

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study entitled “Beliefs of English Teachers in Using Pair Work” is a survey research which deals with teacher’s view point towards the use of pair work technique in English language classroom. This section consists of the general background, review of the related literature, objectives of the study and significance of the study.

1.1 General Background

Teaching is a complex process which can be conceptualized in a number of different ways. Traditionally, language teaching has been described in terms of what teachers do: i.e., in terms of the action and behaviours which teachers carryout in the classroom and effects of these action and behaviors on the learners. Beliefs are important concepts in understanding teachers’ thought processes, instructional practices, and change, and learning to teach.

Teaching English means teaching different levels, skills and aspects of the English language. Traditionally, teachers were taken as the source of knowledge and the students as a creature having empty mind. Students did not have a chance to interact with each other. Teachers did not use learner centered techniques such as: discovery, dramatization, individual work, group work, pair work and role play while teaching English.

However, in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) over the last few decades a gradual but significant change has taken place. As a result, less emphasis is given on teachers and great emphasis on learners and learning. Accepting new ways of teaching methods and techniques in language teaching and learning requires a fundamental change in beliefs from teachers about how languages are learned. In language learning, beliefs and attitudes are shaped not

only by the educational environment but also by social values. Language teachers use many different kinds of approaches to teach depending upon their assumptions and beliefs about how students learn and on the kind of methodology that they believe best supports this learning process.

Regarding teacher's beliefs, Richards et al. (1991, as cited in Richards and Lockhart 2010, p.37) in their study of teachers' belief found that Hong Kong teachers of English believed their primary role in the classroom was to:

- Provide useful learning experiences,
- Provide a model of correct language use,
- Answer learners' questions and,
- Correct learners' errors.

1.1.1 Beliefs: A Short Introduction

Different people use the word belief in different ways. Simply, 'belief' refers to a perception or attitude towards a particular thing or object. Beliefs are the permeable and dynamic structures that act as a filter through which new knowledge and experience are screened for meaning. Belief system therefore, serves as a personal guide by helping individuals define and understand the world and themselves. Beliefs not only affect how people behave but what they perceive in their environment.

The dictionary meaning of the word 'belief' is 'the acceptance of a fact, opinion or assertion as real or true, without immediate personal knowledge, reliance upon word or testimony. . .'. It is also called assumptions, conceptions, personal theories etc. 'Belief' is the psychological state in which an individual holds a proposition/premise to be true. Beliefs not only affect how people behave but also reflect what they perceive. Thus, belief plays a unique role to develop positive attitude towards something. When people believe something is

true, they perceive information supporting that belief which alters expectation. People perceive what they expect to perceive.

Wenden (1998, p. 517) says “beliefs are viewed as individuals’ subjective understandings, idiosyncratic truths, which are often value related and characterized by a commitment not present in knowledge...”. Pajares (1992, p. 307) also says:

Defining belief is at best a game of player choice. They travel in disguise and often underlies-attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perception, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, action strategies, rules of practices, practical principles, repertoires of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in the literature.

To sum up, ‘belief’ refers to a perception or attitude towards a particular thing or object. It is also the conceptual system of attitudes, values, ideologies and personal theories of understanding. These things have formed impressions about themselves, their abilities and about the nature of knowledge, how learning takes place. It plays an important role in many aspects of teaching, as well as in life. So the teachers also have their own belief towards teaching, learning, language and learners.

1.1.1.1 Teacher’s Belief

Beliefs are important concepts in understanding teacher’s thought processes, instructional practices, change and learning to teach. Teacher beliefs can be represented as a set of conceptual representations which store general knowledge of objects, people, events and their characteristic relationship. Teacher beliefs are related to student learning through some sequences of events, mediated by the teacher that happen in the classroom.

Teaching is a very personal activity. Individual teachers bring to teach very different beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes effective teaching. ‘Teachers beliefs and educational research’ concluded that teacher’s beliefs had a greater influence than teachers’ knowledge on the way they planned their lessons, on the kinds of decisions they made and on their general classroom practice. (Pajares, 1992).

The term teachers’ belief refers to teachers’ pedagogic beliefs, or those beliefs of relevance to an individual teaching. The areas most commonly explored are teacher’s beliefs about teaching, learning and learners, subject matter and the role of the teachers.

Teachers’ belief systems are founded on the goals, values and beliefs teachers hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, their understanding of the system in which they work and their roles within it. It is necessary to examine the beliefs and thinking process which underlie teacher classroom action to understand how teachers deal with these dimensions of teaching. (Richards and Lockhart, 2010, p. 30).

Teachers’ beliefs bring new goals, attitudes and decisions in teaching. That influence their teaching experiences and facilitate the learners to alter their beliefs. It is important for teachers to become aware of their own and their learners’ beliefs during teaching and learning process. It can be argued that without sensitizing teachers to their own beliefs, there is no change in teaching and learning process. So, teachers’ beliefs play a central role in the process of teacher development as well.

1.1.1.2 Characteristics of Teachers’ Belief

Belief is the conceptual system of attitudes, values, ideologies and personal theories of understanding. A teacher brings to teach very different beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes effective teaching. Richardson (1996, p. 102) discusses the features of teachers’ belief as follows:

- i. They are powerfully influenced (positively or negatively) by teachers' own experiences,
- ii. They act as a filter through which teachers interpret new information and experience,
- iii. They can exert a persistent long-term influence on teachers' instructional practices,
- iv. They are at the same time, not always reflected in what teachers do in the classroom,
- v. They have a powerful effect on teachers' pedagogical decisions,
- vi. They strongly influence what and how teachers learn during language teacher education.
- vii. They can be deep-rooted and resistant to change.

When we analyze the above-mentioned characteristics of teachers' beliefs, we can summarize that they have strong influence on the instructional practices of the teachers. On the basis of these beliefs the teachers often adopt pedagogical decisions. These beliefs leave long lasting effects in the minds of the teachers which cannot be altered easily. These beliefs function as filter with the help of which the teachers perceive and interpret new information encountered by them. The teachers' beliefs do not reveal in the behaviour of the teachers.

1.1.1.3 Sources of Teachers' Belief

Research on teachers' belief system suggests that they are derived from a number of different sources. Kindsvatter et al. (1988 as cited in Richards and Lockhart, 2010, p. 30) present the following sources:

a. Their own experience as language learners:

All teachers were once students, and their beliefs about teaching are often a reflection of how they themselves were taught.

b. Experience of what works best

For many teachers experience is the primary source of beliefs about teaching . A teacher may have found that some teaching strategies work well and some do not.

c. Established practice:

Within a school, an institution, or a school district, certain teaching styles, methods, approach is dominant that is established through practice in the learning environment.

d. Personality factors:

It plays an unique role to construct beliefs about language teaching and learning. Personal factor deal with the individual characteristics and behavior.

e. Educationally based or research based principles:

Teachers may draw on their understanding of a learning principle in psychology, SLA or education and try to apply it in the classroom.

f. Principles derived from an approach or method:

Teachers may believe in the effectiveness of a particular approach or method of teaching and try to implement it in the classroom.

g. Personal life experience:

Teachers have their own personal life experiences and they try to apply it in the classroom.

1.1.1.4 Categories of Teachers' Beliefs

The term category refers to the class or division of something. Here, categories of teachers' belief deal with teachers' perceptions towards factors which are

related to teaching English language. Regarding this Richards and Lockhart, (2010, p. 32-40) suggest five categories of the teachers' belief which are summarized in the following way:

i. Beliefs About English

English refers to different things to different people. Some believe that English means literature. For others it is just a language of English speaking world. Some view it as a language of colonialism whereas others opine that it is a means of getting job and earning money. These variety of notions influence the style of teaching English. The English language has established itself as the most influential global language of communication in different countries around the world. It is one of the major language taught in schools and universities. Most countries have adopted either British or the North American variety of English as a target for teaching and learning purposes. But research studies have shown that there are new and legitimate varieties of Englishes such as Singaporean, Indian, South African and so on.

Richards and Lockhart (2010) say:

Although teachers' beliefs about English may sometimes represent stereotypical impressions, these beliefs do nevertheless express realities which may influence classroom practices. In the study of the beliefs of English language teachers in Hong Kong whose first language was Chinese felt that English has more grammar rules than Chinese, although they did not feel English had a larger vocabulary or was more flexible in terms of communication. (p. 32)

The study reflects the beliefs of Chinese teachers teaching English as foreign language that English language is composed of complex grammatical structures and it often strikes Chinese learners as being illogical language.

ii. Beliefs About Learning

Learning consists of acquiring, organizing principles through experiences. Teachers' belief about learning may be based on their training, their teaching experience or may go back to their own experience as language learners. Teachers' belief about how languages are learned affect their approach to the language. These beliefs come from how they were taught, their training and their experiences as teachers. In the classroom, both teachers and learners bring experience that influences their perceptions.

Brindley (1984, as cited in Richards and Lockhart, 2010, p. 34.) points out that teachers who favour a "learner-centered" view of learning, would prefer particular variety of assumptions such as:

- Learning consists of acquiring, organizing principles through encountering experience.
- The teacher is a resource person who provides language input for the learners to work on.
- It is the role of the teacher to assist learners to become self-directed by providing access to language data through such activities as active listening, role play and interaction with native speakers.

iii. Beliefs About Teaching

Teachers' beliefs about how they should teach are based not only on their training but also their personalities. So teaching is a very personal activity and it is not surprising that the individual teachers bring to teaching very different beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes effective teaching. Different teachers follow the same teaching situation in different ways because of their beliefs and assumptions.

Richards et al. (1991, as cited in Richards and Lockhart, 2010, p. 36) in their study of teachers' beliefs, found that Hong Kong teachers of English believed their main role as an English teacher was to:

- help students discover effective approaches to learning.
- pass on knowledge and skills to their pupils.
- adopt teaching approaches to match their students' needs.

iv. Beliefs About the Program and the Curriculum

Curriculum is defined as all the planned learning opportunities offered to learners by the education institution and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented. Some others define it as the programs of studies. Any language teaching program reflects both the culture of the institution as well as collective decision and beliefs of individual teachers. Different programs have different beliefs about the curriculum processes.

Butter and Bartlett (1986, as cited in Richards and Lockhart 2010, p. 38) Australian Migrant Education Program has the following beliefs about the curriculum:

- decentralized curriculum planning
- a need based curriculum
- a range of teaching methodologies
- learner based classroom
- autonomous learning
- authentic materials

From the above discussion, we come to a conclusion that the Australian Migrant Education Programme focuses on some certain philosophy and institutional culture to address the learners' needs and autonomy.

v. Beliefs About Language Teaching as a Profession

The profession is a kind of occupation which can only be practiced after rigorous academic study. Language teaching is not universally regarded as a profession – i.e. as having unique characteristics, as requiring specialized skills and training, as being a life long and valued career choice, and as offering a high level of job satisfaction. Richards and Lockhart (2010, p. 40) say “The degree to which individual teachers have a sense of professionalism about their work depends upon their own working conditions, their personal goals and attitudes, and the career prospects available to language teachers in their community.”

Some teachers have a distinct view of their profession as a career with goals and career opportunities. Other may not have such clearly established perceptions of their roles in teaching.

1.1.2 Techniques of Language Teaching

Approach, method and technique are widely used terms in the field of language teaching. Approach is theoretical position and belief about the nature of language. Method is an overall plan for accomplishing linguistic objectives. But the technique is the activity which is implemented in the classroom. It refers to the classroom procedures/activities that we implement to carryout certain teaching task effectively.

Anthony (1963) defines technique as, “A technique is implementation that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Techniques must be consistent with method and therefore in harmony with an approach”, (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2010, p. 19). Thus, a technique is actually applied in the classroom. It is also called implementation. The appropriate selection of technique is determined on the basis of the subject matter, teacher’s

experiences, teachers' belief, composition of the class, availability of the teaching materials and so on.

The techniques to teach language are categorized into two headings:

i. Teacher Centered Techniques

The techniques where the teacher plays dominant role in teaching learning activities are teacher-centered techniques. Teacher is authority in the classroom. Students' interests and activities are given less importance than the subject matter and educational requirements. This technique focuses on product rather than the process.

Some of the widely used teacher-centered techniques are as follows:

- Lecture
- Explanation
- Illustration
- Demonstration

ii. Learner Centered Techniques

The learner-centered techniques tend to view language learning as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of knowledge. Learner-centered technique came into existence as a reaction against Cognivists' model of teaching which is teacher centered technique. In this regard, Nunan (1992) says:

The relative inflexibility of centralized curricula and a change in educational thinking which paid more attention to the learner and led the school based curriculum development movement. The newly developed curricula were more focused on catering the needs of the learners and

the learner centered movement in ESL/EFL ultimately led the birth of learner-centered teaching techniques (p. 21).

There are various learner-centered techniques. Some of them are as follows:

- Individual work
- Pair work
- Group work
- Project work
- Role play
- Problem solving
- Discovery technique
- Language game etc.

Though, there are many learner-centered teaching techniques used in teaching learning activities, our main concern is only pair work technique in our research work.

1.1.3 Pair Work Technique

Pair work is one of the important learner-centered techniques which is often used in a communicative classroom. In this technique learners involve in learning activities in pair. Pair work makes students engage in interaction to each other. Through interacting with other students in pair, students can be given the opportunity to draw on their linguistic resources in a non-threatening situation and use them to complete different kinds of tasks. In this regard, Hatch (1978) says, “Through pair work, one learns how to do conversation, one learns how to interact verbally, out of this interaction syntactic structures are developed” (as cited in Richard and Lockhart, 2010, p. 152). Pair work allows the students to use language and also encourages students’ co-operation which is itself important for the classroom atmosphere. Harmer (2008, p. 244) opines that pair work allows the students to use language and also encourages students

cooperation which is itself important for the atmosphere of the class and for the motivation it gives to learning with others.

In pair work technique students have a chance to work with and learn from their peers, struggling students can learn from more capable peers. It is especially useful for students who prefer interpersonal learning settings. It offers intensive, realistic practice in speaking and listening and it promotes a friendly classroom ambiance that is conducive to learn.

Cross (1992) says:

Pair work is a management task for developing communicative ability.

During pair work the teacher has two roles one is to act as a monitor listening to a few of the pairs and the second role is that of resource person, providing help, information and feedback upon request (p. 49).

While introducing the task as pair work, the students need to be given clear instruction. They should be informed that their role would be changed so that each would practice the target language form. Here, the students can work in pairs doing drills, or asking and answering questions using language that has just been presented while conducting activities using pair work technique. Harmer (1998) asserts that the teacher should be able to act as an assessor, promoter or resource person (p. 224).

The use of carefully designed pair work tasks can help learners obtain “Comprehensible input” i.e. language which is at an appropriate level facilitates acquisition. In this regard, Long (1983) and Krashen (1985) have argue that when second language learners interact focusing on meaningful tasks or exchanges of information, then each learner receives:

- Comprehensible input from his/her conversational partner;
- A chance to ask for clarification as well as feedback on his/her output;

- Adjustment of the input to match the level of the learners' comprehension;
- The opportunity to develop new structures and conversational patterns through this process of interaction.

Pair work, then is a way of increasing students' participation and language use. It can be used for an enormous number of activities whether speaking, writing or reading. It encourages communicative efficiency. A dull exercise can be made fun and turned into real communication by putting two heads together on the task. It gives the students opportunity to speak. All the students are involved in activity. It encourages students to help each other and share their ideas.

1.1.3.1 Steps in Using Pair Work

Pair work is one of the important learner centered techniques which is often used in a communicative classroom. According to Cross (1992, p. 50-51), the steps to be used in pair work are as follows:

Step one: Preparation

Teacher has to prepare students carefully, by means of presentation and practice, so that everyone is confident in using the language. Leave any needed visual support on the chalk board.

Step Two: Teacher-students Model

The teacher calls one student and has to take one role himself and give another role to the students which make all the students familiar with what they have to do. Here, the teacher and the students become pair.

Step Three: Public Pair

The teacher has to designate two students who are sitting well apart, that makes them speak loudly enough for all to hear.

Step four: Timing

In this step the teacher tells the students the time assigned for the pair work that should be of generally two or three minutes.

Step Five: Private Pairs

This is sometimes called simultaneous pair work. The teacher tells everyone to work in pair, while it is going on, the teacher goes around the room to monitor and assist.

Step Six : Public Check

The teacher has to stop the activities when he finds most of the class has completed the task. To ensure it he moves around and check whether students work in pair or not.

Regarding the activities suitable to the pair work technique, Cross (1992, p. 51) has further suggested the following activities:

- i. Dialogues
- ii. Substitution drills
- iii. Grammar practice
- iv. Informal tests
- v. Describing pictures
- vi. Providing titles
- vii. Question and answer work
- viii. Illustrative sentences

1.1.3.2 Advantages of Pair Work Technique

Pair work technique is one of the widely used learner-centered techniques in the field of ELT. There are some advantages of pair work which can be presented as follows:

- It increases the amount of students' participation in the class.
- It allows students to work and interact independently without necessary guidance to the teacher.
- It enables the teacher to work more as a facilitator and consultant.
- It can give learners a more active role in learning.
- It is relatively quick and easy to organize.
- It increases the opportunities for individual students to practice and use new features of the target language.

1.1.3.3 Disadvantages of Pair Work Technique

Along with advantages, there are some disadvantages of pair work, which can be presented as follows:

- It is not beneficial for linguistically poor students.
- Managing classroom becomes difficult because of noise.
- It is difficult to monitor whether students are talking about the topic or not. They may talk about something else which is not concerned with the topic.
- The choice of pair can be problematic if students do not like to work with someone they don't like.
- Sometimes school authorities or other students may react negatively because of the increased noise.

1.2 Review of the Related Literature

Many researchers have already carried out their researches on the use of different tools and techniques used in English language teaching. I have reviewed some research works under the Department of English Education, T.U., which are somehow related to my study.

Johnson (1992) carried out a research entitled “Beliefs About Teaching”. The main objective of this study was to find out ESL teachers' beliefs toward English language teaching. In this study, he selected 30 ELS teachers. The tools of data collection were questionnaire and interview. He found that ESL teachers teach in accordance with theoretical beliefs and that differences in theoretical beliefs may result in differences in the nature of literacy instruction.

In the same way, Bhandari (2005) carried out a practical research entitled “The Effectiveness of Work Techniques in Teaching Communicative Functions of English.” The objective of the study was to compare the effectiveness of the two techniques: pair work and group work in teaching communicative function of English. He used both primary and secondary sources for data collection and selects a public school of Kathmandu as the population of the study. He used pre-test and post-test for primary data collection by dividing the students into two groups, i.e. experimental and controlled group. The study concluded that the pair work technique was found relatively more effective than group work technique for teaching communicative functions of English in general.

Parajuli (2008) conducted a research on “Teachers’ Beliefs on Visual Aids in Teaching English”. His objectives were to find out the teachers’ belief on visual aids in teaching English at the primary level of Palpa district. The area of his study was Palpa district and the population of his study were 60 primary level English teachers. Questionnaire was the major tool for data collection in his study. The conclusion of this study is that the teachers have favor of benefit of using visual aids in teaching English. Due to those benefits they have shown positive beliefs towards visual aids. Most of the teachers opined that visual aids develop creativity of the students.

Al-Shedi (2009) carried out a research entitled “Teachers’ Belief about Using Group Work in Basic Education”. The aim of the study was to investigate basic education teachers’ views about using group work to promote the learning of English. In this study, he had randomly selected 48 schools of Batinah North region of Oman. The major tool of data collection in his study were questionnaire. The result of his study represents the positive views of basic education teachers about group work.

Giri (2010) carried out a survey research on “Perception of Teachers and Students on Lecture Technique”. The main aim of the study was to find out the perception of teachers and learners on the use of lecture technique in teaching English at higher secondary level. The area of his study was Nawalparasi district and the populations of his study were ten teachers and 50 students teaching and learning at higher secondary level. Questionnaire was the major tool for data collection in his study. He has concluded that although different teachers perceive lecture technique differently, what is commonly found is that it is technique to conduct in the classroom and to complete the course within an academic year easily.

Although a number of studies have been made in order to find out the effectiveness of different techniques like group work, pair work, project work, lecture technique etc. There are many challenges like large classroom, lack of teacher training to implement pair work effectively. But none of the studies deals with the teachers’ belief on using pair work technique in teaching English. Therefore, I carried out this study to explore teachers’ belief on using pair work technique in English classes.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- i. To find out the beliefs of English teachers in using pair work technique in their language classes,
- ii. To suggest some pedagogical implications on using pair work technique in ELT.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is conducted aiming to explore the teachers’ belief in using pair work technique. It will provide information about organizing and conducting the pair work technique in English language classroom. It adds a brick in the field of teacher development and ELT which help the language teachers to make their classes interactive and cooperative. This study is expected to be significant to all those who are directly and indirectly involved in language

teaching learning activities and more particularly to the teachers, students, syllabus designers, educationists, textbook writers, guardians, supervisors and other interested readers as well.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the methodology adopted during the study. I adopted the following methodology to fulfill the objectives of the study.

2.1 Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of data have been used for the collection of the required data. The primary sources were used to collect the data whereas secondary sources were used in forming the theoretical part of the research.

2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data

The English language teachers teaching at secondary level in Ilam district were the primary sources of data for this study. The data from them were collected using the questionnaire.

2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data

The secondary sources of data were different books related to English language teacher development, teacher's belief, ELT methodology and techniques, journals, previous theses, dictionaries, articles and other books as well as internet websites related to the topic. Some of them were Cross (1992), Ur (1996), Kumar (2006), Sharma and Phyak (2006), Rirchads and Farrel (2008), Harmer (2008), Richards and Lockhart (2010), Poudyal and Gyawaly (2011) and many more.

2.2 Population of the Study

Secondary level English language teachers of Ilam district were the population of this study.

2.3 Sampling Procedure

The sample size of the study was 40 English language teachers teaching at secondary level in Ilam district. I purposively selected 25 secondary schools and the population as a sample was done on the basis of non-random sampling that is judgemental.

2.4 Tools for Data Collection

I basically used the questionnaire to elicit the required information from the study. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions.

Closed-ended questions were mostly used in my study than that of open-ended questions. Questionnaire of closed-ended were designed in set 'A' and set 'B' while open-ended questions were designed in set 'C'. In set 'A' of the questionnaire, there were ten statements and they were asked to express their degree of agreement on each on 4-point scale viz. strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Closed-ended questions in set 'B' were multiple choice types of questions. Open-ended questions in set 'C' of the questionnaire were asked to take the subjective responses from the participants.

2.5 Process of Data Collection

The following steps were adopted to collect data:

- i. At first, I visited the selected schools and talked to the concerned authority explaining them the purpose and process of research. I asked for permission to consult their English language teachers.
- ii. After getting permission from the authority, I built rapport with the concerned teachers explaining them about the purpose of my study.
- iii. Then, I requested them to help me by responding to the questionnaire.

- iv. Finally, I collected the questionnaire back after a week from the date of distribution.

2.6 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in the following ways:

- i. The study was limited to only 40 English language teachers.
- ii. The study was based on teachers' beliefs from Ilam district.
- iii. The beliefs in the study represented only secondary level teachers' beliefs.
- iv. It was limited to the questionnaire only as a tool to elicit the data.
- v. The questionnaire were limited to pair work technique and teacher's belief on it.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with detailed analysis of data from primary sources. The data have been analyzed under the following eight headings-using appropriate statistical tools, tables and figures:

- Teachers' beliefs
- Frequency of using pair work
- Ways of forming pairs
- Skills and aspects best handled
- Activities best handled
- Effectiveness of pair work
- Challenges in using pair work
- Merits and demerits of pair work

3.1 Teachers' Beliefs

In set 'A' of the questionnaire, the participants were given ten statements and they were asked to express their degree of agreement on each on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree. Table no.1 summarizes the responses to those statements, the original four-point scale viz. strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree has been collapsed into two: agree (made up of strongly agree and agree) and disagree (made up of strongly disagree), where NR represents the number of respondents and the symbol % indicates the per cent to these statements.

Table No.1
Teachers' Belief About Pair Work

S.N	Statements	Respondents degree of agreement			
		Agree		Disagree	
		NR	%	NR	%
1	Pair work is an appropriate technique to teach English at secondary level	38	95	2	5
2	Pair work gives learners more opportunities to speak English in the class	34	85	6	15
3	Learners who work in pairs are more satisfied with their class	30	75	10	25
4	The course book we use encourages us to use pair work	38	95	2	5
5	Pair work increases learners' achievements	36	90	4	10
6	Pair work is an appropriate technique in large class	35	88	5	22
7	Learners who work in pairs learn more than those who work individually	36	90	4	10
8	Pair work is an effective technique for dealing with mixed abilities students	30	75	10	25
9	Pair work is relatively quick and easy to organize	34	85	6	15
10	Teachers of other subjects use pair work in their class	4	10	36	90

The above table shows that the 1,4,5,7 received the highest level of agreement. Over 38 (95%) of the participants agreed that pair work is an appropriate technique to teach English at secondary level and the course book we use

encourages us to use pair work, while 36(90%) of the total participants agreed that “pair work increases learners achievements” and “learners who work in pairs learn more than those who work individually”. Likewise, statements 6,8,2,9 got the second highest level of agreement i.e. 35(88%) of the total participant agreed that “pair work is an appropriate technique in large class” and “pair work is an effective technique for dealing with mixed abilities students”. While 34(85%) of the total participants agreed that “pair work gives learners more opportunities to speak English in the class” and “pair work is relatively quick and easy to organize”. Likewise, statement 3 got the third highest level of agreement i.e. 30(75%) of the total participants agreed that “Learners who work in pairs are more satisfied with their class.” But statement 10 got the lowest level of agreement i.e. only 4(10%) of the total participants agreed that “Teachers of other subjects use pair work in their class”.

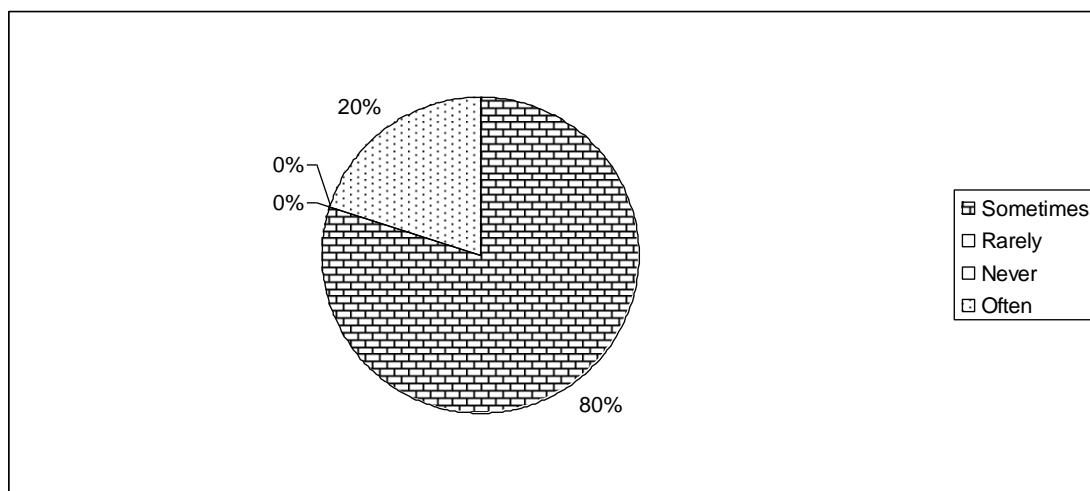
In terms of disagreement, the table shows statement 9 had the highest level of disagreement i.e. 36(90%) of the total participants disagreed that “teachers of other subjects use pair work in their class”. Likewise statements 3,8,6 got the second highest level of disagreement i.e. 10(25%) of the total participants disagreed that “learners who work in pairs are more satisfied with their class” and “pair work is an effective technique for dealing with mixed abilities students” while 5(22%) of the total participants disagreed that “pair work is an appropriate technique in large class”. In the same way, statements 2,9,5,7 got the third highest level of disagreement i.e. 6(15%) of the total participants disagreed that “pair work gives learners more opportunities to speak English in the class” and “pair work is relatively quick and easy to organize” while 4(10%) of the total participants disagreed that “pair work increases learners’ achievements” and “Learners who work in pairs learn more than those who work individually”. In addition, majority of the participants 2(5%) showed their negative beliefs on statements 1 and 4.

On the basis of this discussion, we can say that most of the participants have shown their positive beliefs on the use of pair work technique. It can be said that most of the teachers believed on pair work technique in their class.

3.2 Frequency of Using Pair work

To look at whether the teachers repeat pair work technique during their classes, in question no 1 and 2 of the set 'B' they were asked to respond to the question "How frequently do you use pair work in your teaching?" There were four possible answers: often, sometimes, rarely and never. The responses obtained from them are presented below:

Figure No. 1
Frequency of Using Pair work

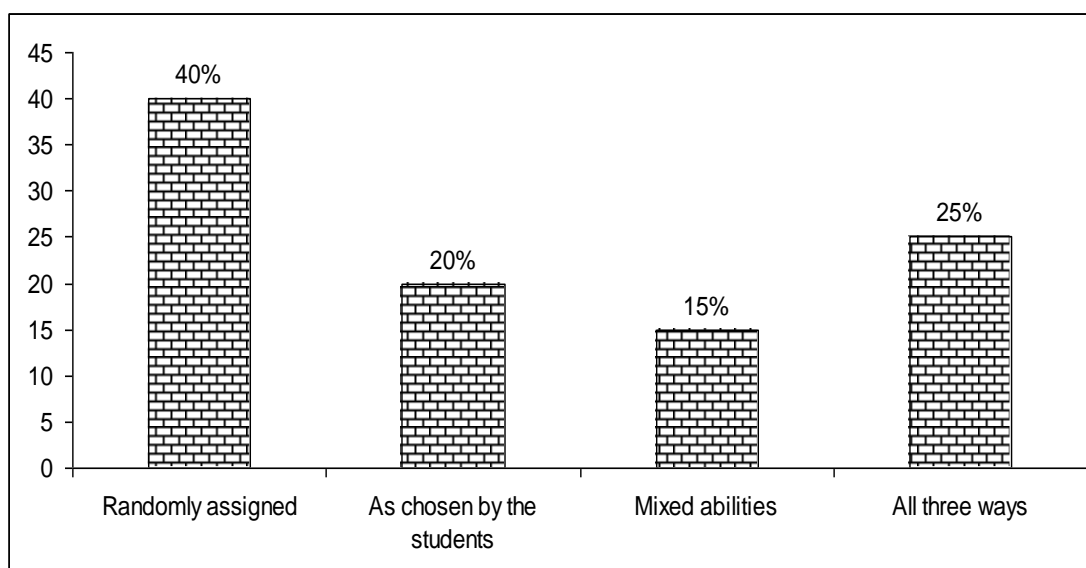


The above figure shows that 32(80%) of the total respondents said that they used pair work sometimes in their classroom. The remainder 8(20%) respondents said that they used it often. No one responded rarely or never to this question. It shows that the teachers use pair work at least sometimes. So it can be said that most of the teachers believe in using pair work technique in their class. With this we can conclude that frequency of the use of pair work in English language teaching at secondary level is appropriate.

3.3 Ways of Forming Pairs

The respondents were asked about the ways they prefer to form pairs. They were given three options viz. let students choose their own pairs, randomly assign students to pairs or form mixed ability groups. The responses obtained from the participants have been presented in the following figure.

Figure No.2
Ways of Forming Pairs



Over 16(40%) of the total respondents said that they randomly assign students to form pairs while 10(25%) replied that they use all three stages for forming pairs. Likewise, 8(20%) said that they let their students to choose their own pair and remaining 6(15%) said that they use mixed ability groups.

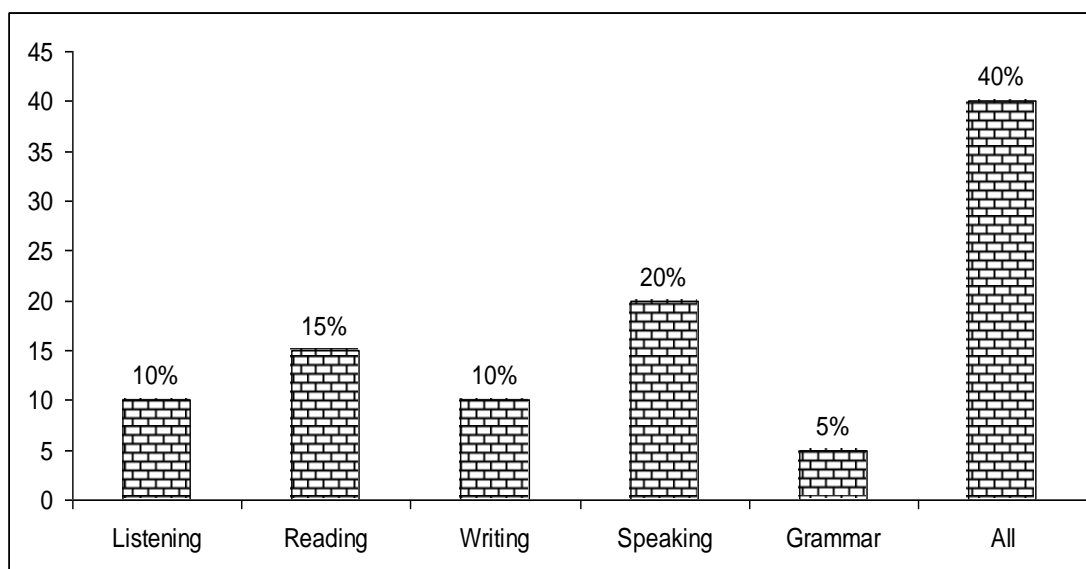
On the basis of obtained data, we come to the conclusion that very few teachers have been using mixed ability groups which is not best but pair work is an effective technique for dealing with mixed abilities students.

3.4 Skills and Aspects Best Handled

To find out the preference of teachers to teach language skills and aspects by using pair work technique in question no.4 of the set 'B' they were asked to respond to the question "which of these skills and aspects can be best handled

by using pair work?” The responses obtained from them have been presented in the following figure.

Figure No.3
Skills and aspects best handled by using pair work



The above figure shows that 16(40%) of the total respondents believed that all sorts of language skills and aspects can be best handled by using pair work while 8(20%) of the total respondents believed that speaking can be best taught by using pair work. Out of remaining 40 per cent, 6(15%) of the total respondents believed that reading can be taught by using pair work and 4(10%) teachers believed that listening and writing. Other 2(5%) teachers believed that grammar can be best handled by using pair work technique.

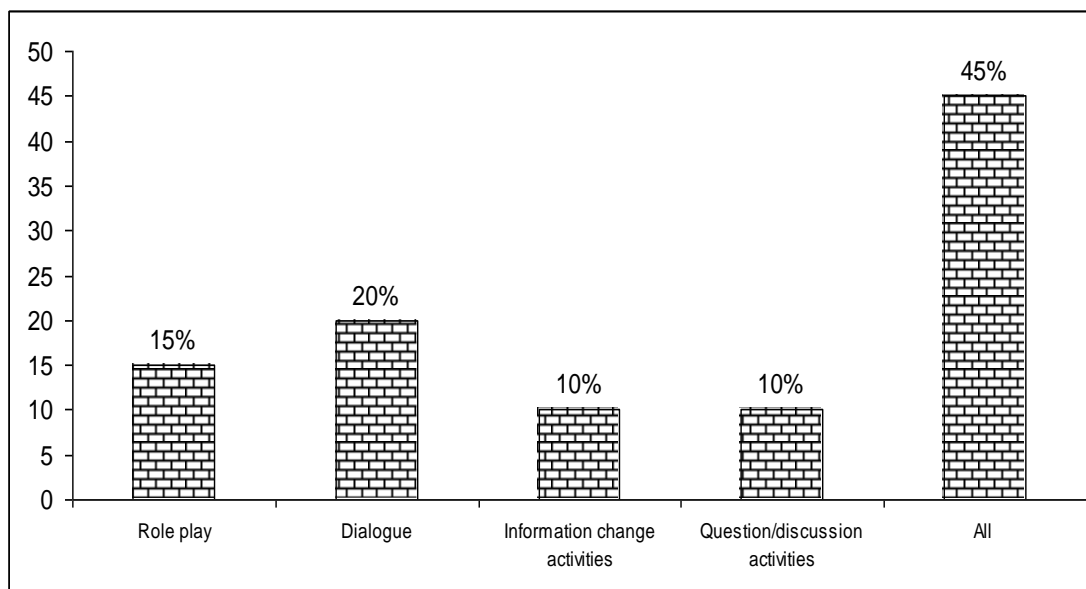
On the basis of obtained data, we come to the conclusion that teachers hold belief that all sorts of language skills and aspects can be taught by using pair work technique.

3.5 Activities Best Handled by Using Pair work

To find out the preference of teachers to teach language activities by using pair work technique, in question no.5 of the set ‘B’; they were asked to respond to the question “which of these activities can be handed by using pair work?” The

responses obtained from the participants have been presented in the following figure.

Figure No. 4
Activities Best Handled by Using Pair work



The above figure shows that 18(45%) of the total respondents believed that all sorts of activities can be best handled by using pair work technique. Likewise 8(20%) of the total respondents believed that dialogue can be best taught by using pair work. Out of remaining 14(35%), 6(15%) teachers believed that role play can be the best activities in the pair work technique while 4(10%) teachers believed that information change activities and questionnaire/discussion activities can be best handled activities while using pair work technique.

On the basis of the above data, we can conclude that teachers believed all sorts of activities can be taught by using pair work technique.

3.6 Effectiveness of Pair work Technique

The respondents were provided with an opportunity to put their views about the effectiveness and suitability of pair work technique to teach English at secondary level. In addition, they were also provided with a chance to clarify their views for both positive and negative responses. To find out whether the

teachers think pair work technique is suitable for secondary level or not, they were asked to respond to the questions “Do you think pair work is a suitable technique for this level?” and “Using pair work in teaching process has effective role in teachers’ professional development?”

In first question 36 of the total respondents thought that it is an effective and a suitable technique for this level. The respondents who were in the favor of pair work technique were asked the question “support your answer’ to clarify the reason. The similar responses obtained from them have been grouped together and listed below.

There are 7 teachers in group A.

Group A teachers said that students of this level who work in pairs are satisfied with their classes. They also add students who work in pairs learn more than those who learn individually and it provides students more opportunity to speak English in the class.

There are 8 teachers in group B.

Group B teachers said that weak and shy students learn more as they are allowed to talk and speak with their friends and students feel less anxiety when they are working with their friends by using this technique.

There are 5 teachers in group C.

Group C teachers said that the level of understanding of the students at this level with lecture and demonstrations techniques is not very high.

There are 3 teachers in group D.

Group D teachers said that this technique is suitable as it is an alternative way to make personal contact in crowded classes like ours.

There are 6 teachers in group E.

Group E teachers said that the exercises like providing direction, matching, classifying, solving problems and contents like language functions, guided writing, role play, information change activities etc which we find in the textbook of grade 9 or 10 required either group work or a pair work technique to be practiced.

There are 7 teachers in group F.

Group F teachers said that it is a learner centered technique and the learners are to be made communicatively competent. So they should be given an opportunity to learning by doing, thus, this technique is suitable.

There are 4 teachers in group G.

Group G teachers said that the students of this level are responsible to learn by themselves and it can be perfectly used in teaching all language skills.

On the basis of these responses, we can say that pair work technique is an appropriate technique at this level to conduct activities like providing direction, matching, classifying, solving problems, role play, information change activities etc as the level of understanding of the students at this level is not supposed to be high. Moreover, it is also appropriate since the students of this level who work in pair are satisfied with their classes. It is also useful to deal with crowded classes where it is very difficult for a teacher to make personal contact in the class.

The respondents who did not agree with the effective use of pair work technique to teach English at secondary level were provided with an opportunity to give their reason. There were only 4 teachers who did not support in using pair work technique. They said that it is not suitable technique for this level. Other techniques are more suitable technique for this level such

as lecture, question-answer demonstration etc. Pair work technique is also time consuming technique and it disturbs to finish the course in time.

The above responses make us clear that the teachers have only theoretical knowledge of pair work technique and they are poor to deal with specific problems. Some of the teachers are not capable of conducting pair work technique to teach all types of contents and skills in all classroom situation, for different sizes of courses and all the time.

In the second question 35 of the total respondents believed that pair work technique in teaching process has effective role in teachers' professional development. The respondents who were in the favour of pair work technique were asked the question "support your answer" to clarify the reason. Some of the teachers said that teacher professional development is a process of becoming the best kind of teacher. It draws on the teachers' own inner resources for change. So the best kind of teacher always use different kind of teaching techniques and develop their teaching profession. Some other teachers said that profession requires different kinds of academic training and a formal qualification. Then it helps in using pair work technique while teaching in the classroom. They also added teachers professional development includes training skill, self-discipline, self-regulation etc. So the teachers should apply these in the classroom and develop their teaching techniques.

Five of the total respondents did not clarify the reason. On the basis of these responses, we can say that using pair work in teaching process has effective role in teachers' professional development.

3.7 Challenges in Using Pair Work Technique

The respondents were provided with an opportunity to put their views about the challenges in using pair work technique. They were also provided with a chance to clarify their views for both positive and negative responses. To find out the challenges of pair work technique while teaching language in the

classroom they were asked to respond the 4 questions such as question no.3,4,5,6 “Do the students understand the lesson clearly?”, “Do you think using pair work in teaching really helps to meet the objectives of the course?”, “What are the challenges you face while using pair work technique?” and “If the students do not understand your instruction, what do you do?” respectively.

In the first question 36 of the total respondents believed that the students at this level understand the lesson clearly. The respondents who were in the favour of pair work technique were asked to clarify the reason. The similar reasons obtained from them have been listed below:

- Students get more opportunities to speak with teacher and their pair. It encourages the students to learn.
- They involve themselves in learning. It helps them understand the lesson clearly.
- They are active in the classroom.
- They can work and interact independently of the lesson.
- Lesson becomes real and effective while using pair work technique so it is not difficult to understand the lesson to the students.

On the basis of these responses, we can conclude that using pair work in teaching process, all the students understand the lesson clearly. Pair work is a way of increasing students’ participation and language use. It gives the students more opportunity to speak. It encourages students to help each other and share their ideas. Most of the teachers believed that the students understand the lesson clearly by using pair work technique.

There are only 4 teachers who opposite this question. They said that only a few students understand the lesson clearly because the class is always noisy and funny, students are indisciplined. As a result students do not understand the lesson clearly.

On the basis of the above responses, we can conclude that the teachers have lack of training, they do not have practical knowledge to teach in the classroom.

Likewise, to find out the challenges of pair work while teaching language in the classroom they were asked to respond the second question “Do you think using pair work in teaching really help to meet the objectives of the course?” In this question all the respondents believed that using pair work in teaching really helps to meet the objectives of the course. They further said that secondary level curriculum focuses to communicate fluently and accurately with other. They also add there are different exercises or activities given in the course related to pair work. They said that most of the units/topics given in the book can be worked in pairs and group. They further said that the English curriculum focuses on teaching and learning in the classroom should be learner-centered. Learners learn by doing and language learners learn to speak by speaking.

On the basis of these responses, we can say that pair work in teaching really helps to meet the objectives of the course. Secondary level of English curriculum of Nepal also focuses on pair work and group work techniques. It helps to communicate fluently and accurately with other English speakers.

In the same way, they were asked to respond to the third question “What are the challenges you face while using pair work technique?” The responses obtained from them have been listed (repeated responses are not mentioned) below:

- Large class.
- Mixed abilities students.
- Takes more time to manage.
- It is difficult to observe all the students.
- Shyness of students.
- Influence from mother tongue such as Rai, Limbu, Lepcha etc.

- There may be too much noise and indiscipline.

On the basis of above mentioned responses given by the teachers, we can say that even though pair work technique is a highly effective technique, there are also some challenges while using it.

Likewise, to find out the challenges of pair work technique the respondents were asked to respond to the fourth question “If the students do not understand your instruction, what do you do?” Over 35 of the total respondents said if the students do not understand their instruction they use the Nepali language. Because it helps learners to understand what they are going to do. It is easy to make them clear.

Rest of the 5 teachers said that they act first and ask learners to the same way and teacher should give clear concept of the topic to the students.

On the basis of these responses, we can conclude that most of the teachers said that they use the Nepali language to give clear concept of the topic or if the students do not understand the instruction clearly. They are right to some extent because it is time consuming to explain the topic clearly in the target language. So it is easy-going technique. But 5 teachers are persistently in favor of using target language even if students do not understand. They opine that dramatization will be useful to make the concept clear.

3.8 Merits and Demerits of Pair work

Question 7 in set ‘C’ of the questionnaire requested the respondents to mention the important advantages of the pair work technique. On the basis of their beliefs on the use of pair work technique, they have mentioned the following advantages of it to teach English at secondary level.

- Pair work helps to motivate the students.
- Students do not feel shy.
- It develops cooperation and improves interpersonal skills.

- It encourages students to use language with each other.
- It can be used in teaching all language skills.
- It makes students active.
- It helps the students use English in the context.
- Students can learn themselves.
- It helps the teacher work more as a facilitator.
- It increases the amount of students participation.

(Note: repeated responses are not mentioned above)

As the beliefs of teacher, the above mentioned points are the major advantages of pair work technique. On the basis of above mentioned data, we can say the pair work technique is an important technique which should be used at this level as the demand of classroom situation, topic, course, interest and understanding level of the learners.

But teachers had also shared some disadvantages of pair work technique. Question 8 in set 'C' of the questionnaire requested them to mention the disadvantages of a pair work technique. The responses obtained from them have been listed below:

- There may be too much noise and indiscipline.
- Students may use their mother tongue.
- There is a problem of selecting pair member.
- There is a problem of classroom management.
- It is not helpful for linguistically poor students.
- The course gets incomplete in time.

(Note: repeated responses are not mentioned)

On the basis of above mentioned responses given by the respondents, we can claim that even though the pair work technique undoubtedly a highly effective technique, there are also some weakness of it as other techniques in teaching English at this level.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of the major findings of the study. This also consists of some recommendations with pedagogical implications which are made on the basis of analysis and interpretations.

4.1 Findings

After the analysis and interpretation of the data, it is found that the teachers have positive beliefs in using pair work technique in their classes. They feel that it is the necessity of present day situation and generation and this technique also helps the teachers' professional development.

Some major findings are listed below:

- i. Teachers have very positive beliefs about using pair work and they use pair work at least sometimes.
- ii. The teachers believed pair work as an appropriate technique for secondary level. According to the number of teachers, it is an appropriate and important technique because the exercises like providing direction, matching, classifying, solving problems, information change activities etc require pair work technique to be practiced. Moreover, it is found that it is an appropriate technique to deal with crowded class where it is very difficult for a teacher to make personal contact in the class.
- iii. All sorts of language skills and aspects can be taught using pair work technique.
- iv. It is found that some teachers have good theoretical knowledge of techniques but due to the lack of skills, practical knowledge and

passive habit, they do not practise and prepare for conducting pair work in the classroom.

- v. The teachers believed that pair work gives the students more opportunities to speak and it encourages students to help each other. It helps the students understand the lesson clearly.
- vi. Even though pair work technique is a highly effective technique, there are some challenges to the teachers while using it in the classroom.
- vii. In order to make the instruction of the topic/concept clear, Nepali language is found to be used by large number of teachers.
- viii. Though the majority of the respondents perceive pair work as a highly effective technique, they also have internalized some demerits of it.

4.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for the pedagogical implications on the basis of the findings obtained through the analysis and interpretation of the data.

- i. As the result of this study indicates teachers' positive beliefs about pair work, it should be given emphasis as the other techniques taught at secondary level.
- ii. Practical aspects of pair work should be emphasized by systematic procedures to teach a particular skill and aspect of language.
- iii. Teachers should be trained as how to use pair work effectively and they should be aware about the development of new techniques.

- iv. Mother tongue should not be used while teaching English. The teachers should try to give clear concept to the students through the English language.
- v. The pressure of students' number is high in government aided schools of Nepal. In such a context, teachers should implement the technique as it is an appropriate way to deal with for a teacher to make personal contact in a class.
- vi. This study is entirely based on teachers' belief. For a better understanding of how teachers implement pair work further observations of teachers' actual classroom is needed.
- vii. This research was limited only to a district. It can not be claimed that the findings of this research are applicable everywhere. Further researchers can carry out this type of research including more samples in different parts of the country.

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APPENDIX –I
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear sir/madam

This questionnaire is a research tool for gathering information for my research entitled "Beliefs of English Teacher's in Using Pair Work Technique" as a partial fulfillment of Master's Degree in Education under the supervision of Mrs. Hima Rawal, Lecturer, Department of English Education, T.U., Kirtipur. You are kindly requested to give your responses through the following questionnaire. The correct information provided by you will be of great help for completing my research. This information provided by you will be kept highly confidential and used only for research purpose. I would appreciate your honest opinions and assure you that your responses will be completely anonymous.

Sagar Poudyal

Name:

School:

Qualification:

Experience :

Set 'A'

A. Please put on tick for each statement to give your view

1. Pair work is an appropriate technique to teach English at secondary level.

i. Strongly agree ii. Agree iii. Disagree iv. Strongly disagree

2. Pair work gives learners more opportunities to speak English in the class.

i. Strongly agree ii. Agree iii. Disagree iv. Strongly disagree

3. Learners who work in pairs are more satisfied with their class.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
4. The course book we use encourages us to use pair work.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
5. Pair work increases learners' achievements.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
6. Pair work is an appropriate technique in large class.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
7. Learners who work in pairs learn more than those who work individually.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
8. Pair work is an effective technique for dealing with mixed abilities students.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
9. Pair work is relatively quick and easy to organize.
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree
10. Teachers of other subjects use pair work in their class
 - i. Strongly agree
 - ii. Agree
 - iii. Disagree
 - iv. Strongly disagree

Set 'B'

1. How frequently do you use pair work in your teaching. Tick one:
 - a. Often
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Never

2. If you choose rarely or never use pair work, why? Tick the following that you believe.

- i. I don't believe that pair work is an important tool in teaching
- ii. I don't have any ideas about how to apply pair work.
- iii. Pair work is too difficult for my students.
- iv. Pair work tasks too much time in class.

3. Which of these ways do you usually use to form the pairs?

- i. Let students choose their own pairs.
- ii. Randomly assign students to pairs.
- iii. From mixed ability groups.
- iv. Others, please mention.

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4. Which of these skills can be best handed by using pair work. Tick all that apply.

- a. Listening b. Speaking c. Reading
- d. Writing e. Grammar f. All

5. Which of these activities can be handed by using pair work? Tick all that you apply.

- i. Role-plays ii. Dialogues iii. Information-change activities
- iv. Questionnaire/discussion activities v. All
- vi. If other mentions:

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Set 'C'

1. Do you think 'pair work' is a suitable technique for this level?

- i. yes
- ii. no

Support your answer

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2. Using pair work in teaching process has effective role in teachers' professional development?

- i. yes
- ii. no

Support your answer

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3. Do the students understand the lesson clearly?

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4. Do you think using pair work in teaching really help to meet the objectives of the course?

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5. What are the challenges you face while using pair work technique?

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6. If the students do not understand your instruction, what do you do?

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7. Mention the important merits of pair work technique.

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8. What can be the demerits of pair-wise technique?

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Thank You

