

English in the Nepalese Education System: Socio-Cultural Perspectives

Prakash Qattari 

Critic and Researcher, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal India.

Abstract

Empirically speaking, proficiency in the English language was and continues to be regarded as a social status indicator that symbolizes class and power. The fundamental framework of English language instruction in Nepal is a synthesis of elitist norms and upper-class ideology. English has, in fact, always been a part of education. The Nepalese students go abroad to study English. Since the early 1940s, they have also had access to educational possibilities within the nation. English has always been valued, and people who could speak it were thought to be intelligent. In actuality, the state ideology and the English language have worked hand in hand to determine the relationship between language instruction and culture. The fact that teaching literature has taken center stage in English language instruction must be investigated and critically examined. Document analysis served as the foundation for this study, which also included an interview and classroom observations. Women don't seem to have souls. She grows aloof from the patriarchal web of injustice. She gives birth to her child despite not wanting to. However, she rejects maternity by showing little concern for her kids. Women engage in a variety of acts to oppose the culture and society that are dominated by men. Its conclusions have been disseminated throughout the study. Its conclusions have been dispersed over the study's several sections. As a result, this study combines social reality, history, and the idea of teaching English in Nepal.

Introduction

Since the early 1940s, English literature has been an integral element of academic life in Nepal. How can we implement a significant curricular change? is the issue that needs to be answered. We can't just throw out the good with the bad, can we? Nepalese students must be made aware of the history of English language acquisition and the use (or study) of literature, which has taken on a significant role as a teaching tool and resource for students' language growth at the postsecondary level.

When the NESP education system was introduced in Nepal in 1972 A.D., it introduced the idea of development and the use of teacher's guides along with the evolving notion.

According to NESP (1971), teacher guides must be required for every subject taught at the school level (Sharma and Sharma, 2003: p. 266). Currently, Janak Shikhsya Samagri Kendra is in charge of publishing and

distributing teacher's guides and school-level textbooks after curriculum center Shanothimi, Bhaktapur, developed one.

Because they are beneficial to both teachers and students, textbooks are an essential teaching and learning tool. Hutchinson and Torres (1994) claim that textbooks contribute text, activities, explanations, and other elements to classroom instruction. When textbooks are used in the teaching and learning process, both teachers and students will profit (Harmer, 2007). In order to continue the next meeting in the textbook, both teachers and students can go back to earlier learning sessions (O'neill, 1982). It means that both teachers and students should have textbooks since they are used in the teaching and learning process. How a female is obliged to rebel against the domination and she goes on to the level of killing her family members. This book appears to be an examination of a family issue and the severity

of familial relationships. However, upon closer inspection, it is a comprehensive examination of a woman's resistance against the violence, oppression, and dominance of women by deeply ingrained cultural boundaries that are founded on the masculine ideology of society.

Role of Women to promote English in Nepal

During the prayers and chanting in the Jesuit schools, the Nepalese students had a wonderful opportunity to hear native English speakers and Anglo-Indians. The concealed curriculum of this school included Krashen's (1988) notion of "comprehensible input" and his philosophy of learning a language by experience rather than by knowing its rules. Both schools initially used the Cambridge Board curricula. The Cambridge Board UK provided the textbooks, other educational resources, and assessment methods, and instruction was conducted entirely in English.

Classmates, seniors, teachers, "sisters," "brothers," "mothers," "fathers," gardeners, sweepers, dhobis, carpenters, and other administrative staff who couldn't understand English were all permitted to speak Nepali on school property.

The learners were able to acquire excellent English due to their extensive exposure to English literature and the language. Very mild forms of corporal punishment were also used if the Mothers (nuns) heard any students speaking a language other than English. It was believed that students would acquire English through the Natural Approach, hence admission to the

school as boarders was promoted (Krashen, 1988).

One of the tenets of the Natural approach is that each classroom activity is focused on a topic rather than just grammatical structure, and the syllabus is composed of communicative goals. As a result, mastery of the target foreign language is acquired more quickly and effectively. In parallel with Durbar School, which was the first school in Nepal to offer English as a subject, private English-medium schools were established. These schools taught English in a manner akin to that of students attending Indian missionary schools in the neighboring country. The majority of the pupils' parents in the early 1950s were uneducated Nepali parents.

Because at least one of the parents would be educated, the children of members of the elite segment in society and those employed by the embassies were chosen. If teachers could at least communicate with one parent, the children's English-medium education would be beneficial. The aforementioned missionary schools were required to follow the Ministry of Education's specified curriculum and texts when the New Education System Plan (1971–1976) was implemented. The English taught in these two schools was completely different from that taught in other government schools, where English was taught by Nepali teachers who had studied in India, or at Tri-Chandra College in Nepal, where English was taught primarily by Bengali teachers who had been invited from Calcutta University or Calcutta.

English was invented more than 60 years ago without any scientific investigation,

study, or survey. English is being taught in Nepal in the twenty-first century without any laws pertaining to language planning. The eleventh plan merely specifies when English instruction should begin. The national policy doesn't address why or how to begin learning English.

Problem of the Study

English literature, or English-language literature in general, has grown to be a significant and difficult idea that necessitates careful examination of the complex linguistic materials. Thus, demonstrating how language and literature are interdependent is "problematic" in and of itself. Subedi (2000) On the one hand, it is impossible to dispute the importance of classics in literature, but on the other, it is necessary to take into account the advancements and innovations in English instruction within the framework of English as a global language. The women portrayed in the book are terrified of the male culture and extremely subservient. The intense strain of the male chauvinist culture forces them to take their own lives.

It indicates that they are not in a position to bear the suffering caused by the brutal cultural limitations of men.

Objectives:

- to identify the status of TESOL in Nepal from Socio-cultural perspectives
- to encourage a methodical and knowledgeable conversation about South Asian subaltern topics.

Methodology

By that time, Nepal had developed a highly autonomous and trustworthy educational system, teaching style, and curriculum. According to Morriam-Webster (2017), research is a methodical investigation carried out to discover new information about a subject. Finding and reporting new information regarding the teaching handbook was the study's primary goal. 130 math teachers from both schools made up the study's sample. Purposive sampling was used to choose the study's samples.

Discussion

Language differences are contentious political issues in many nations, according to Quirk and Stein (1990). A term like "Indian English" has a completely different connotation. Indian English can be defined as either an Indian English novel written in English by a non-native Indian or as the linguistic form, pronunciation, syntax, and choice of lexical items spoken by people from the Indian subcontinent.

There was never colonization of Nepal. Nepal is located in the Indian subcontinent. These two nations share a same language in addition to their shared physical location. The languages spoken in both nations are members of the same Indo-Aryan family.

The predominant religious language in both nations is Sanskrit. Nepal and India have a lot in common from a sociocultural, geographical, religious, and commercial standpoint. Why has the Nepalese educational system been impacted by the Indian educational system in general and English education in particular? Additionally, it has

been stated that the Nepalese people were not forced to learn English. English emerged in Nepal as a result of decisions made to broaden the scope of education, business, science, technology, literature, elitism, and modernization. English was never and is not an intra-national language in Nepal.

Although there are more than 92 languages spoken in Nepal, Nepali is the national language and the language of communication in offices, trade, and business as well as in the educational system, despite the fact that Nepal is not a single language nation like Japan, Thailand, or Korea (Yadav, 2003, Gurung, 2005). With 48.6% of the inhabitants speaking it as their mother tongue, Nepali is the most common language. English is the mother tongue of only 1,037 Nepali residents, according to the 2001 census. An interpreter speaks Nepali or the regional language instead of English in areas where the Nepalese are unable to speak both Nepali and the local language.

The Englishization (Kachru, 1983) of the national or regional language is one noteworthy fact that is present not only in India but also in other subcontinental nations. Communicative techniques like "code-mixing" and "code-switching" have led to English-based education, media, and mass communication in Nepal as well. Since there are no corresponding Nepali equivalents for these English words, they are included in Nepali vocabulary. However, because it was introduced by British Gurkhas and those trained in the Indian educational system, which was heavily impacted by the British Raj, some English words are used in Nepali.

Due to nativization in sound alone, rather than in meaning and usage, these words frequently appear to be regional rather than borrowed words. For instance, the term "bag" is pronounced "biag" in Nepali and used as a Nepali word in the vernacular language; similarly, the word "class" is pronounced "kilas," although the pronunciation is the same. Three kinds of English—British English, American English, and Indian English—have been shown to exist in Nepal. Since the American variant of English has a little history in Nepal and this research study is concerned with the historical and sociocultural features of the English language in Nepal, there hasn't been any discussion of it.

This is due to the fact that, despite the existence of the American variety of English today, there is no empirical proof of its usage in Nepal during the early 1950s or earlier. However, only at the university level and for a brief period of time are American English Studies and American English Literature studied as subjects and as specialist papers. Courses in High School and Higher Secondary also include some American authors. In Nepal, the majority of people read British English. The majority of people in Nepal accept this variant either directly or indirectly because it is the connecting language in the Indian subcontinent.

The use of nativized lexicalization occurs not only because there isn't a suitable corresponding meaning in English for the lexical item, but also because the writer or speaker frequently uses it to depict native culture and religion. For instance, words pertaining to church services, donations made

in temples and monasteries, for instance, automatically require nativization and emerge as a semantic necessity.

English pronunciation is nativized or localized by a Nepali speaker, who also modifies English sounds to fit the Nepali sound system. The Nepali or non-native form of English is thus produced.

From the perspective of a native speaker, such word creation or re-creation in English for the purpose of communication appears to be a "deviant" version of the language. From the perspective of non-native English speakers, this has an advantage: these usage create a cultural and emotional connection and make it appropriate both culturally and contextually. On the other end of the spectrum, certain culturally specialized terms lack an English equivalent. It becomes culturally incorrect to utilize English words or lexis in such situations. Words can have additional "pragmatic" meanings merely by virtue of their natural usage contexts, and the "strategic" models are derived from the field of pragmatics in speech analysis.

It is mostly focused on how language is understood in context (Simpson, 2004). As said by Kachru:

These linguistic varieties are viewed as lexically, collocationally, and semantically abnormal by a native English speaker who is unfamiliar with the cultural and linguistic diversity of South Asia. Such a response makes sense. However, this formal deviation—including mixing—is what gives South Asian or African English its contextual appropriateness. It is true that coherence and cohesiveness methods have been "violated" by

native speakers. However, how can a "transplanted" language become functionally appropriate?

A language loses its status as a "guest or a friend" as a result of acculturation.

According to Yamuna Kachru's sociolinguistic research, it is impossible to teach the world's English-speaking population how to think and write in American, British, or any other English. (Kachru, 1982) Like the basic necessities of "food, shelter, and clothing," learning the standard form of English is crucial in today's international, competitive society. Whether at work, on vacation, for business, or for pleasure, using standard English is required to live a normal life. Kachru's assertion makes sense and is pertinent. Possessing native-like proficiency or learning the standard form of English is undoubtedly a privilege. Nonetheless, even non-native variations are recognized as understandable and communicative when the conventional form is altered.

Students from Nepal who attend government schools have relatively little exposure to an English-speaking environment. Pupils are not exposed to or active in various sociolinguistic and pragmatic factors. Exam-focused classroom instruction does not give students the chance to express themselves in "multiple contrasting language examples" (Judd, 158) in order to become "attuned" to the several elements that influence pragmatic usage. There is more to pragmatic knowledge than merely employing a set of formulaic statements. It requires a thorough understanding of culturally appropriate

actions that work in a range of unfamiliar contexts (Judd, 2001).

Since Nepali is the primary language of instruction in the majority of government schools in Nepal, Nepalese students' study skills fall short of the international standards for expressing themselves in writing or speech, which causes them to lag behind in any competitive examination held in English after they graduate from high school. This explains why students believe they must rely on "coaching centers" or "private language centers" to improve their English. As was previously indicated, students are prone to "exam-oriented learning," which prevents them from using their theoretical knowledge in unexpected settings outside of the classroom and test hall, even though they possess both theoretical and formulaic information.

Another major issue is whether or not all English teachers in government schools possess the practical skills necessary to design worthwhile exercises and offer insightful feedback on the EFL circumstances of their students. It's possible that educators lack formal training and make false assumptions about the shapes that natural language can take. As a result, even though they are academically qualified, the students find it difficult to use English in sociolinguistic circumstances. To enhance their written and spoken English, a large number of students visit "private coaching centers" or private language training facilities.

English is currently a modernizing need in Nepal. In the past, scholastic and socioeconomic factors made English in demand.

Considering Gandhi's 1908 conjectures, Nepal currently needs to reconsider and reexamine Gandhian ideology. Nepal will be able to "stitch in time" and prevent the loss of its cultural legacy thanks to this. It is admirable to learn or become proficient in any language for the sake of communication, scholarships, or scientific advancements, but not at the expense of losing a country's cultural legacy.

To provide English usage in the "expanding circle" an appropriate status and to emphasize the role of Nepali English in "other Englishes," it is essential for Nepal to identify the key challenges. Words that have no equivalent in the English language can be loaned.

The preceding section provided an illustration of this idea. It is also possible to create new terms for new advancements. Similar to this, printed journalism can exercise extreme caution when using other languages and colloquial words that lack an English counterpart. Due to English's widespread usage and familiarity among all ethnic groups, several words in the vernacular become obsolete. Even though the English word refrigerator (or fridge) has a colloquial equivalent in Nepali, many people, especially the younger generation, do not utilize the Nepali word when speaking in Nepali. There are also other words.

If this keeps up, there's a good potential that the Nepali vernacular will resemble English by adopting and substituting numerous loanwords for native Nepali words.

The influence of the mother tongue and its sociocultural standing is a prevalent factor

in ELT contexts across the subcontinent. The subcontinent's member nations are able to use English as an international language of the South Asian variety due to both cultural parallels and contrasts. These nations—Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—have mutually understandable English dialects that support a shared historical identity. They also respect each other's English dialects. English with a little "e" has grown as a result (Eaglestone, 2000).

Steinbeck is a writer, storyteller, and social critic. His job is to define societal injustice, particularly as it relates to women. He portrays women as submissive and timid in the majority of his works. He believes that in order to establish women's authority in society, one must define such injustices, illusion, mythological, archetypal, depth psychology, and symbol. Ethnic protagonists whose identities are in jeopardy due to cultural strife are featured in half of Steinbeck's works. His characters are unable to avoid historical influences, whether they be biological, cultural, religious, or the collective actions of migration and conflict. The household strife between men and women cannot be ignored by the reader.

Steinbeck is a writer, storyteller, and social critic. His job is to define societal injustice, particularly as it relates to women. He portrays women as submissive and timid in the majority of his works. He believes that in order to establish women's authority in society, one must define such injustices, illusion, mythological, archetypal, depth psychology, and symbol. Ethnic protagonists whose identities are in jeopardy due to cultural

strife are featured in half of Steinbeck's works. His characters are unable to avoid historical influences, whether they be biological, cultural, religious, or the collective actions of migration and conflict. The household strife between men and women cannot be ignored by the reader.

Men in society rely entirely on women for all home tasks. When their wives aren't around, they turn lame. "Societies prescribe gender roles based on sex hence the condition of the people arising from the gender division of labour result into practical gender needs" (Taylor 1871). For instance, even though Adam is completely subservient to women in the book, women have the greatest influence on him after she leaves. Adam is left feeling hopeless and depressed when she flees after their twins are born.

Adam, who at first glance seems to be a nice guy, changes drastically. He just loses interest in things that used to be very important to him. Because his sons remind him of their mother's passing, he even displays little to no interest in them. The twins' absence of names during their first year of life is another indication of his lack of concern for them. Kate is eventually murdered off because Steinbeck knew that the patriarchal society, which is firmly based in the idea of men, would not likely accept a woman who completely rejected her domestic and maternal responsibilities. Liza's death emphasizes that postwar women should not wholly submit and let domesticity completely mold their identity, whereas Kate's death warns against totally rebelling against familial responsibilities.

A woman is well aware of the harsh realities of the patriarchal system, which consistently places women at the margins. She is aware that she is at the bottom of the power hierarchy that underpins life. She takes use of her sexuality in order to have any influence over her life. She works methodically, patiently, and slowly rather than in a frenzy of passion. She holds off on acting till the appropriate time. The history of women's resistance uses the violent resistance as an example. There is a severe instance of women being used and subjugated in the relationship between Edward and Catherine. Catherine turns becomes the most extreme example of how women are subjugated. She is devoted to her spouse. In whatever form of relationship, she should persuade her husband. Here, the subject of women's resistance casts a shadow over the issues of good and bad. In actuality, patriarchal culture invented the concept of good and bad in order to subjugate women. She calmly shoots Adam when he tries to stop her, leaving him injured. She departs and resumes her career as a prostitute. This is the pinnacle of her rebellion against the cultural boundaries that are governed by men. According to Taylor, women should constantly prioritize their productive lives.

They ought to take action to avoid becoming dependent on their husbands and restricting their freedom, as women do in the novel by following a path that is rather forbidden in her community.

Conclusion

English was brought into Nepal's educational system through India, specifically

through Calcutta. During the British Raj, Calcutta was regarded as the center of English language, literature, and culture in India. It was through Calcutta English, or more accurately, the local dialect known as Babu English, that came to Nepal because the first principal of Tri-Chandra College and the first Bengali headmaster of Durbar High School were both from Bengal, India. Bengalis made up a large number of scientific instructors who also taught other disciplines in English.

As a result, TESOL in Nepal and TESOL in India are closely related. English has never been the official language of Nepal and has never been eliminated from the country's educational system. Among Nepalis, English is not and has never been an intranational language. Nepalis converse with foreigners in either Hindi or English. Nepali is the language used for communication among the Nepali people. Since Nepal is a popular travel destination, the English language has advanced in just 59 years (this research study is based on 1950 to current).

As a result, teaching and learning English in Nepal is crucial for business, industry, and technology in addition to academic purposes.

According to the patriarchal cultural network, women are a symbol of infertility and ruin who murder their parents and try to murder their own unborn children. They are likened to biblical figures that force men to be bad. It is evident from the biased comparison how women lack a voice in society. Nobody is there to advocate for them. Additionally, they keep quiet about the injustices they face since, as Spivak states, "Subaltern doesn't speak

themselves" (132). She is a corrupted version of the biblical Eve, who is considered the mother of all people in the Christian tradition. Women are linked to sin, just like Eve, but while Eve is tricked into committing sin, women fully embrace it and conduct evil for its own reason. A woman's perspective on humanity is disproportionately negative; she fully submits to evil because she thinks there is only evil in the universe.

References:

- Eaglestone, R. (2000). *Doing English: A Guide for Literature Students*. Routledge.
- Fishman, J. (1982). *A Sociology of English as an Additional Language*. In B. B. Kachru (Ed.), *The other tongue* (pp. 15–22). Pergamon Press.
- Gurung, H. (2005). *Social demography of Nepal: Census 2001*. Himal Books.
- Judd, E. (2001). *Some Issues in The Teaching of Pragmatic Competence*. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Culture in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 152–166). Cambridge University Press.
- Kachru, B. B. (1983). *The Indianization of English: The English language in India*. Oxford University Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1988). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Prentice Hall.
- Merriam-Webster. (2017). *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (11th ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.
- Quirk, R., & Stein, G. (1990). *Variation within English*. In *English in use* (pp. 41–53). Longman Group.
- Simpson, P. (2004). *Language through literature: An introduction*. Routledge.
- Subedi Abhi. "Writing research Proposal" Paper presented at the *Research Methodology Seminar*. The Deans Office Humanities and Social Sciences, 26-3-2000.
- Taylor, E. B. (1871). *Primitive culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom* (Vol. 1). J. Murray.
- Yadava, Y. P. (2003). *Language. In Population Monograph of Nepal* (Vol. 1). His Majesty's Government, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Central Bureau of Statistics. Ramshah Path, Kathmandu.