

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Background

Languages are part of the societies in which they are spoken. Language use reflects culture and it is impossible to disassociate the two in any real sense. Most people do not deeply ponder the language they speak – they see it merely as a communication tool with other members of their society. Languages are spoken for various reasons. Obviously communication is a primary reason, but there are others too. One reason for speaking a language is to show a person belongs to a culture. Many people feel that language and nationality are inseparable. Language is an important part of our identity. Language identifies cultural identity i.e. by choosing a language; we choose to identify ourselves with a group of speakers and certain norms and values. According to Stan (1997), “... language is the umbilical cord to culture. Thus, it is simply natural that a group of people should cling to and cherish their language” (p. 17). However, people sometimes do not cling to their language but rather give it up freely.

The repression or loss of an ancestral language can be quite painful because the emotional tie to it is quite strong. Describing the importance of local languages Crystal (2000) says, “Local languages are seen to be valuable because they promote community cohesion and vitality, foster pride in culture, and give a community (and thus a workforce) self-confidence” (p. 36). Furthermore, Wardhaugh (1986) notes, “... a demand for ‘language rights’ is often one of the first demands made by a discontented minority almost anywhere in the world” (p. 346). An example can be taken from the Nepalese context– SeTaMaGuRaLi (an organization of six minority groups - Sherpa, Tamang, Magar, Gurung, Rai and Limbu), Tharu Adibashi people, Madhesi people and different minority groups in Nepal are still demanding linguistic rights and federal state on the

basis of language at present. A sense of the language and or society being endangered will often lead to the calls for preserving the language. It is often said that when a language dies, a world dies. So, the preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity in the present world is a major concern to many scientists, artists, writers, politicians, leaders of linguistic communities and defenders of linguistic human rights. Crystal (2000) mentions, "... just 4% of the world's languages are spoken by 96% of the population i.e. 96% of the world's languages are spoken by just 4% of the population" (p. 14). Up to one half of the 6,000 languages currently spoken in the world are estimated to be in danger of disappearing during the 21<sup>st</sup> century ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/language\\_policy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/language_policy)). Many factors affect the existence and usage of any given human language, including the size of the native speaking population, its use in the formal communication and the geographical dispersion and the socio-economic weight of its speakers. National language policies can either mitigate or intensify the effects of some of these factors.

### **1.1.1 Language Shift**

Language shift within a lineage results when a bilingual parent transmits only his/her second language to his/her children. According to Crystal (2003), "Language shift is a term used in SOCIOLINGUISTICS to refer to the gradual or sudden move from the use of one language to another, either by an individual or by a group" (p. 259). It is an intergenerational shift in mother tongue in favour of more widely spoken languages that underlies language consolidation. Language shift is thus a slow, generational process. It is sometimes referred to as language transfer or language replacement or assimilation. It can also be taken as a progressive process by which a speech community of a language shifts to speaking another language. The rate of assimilation is the percentage of individuals with a given mother tongue who speak another language more often in the home. The process whereby a community of speakers of one language becomes bilingual in another language and gradually shift constancy to the

second language is called assimilation. Crystal (2000) notes, “Language shift is a conventional term for the gradual or sudden move from the use of one language to another” (p. 17). Other terms frequently encountered in the endangered languages literature include: language loss, for a situation where a person of a group is no longer able to use a language previously spoken; language maintenance, where people continue to use a language, often through adopting specific measures; and language loyalty, which expresses the concern to preserve a language when a threat is perceived. When a linguistic community ceases to use their original language, we speak of language death. Sanskrit and Hebrew languages were often called as dead languages but it is to be noted that the status of the Hebrew language is reversed now. All the indigenous languages may not go the way of Hebrew, which died as a spoken language but remained in use as a literary language. Since many languages have only oral tradition, not a written, it will pass out of all use whatsoever. “The majority of the world’s languages are vulnerable not just to decline but to extinction. Over half the world’s languages are moribund, i.e. not effectively being passed on to the next generation” (Crystal, 2000, p. 19). According to Rhydwen (1998), “... loss of language is not the loss of a concept, an abstraction, but rather it is what happens when people change their behaviour and stop transmitting their language intergenerationally” (as cited in Crystal, 2000, p. 25).

The other term frequently used in such situation is language change. Language change is the manner in which the phonetic, morphological, semantic, syntactic and other features of a language are modified over time. “Language change refers to a change within a language over a period of time and is seen as a universal and unstoppable process” (Crystal, 2003, p. 256). Languages are organic and dynamic. They changes continuously. Aitchison (2001, p. 4) explains language change as, “Language, then, like everything else, gradually transforms itself over the centuries... in a world where humans grow old, tadpoles change into frogs, and milk turns into cheese, it would be strange if

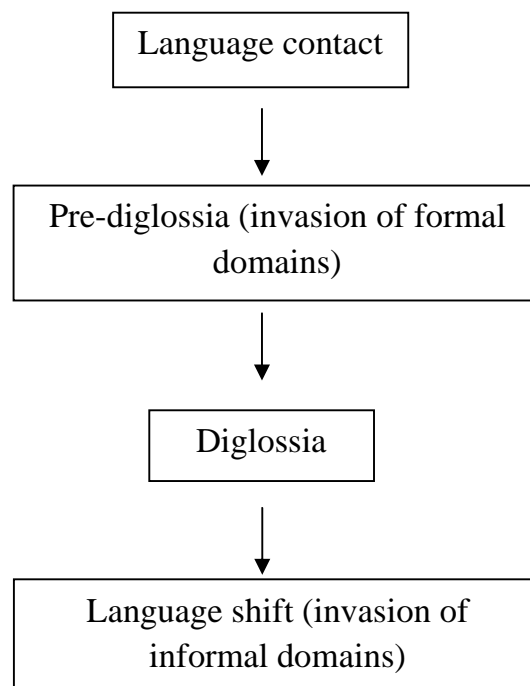
language alone remained unaltered”. At any given moment the English language, for example, has a huge variety within itself, and this variety is known as synchronic variation. From these different forms, an effect on language occurs over a period of time and the change is known as diachronic change. Though language change and language shift seem to be similar, they are not the same thing. For example, the English used in Chaucer’s time and the English of today have a marked difference. In fact, the difference is so great that modern readers can hardly understand the Chaucerian English. The same is true with the Nepali language as well. The language of Bhanubhakta’s time is so different from today’s Nepali that people hardly understand them. Language change is a reality but we must be aware of the fact that change does not take place suddenly. Language shift, on the other hand, is also a gradual process but it occurs across a language, that is, it is an interlingual and intergenerational process. In language shift, there is an adaptation of a dominant language as well as complete or partial loss of minority language. Partial language shift sometimes is accompanied by language skill attrition, the loss of proficiency in one or more of the language skills: reading, writing, speaking or understanding. Language loyalty and language attitude are the main reasons for language shift. Language is one of the major characteristics of multilingualism. All of us are language users. Which language we choose to use and how we use it, that is, the choices we make on an individual and daily basis, determine the communication pattern in a society.

Language shift can be detrimental to at least a part of the community associated with the language which is being lost. Sociolinguists such as Joshua Fishman, Lily Wong Fillmore and John Reyhner report that language shift, when it involves the loss of the first language, can lead to cultural disintegration and a variety of social problems including increased alcoholism, dysfunctional families and increased incidence of premature death ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/language\\_policy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/language_policy)). For example, Aniche (1997c) observes a tendency

among many Nigerians to bring their children as monolingual speakers of English and reports that this can lead to their children holding their heritage language in disdain and feeling ashamed of being associated with the language of their parents and grand parents. As a result of this, some Nigerians are said to feel neither wholly European nor wholly Nigerian (pp. 73-79).

### **1.1.1.1 A Theory of Language Shift**

Language shift is a gradual intergenerational process. Diglossia is also a paramount stage in the process of language shift. Diglossia develops when there is contact between languages or language varieties. According to Dahlin (2007, pp. 12 - 14), there are four main stages that a speech community goes through before language shift may transpire.



In the initial phase of the process of language shift, language contact occurs. Invasion, immigration of workers or trade as well as industrialisation, urbanisation, modernisation and globalisation render language spread which facilitate new linguistic contact situations, essential to multilingual societies.

In the succeeding phase of the process, the languages serve different functions in society, allotted to different domains. These domains, usually the formal and elite domains, are conquered by the dominating language while the dominated language is allocated the more informal and domestic domains. Diglossia then transpires when the two languages or language varieties co-exist, each assigned different functional roles in the society. This arrangement, more cultural rather than natural, assists an asymmetric allocation of the varieties in which one is given formal functions (such as writing) and the other the informal functions (such as speaking). The allocation of the two co-existing varieties in diglossic societies are defined by Charles Ferguson as High (H) and Low (L) where H represents the language allocated the formal and high prestige domains and L represents the language allocated the informal and colloquial domains. The two languages are distinguished by function and context rather than by linguistic features. Even though some oral functions may be given to H at the same time as some written function may be given to L. Thus, given the close relation to education and its role as the writing medium, H is provided with higher prestige than L, which may deprive certain individuals in society of H and subsequently helps to maintain high illiteracy and reinforces social inequality. In the last stage of language shift, informal domains such as between friends and family, at the local pub etc., are conquered. In fact, the informal and colloquial domains are the last defender of the endangered language. Thus, in order for language shift to completely transpire, reduction of one language's functional range is required. Domain invasion and diglossia are thus indications that language shift may be underway.

### **1.1.2 Sociolinguistic Situation of Nepal**

Nepal is a multilingual and multiethnic country situated in southern part of Asia, lying in between India and China. Kathmandu is the capital of this country. It is a metropolitan city where people of different caste, culture and religion live and work together in peace.

To put in Bhattarai and Gautam's (2007) words, "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).

Describing linguistic scenario of Nepal Toba (1992) says:

The country of Nepal is world famous for several reasons. It is not only the fact that Nepal boasts of the highest mountain in the world, but Nepal also exhibits a 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.

(p. 1)

There is no definite answer as to how many languages are spoken in Nepal. The number of languages varies in different census. In the light of the linguistic survey of Nepal, carried out by German Research Council, it is estimated that about 70 different languages belonging to four language families are spoken in Nepal (Toba, 1992). CBS Report (2001) has recorded 92 identified languages whereas The Ethnologue (2005) shows 126 languages spoken in Nepal, among them three languages – Dura, Kusunda and Waling are extinct. These languages (except Kusunda, a controversial language to be kept under any language families) are said to have genetic affiliation to four language families, namely Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic/Munda and Dravidians. A list of languages and their number of speakers is attached in appendix III.

Due to multilingual situation of Nepal, it is natural to find cases of language dominance, positive or negative attitudes towards one language or the other, the decline in language loyalty resulting in language shift, and efforts to maintain language under pressure of multilingual area. One remarkable aspect of the

multilingual situation of Nepal is that every person is at least a bilingual. Nepali being a dominant language, people are shifting from their mother tongue to the Nepali language. (Rai, 2005, p. 137).

### **1.1.3 The State and Language Development in Nepal**

Before Rana's autocratic regime, there was dominance of the Sanskrit language. The Ranas (1846-1950 A.D.) gave special protection to the Nepali language. The English language, which was already introduced in Nepal during Malla period by Christian Missionaries, was also given priority in Rana regime. The English language was used in education with the establishment of Durbar High School (1884) by Janga Bahadur Rana. English in higher education was used with the establishment of Tri-Chandra College (1919) by Chandra Shamsher Rana. King Mahendra, in his partyless Panchayat System (in 1962) introduced the concept of Nepali nationalism on the basis of mono-model policy "one nation, one religion, and one language" undermining the rest of the languages of Nepal. The New Education Plan (NEP, 1971) discouraged other languages except Nepali as the medium of instruction in schools. As a result, the Nepali language continued to grow and expand whereas other languages suffered. Then the constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal (1990) made the distinction between the national language (the Nepali language) and languages of the nation (languages spoken by minority group – indigenous people). Although it gave a fundamental right to preserve the indigenous languages and made a shaky and vague provision of mother tongue education at primary level, the rate of language endangerment has not stopped (Phyak, personal communication, December 23, 2007). The Supreme Court of Nepal has barred the use of mother tongue at offices. Linguistic groups are agitating against the verdict of the court – 1<sup>st</sup> June is the linguistic black day for them. In the present context, Nepali is the official as well as contact language of the nation and English is used as an international language. These two languages have got the status of killer language (Rai, 2005). Recently with the restoration of democracy, there is a



growing concern and awareness towards the promotion and preservation of the indigenous languages though some of the languages are on the verge of extinction. With the introduction of mother tongue education policy at primary level education, the government also has taken initiative towards the establishing and supporting mother tongue education through 14 indigenous languages in formal education (Bhattarai and Gautam, 2007, p. 32). The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) has removed the tradition of distinction between languages of the nation and the national language. The Nepali language has been regarded as an official language of the nation, but it shall not be deemed to have hindered the use of mother tongue in local bodies and offices.

Nepal is providing education through six universities with about 1000 constituent and their affiliated colleges, some 15000 higher secondary schools and 42100 schools of which 7154 are privately run and the rest are publicly run (Bhattarai and Gautam, 2007, p. 32). English occupies a prominent position in the total education system of Nepal (Awasthi, 2003). Almost all university education, tertiary educational colleges and privately run academic institutions use English for all academic purposes – teaching, evaluation and research. Growing public craze towards the English language is seen in the growing attraction of parents and students towards privately run education institutions of the country, whether at the university level or the school level. At present, education policy makers have to bridge the contrasting gap by establishing a meeting point.

#### **1.1.4 The Concept of Attitude**

The term attitude is borrowed from Latin word ‘aptus’ which means ‘fitness’ or ‘adoptedness’. Attitude refers to a psychological tendency that can be expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. It refers to all evaluative predispositions and influence on belief, affect and overt behaviour. Affect, behaviour and belief refer to the feelings that people

experience. In other words, attitude is shaped by a person's actions, how he or she feels and the ambience that surrounds him or her. In fact, it can be said that affect, behaviour and belief interact with attitude. As mentioned in the Encyclopaedia of Education vol. 1 (1971), "Attitudes refer to how we think, feel about and act toward our fellow human beings and how they think, feel about and act toward us" (p. 396). Thus, it is a set of beliefs towards something. Moreover, this definition of attitudes stresses the integration of thought, feeling and deed. Likewise, to quote Benon (1960),

Technically an attitude is a tendency or pre-disposition toward a certain type of reaction ... As actions tendencies, attitudes are characterized by directionality and often by feelings and emotions. They may be expressed in such terms as, for or against, favourable and unfavourable, approval and disapproval, and like and dislike, for some specific or general stimulus ... The nature and function of attitudes can not be understood without reference to some object or situation (p. 662).

Thus, from these definitions, it is obvious that attitude is the way of thinking or behaving towards something. Fasold (1984) notes, "All kinds of behaviour and feelings concerning language to be treated (e.g. attitudes toward language maintenance and planning efforts) are termed as language attitude" (p. 148). Crystal (2003) has defined the term language attitude as "... feelings people have about their own LANGUAGE or the language(s) of others" (p. 256). He further explains that knowing about attitudes is an important aspect of evaluating the likely success of a language teaching programme or a piece of language planning. Attitudes are crucial in language growth or decay, restoration or destruction: the status and importance of a language in society and within an individual derives largely from adopted or learnt attitudes. An attitude

is individual, but it has origins in collective behaviour. Attitude is something an individual has which defines or promotes certain behaviours. Although an attitude is a hypothetical psychological construct, it touches the reality of language life. Baker (1988) stresses the importance of attitudes in the discussion of bilingualism. Attitudes are learned predispositions, not inherited, and are likely to be relatively stable; they have a tendency to persist. Though attitudes are affected by experience, attitude change is an important notion in bilingualism. Attitudes vary from favourability to unfavourability. Attitudes are complex constructs; e.g. there may be both positive and negative feelings attached to a language situation (Baker, 1988, pp. 112-115).

According to Lambert (1967), attitudes consist of three components: the cognitive, affective and conative components (as cited in Dittmar, 1976, p. 181). The cognitive component refers to an individual's belief structure, the affective to emotional reactions and the conative component comprehends the tendency to behave in a certain way towards the attitude. The major dimensions along which views about languages can vary are social status and group solidarity or language loyalty. Fasold suggests that attitudes toward a language are often the reflection of attitudes towards members of various ethnic groups: the people's reactions to language varieties reveal much of their perception of the speakers of these varieties (Fasold, 1984, p. 148). Changing attitude is very important in L2 teaching and learning. If the learners have positive attitude, they will certainly learn better than those who foster negative attitude towards the TL. Similarly, if the teacher has negative attitude towards the TL and learners, his teaching will never be effective. Attitudes are mixed and changing concept. Crystal (2000) states such concept of attitudes as,

Within a community, attitudes will be mixed: some members will be in favour of preservation, others will be against it. There will be pride,

apathy, guilt, denial, regret, and many other emotions. Moreover, the reasons for support and opposition will be mixed (p. 103).

Depending upon the situation, one family may be particularly proud of its tradition of ethnic identity; another family may not. One family may have gained a great deal economically from shifting to the new language; another family may not. One person may view an ancestral language as useless and irrelevant; another may not use functional arguments at all, seeing it rather as a source of spiritual or psychological strength. When studying language attitudes, the concept of motives is important. Two basic motives are instrumental and integrative motives. If a learner learns L2 for some utilitarian purposes (furthering a career, getting a job, etc.), he is considered to have instrumental motive. If L2 acquisition is considered as instrumental, the knowledge in a language is considered as a “passport to prestige and success”. The speaker/learner considers the speaking/learning of English as functional aspect (Ellis, 1991, p. 117). On the other hand, if a learner wishes to identify with the target community; to learn the language and the culture of the speakers of that language so that one can be able to become a member of the group, the motivation is called integrative. In general sense, the integrative motivation can be more beneficial for the learning of another language. Moreover, motivation derived from a sense of academic or communicative success is more likely to motivate one to speak a foreign/second language (Ellis 1991, p. 118). Understanding one’s viewpoints, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, sentiments, perception and tendency is prerequisite for any decision making tasks. So, such studies are of great value.

Moreover, attitudinal studies have great importance in many social and educational setting as attitude has a close tie with motivation and learning.

In this context, Finocchiaro (1969) writes,

The attitudes of students, teachers, community members, peers and other with whom the student comes into contact all affect motivation to some extent but it is attitude of the teacher towards the students and towards his/her profession that is the essence and core of motivation (p. 22).

However, measuring anyone's attitude is a very difficult job. In accordance with Best and Kahn (2004), "Information which attempts to measure the attitudes or beliefs of an individual is known as opinionnaire or attitude scale" (p. 245). So, the researcher must depend upon people's view on something. To measure attitude we can develop a questionnaire or interview schedule and elicit one's view toward an object or issue. Such attitudinal studies try to seek reason(s) toward some issues or phenomena. Furthermore, the views or opinions can be interpreted by using several scales. Some of them include Likert scales having five alternatives which can be interpreted by using chi-square formula or calculating percentile, Thurstone scale which calculates median value, judgemental scoring with degrees of magnitude, configural scoring and so forth. In addition, the attitudes or opinions can also be interpreted by applying simple statistical tools like measure of central tendency i.e., mode, median, mean or average.

## **1.2 Review of the Related Literature**

Many research works have been carried out on language planning, language issues and linguistic demography of Nepal. However, not a great deal of studies has been carried out on language shift by indigenous people. Some of the related studies are briefly stated in this section.

Pokharel (1993) explains that the formulation of language planning and the implication of language policy in Nepal are challenging tasks due to the

situation of bilingualism, semi-bilingualism, language loyalty, language decline, language death, language shift etc. His suggestion for continuous programme to preserve and develop all the languages is very important. He has recommended to imply the programme in terms of the number of speakers. Though his suggestions seem to be very practicable, he did not talk about the need and attitude of indigenous people which is very important for language maintenance.

Bhatta (1997) conducted a research entitled 'Language Planning Policy in the Education Sector of Nepal and the Status of English in it'. He had attempted to find out the attitudes of the different groups of people towards the present language policy in the education sector of Nepal. He found that the attitude of the majority of population was negative towards the present language policy. He has suggested to adopt multilingual education policy and use the mother tongue as a medium of instruction to facilitate learning. However, he could not find out the attitudes of different groups of people towards their mother tongue, Nepali language and English language which are very important for language planning.

Kuncha and Bathula (2004) carried out a research entitled 'The Role of Attitudes in Language Shift and Language Maintenance in a New Immigrant Community: A Case Study'. The study was conducted to investigate language attitude of mothers and children in Telugu community and how they relate to loss of language in an English speaking country. The study was carried out on new immigrants of Telugu community in New Zealand. They found that both mothers and children have less positive attitudes towards Telugu than English, which adversely affects the Telugu language maintenance. Similarly, the majority of mothers want to speak Telugu at home while fewer children are willing to do so as they do not feel it is necessary for their daily chores.

They also noted that language shift is found more in second born than the first born child. Furthermore, they concluded that ‘necessity’ and ‘pride’ are the two influencing factors of language shift.

Shetty (2004) conducted a research entitled ‘Language Contact and the Maintenance of the Tulu language in South India’. The main objective of the study was to find out the factors contributing to language maintenance and language shift. She also aimed to point out the role of code switching in language shift. She conducted a field research over a period of two months in two locations: The South Kannara district and the city of Mumbai.

Questionnaire and interview were the main tools used in the research. She found that Tulu speaker in South Kannara are committed to maintain their group identity and choose not to code switch between Tulu and Kannara. As a result, there is maintenance of Tulu language in the region. But code switching between Tulu and other languages in Mumbai is common and language shift from Tulu to other languages is taking place. She drew a conclusion that if the role of language as a symbol of group membership is far greater than the need for social identity negotiations, there is likely to be no code switching, and language maintenance is a possibility. If on the other hand, the concept of a coherent group loses its significance, the language that is associated with the group loses its social and symbolic value making language shift likely.

Chaubey et al. (2008) conducted a research entitled ‘Language Shift by Indigenous Population: A Model Genetic Study in South Asia’. They carried out the research on Mushar population which is thought to have undergone language shift from Munda (an Austro-Asiatic Language) to Hindi (an Indo-European Language). The results revealed much closer genetic affinity of the Mushar people to the neighbouring Austro-Asiatic (Mundari) population, than to the neighbouring Hindi-speaking population. This example shows that the language shift as such is not necessarily a signal for rapid genetic mixture, either maternally or paternally. The research was totally biological (genetic)

linguistic study based on laboratory experiment method whereas the research I wanted to conduct is based on survey method.

Thus, several researches have been carried out on language maintenance, language shift and language planning policies by various researchers previously which are somehow related to my research area. Some of them are survey research whereas others are experimental biological study. However, no research work is conducted to explore the attitude towards mother tongue, Nepali and English. This research differs from all above mentioned researches in the sense that it is a survey research which aims to investigate whether there is language shift among Nepalese people in Kathmandu and, if so, identify what role attitude played in the shift and maintenance of their language. Furthermore, I am interested to carry out this research to find out the attitude of different groups of people towards their mother tongue, Nepali and English. So, it is a new venture in itself.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study had the following objectives:

1. To find out the situation of language shift in Kathmandu.
2. To find out the attitudes of the following groups of people towards their mother tongue, the Nepali language and the English language:-
  - i. Teachers
  - ii. Students
  - iii. Politicians
  - iv. Business persons
  - v. Ethnic groups.
3. To suggest some pedagogical implications.



#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study is significant for the prospective researchers who want to carry out sociolinguistic survey in Nepal. After 1990, all the languages obtained constitutional rights to provide primary education in their mother tongue but the government has not implemented a clear and definite language policy for all indigenous languages in the country. As this study focuses on attitudes towards using mother tongues, the Nepali and English languages, it will help language planners to plan an appropriate multi-lingual policy in the education sector of Nepal to some extent. It will also help them to fix the position of English in the national language policy framework and position of English in formal education. This study will also be helpful to justify the role of English to promote and strengthen democracy in Nepal. Since the main purpose of this research is to find out the situation of language shift as well as attitudes towards the use of their mother tongues, the Nepali and English languages, it is useful to English teachers in their dual positions as promoters of English and protectors of an ancestral language.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this study, I adopted a survey research design. Since the study was aimed at finding out the situation of language shift and the attitudes of different groups of people towards their mother tongues, the Nepali and English languages, it was not possible to conduct the study in laboratory experiment and self - study method. Moreover, the study was aimed to confine the use and functional roles of indigenous, Nepali and English in education and suggest options for better language policy in the country. So I adopted an evaluative opinion survey method. This method enabled me to find out the necessary facts, opinions and practices to the subject mentioned above. The sources of data, sample size, sampling procedure, tools for data collection, process of data collection and the limitations of the study are specified as follows.

#### **2.1 Sources of Data**

I have used both primary and secondary sources of data to complete this research work.

##### **2.1.1 Primary Sources**

This study was primarily based on primary sources of data. The data were mainly collected from teachers, students, politicians, business persons and representative members of ethnic groups currently living in Kathmandu valley.

##### **2.1.2 Secondary Sources**

As the secondary sources, I consulted various books, journals, articles and related previous research works available in print or online sources. Some of them were Lambert (1967), Wardhaugh (1986), Fishman (1991), Toba (1992), Aniche (1997), Eagle (1999) , Crystal (2000), Aitchison (2001), Crystal (2003), Chaubey et al. (2008), different issues of CBS Report and so forth.

## 2.2 Population of the Study

The total population of the study were all the Nepalese people currently living in Kathmandu valley. The population of the study were stratified on 5 different strata viz. teachers, students, politicians, business persons and representative members of different ethnic groups. Among them, 20 respondents from each stratum were taken as sample population of the study.

## 2.3 Sampling Procedure

From the total population, one hundred respondents were sampled on the basis of stratified random sampling procedure. There were five different strata viz. teachers, students, politicians, business persons and representative members of ethnic community. From each stratum, twenty respondents were sampled on the basis of non – random judgemental sampling procedure. In this way, there were altogether one hundred respondents from five different strata. Hence, the sampled population includes:

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Teachers	20
Students	20
Politicians	20
Business Persons	20
Members of ethnic group	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## 2.4 Tools for Data Collection

Tools for data collection were questionnaires and semi-structured interview. A series of open-ended and close-ended questionnaires were formulated to fulfil the aforementioned objectives of the study. The same questionnaires were used to collect information and opinion from all the respondents. Short and semi-structured interview was conducted using the same questionnaire to reduce length of time while eliciting information from people having busy schedule and illiterate ones. There were twenty three questions along with sub-questions. A sample of questionnaire is attached in the appendix-I.

## **2.5 Process of Data Collection**

After formulating the questionnaire, I directly visited the deserved fields for data collection. Schools, campuses, political parties, markets and ethnic community were the major fields for data collection. At first, I made contacts with some teachers and students. I administered the pre-set questionnaire to the purposively selected teachers and students by explaining them the purpose of the study. There were twenty teachers and equal number of students, altogether forty. Similarly, I visited different places, markets and ethnic community, established rapport, fixed the time and administered the questionnaire by explaining them the purpose of the study. The informants were purposively selected. To some illiterate people, I took an interview translating the same questions into the Nepali language. Similarly, to some people having busy schedule, I took short and semi – structured interview. Finally, I collected the questionnaires from the respondents and thanked all of them. For the secondary sources of data, I consulted my supervisor, related bookshops, libraries and internet websites.

## **2.6 Limitations of the Study**

The study had the following limitations:

- i. The study was geographically confined to Kathmandu city.
- ii. It was limited to study language shift by individual, not by any particular community.
- iii. The study was limited to find out the attitudes of different groups of people towards their mother tongues, the Nepali and English languages.
- iv. The study was further limited to the analysis of information obtained from the hundred informants only.
- v. The study was limited to the speakers of those languages which have their own orthographic system.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

This chapter is mainly concerned with analysis and interpretation of the data. In this section of the study, the data collected from different sources were analyzed and interpreted to fulfil the aforementioned objectives. The data were analyzed and interpreted under the two broad headings viz. Situation of language shift and Attitude of different groups of people towards Mother tongue, Nepali and English language.

It has already been mentioned that a set of questionnaire consisting of open-ended and closed-ended questions were developed as a tool for the collection of data. The percentage is the main basis for the data analysis. While analyzing the data, the total number of responses were counted and changed into percentage.

#### **3.1 Situation of Language Shift**

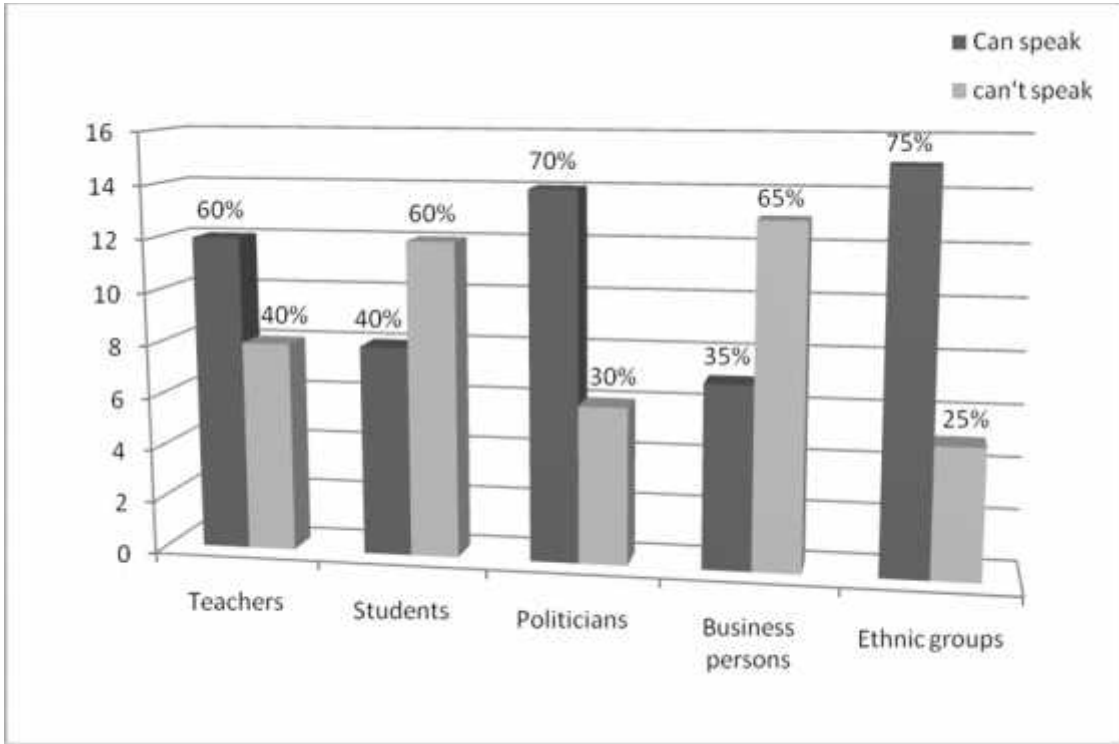
In this section, different questions pertaining to the use of their mother tongue, languages they know and domains of language use were asked to find out whether there is language shift or not. If there is, what is the situation of language shift, whether it is towards the national language Nepali or an international language English? All the respondents were directly asked whether they can use their mother tongue or not. Their responses are tabulated and analysed as below:

**Table No. 1**  
**Number of Speakers who can Speak Their Mother tongue**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Speakers</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1.	Teachers	12	60
2.	Students	8	40
3.	Politicians	14	70
4.	Business persons	7	35
5.	Ethnic groups	15	75

The above table shows that the highest percentage of mother tongue speaker is ethnic group (i.e. 75%) whereas the lowest percentage of mother tongue speaker is business persons (i.e. 35%). This indicates that 25% of ethnic group and 65% of business persons can not speak their mother tongue. That means they have shifted their first language from mother tongue to other languages. Similarly, 70% of politicians, 60% of teachers and 40% of students can speak their mother tongue. That means 30% of politicians, 40% of teachers and 60% of students can not speak their mother tongue i.e. they have shifted their first language from mother tongue to other languages. In total, 56% speakers were found to be able to speak their mother tongue which implies that 44% speakers can not speak their mother tongue i.e. they have shifted their first language from mother tongue to other languages. The number of each variable who can/ can't speak their mother tongue is presented in the following multiple bar diagram:

**Diagram No. 1**  
**Use of Mother tongue**



When the respondents were asked about the languages they know, 100% respondents answered that they can speak the Nepali language which is the single official language of the nation. So, it is the most affective language to be replaced or shifted in place of their mother tongue.

In the study, 34% of the sampled population were married. Out of them, only 55.88% (i.e. 19% of the total sampled population) were found to use their mother tongue at home. This indicates that only 55.88% parents are transferring their mother tongue as a first language to their children. Furthermore, it shows that 44.12% parents (i.e. 15% of the total sampled population) do not use their mother tongue at home and are ceasing to transfer their mother tongue as a first language to their children. It indicates a great possibility of language shift in near future because their languages are moribund.

### 3.1.1 Partial Language Shift

Under this heading, it was attempted to find out partial language shift. For this, respondents were asked whether they can speak/ read/ write in their mother tongue and/ or other languages. Specifically, proficiency of the respondents in the use of three languages (mother tongue, Nepali and English) are analyzed on the basis of their responses. The data are tabulated below:

**Table No. 2**  
**Proficiency in the use of Mother tongue, Nepali and English**

S. No.	Respondents	Mother tongue		Nepali language		English language	
		Speak	Read & write	Speak	Read & write	Speak	Read & write
1.	Teachers	60	25	100	100	100	100
2.	Students	40	15	100	100	100	100
3.	Politicians	70	20	100	100	90	85
4.	Business persons	35	10	100	100	85	70
5.	Ethnic groups	75	25	100	90	75	70

The above table shows that 60% teachers can speak their mother tongue where as only 25% can read and write. Similarly, 40% students can speak their mother tongue where as only 15% can read and write, 70% politicians can speak but only 20% can read and write, 35% business persons can speak but only 10% can read and write, 75% ethnic group can speak but only 25% can read and write in their mother tongue. The data indicates that 75% teachers, 85% students, 80% politicians, 90% business persons and 75% ethnic group can not read and write in their mother tongue i.e. there is partial language shift among them. Furthermore, majority of respondents can read and write in Nepali as well as 100% teachers and students, 85% politicians, 70% business persons and 70% ethnic group can read and write in English which indicates that language shift is occurring towards the Nepali and English languages.

### **3.1.2 Domains of Language Use**

Under this section, it was attempted to analyze domains of language use in brief. Fishman (1991, p. 44) has first quoted the term ‘domains of use’ and defined the term as, “...areas in which the language is used, such as home, work, religion, mechanics, government, and education” (as cited in Anonby, 1997, p. 12). He further says that when a speech community is multilingual, one language may be used in some domains (for example, home and religion); and another language in others (for example, education and government). Hence domain refers to a group of institutionalized social situations typically constrained by a common set of behavioural rules. In this study, only some domains are analyzed. They are home, working place/school/ college and community. Q. No. 9 – 11 (see appendix-I) were asked to the informants to uncover the fact. Their responses are tabulated and presented in the following table:



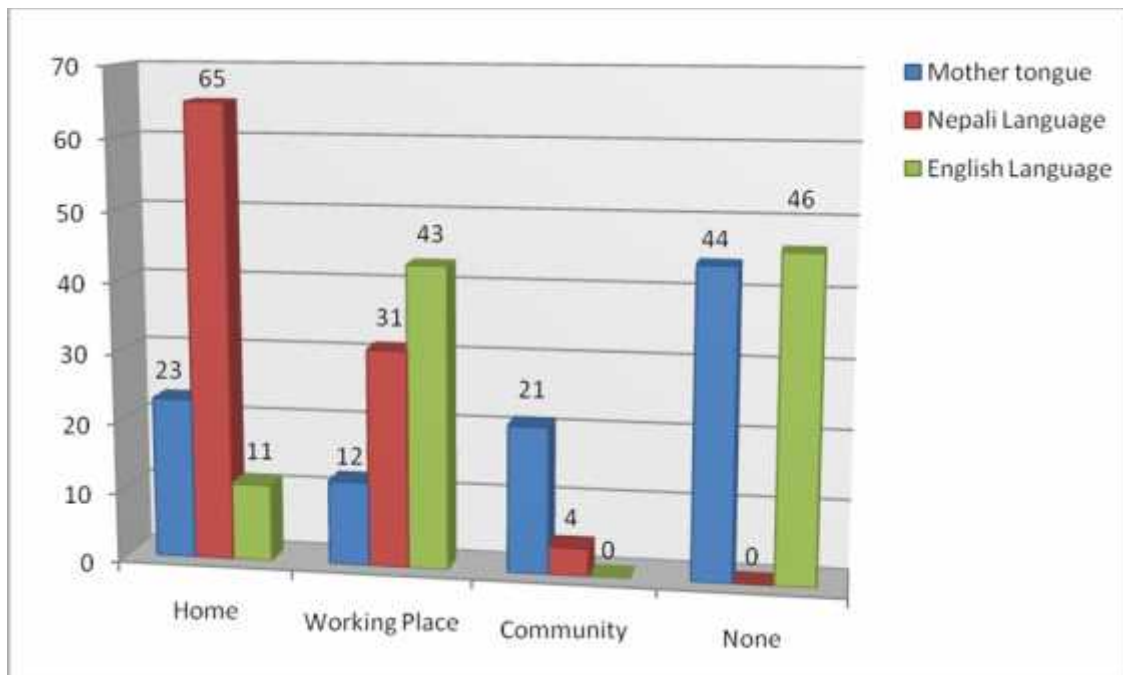
**Table No. 3**  
**Domains of Language Use**

Respondents		Teachers	Students	Politicians	Business Persons	Ethnic Members	Total (%)
Domains							
<b>Mother Tongue</b>	Home	5	3	5	3	7	23
	Working Place	1	1	3	2	5	12
	Community	6	4	6	2	3	21
	None	8	12	6	13	5	44
<b>Nepali Language</b>	Home	14	15	12	11	13	65
	Working Place	5	4	7	8	7	31
	Community	1	1	1	1	0	4
	None	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>English Language</b>	Home	1	2	2	6	0	11
	Working Place	14	15	3	10	1	43
	Community	0	0	0	0	0	0
	None	5	3	15	4	19	46

The above table shows that the most frequently used domain of mother tongue is home i.e. altogether 23% and the most frequent user of mother tongue at home is ethnic group i.e. 35%. On the other hand, the least frequently used domain of mother tongue is working place i.e. altogether 12%. It indicates that the use of mother tongue is being constricted to home. Similarly, the most frequently used domain of the Nepali language is also home. Altogether 65% respondents were found to use the Nepali language at home. Furthermore, the most frequently used domain of the English language is working place.

Altogether 43% respondents were found to use the language in that domain. This figure can be presented in the following multiple bar diagram:

**Diagram No. 2**  
**Domains of Language Use**



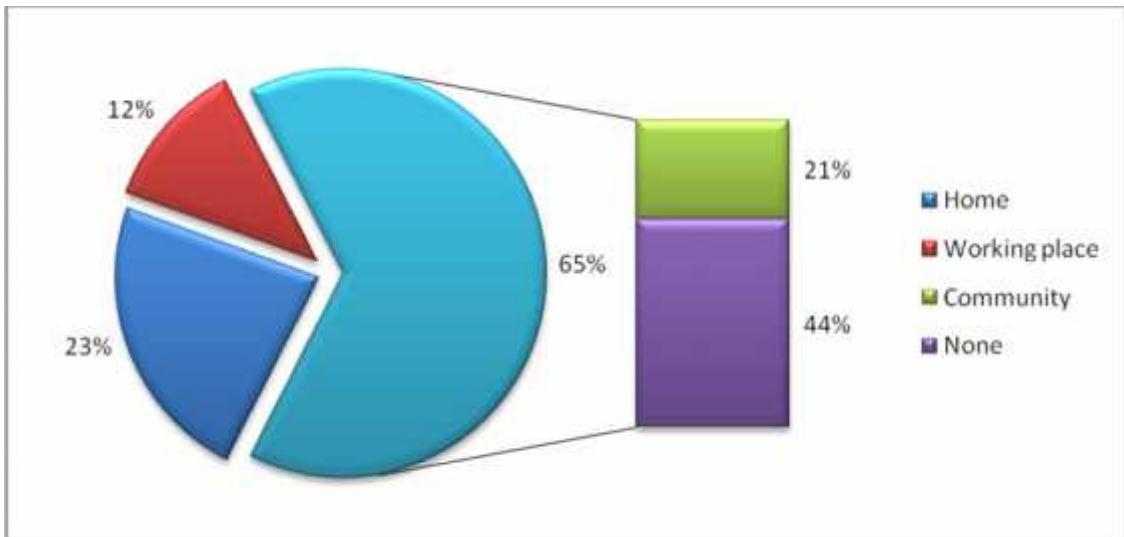
Furthermore, the data is analyzed in the following three subsections for the convenience of domain analysis in each language:

### **3.1.2.1 Domains of Language Use (Mother tongue)**

Q. No. 9 (see appendix-I) was asked to find out the areas where they often use their mother tongue. Twenty-three percent respondents revealed the fact that they use their mother tongue at home, 21% said that they use their mother tongue when they meet the people of their community and 12% said that they use their mother tongue at their working place. Forty-four percent respondents revealed the fact that they do not use their mother tongue at all. It was found that the most frequently used domain of mother tongue is home. The information obtained from them is presented in the following pie chart:

**Chart No. 1**

**Domains of Language Use (Mother tongue)**

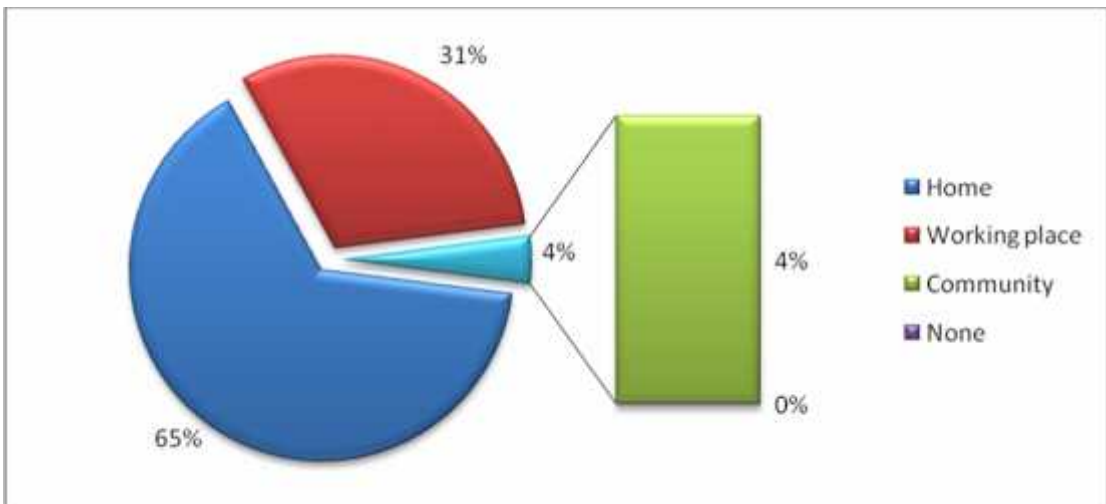


**3.1.2.2 Domains of Language Use (Nepali Language)**

Q. No. 10 (see appendix-I) was asked to find out the areas where they often use Nepali language. Sixty-five percent respondents revealed the fact that they use the Nepali language at home, 31% said that they use the Nepali language at working place and 4% use in their community. The data indicates that the most frequently used domain of the Nepali language is also home. The information obtained from them is presented in the following pie chart:

**Chart No. 2**

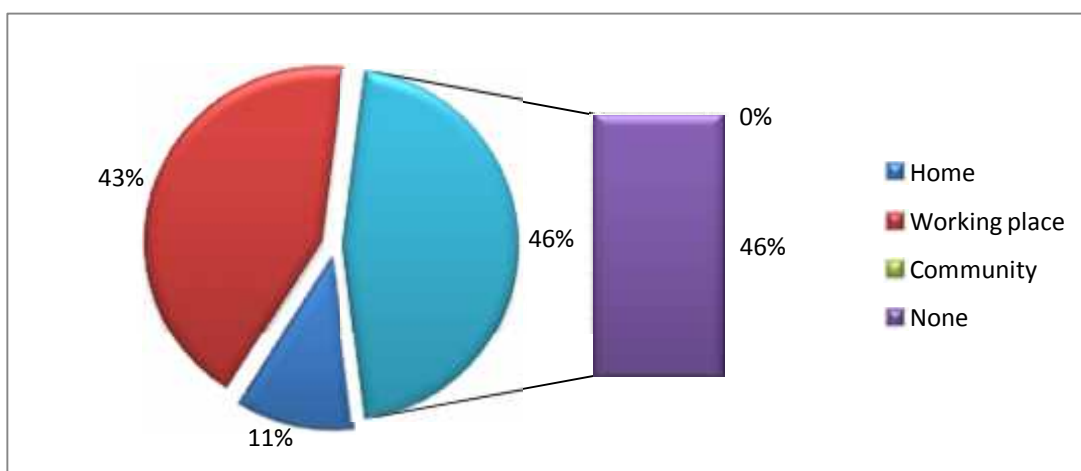
**Domains of Language Use (Nepali Language)**



### 3.1.2.3 Domains of Language Use (English Language)

Q. No. 11 (see appendix-I) was asked to find out the areas where they often use the English language. Eleven percent respondents revealed the fact that they use the English language at home and 43% use at their working place. Forty-six percent respondents revealed the fact that they do not use the English language. It was found that the most frequently used domain of the English language is the working place. The information obtained from them is presented in the following pie chart:

**Chart No. 3**  
**Domains of Language Use (English Language)**



### 3.2 Language Attitude

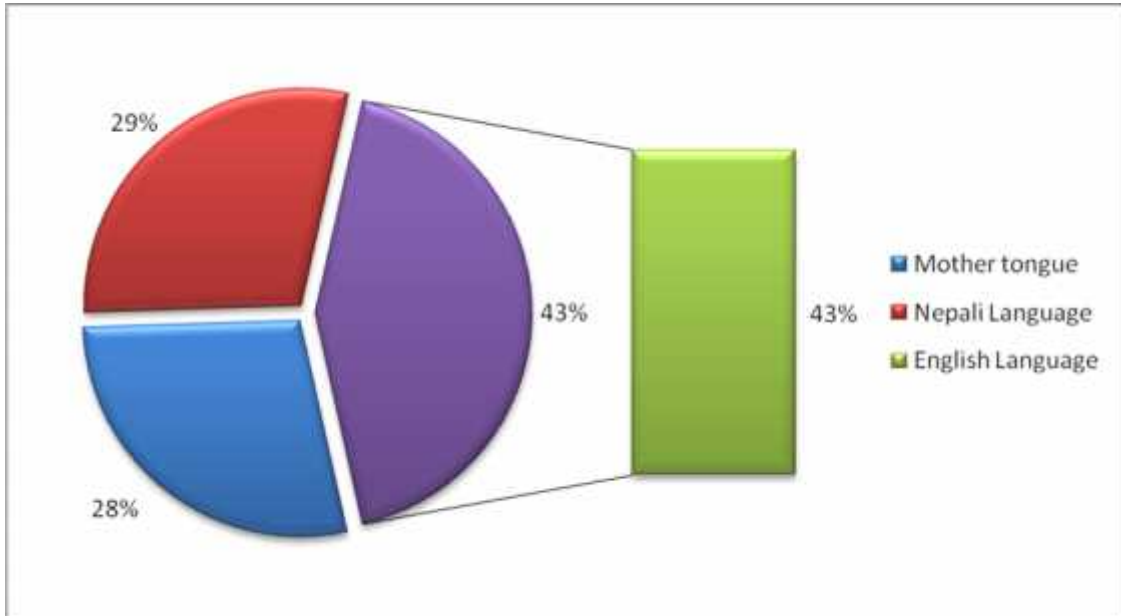
Under this section, it was attempted to analyze the attitude of different groups of people towards Mother tongue, Nepali and/ or English languages. It was tried to find out their most preferred language to speak, how they feel while speaking those languages etc. To uncover the fact, seven questions (Q. No. 12 – 18, see in appendix-I) were asked. On the basis of their responses, the following information were drawn and presented in the following table:

**Table No. 4**  
**Choice of Language**

S. No.	Respondents	Mother tongue		Nepali Language		English Language	
		Fo	P	Fo	P	Fo	P
1.	Teachers	5	25	6	30	9	45
2.	Students	3	15	2	10	15	75
3.	Politicians	8	40	7	35	5	25
4.	Business persons	3	15	9	45	8	40
5.	Ethnic groups	9	45	5	25	6	30
6.	Total	28	28	29	29	43	43

From the above table, it can be said that the Mother tongue is the most preferred language among politicians and ethnic groups, the Nepali language among business persons and the English language among teachers and students. In totality, 28% respondents preferred mother tongue to speak, 29% respondents preferred the Nepali language and 43% respondents preferred the English language to speak. It indicates that English is the most preferred language among the three languages. It can be presented in the following pie chart to make the data more vivid.

**Chart No. 4**  
**Choice of Language**



Similarly, it was attempted to study the feelings of the speakers while speaking mother tongue, the Nepali and/ or English language. So, Q. No. 13 - 15 (see in appendix-I) were asked to uncover the fact. After analyzing the data, it came to be known that 49% respondents feel proud and 51% feel normal while speaking their own mother tongue. In the same way, 30% respondents feel proud and 70% feel normal while speaking the Nepali language. Similarly, 25% respondents feel proud, 35% feel normal and 40% feel uneasiness and hesitate to speak the English language. It can be concluded that majority of the respondents have positive attitude towards all aforementioned languages i.e. positive attitude towards multilingualism.

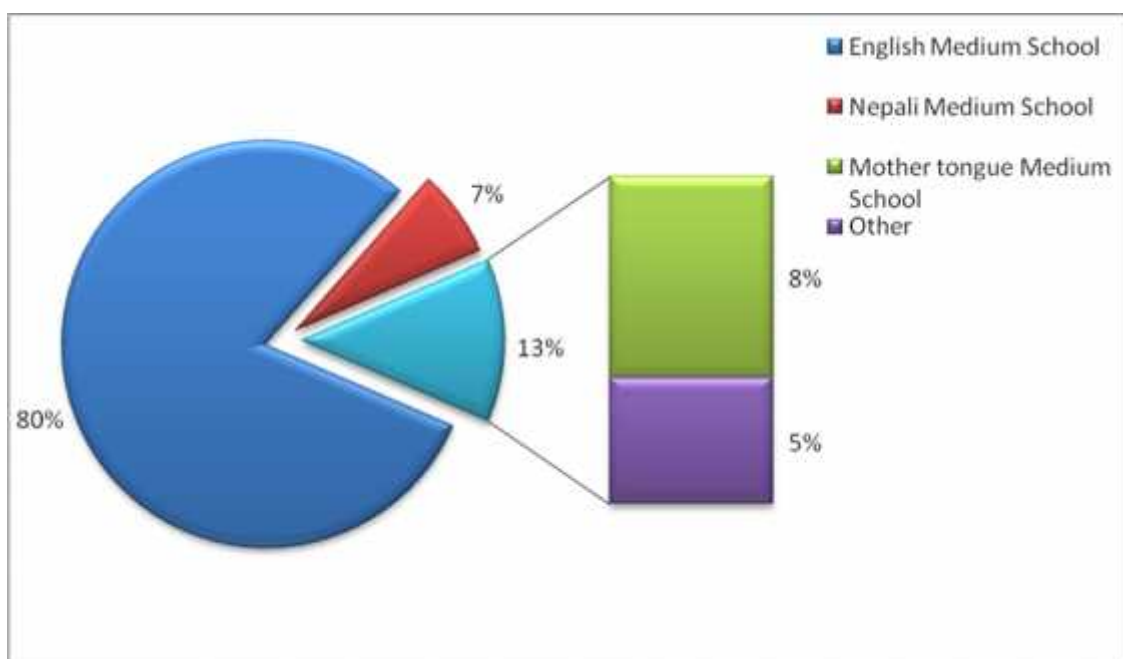
### **3.2.1 Preference Given to the Language as a Medium of Instruction in a School**

Under this section, it was attempted to find out the favourite or the most preferred language as a medium of instruction in a school. Q. No. 16 (see in appendix-I) was asked to the respondents for this purpose. Generally, English

medium school is referred to a school having the English language as a medium of instruction. In the same way, Nepali medium and mother tongue medium school are used here to refer to a school having the Nepali language and mother tongue as a medium of instruction respectively. On the basis of their responses, information obtained are presented and analyzed in the following pie chart:

**Chart No. 5**

**Preferred Language as a Medium of Instruction in a School**



The above chart shows that majority of the respondents (i.e. 80%) prefer the English language as a medium of instruction in a school. The least preference is given to the Nepali language to be used as a medium of instruction in a school. There are some different views as well. Five percent respondents expressed such views that it would be fruitful to use mother tongue as a medium of instruction at primary level, Nepali at secondary level and English at higher secondary level or above. They expressed such idealistic view claiming that learning will be easier with ones own mother tongue as a medium of instruction at primary level. On the other hand, the Nepali language is a national language

of our country and is essential to maintain the unity in a diverse country like Nepal. So, it would be fruitful to use this language at secondary level. But, the English language is more advantageous language to get better education at higher level.

So, it would be better to use this language at higher secondary level or above. All the respondents were asked to express some reasons to support their views. Those respondents who preferred mother tongue medium school gave following reasons to support their views:

- (1) It will be easier to learn in one's own language.
- (2) It will help to save their mother tongue.
- (3) It will help to save their culture and preserve identity.

Those respondents who preferred Nepali medium school gave the following reasons to support their views:

- (1) The Nepali language is a national language. So, everybody should learn it.
- (2) It will help to unite the people.
- (3) It is a link language and easy to manage.

Those respondents who preferred English medium school gave the following reasons to support their views:

- (1) It is an international language.
- (2) It helps to acquire better education at higher level.
- (3) It helps to grab better job opportunity.

### **3.2.2 Need of Education through Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction**

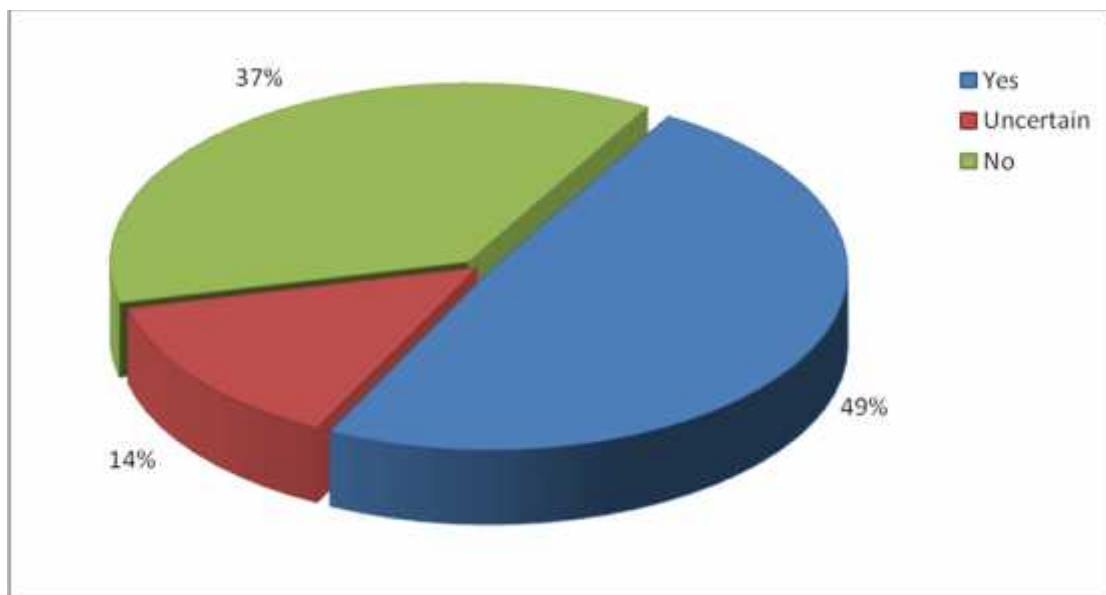
In a general sense, English is used in international communication, Nepali in national communication and ethnic languages in local communication. English is a vast language and most of the ethnic languages are 'small' languages with



respect to the number of speakers. Nowadays, people are motivated to provide education through the medium of the English and/ or Nepali languages for various reasons. Most of the English medium schools or institutions are gaining popularity but the ethnic language medium schools or institutions are not able to gain high reputation. Even though, some people are tempted to have education through the medium of their own mother tongue (Eagle 1999, pp. 302-307). In this controversial situation, it is important to understand the view of different groups of people and their interests towards providing education through mother tongue. So, to uncover the fact, it was asked to the respondents whether it is necessary to provide education through their mother tongue or not (See in Appendix). On the basis of their responses, the following information were drawn and presented in the pie chart.

**Chart No. 6**

**Need of Education through Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction**



As shown in the above chart, majority of the respondents (i.e. 49%) viewed that it is necessary to provide education through mother tongue. On the other hand, 14% respondents were uncertain and 37% viewed that it is not necessary.

Furthermore, those respondents who felt the necessity of education through mother tongue gave the following reasons to support their view:

- a) Children can understand better and learn more effectively through their mother tongue i.e. it facilitates learning or makes learning more effective.
- b) It helps to preserve and develop the ethnic languages, identity and culture.
- c) It is mainly useful in the rural and disadvantaged group of people.
- d) It helps to bring conceptual change of their parents and/ or a society.

On the contrary, 37% respondents viewed that it is not necessary to provide education through their mother tongue. They gave some reasons to support their views which are summarised below:

- a) The English and/ or Nepali language help children for further study and make their livelihood better but mother tongue can not serve this function.
- b) The English and Nepali languages are advanced languages. So, a child can not adjust in the modern world without being able to communicate with the medium of national or international language.
- c) Using mother tongue as a medium of instruction in a school does not help to preserve and develop ethnic language and culture. But using mother tongue in the community by themselves will help to survive it.

### **3.2.3 Necessity of Mother Tongues, Nepali and English Languages**

Under this section, as the title suggests, it was attempted to find out the necessity of mother tongues, Nepali and English languages and the reason behind this necessity. To uncover the fact, altogether 21 statements, 7 for each language, were presented to the respondents. Statements i-vii of A were related to the necessity of one's own mother tongue, i-vii of B to the Nepali language

and i-vii of C to the English language (see in Appendix-I). Here, only their positive responses are analyzed as the negative one is redundant in this case. Hence their positive responses are tabulated, analyzed and interpreted as below:

**Table No. 5**  
**Necessity of Mother Tongue**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Politicians</b>	<b>Business persons</b>	<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Facilitating the learning	95	90	90	80	95	90
2.	Enabling children to make original contributions to ethnic languages and literature	95	85	95	90	100	93
3.	Preserving the ethnic language	90	55	90	70	95	80
4.	Motivating the people to take part in education	95	80	90	85	95	89
5.	Reducing drop out rates and illiteracy	90	75	90	90	95	88
6.	Fulfilling the demand of different ethnic groups	80	75	95	80	100	86
7.	Improving quality in education	60	70	85	80	95	78

The above table shows that the majority of teachers i.e. 95% gave equal importance to response nos. 1, 2 and 4 where as response no. 7 got the least importance among them i.e. 60%. Similarly, response no. 1 got the highest percentage among students i.e. 90% and response no. 3 the lowest percentage i.e.55%. Both response nos. 2 and 6 got the highest percentage among politicians i.e. 95% and response no. 7 the lowest percentage i.e. 85%. Likewise, response nos. 2 and 5 got the highest percentage among business persons i.e. 90% and response no. 3 the lowest percentage i.e. 70%.

Both response nos. 3 and 4 got the highest percentage among ethnic groups i.e. 100% and all other responses got the equal percentage i.e. 95%. Thus, it is clear from the table that the responses (i.e. reasons for necessity of mother tongue) varied according to the groups of respondents.

Furthermore, if the data is observed holistically, response no. 2 carries the highest percentage (i.e. 93%) and response no. 7 the lowest percentage (i.e. 78%). Hence, the responses can be presented in a decreasing order as below:

1. Enabling children to make original contributions to ethnic languages and literature.
2. Facilitating the learning.
3. Motivating the people to take part in education.
4. Reducing drop out rates and illiteracy.
5. Fulfilling the demand of different ethnic groups.
6. Preserving the ethnic language.
7. Improving quality in education.

The following table is presented to show the responses of the informants on the necessity of Nepali language.

**Table No. 6**  
**Necessity of the Nepali Language**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Politicians</b>	<b>Business persons</b>	<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Facilitating the learning	55	45	50	45	40	47
2.	Getting a better job or opportunity in future	45	40	40	30	40	39
3.	Promoting national unity and identity	75	80	80	85	65	77
4.	Motivating the people to take part in education	35	30	45	30	30	34
5.	Serving the function of a link language	75	70	80	85	75	77
6.	Preparing children for further study	40	35	40	30	30	35
7.	Improving quality in education	40	30	45	35	35	37

As shown in the above table, both response nos. 3 and 5 carry the highest percentage among teachers (i.e. 75%) whereas response no. 4 carries the lowest percentage (i.e. 35%). Likewise, response no. 3 carries the highest percentage among students (i.e. 80%) whereas response nos. 4 and 7 carry the lowest percentage (i.e. 30%). Response nos. 3 and 5 carry the highest percentage among politicians (i.e. 80%) whereas response nos. 2 and 6 carry the lowest percentage (i.e. 40%). Similarly, response nos. 3 and 5 carry the highest percentage in the opinion of business persons (i.e. 85%) whereas response nos. 2, 4 and 6 carry the lowest percentage (i.e. 30%). Furthermore, response no. 5

carries the highest percentage in the opinion of ethnic groups (i.e. 75%) whereas response nos. 4 and 6 carry the lowest percentage (i.e. 30%). Thus, it can be seen that all responses vary according to the respondents. If the data is analyzed holistically, response nos. 3 and 5 carry the highest percentage (i.e. 77%) whereas, response no. 4 carry the lowest percentage (i.e. 34%). Hence, it can be said that the necessity of the Nepali language is considered so as to promote national unity and identity and serve the function of a link language. The responses can be listed in a descending order as below:

1. Promoting national unity and identity.
2. Serving the function of a link language.
3. Facilitating the learning.
4. Getting a better job or opportunity in future.
5. Improving quality in education.
6. Preparing children for further study.
7. Motivating the people to take part in education.

Furthermore, a table is presented below to show the responses of the informants on the necessity of the English language.

**Table No. 7**  
**Necessity of the English Language**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Politicians</b>	<b>Business persons</b>	<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Facilitating the learning	70	75	70	80	75	74
2.	Getting a better job or opportunity in future	65	75	80	80	80	74
3.	Making children familiar with the foreign culture	45	40	35	40	30	38
4.	Motivating the people to take part in education	75	75	70	80	70	74
5.	Serving the function of a link language	65	75	75	80	70	73
6.	Preparing children for further study	95	95	90	95	90	93
7.	Improving quality in education	60	65	60	65	45	59

As shown in the above table, response no 6. carries the highest percentage among all respondents (i.e. 95% teachers and same percentage of students and business persons, 90% politicians and same percentage of ethnic groups; in totality 93% of respondents). On the other hand, response no. 3 carries the lowest percentage (i.e. 9% teachers, 8% students, 7% politicians, 8% business persons and 6% of ethnic groups; in total 38 % of respondents). From this data, it can be concluded that the English language is necessary in order to prepare children for further study. The responses can be mentioned in descending order as below:

1. Preparing children for further study.
2. Facilitating the learning.
3. Getting a better job or opportunity in future.
4. Motivating the people to take part in education.
5. Serving the function of a link language.
6. Improving quality in education.
7. Making children familiar with the foreign culture.

### **3.2.4 Suitability of Mother Tongues, Nepali and English Languages**

Under this sub-section, questions related to the suitability of mother tongues, Nepali and English languages in 10 different levels of education were presented to the informants in the form of a table (see in appendix-I). The informants were asked to tick the mark ( ) for suitable language(s) in the particular level of education. Ten different levels of education given in the questionnaire are reduced to six levels for analysis and interpretation. The non – formal education viz. Adult literacy and basic literacy are reduced to ‘literacy level’. Open Universities, Vocational education and special education are combined into ‘Skill Development’. Higher Secondary and University levels are combined into ‘Tertiary Level’. The information obtained from them are tabulated and interpreted as below:

**Table No. 8**  
**Suitability of Mother tongue**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Politicians</b>	<b>Business persons</b>	<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Pre-primary	95	90	95	85	100	93
2.	Primary	65	75	95	75	100	82
3.	Secondary	25	45	60	50	50	46
4.	Tertiary	25	25	35	15	50	30



5.	Literacy	75	80	90	90	100	87
6.	Skill Development	75	85	90	90	100	88

As shown in the above table, the suitability of mother tongue as a medium of instruction at the pre-primary level has the highest percentage and tertiary level has the lowest percentage in the opinion of all respondents. It clearly shows that mother tongue as a medium of instruction is very useful for the beginners.

Likewise, opinions of different respondents towards suitability of the Nepali language for different levels of education were also studied and presented in the following table:

**Table No. 9**  
**Suitability of the Nepali Language**

S. No.	Levels	Teachers	Students	Politicians	Business persons	Ethnic groups	Total
1.	Pre-primary	35	25	50	15	0	25
2.	Primary	65	70	50	45	25	51
3.	Secondary	50	50	45	35	25	41
4.	Tertiary	35	50	45	25	20	30
5.	Literacy	90	75	75	95	30	73
6.	Skill Development	85	60	70	85	20	64

As shown in the above table, it can be said that the Nepali language is suitable as a medium of instruction for primary level (as 51% respondents opined it) but less suitable for pre-primary level and tertiary level as well. The figure also shows that Nepali is suitable as a medium of instruction for literacy level and vocational education (skill development). Likewise, opinions of different respondents towards suitability of the English language as a medium of

instruction for different levels of education were also collected. The information obtained from them are tabulated and analyzed as below:

**Table No. 10**  
**Suitability of the English Language**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Politicians</b>	<b>Business persons</b>	<b>Ethnic groups</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Pre-primary	15	10	25	35	0	17
2.	Primary	75	60	70	80	10	59
3.	Secondary	75	75	85	90	20	69
4.	Tertiary	95	90	100	100	25	82
5.	Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0
6.	Skill Development	55	65	55	75	35	57

As shown in the above table, the majority of the respondents (i.e. 82% in total) opined that the English language is suitable for tertiary level (i.e. higher level of education). From the figures shown in the above tables (i.e. table nos. 8-10), it can be concluded that mother tongue is suitable for pre-primary, Nepali for primary and secondary and English for tertiary level. It will be worth to mention here that some respondents opined as all three languages should be used from primary to higher secondary level in which Nepali and English should be treated as additional languages.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter deals with the major findings of the research. It also deals with some recommendations and pedagogical implications which are made on the basis of analysis and interpretation of the data.

#### **4.1 Findings of the Study**

The major concern of this study was to find out the situation of language shift and the attitude of different groups of people towards their mother tongues, the Nepali and English languages. The data collected from different sources were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted on the basis of various variables according to the aforementioned objectives. After the completion of analysis and interpretation of the data, the major findings of the study are summarized as follows.

As in other multilingual community, there is a case of language shift in Kathmandu too. Forty-four percent have shifted their first language from mother tongue to other languages. Moreover, there is a positive attitude towards all languages (mother tongues, Nepali and English) i.e. positive attitude towards multilingualism.

The findings related to the situation of language shift are listed below:

1. Most of the people are found to be unable to speak in their mother tongue which implies that they have shifted their first language from mother tongue to other languages. Language shift is found among 40% of teachers, 60% of students, 30% of politicians, 65% of business persons and 25% of ethnic groups. The highest frequency of language

shift is found among business persons and the lowest among ethnic groups.

2. The Nepali language, which is the single official language of the nation, is the most affective language to be replaced or shifted in place of ones own mother tongue.
3. Language shift is occurring towards the Nepali and English languages.
4. Since 44.12% parents do not use their mother tongue at home, they are ceasing to transfer their mother tongue as a first language to their children. It indicates a great possibility of language shift in near future because these languages are moribund.
5. Regarding the domains of language use, it is found that the most frequently used domain of mother tongue is home and the most frequent user of mother tongue at home is ethnic group. It indicates that the use of mother tongue is being constricted to home i.e. mother tongue is getting the status of home language.
6. It is found that the most frequently used domain of the Nepali language is also home. Altogether 65% respondents are found to use the Nepali language at home. Furthermore, the most frequently used domain of the English language is working place. Altogether 43% respondents are found to use the language in that domain. It indicates that there is a great possibility of the Nepali language users towards shifting the English language.
7. Regarding the choice of language to speak, 28% prefer mother tongue to speak, 29% prefer the Nepali language and 43% prefer the English language to speak. It indicates that English is the most preferred language among those languages. Mother tongues are the most

preferred language among politicians and ethnic groups, the Nepali among business persons and the English among students.

The findings related to attitude towards mother tongues, Nepali and English languages are listed below:

1. There is positive attitude towards all aforementioned languages (mother tongues, Nepali and English languages) i.e. positive attitude towards multilingualism.
2. Regarding the choice of school on the basis of language used as a medium of instruction, 80% prefer English medium school (so called Boarding School).
3. Regarding the necessity of providing education through mother tongue, 49% viewed that it is necessary.
4. Mother tongue as a medium of instruction at primary (elementary) level is necessary for learning facilitation. Nepali is necessary as it serves the function of a link language all over the country. Likewise, English is necessary to prepare children for further study.
5. It is found that mother tongue is the suitable language to be used for pre-primary, Nepali for primary and secondary and English for tertiary level of education.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings obtained from the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, some salient pedagogical implications with some recommendations have been suggested as follows:

1. The language planning and policy would be more fruitful if it is followed by a well planned and consistent 'multi-lingual approach'.

Due to the complex socio-cultural and socio-lingual situation, the government should adopt multi-lingual policy that can meet the needs and interests of all groups of people and the opportunity to study any languages in the education sector would promote national unity without destroying the rich cultural diversity.

2. Before applying multi-lingual policy, proper documentation of ethnic languages and literacy in mother tongue should be conducted.
3. It would be better to conceptualise the problems related to the issues of language use both in formal and non-formal education by the government. Before formulating any status planning, the ethos of multilingualism and cultural pluralism should be properly comprehended by the language planners and policy makers.
4. Language planning and policy should give rise to a sense of national pride based on both sentimental and instrumental attachment to the national system. The policy should serve both the individual and national needs and interests.
5. Language policy in education with regard to language choice for the medium of instruction in Nepal is suitable to initiate literacy level in the learner's mother tongue. It is suitable to provide education through the medium of mother tongue in pre-primary and primary levels. There should be a switch over to the Nepali and English languages at the later stages with an optional subject of mother tongue.
6. It can be suggested to the government to establish a language council with full responsibility of producing and supplying textbooks, skilled manpower and other necessary materials to make mother tongue (as a medium and/ or a subject) programme successful.

7. The uses of regional languages in mass media, journalism, literature etc are important factors to develop the ethnic languages. So the regional languages should be used in these areas.
8. The schools and language teachers also should pay attention while teaching language to promote the English language preserving ethnic languages.
9. The English language teachers are suggested to promote English encouraging and motivating the students to make original contributions to their ethnic languages and literature, making familiar with foreign culture while teaching.

For the further researchers,

1. The study was limited to Kathmandu valley only. It is advisable to carry out further researches in other areas of Nepal. It is also suggested to carry out other researches in different particular ethnic community.
2. Workshops, interaction programmes, seminars, conferences of the teachers, linguists, scholars, course designers, ELT experts, guardians, students etc. should be organized for promoting the English language as well as preserving and flourishing ethnic languages.

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## Appendix – I

### Questionnaire

Dear Informant,

I am doing a research entitled '**Language Shift in Kathmandu**' under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Govinda Raj Bhattarai, Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Education, T.U. Kirtipur. So, I humbly request you to go through the questions and provide the essential information. I promise you to keep your personal information secretly and it will not be exposed without your permission. I look forward to getting your assistance and co-operation in completing these questionnaires.

**Researcher**

Bishnu Deula

T.U. Kirtipur, Kathmandu

#### Personal Information:

Name	
Age	
Sex	
Religion	
Birthplace	
Father's name	
Mother's name	
Present address	
Education	
Present	

designation	
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1. How long have you been in Kathmandu?  
 (a) 2 – 5 Years    (b) 5 – 10 Years    (c) 10 – 15 Years    (d) by birth
2. Why did you come to Kathmandu?  
 (a) For higher education                      (b) For business  
 (c) For job    (d) For other purposes
3. What is your marital status?  
 (a) Married      (b) Single      (c) Divorced
4. If you are/were married, what type of marriage was that?  
 (a) Inter caste    (b) Within caste
5. What is your mother tongue? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you use your mother tongue at home?  
 (a) Yes    (b) No

Give some reasons to support your answer .....

.....

.....

7. How many languages do you know?

languages	Read	Write	Speak	Understand

8. How did you know those languages? Explain briefly.

.....

.....

9. Where do you often speak your mother tongue?

- (a) Home                      (b) Working place/ school/ college  
 (d) When you meet the people of your community    (d) No where

10. Where do you often speak Nepali language?  
 (a) Home (b) Working place/ school/ college  
 (c) When you meet the people of your community (d) No where
11. Where do you often speak English language?  
 (a) Home (b) Working place/ school/ college  
 (c) When you meet the people of your community (d) No where
12. Which language do you like to speak most?  
 (a) Mother tongue (b) Nepali (c) English
13. How do you feel while speaking your mother tongue?  
 (a) Proud (b) Ashamed (c) Normal (d) If different, \_\_\_\_\_
14. How do you feel while speaking Nepali language?  
 (a) Proud (b) Ashamed (c) Normal (d) If different, \_\_\_\_\_
15. How do you feel while speaking English language?  
 (a) Proud (b) Ashamed (c) Normal (d) If different, \_\_\_\_\_
16. If you have to send your child in a school, what type of school will you choose?  
 (a) Nepali – medium (b) English – medium (c) School of your mother tongue

Give some reasons to support your answer .....

.....

.....

17. Do you think that it is necessary to provide education through mother tongue?  
 (a) Yes (b) Uncertain (c) No

Give some reasons to support your answer .....

.....

.....

18. Why should we learn English language? Give your opinion.

.....

.....

.....

19. Please tick the mark (✓) for the answer of your choice.

A.

Mother tongue in school education is necessary for:		Agree	Disagree
i.	Facilitating the learning		
ii.	Enabling children to make original contributions to native languages and literature		
iii.	Preserving the native language		
iv.	Motivating the people to take part in education		
v.	Reducing drop out rates and illiteracy		
vi.	Fulfilling the demand of different ethnic groups		
vii.	Improving quality in education		

B.

Nepali language in school education is necessary for:		Agree	Disagree
i.	Facilitating the learning		
ii.	Getting a better job or opportunity in future		
iii.	Promoting national unity and identity.		
iv.	Motivating the people to take part in education		
v.	Serving the function of a link language		
vi.	Preparing children for further study		
vii.	Improving quality in education		

C.

English language in school education is necessary for:		Agree	Disagree
i.	Facilitating the learning		
ii.	Getting a better job or opportunity in future		
iii.	Making children familiar with the foreign culture		
iv.	Motivating the people to take part in education		
v.	Serving the function of a link language		
vi.	Preparing children for further study		
vii.	Improving quality in education		

20. In a multilingual country like Nepal, which language/s do you think will be the most suitable for the medium of instruction in following levels of education?

Please, tick the mark (√) inside the boxes for suitable option.

Levels		Mother tongue	Nepali language	English language
1.	Pre-primary			
2.	Primary			
3.	High School			
4.	Higher Secondary			
5.	University			
6.	Adult Literacy			
7.	Basic Literacy			
8.	Open Schools and Universities			
9.	Vocational Education			
10.	Special Education			

21. What do you think the government should do to preserve indigenous languages? .....

.....  
 .....

22. What should be the role of linguistic community to promote English language protecting an indigenous language? Give your opinion.

.....  
 .....

23. What should be the role of government towards Nepali language and English language? .....

.....

(Please make sure that you have answered all the questions.)

**Thank you for your kind co-operation.**