of empirical literature has helped me develop the conceptual framework and bring clarity and focus to the research problem. It has also helped me improve the methodology of the study as well as contextualize the findings.

To put in other words, the theories and researches reviewed above are relevant to the present study. They concern on the role and effect of English language in EFL context. Hence, they have helped me bring the issues of EMI to the fore.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is the representation of the understanding of the theories by the researcher and his own conceptualization of the relationship between different variables. After the intensive study of a number of theories and researches I have come up with a conceptual framework which can be presented diagrammatically as follows:



CHAPTER THREE

METHOD AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

3.1 Design and Method of the Study

A research design is a fixed set of procedures of conducting a research. There are several designs in practice. This study follows survey research design because it is suitable to elicit attitudinal data using this design.

Survey research is the most popular design of research in social science including in the field of education. Mr. Rosiers (1988, as cited in Ojha and Bhandari, 2013) defines survey research as:

Survey research in education involves the collection of information from members of a group of students, teachers or other persons associated with the educational process and the analysis of the information to illuminate important educational issues. Most surveys are based on samples of all specified target population . . . The research often wishes to generalize the results obtained from the samples to the population from which the samples were drawn.

This refers to the fact that a large population is covered using sampling. But the sample has to be representative so that the findings can be generalized to the entire population. Nunan (1992) mentions that survey is a cross-sectional study in the sense that data is collected at a single point of time to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes and events.

Nunan (ibid.) suggests the following eight-step procedure of survey research in a more comprehensive way. The present study has followed the same procedure so as to abide the spirit of survey research.

- Step 1: Define objectives
- Step 2: Identify target population
- Step 3: Literature review
- Step 4: Determine sample
- Step 5: Identify survey instruments
- Step 6: Design survey procedure
- Step 7: Identify analytical procedure
- Step 8: Determine reporting procedure

This method of research has enabled me to find out necessary information (data) required to finalize the study.

3.2 Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy

The study population for this study was ELT practitioners from Kanchanpur district. It was not possible for me to conduct the research with the universe. So that the study population was sampled into a smaller group. The sample had 40 respondents including ELT practitioners from the district.

I used non-random purposive sampling procedure to sample the study population because it was impractical for me to approach the entire study population. Instead, I had baseline information about the population and purposively tried to make the sample as representative as possible to it.

3.3 Study Areas

This study occupied a very specific area of shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English language in Nepalese schools. It concerned with preparation of government-aided schools to adopt English-medium instruction. It equally focused on potential opportunities as well as threats of shifting the medium of instruction in the schools.

3.4 Data Collection Tools and Techniques

An open-ended questionnaire was used to elicit attitudinal information from the respondents regarding the research problem. I made direct contact with the respondents for collecting the data.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

I followed the following stepwise procedure for data collection.

- I went to the field and contacted the respondents.
- After establishing rapport with them, I familiarized them with the research problem and purpose of the study.
- Then, I distributed the research tools to them.
- Next day, I collected the research tools from them.

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure

The systematically collected data were analyzed, interpreted and presented using appropriate statistical tools, tables, diagrams and illustrations.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

In this chapter the data obtained have been analyzed properly and the results have been interpreted in a comprehensive way. The chapter also encompasses summary of findings in the latter part.

4.1 Analysis of Data and Interpretation of the Results

In this section the systematically collected data were analyzed and interpreted via appropriate tools to fulfill the aforementioned objectives. The attitudes of ELT practitioners (teachers) have been presented and analyzed here.

The researcher carried out the analysis under the following headings:

- Preparation of Government-aided Schools
- Opportunities of English Medium Instruction (EMI)
- Threats of English Medium Instruction (EMI)

Altogether 13 questions were asked to collect attitudinal data from 40 ELT practitioners of Kanchanpur district to highlight various issues regarding shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English language in Nepalese schools.

4.1.1 Preparation of Government-aided Schools

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of four questions related to preparation of government-aided schools in terms of teachers and materials to adopt EMI in the schools. The responses obtained have been analyzed in the following way under separate sub-headings.

4.1.1.1 Readiness of Government-aided Schools to Adopt EMI

Regarding preparation of government-aided schools all the respondents responded that government-aided schools are not well-prepared or ready to adopt EMI. The teachers teaching subjects other than English lack competence and performance in using English-medium texts. So that it was expressed that enough homework has to be done before implementing or adopting EMI in the schools.

4.1.1.2 Difference Between Teachers of EM Private Schools and NM Government-aided Schools

Regarding difference between teachers of English-medium private schools and Nepali-medium government-aided schools there were found varieties of views. Most of the respondents inked that government-aided school teachers receive handsome salary, comparatively better facilities and trainings, however, they are not industrious and devoted unlike their counterparts from private schools. Some respondents further opined that permanency of job is the main factor which has made government teachers reluctant towards their profession.

4.1.1.3 Medium of Instruction at Primary Level

Regarding medium of instruction at primary level, three groups of respondents were found. Twelve respondents favored to implement EMI from earlier grades. Their common attitudes have been listed here:

- *Second language learning takes place successfully in early age. So that EMI should be used from elementary levels.*
- *All the subjects should be taught in English medium so that the students can have plenty of exposure on English language.*
- *English speaking environment should be created in the schools.*

On the contrary, other 12 respondents argued for mother-tongue education (MTE) at primary level. Some of their representative opinions are as follows:

- *MTE is desirable in primary level because the students can comprehend and learn the things which they are taught through their MT.*
- *The beginners develop cognitive academic proficiency in the MT if they are taught in it. And they can easily learn and transfer the abstract concepts to other languages like Nepali and English, and learn these languages faster.*
- *MTE helps to preserve local languages and promote ethnolinguistic identity of the students.*

And, remaining 16 respondents favored to adopt bilingual education from earlier grades. They shared the following attitudes:

- *Bilingual method is the most desirable method in primary education in the present context of Nepal.*
- *The subjects like English, Mathematics and Science can be taught using bilingual method and other subjects can be taught through MT. This will help enhance students' cognitive development, enhance their command in English, and subsequently minimize domination of English over our national languages.*

Their views can be displayed diagrammatically as follows:

Table No. 1
Medium of Instruction at Primary Level

S.N.	Medium of instruction at primary level	No. of respondents
1	English medium instruction	12
2	Mother tongue education	12
3	Bilingual education	16
	Total	40

4.1.1.4 Suggestion to Newly Appointed Permanent Teachers

All the respondents suggested the newly-appointed permanent teachers to strive to be industrious, devoted as well as innovative so that they can help enhance educational status of government -aided schools to the height.

4.1.2 Opportunities of English Medium Instruction

This section consisted of five questions regarding opportunities of EMI for Nepalese students in their academic success and career enhancement. The responses obtained have been analyzed below under separate sub-headings.

4.1.2.1 Facilitation of EMI in Higher Education and Careers

Regarding the query whether EMI facilitates our students in their higher education and in achieving more career opportunities most of the respondents responded that students having good command in English language are likely to perform better in higher education and hold better careers. They further opined that English is not just another language we can learn, but also an important tool that can empower our students in the global job market. On the other hand, the remaining respondents were in favor of providing our students with technical and agricultural education. However, they believed that English language plays facilitating role in their education and careers. Thus it is obvious that EMI facilitates in higher education and in achieving attractive careers.

4.1.2.2 Better Results of Private School Students

Regarding high grades and better results of private school students, a group of 16 respondents opined that it is English language environment that accelerates the grades of private school students. Here are some of their common responses:

- *Students having good proficiency in English are likely to perform better in their study.*
- *English language competence facilitates the students in their study as it improves their comprehension skills and widen horizon of their knowledge.*
- *Students can have access to varieties of texts.*

But other 20 respondents agreed upon that it is not English language but devotion of teachers, carefulness of guardians and struggle of the students that are responsible for high grades and better results of private school students. Some other respondents argued that private school students are conditioned to rote-learning and they write what they parrot in examination. They further opined that such students do not have behavioral knowledge at all. Their views have been presented as follows:

Table No. 2
Reasons for High Grades of Private School Students

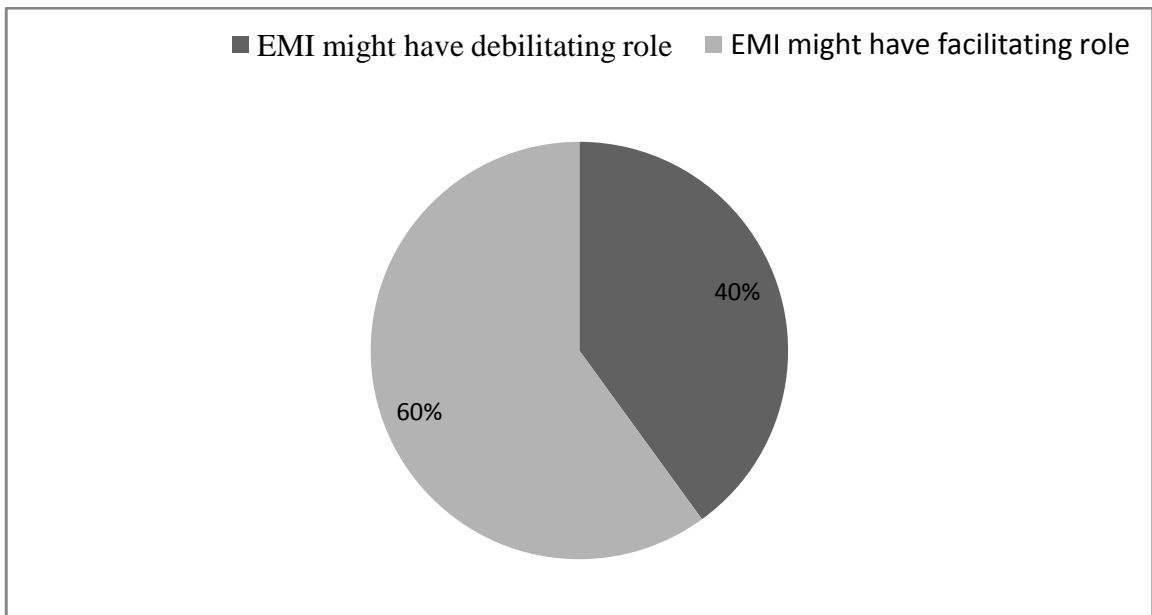
S.N.	Reasons for high grades of private school students	No. of respondents
1	English language environment	16
2	Devotion of teachers, carefulness of guardians and struggle of students	20
3	Rote-learning	4
	Total	40

4.1.2.3 Roles of EMI in Students' Academic Success

Regarding roles of EMI in students' academic success there is a mixture of opinions. Most of the respondents responded that a lot of textbooks and reference materials are printed in English. Thus it was argued that the students can have access to a huge resource of learning materials via English language,

so that they can easily enhance their academic success. On the contrary, the remaining respondents pointed out that sometimes lack of competence in English hinders the students' further learning. According to them, students having low competence in English may not participate in interaction and learning activities due to fear of committing errors. Their views have been displayed in the following figure:

Figure No. 1
Role of EMI in Students' Academic Success



4.1.2.4 EMI and Problems of Government-aided schools

Regarding the query whether EMI helps to eliminate the problems of government-aided schools, 32 respondents responded that the medium used has a trivial role to degrade the quality of education in government-aided schools. They further argued that complete restructure of teaching learning system is mandatory in the schools for the desired results. And, 8 respondents opined that EMI is one of the several factors that may determine the quality of students as English language unlocks the window to view the entire world.

4.1.2.5 NMI and Failure of Government-aided School Students

Regarding failure of most of government-aided school students in SLC examination, most of the respondents did not blame Nepali-medium instruction for such result. They pointed out the following factors that are responsible for such result:

- *Irregular classes*
- *Insincere teachers*
- *Traditional teaching methods*
- *Large classes*
- *Poor classroom management*
- *Reluctance of guardians and students*
- *Unpunctual teachers and students*
- *Corrupt administrators*

Some other respondents further opined that English language makes it easier to study the subjects like Science, Mathematics and Computer Science. So, Nepali language sometimes creates difficulty in learning such subjects. But Nepali language is not the mere cause of downgrading of government-aided schools, they believed. Thus we cannot say that Nepali medium instruction is problematic. There are a lot of other problems in the government-aided schools indeed.

4.1.3 Threats of English Medium Instruction

This section of the questionnaire consisted of four questions related to threats of EMI to local or national languages of Nepal. The responses to the questions have been analyzed separately in the following way.

4.1.3.1 Suitable Medium of Instruction for Nepalese Schools

There were found diverse responses regarding the language to be used as the medium of instruction in Nepalese schools. A group of 12 respondents argued

that since good command in English makes students more competent in their higher education and careers, English should be the medium of instruction in all schools of Nepal. But another group of 12 respondents opined that English medium should not be a compulsion. According to them, content is more important than the medium of instruction. They believed that if students have good grasp of subject matter, the medium of instruction is irrelevant. Still another group of the respondents argued that bilingual method is suitable in primary level. In upper grades English-medium can be used to teach the subjects like Science, Mathematics, English and Computer Science. And, they further opined that all the subjects except language-subjects (e.g. Nepali) should be taught through English medium in higher education levels.

4.1.3.2 Threats of EMI to National Languages

Regarding threats of EMI, 16 respondents expressed their views focusing on threatening nature of English language. Some of their common views are as follow:

- *English language is flourishing as the most fascinating and advantageous language among indigenous language speakers in Nepal.*
- *Exclusive use of EMI might diminish roles of local languages and pose threats to them.*
- *English language carries ideologies of its native speakers. So that exclusive use of EMI bears potential threats to our national languages.*

On the contrary, the other 24 respondents agreed upon the following points:

- *English language should be used without forgetting our particularities.*
- *EMI might be productive if we use it just for widening our access to knowledge without sacrificing our identity and heritage.*
- *EMI is desirable and so is proper language planning.*

4.1.3.3 EMI and English Linguistic Imperialism and Cultural Domination

Regarding English linguistic imperialism and cultural domination, 16 respondents responded that when English is introduced to academia, other national languages are caused to vanish from curricula of the schools. According to them such situation promotes marginalization of national languages, and as a result English linguistic imperialism and cultural domination flourish. On the contrary, 24 respondents opined that English itself is not a killer language, rather facilitates the native speakers to signal their identity through English. According to them, blind devotion to English and negligence towards preservation of the national languages may contribute to English linguistic imperialism and cultural domination in a long term. They further suggested that EMI should be used only to satisfy the needs of our students. Their views have been displayed in the following figure.

Figure No. 2
Results of Exclusive Use of English Language



4.1.3.4 EMI and National Particularities

All the respondents agreed upon that English language should be used without posing any threats to the linguistic and cultural diversity of Nepal. Learning English should address our local and national particularities. They all opined that English has become the most important language in the world, and deprived of which the educational world will feel underprivileged indeed. And, it was also suggested that English should be taken just as a medium for learning various subjects and should not be promoted as a killer language.

4.2 Summary of Findings

The present research has attempted to highlight the issues of shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English language in the schools of Nepal. Attitudinal data were collected from a sample of ELT practitioners (teachers) of Kanchanpur district, regarding the issues. They were asked altogether 13 questions which were categorized under these 3 categories:

- Preparation of government-aided schools
- Opportunities of EMI
- Threats of EMI

Regarding the first category it was responded that government-aided schools are not well-prepared yet to adopt EMI. The respondents also pointed out various opportunities as well as threats of EMI which have to be concerned carefully before shifting the medium of instruction in the schools.

After the rigorous analysis and interpretation of the attitudinal data these findings have been listed:

- I. It was told that most of the government-aided schools are not still well-prepared to adopt EMI.

- II. Permanency of job was mentioned to be a major factor which creates comfort to government-aided school teachers and also prevents them from being industrious, devoted and professional teachers.
- III. Thirty percent of the respondents opined to use EMI from earlier grades. Similarly, another 30% of them favored mother-tongue education, and still another 40% favored bilingual education in primary level.
- IV. It was responded that the study of the subjects like Science, Mathematics and Computer Science is more fruitful through English medium than through Nepali medium.
- V. It was opined that the newly-appointed teachers can and need to enhance the quality of education in government-aided schools.
- VI. It was opined that good command of English language has facilitating role in higher education and in achieving attractive careers.
- VII. Majority of the respondents opined that students' academic success will mount to the height if they delve in the rich sources available in English language.
- VIII. It was also responded that Nepali medium is not the sole factor to downgrade the educational status of government-aided schools, it might be a trivial one. There are lots of other major factors indeed.
- IX. There were found diverse attitudes regarding the most suitable medium of instruction in school level.
- X. Forty percent of the respondents were found to fear of dominating and imperialist nature of English language, whereas remaining 60% of them opined not to view English as a killer language. They further suggested to use it merely as a medium for learning and satisfying our needs.
- XI. All the respondents agreed upon that local and national particularities should be promoted and EMI should be boon for Nepalese education.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of the results, conclusion of the research has been made and some recommendations have been forwarded in this section.

5.1 Conclusion of the Research

On the basis of the analysis and findings of the research, the following conclusion has been made.

Shifting the medium of instruction from Nepali to English language in Nepalese schools has a lot of issues that need to be resolved properly. Much concern has to be paid to the preparation of government-aided schools to adopt English medium instruction. Enough homework has to be done before putting the plan into practice.

As English is one of the most widely used languages in the world, it is beneficial for our students to have good command on it. English language will help them in their higher study and careers. English has the treasure of knowledge available in the world. So it is desirable to use EMI in the schools of Nepal.

EMI can pose threats to our national or local languages if it is used exclusively without appropriate language planning. Hence blind devotion to English language should be restricted so that we can preserve our languages, cultures and identity indeed. This is the time we need to use English to promote our particularities. Thus, English should be promoted as an additional language without diminishing the role and status of the local languages.

5.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings derived from the analysis and interpretation of the data, following recommendations have been forwarded for various levels.

5.2.1 Policy Related Recommendations

- I. Ministry of Education (MOE) should observe the condition of government-aided schools before putting the plan of shifting the medium of instruction into practice. A lot of reformation is needed there.
- II. There should be careful and judicious language planning in our country. No language should threaten other languages.
- III. English medium can be used to teach the subjects like English, Science, Mathematics and Computer Science. And, other subjects like Social Studies, Education, History, Health Education and Population Education can be taught through Nepali medium.
- IV. As English language is the gateway to world-knowledge and good careers, students need to be encouraged to learn it from early grades. At the same time, the role of national languages should not be diminished. They should be well-preserved for coming generations.

5.2.2 Practice Related Recommendations

- I. Government-aided school teachers need to be industrious, responsible, punctual and devoted to their profession. They are the ones who can enhance the educational status of their schools indeed. They need to open their eyes and understand this.
- II. Enough teaching materials should be managed by school administration for successful teaching and learning.

- III. Newly-appointed teachers are suggested to be real teachers. They should be proud of their profession and keep the motto of quality education in their heart and mind.
- IV. Complete restructuring of teaching learning system is mandatory in government-aided schools for the desired results.

5.2.3 Further Research Related Recommendations

The present research was unable to occupy several areas related to the topic. The findings of the study might not be generalized to all contexts as it has a lot of limitations. It has limitations in terms of study population, sample, data collection tool and so on. So further researches can be conducted concerning the limitations of this research. Here, some of other related areas are recommended for further research.

- I. Appropriate age at which EMI starts
- II. Attitudes of administrators and parents towards shifting the medium of instruction in schools
- III. A study on bilingual education at primary level
- IV. A study on EMI qualified teachers in schools of Nepal

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Appendix

(Open-ended Questionnaire)

Dear informant,

I am conducting the research entitled **Issues of shifting the medium of instruction in Nepalese schools: An attitudinal study of ELT practitioners** under the supervision of Ms. Madhu Neupane, Lecturer, Department of English Education, TU, Kirtipur. So, I humbly request you to go through the questions and provide reliable and genuine information. I sincerely assure you that your responses will remain confidential and be used only for the research purpose. And, I will be indebted to you for your invaluable contribution in completing the research work.

Researcher

Shanker Dev Bist

A. Personal Information of the informant

Name:

Profession:

Level:

Institution:

Mother tongue:

B. Please give your views for these queries on the sheets attached to the questionnaire.

I. Preparation of Government-aided Schools

1. Recently, Ministry of Education (MOE) of Nepal has declared to adopt English Medium Instruction (EMI) in government-run schools in a decade's time. Do you think the schools are well-prepared to adopt EMI?
2. What differences do you think are there between the teachers of EM private schools and NM government schools?



3. What is your view regarding mother-tongue education in primary level?
4. Recently, thousands of candidates have succeeded on the examination held by Teacher-Service Commission (TSC). They are going to be recruited permanently in government schools. How do you suggest them to contribute for the progression of the schools?

II. Opportunities of English Medium Instruction

1. Do you think EMI will facilitate our students in higher education and achieving more career opportunities?
2. English medium private schools are said to be better places for achieving high grades. What reasons do you think are there for such achievement?
3. What roles do you think EMI will play in the students' academic success?
4. Do you think using English Medium Instruction (EMI) will help eliminate the problems of government schools? Give reasons to support your view.
5. Many of the students from government schools are failing the SLC examination. Do you think this is due to Nepali medium instruction (NMI) or something else?

III. Threats of English medium instruction

1. Which language do you think is the most suitable for medium of instruction in Nepalese schools? (Nepali, English, Mother tongue or any other)
2. Does exclusive use of EMI pose any threats to the national (local) languages of Nepal?
3. Will exclusive use of EMI result English linguistic imperialism and cultural domination in a long-term?
4. How can we teach English while addressing linguistic and cultural diversity of Nepal?

