IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

EFL LEARNERS: AN ACTION RESEARCH

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DESSERTATION OF

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Among the multiple ways of learning, reading is inevitable. It plays a vital role to determine the individual's knowledge. Generally, everyone who can read the written form of the language is considered as a literate person. Besides, person's knowledge is judged on his/her proficiency in reading. Reading is inevitable for the human beings not only to increase the knowledge they have but also to fulfill their daily needs. The needs of reading may vary based on the context, but there is no doubt about the importance of reading. In other words, everyday, one has to read course books, letters, sing boards, medical reports, bills and many other different text messages. In this process, the reader requires to understand the reading materials and respond them in an appropriate way.

Tickoo (2003) argues, "Reading is not, as many still believe, a passive activity in which readers just move their eyes over the printed page in a linear order. It is interactive in that in it the reader brings his personal knowledge (or schema) to the text in front of him" (p. 22). The readers process the text, make associations of the content knowledge with their prior understanding, and react according to the necessities.

Similarly, Wallace (1992) states that the readers are seen as negotiating meaning as meaning is partial within the text and writers' intentions may not be privileged over readers' interpretations. He further argues that reading is concerned with the ability to decode words and with the particular skills judged prerequisite to fluent, independent reading. In this sense, the learners are required to comprehend the text message in sufficient way, which can only make the difference in his/her learning. The same case applies in the reading of English as a foreign language. However, the classroom context in the public schools does not seem to be supportive to the learners to learn variety of reading materials. As a result, the learners, even in the secondary level, fail to deal and comprehend the texts, which causes their failure in English subject. Moreover, the poor comprehension of the learners leads them towards frustration in learning the English language.

In this regard, I focused my research on the strategy that helped the secondary EFL learners to learn the reading materials on their own in the classroom. Keeping the learners' real problems in mind, I made my plan for improving the comprehension of the students. The intervention plan was exploited through the action research process under the qualitative research method. The intensive review of the literature helped me to design the classroom activities and implement them making the learners more responsible in the learning process. The philosophical considerations guided my action research whereas the quality standards maintained the reliability issues regarding the study.

The effort done for the action research had a very significant result as it provided the learners with better opportunity to learn playing with the comprehension related tasks along with their friends. In addition, it has also been significant to develop my professional skills as an English teacher. The action research provided me

the avenue to learn the Nepalese EFL setting. It is equally valuable for shaping my

classroom practices concerning teaching English.

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Ganesh Kumar Khanal, Degree Candidate   November 2013

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all my well-wishers who helped me directly or indirectly in my academic journey.

DECLEARATION

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

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Ganesh Kumar Khanal, Degree Candidate   November 2013

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ABBREVIATIONS

CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
GT	Grammar Translation
KOLS	Knowledge of Letters
KOW	Knowledge of the World
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
STT	Student Talk Time
TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching
TTT	Teacher Talk Time
VDC	Village Development Committee

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with an account of my experiences of learning English language in school. It also reveals my experiences of an EFL teacher. The problem statement of the study gives a clear description of the existing practices in teaching reading comprehension to students of secondary level. Similarly, it also presents the purpose of the study, research question, and significance of this study along with delimitation.

Background

As a school student, I went to a public school in Dang, situated in a remote area of the district. Some of the students had to spend a long time in order to reach the school since that was only the secondary school in the VDC. The activities took place in the secondary English classes are still fresh and vivid in my mind. Teaching methodology employed in my school was probably used by a very few number of English teachers.

Especially, in reading classes, before delivering the lesson, we were given the pages of words with their Nepali meaning and asked to memorize them in a chorus – chanting. If we failed to do as the teacher said we would get a severe punishment. Due to the fear of the punishment, I memorized everything that I was supposed to learn. Regarding the lesson presentation, he used to read texts in a loud voice by himself. After few statements, he would translate them into our mother tongue; Nepali. He would recite the whole text in the same way and finish the lesson. The learners had very less chance to read the text and do the activities. At the end of the text, the teacher used to write the answers to all the questions on the board and ask us to copy,

and memorize. We read them and memorized for the test. Our evaluation was mainly carried out based on our performance in the class. If we failed to tell the right answer, the teacher would punish the learners. Probably, he might have forgotten to encourage the learners for solving text related items. But, the same practices continued where we got minimum chance to learn by doing in the classroom. In comprehension test, I used to copy few statements from the text and rewrite as my answer. I did not have appropriate idea regarding solving text related items so it was the most difficult task not only for me but also many other learners had the similar problem. In this regard, the activities took place in the reading classroom were not significant to make the learners able to deal with the reading texts and the comprehension items. In the classroom, the students had to sit and follow whatever the teacher said, as about the role of teacher in grammar translation method, Larsen-Freeman (2000) argues, "The teacher is the authority in the classroom and the students do as she says so they can learn what she knows" (p. 17). The interesting point about our learning was that our teacher translated every English statement into Nepali so there was no problem in understanding the reading materials as the meaning of the target language was made clear by translating into our native language (Larsen-Freeman 2000, p. 18). However, we were not able to interpret the text in English. Almost all the learners had a very low level of vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, the medium of classroom instruction was L1 even in the English classes. Therefore, the learners had a very low level of exposure that resulted poor performance in English language. Khati (2011) mentions, "Research shows that limited use of L1 does not hinder L2 learning rather it facilitates/assists learning, and learners who have a low level of proficiency make the use of mother tongue more. But, the frequent use of mother tongue does not help to maximize exposure and communication in L2" (p. 85). In this regard, the learners had

problems not only in comprehending the reading materials but also in communicating in English as a foreign language.

My Experience as an EFL Teacher

Besides the matter how I was taught in school, how I teach to my students as an English teacher is also equally important. Therefore, I think, it is better to uncover the realities behind my teaching practices. I would like to introduce myself as a teacher rather than a student though I am still in the university doing my Masters in English Language Teaching. This is because of my involvement in the field of teaching since I completed my intermediate majoring English. I had only 30 days teaching practice for the partial fulfillment of the intermediate. The practice teaching had not that remarkable effect on my teaching profession rather than building some confidence on me. I did not have much idea about English language teaching because I had not taken any training and joined in workshop related to teaching language nor any professional teacher had mentored me. Later, I enrolled for my Bachelor's degree in the same discipline. However, I could not take my regular classes because of responsibility of the principal in a primary boarding school established in the same year. I had to teach English along with some other subjects in the school. Every time, I went into the class, I used to teach the students on my own style. The learners had very less tasks to do in the classroom. I remember, I used to ask students to open their textbook just as my secondary English teacher did. Moreover, there was the great influence of my former teachers in my way of teaching. However, I was more or less conscious about the lesson presentation. Therefore, a few minutes before the class started, I used to go through the related texts and prepare a short note as my plan and activities for the class. I delivered the lesson as I had planned but the students had very less chances of being engaged in text related activities. What they were mostly

supposed to do was solving comprehension questions given just after the text as their class work and homework. The learners had average performance in English and I was satisfied with what they did.

After teaching nearly three years in the same school, I left the job in order to join my Masters' degree. As a university student in English language teaching, I started participating in the regular classes and reading books suggested by the tutors. Not only that, I also involved in various workshops and trainings organized by different institutions in English language teaching. As the result, I started getting innovative ideas in teaching English language as a foreign language. Meanwhile, I came to know about the teacher centered and the students centered method of teaching. Later, I better realized that I had done unjust over my students as my former EFL teachers did over me. Now, I think I have more ideas regarding teaching English exploiting the learner-centered method in the classroom. In this regard, I chose an action research for developing reading comprehension of the learners where I also had the chance of improving my practices regarding teaching English.

Reading as a Skill

Encyclopedia Britannica (2009) defines reading as receiving or taking the sense of letters or symbols especially with the help of sight or touch. Similarly, Hudson (2007) views reading as a skill where he asserts, "Reading appears to be at least as magical as pulling rabbits from hats, conjuring pigeons from coat sleeves, or producing dimes from behind someone's ear" (p.1). In this regard, reading is a process of grabbing sense from texts. He further mentions that writers are able to communicate with the heterogeneous mass of people in a great distance whereas readers are able to take arbitrarily determined shapes presented against some appropriate background. In addition, they are able to turn them into meaning.

Ur (1991) has the similar view for reading where he says, "Only translating, decoding written symbols into corresponding sounds is not reading but it is "reading and understanding" (p. 38). In this regard, reading is a meaning making process out of the printed words. If someone reads, there has to be understanding the text message, however, the degree of understanding may vary person to person as it is done by individual. There are certain aspects in reading, like prior knowledge, prediction, vocabulary, word recognition, comprehension that determine the level of sense making process in readers. Perfetti (1995) highlights on the importance of vocabulary knowledge because it allows multiple meanings for any particular word and the successful reading involves being actively involved in the process and understanding what types of possible interpretations can be made. Meanwhile, the skilled readers use a great deal of context to interpret words and sentences where the prior knowledge has the important role to play (as cited in Hudson 2007, p.8).

Besides, the sense making process is also affected by the purpose of reading. The readers motivate themselves in reading as they encounter with the various situations where comprehension is essential. Hudson (2007) further refers to Adler (1940) where he says, "…when a man and a woman is in love and are reading a love letter, they read for all they are worth. They read every word three ways; they read between the lines and in the margins; they read the whole in terms of the parts and each part in terms of the whole; they grow sensitive to context and ambiguity, to insinuation and implications; they perceive the colour of the words, the odor of phrases, and the weight of sentences. They may even take the punctuation into account. Then, if never before or after, they read" (p. 9). Readers go through the various activities based on the purpose of reading. Sometimes they read and just share the ideas and sometimes they write about it as summary or reflection, which helps

them represent their ideas. Therefore, Tickoo (2003) says, "Reading is no longer viewed as a passive activity in which the reader strives to find out all and only what the writer has written" (p. 53). Once the writer finishes writing, it is the readers' responsibility to make the judgments over the texts as they read.

Davison & Dowson (1998) argue, "Through reading, we are able to interpret, comprehend and respond critically to the ideas of others (p. 98). In this regard, reading is no more just moving eyes over the printed letters; there should be understanding on the part of the readers. In the same way, our students are supposed to understand variety of reading materials in English. They need to comprehend the text not only to get new knowledge but also to solve the comprehension items in the tests, which measure their performance level. Moreover, based on the performance they make in the test, the students are categorized in the different positions where reading has a crucial role.

Problem Statement

The Secondary English Curriculum of Curriculum Development Centre (2007) aims to develop students for better comprehension of variety of authentic texts using different reading techniques (p. 6). However, the teaching learning scenario of the EFL reading classroom is different. In other words, the classes do not seem to be supporting to the learners to understand the varieties of texts in sufficient ways. In this regard, Gnawali (2009) mentions, "The teacher explains everything and even dictates the answers to 'test potential' questions and learners note down everything the teacher gives. Interestingly enough, learners seem to enjoy being 'spoon-fed' out of habit imposed upon them by the teacher himself" (p. 59). Similarly, Phyak (2009) states, "Instead of involving the students in doing tasks that encourages them to analyze, discuss, debate, question and synthesize the ideas given in the text into students' own

socio-cultural contexts, teachers try to influence the students with their own interpretations" (p. 58). He further argues, "Many teachers do not encourage their students to interact with the text and their friends in the classroom" (p. 55). As the result, the learners depend on the teacher not only for understanding reading materials but also in solving the texts related problems, which is the main source of the problem observed in the learners. During tests, the students get different texts (seen and unseen) but they attempt by copying the sentences that consisted some words in the question. Moreover, they never scored what the teacher desired. On the other hand, the learners could not get rid of the fear of English test because of the poor comprehension ability in reading, which is best described by Gnawali and Karki in an article "Adapting textbooks for ELT". They mention, "Rigid use of textbooks can deviate us from the developing creativity, by forcing stereotyped learning and teaching strategies on the students. By following certain books blindly without any kind of adaption, we do injustice to the learners as well as to our pious profession of teaching (p. 58). The traditional practice in teaching has made the learners dependent on the teachers and it has negative impact in learning.

In order to have an accurate evidence of the learners' performance, I assigned pre-test (Appendix 1) before starting teaching learning activities. The pre-test in reading comprehension assigned to the learners has given the evidence that the learners have problems in understanding reading materials in sufficient ways.

They have simply tried to copy the sentences from the text or they have irrelevant ideas. It has been found that the learners have low level of vocabulary knowledge in English. The problem in reading comprehension has led the learners towards poor scorers in the test as one of students had scored 3.5 marks and the other had only 6 marks out of 35 (Appendix 2). The poor scoring in reading comprehension

has not only led the learners to be failures but also frustration in learning English. Therefore, I wanted to take initiative for improving the reading comprehension of the learners exploiting learner-centered method in teaching as Gnawali and Karki (2009) argue, "As modern teachers, we should be able to break the monotony of the conventional style of teaching only from the textbooks. We should as far possible, try to assist our students to be participants themselves in the learning process where our role is that of the guide or facilitator" (p. 59). In this regard, I carried out action research for solving reading comprehension problem of the learners in secondary level.

Purpose of the Action Research

The main purpose of the action research was to design and implement various tasks in the reading classroom. As the result, the students would get adequate opportunity to engage in various tasks, which ultimately enhance reading comprehension in English as a foreign language.

Research Question

I have a single research question in relation to the purpose of my action research. My research question is:

1. How can I improve the EFL reading comprehension of the learners at Grade Ten?

Significance of the Research

It is obvious that the secondary English curriculum aims to develop the learners' competence in understanding a variety of reading texts (CDC, 2007, p. 5) for developing command over the language (Nuttall 1996). He further says, reading therefore, has an important place in classrooms where language learning is the central (p. 30). In this regard, reading in English as the foreign language should be taken into

the serious account as it helps the learners to boost up their language proficiency. That is why, Hudson (2007) views reading as purpose and comprehension driven in that each reader is engaged in order to achieve some goal. In this sense, reading is inevitable for learning a language where comprehension has the key role to play.

Similarly, Prefetti (1977) associates reading comprehension with the language comprehension, decoding and other some minor contributing variables. Therefore, the learners should be better comprehenders not only to decode the text's message but also to learn the language. Hudson (2007) views, "Comprehension skills represent the ability to use context and knowledge to derive meaning from what is read. The comprehension skills would include grammatical competence and knowledge of morphology, syntax, mechanics, using context to gain meaning, using schemata as aids, using meta-cognitive knowledge, recognizing text structure, and predicting what will come next in a text" (p. 80). Without the text comprehension, learners had nothing to do with the various reading materials in language learning process. In this sense, the action research was significant for the secondary learners to improve their EFL reading comprehension as the result of engaging in the various tasks in the reading classroom. Moreover, the action research has added at least a brick in the learners' performance in English.

In addition, the action research is considered to be significant to make my teaching reading skills appropriate according to the contexts. Meeting to the context is very important for effective teaching learning which can fulfill the need of the students according to the current demand and pedagogical trends. In other words, the action research will be equally beneficial for my professional development widening my knowledge in the field of the ELT. As it started with exploring issues, I dived into the process by analyzing the learners' problems. Data collection, data analysis and the

implementation of the action research plan gave me a valuable backup that an ELT practitioner should have. It provided me an avenue for shaping my classroom practices. Similarly, reflection on the intervention was a crucial step in my action research. This self-enquiry process has helped me to be an expert in teaching reading skills in English as a foreign language. Besides, the work will be helpful to the EFL teachers and trainers for adapting appropriate strategies for teaching reading in the classroom. Not only that, the research will be supportive for the further research related to teaching reading in English as the foreign language.

Delimitation of the Study

Throughout the action research, I designed multiple tasks and implemented in the classroom, as I wanted to give more opportunity to the learners to engage in the various tasks for improving their reading comprehension. I exploited TBLT and CLT in my classroom to improve reading comprehension of the secondary school EFL learners.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I exposed my EFL teaching learning experiences in relation to reading comprehension. I also mentioned the clear description of the problem statement, purpose of the action research, my research question and its significance. Finally, I presented the delimitations of my action research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The first section of this chapter deals with reading comprehension, reasons for reading, ways of reading, types of reading comprehension, reading approaches and stages in teaching reading. Similarly, the latter section deals with some of the theories related to teaching reading comprehension. Besides, it also deals with the previous research studies and the research gap I noticed followed by the conceptual framework of my research.

Thematic Review

I went through the various literatures in order to strengthen the thematic review. In this regard, I reviewed books and journals published as well as electronic that they were related to the issues of teaching reading English as a foreign language.

Reading in English

In the modern period, one has to read English in the different situations. As a learner, he/she requires to read course books, periodicals, notes, anecdotes, newspapers, story or novel and many other text messages in English language. The reading materials differ as the need of reading. The way and the reason for reading stories and novels are different from the reading of textbooks. No matter, what one reads but the matter is gaining new ideas, information and understanding the writers' perspectives on the particular topic or the subject matter. Davison and Dowson (1998) mention, "Through reading, we are able to interpret, comprehend and respond critically to the ideas of others" (p. 98). In this regard, it is necessary to make the learners able to respond the reading materials as the context demands. Reading in

English is important for the learners in order to enhance creativity so as to advance their knowledge in the changing context. Besides, reading in English is essential for developing communication skills. Reading in English serves various purposes in the classroom as it is linked to the other language skills, which are the foundations for the language proficiency. Nuttall (1996) argues, "Reading widely is a highly effective means of extending our command of language, so it has an important place in classrooms where language learning is the central purpose (p. 30). In this regard, reading is of great importance for learning a foreign language. A reader reads various texts so that he/she knows different contexts through the meaning they provide.

On the other hand, there is no doubt on the fact that the EFL classrooms are for providing maximum exposure to the learners so that they could learn language, as the result, communicate with the speakers of English in various context through the different modes (CDC, 2007). Doff (1995) explains, "Texts are usually used in English classes for two main purposes: as a way of developing reading comprehension –by looking at the text and trying to understand its 'message' (what it has to say), and as a way of learning new language –by looking at the text and focusing on particular words and expressions" (p. 62). Similarly, Harmer (2007) says, "We may get students to read texts for communicative purposes, as part of their activities, as resources of information, or in order to identify specific uses of language (p. 288). Therefore, an EFL teacher needs to provide ample exposure in reading in the classroom through which the learners can boost up their overall performance in the process of learning English as the target language.

Aspects in Reading

There are some considerable aspects in reading as it is taken as a complex process. Prior knowledge or background knowledge, prediction, word recognition,

vocabulary and the textual or reading comprehension are inevitable. Here, I have made a brief discussion about those aspects.

Background Knowledge

Background knowledge refers to the prior knowledge that the readers already have in their mind. The prior knowledge is important for the further processing of the reading materials. In relation to background knowledge and reading comprehension, Archer (2008) mentions, "If students have background knowledge required by a passage, their comprehension will be enhanced (p. 48). Moreover, comprehension occurs when a student integrates new information with the prior knowledge (Chard & Santoro, 2008). They highlight the importance of the background knowledge in the following extract:

Students can be explicitly taught how to link existing knowledge to new knowledge for building comprehension. Before reading, students are taught to think about what they know about a topic and what they want to learn. During reading, teachers help students record or discuss the answers to the "want to learn" questions as well as revise any misconceptions about what students thought they knew. After reading, answers to the "want to learn" questions are finalized and unanswered or new questions are discussed. This strategy of explicitly showing students how to connect existing knowledge with new knowledge applies to both narrative and expository texts and can be used for reading and listening comprehension (as cited in Archer, 2008, p. 48).

Therefore, it is the teachers' role to help the learners associate their background knowledge with the new text that the learners processing. This act makes possible to have better success in reading for language learning.

Prediction

Prediction, in reading comprehension, plays a crucial role. Readers come up with the certain assumption about the message of the text that they are going to read. Nuttall (1996) illustrates "A reader who shares many of the writer's presuppositions will be able to think along with the writer and use his own experience to resolve difficulties" (p. 13). She further mentions that the reader does not need to read the whole text as prediction helps in making sense. However, the 'presupposition' may guide the reader go beyond the text and make an interpretation. In this regard, the reader needs to be wise enough to predict message of the reading material. In the same context, Nuttall (1996) argues prediction as the tool for activating schemata and readers make use of schemata to interpret the text and the activation of relevant schemata helps in understanding the text more easily (p.13). Before reading a text, it is important to make the learners predict about the text. In this regard, an EFL teacher can make his/her students active in the process asking what/how/why etc. questions based on the text. The teacher can use questions for motivating the learners to learn rather than evaluating their understanding.

Word Recognition

Hudson (2007) mentions, "Word recognition takes place prior to comprehension" (p. 35). A reader must possess word recognition skills within self. There is no doubt on the importance of word recognition for knowing the functional value of text. Of course, reading comprehension involves word recognition, which results a meaningful understanding of the written discourse. Regarding the importance of word recognition, Doff (1995) states that we do not need to read every letter or every word, nor even every word in each sentence, our eyes flick backwards and forwards over the text, and we can guess much of what it says as we read it. However,

new words in terms of meaning and pronunciation make the readers look at individual letters, try to match the word with the way it sounds, and finally make the reading difficult (p. 109). However, the learners are supposed to recognize each of the words in a sentence, fail to do so are not counted as the good readers. In one or another way, recognition of letters in the level of morphemes to the level of sentence is important through which readers make sense out of the reading materials. Therefore, teachers want their learners to recognize letters and words in the basic level, as the curriculum has been set accordingly.

Vocabulary

Ur (1991) states, "Vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words we teach in the foreign language" (p. 60). In a common sense, any meaningful chunk of words can be viewed as vocabulary. In the foreign language reading, vocabulary has a crucial role to play. Without knowing the meaning of vocabulary, the learners cannot make sense out of the reading materials.

"One of the components of language proficiency that has been shown to have a strong effect on reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge in the language being read" (Coady, 1997; Coady, Mgoto, Hubbard, Graney, & Mokhtari, 1993 as cited in Burt, Peyton and Adams, 2003, p. 17). It is obvious that without knowing vocabulary in the target language, neither the learners able to comprehend discourse not they able to communicate with the people sharing the same language. In this regard, Milton (2009) mentions that the L2 readers should know a vast amount of words for achieving basic text comprehension in explicit and implicit learning (p. 120). He further argues, reading fosters the growth of vocabulary knowledge and gaining broader knowledge of L2 vocabulary fosters reading proficiency due to their mutual relationship. Similarly, Archer (2008) argues, "If students understand meaning

of critical vocabulary in passage, their comprehension will be enhanced" (p. 12). Difficult vocabulary in the text may cause failure in understanding the whole text. Therefore, it is worth providing instruction to the students in learning new vocabulary for developing reading comprehension.

Comprehension

Scholars have defined reading comprehension in various ways. Among them, many of them have taken 'reading comprehension' as a process or skill of getting information from any kind of reading materials. Pardo (2004) defines reading comprehension as the process of readers interacting and constructing meaning form text, implementing the use of prior knowledge, and the information found in the text" (as cited by Closs, 2013, p. 1). Similarly, Perfetti (1977) views reading comprehension parallel to language comprehension, plus decoding, plus some other minor contributing variables (as cited in Hudson 2007, p. 37). He further refers to Anderson and Pearson (1984) where they argue that the comprehension is interaction of new information with the old knowledge (p. 47). When the readers go through the text, they do not only interact with the text. They also generate the sense with the help of their background understanding, which has the great value in language comprehension. It is so obvious that reading is associated with learning a language. Therefore, reading itself is considered as the most important skill learning a language. Lipka and Siegel (2011) mention, "Reading comprehension is a multi dimensional process that includes the reader, the text and factors associated with the activity of reading (p.1873). They further highlight comprehension as the ultimate goal of reading and comprehension failures can lead to school failures. Learners need to understand the reading materials they read; otherwise, the reading does not make any sense in their study. In addition, the learners should know the underlying meaning of

the text through which they can enhance language performance. In this sense, it is necessary to engage the learners with the different reading materials that assist for the better comprehension skill where the EFL teacher has the important role in the classroom.

Stages in Teaching Reading

In order to have the better result in teaching learning, it is necessary to go through the different stages in teaching reading. The different stages serve different functions in the learning process. The commonly used stages in EFL reading classroom are pre-reading stage, while-reading stage and post-reading stage.

The Pre-Reading Stage

Urquhart and Weir (1998) call pre-reading activities as planning of teaching reading, which includes previewing, and prediction of the texts we read (p. 185). The activities that take place before entering to the actual lesson or activity is the stage of pre-reading. In relation to the importance of pre-reading activities, Doff (1995) says, "There are various things we can do before reading a text which will make it easier for students to understand the text and help them focus attention on it as they read" (p. 59). In this regard, the teachers can exploit relevant activities under scene setting and make the learners interested in the lessons. There is not any hard and fast rule regarding the activities in pre-reading stage. However, the teachers need to be aware about motivating the learners for further reading activating the relevant schema. Tickoo (2003) argues, "The pre-reading stage serves to stimulate interest and, where necessary, introduces language or concepts which the pupil may not know." Similarly, on the importance of pre-reading activities, Wallace (1992) opines that pre-reading tasks have tended to focus exclusively on preparing the readers for likely linguistic difficulties in a text as well as for activating schematic knowledge (p. 86).

In reading, schema activation plays a great role for associating new knowledge with the prior knowledge. Widdowson (1983) says that, schemas or schemata as they are sometimes known have been described as cognitive constructs that allow for the organization of information in long-term memory (as cited by Wallace, 1992, p. 33). In this regard, an EFL teacher needs to use different pre-reading tasks in the classroom, which help the pupils be familiar with the language and the context of the text.

The While-Reading Stage

Tickoo (2003) states that the while-reading stage helps the teacher achieve the main aim by getting pupils to 'engage with' the text in different ways. In this stage, the teacher presents his/ her lesson in a well-planned manner. This stage is considered as the main activity in a lesson plan. Urquhart and Weir (1998) describe while-reading activity as interrogating texts or a text talk. It means monitoring one's own comprehension; checking that comprehension is taking place (p. 186). In the while-reading stage, multiple tasks like true or false, gap filling, reordering, matching, question-answers and multiple-choice items are useful. Similarly, the teacher can make the learners responsible in learning process by making them present their ideas based on the reading materials. In order to make sure that the learners have understood the text, an EFL teacher needs to exploit various tasks in the classroom. The tasks should match the learners' level that only can promote learning. In this process, the teacher can play a significant role creating learning environment in the classroom. The well-planned activities and the facilitative role of the teacher in the classroom enhance learning.

The Post-Reading Stage

Tickoo (2003**)** has mentioned that the post-reading stage seeks to 'utilize the text and the meanings derived from it in order to help pupils relate to other activities that would be of interest and use of them. According to Nuttall (1996), this is the time to reconsider the hypotheses students made about the text in the early stages, their opinions about the writer's aims, about the main message of the text and such ideas can be substantiated and refined or if necessary rejected and replaced. The work may be done either orally or in writing (as cited by Bhusal, 2011, p. 43). The activities done under the post-reading stage are mainly supportive to judge the learners understanding of the reading materials. It is also necessary to make the learners share their ideas in terms of some critical questions. Besides, the teacher can launch debate contest and make the learners comment on each other's ideas and strengthen their text comprehension. In one or other way round, it is necessary to make the learners able to respond in different ways and make sure that they have relevant ideas from the reading materials.

Approaches in Reading

The focus and reason for reading determines the reading approach. Approaches are related to language acquisition just like reading comprehension. Approaches in reading are responsible to determine the effectiveness of reading any text. In this regard, there are some reading approaches, which are as follows;

The Bottom-up Approach

In the bottom-up approach of reading, reader follows a systematic way to reach up to the intended meaning of a particular text. Bottom-up approach is based on the sequential as well as the linear process in reading. Tickoo (2003) states that the bottom-up model as an reading activity in which sounds are matched to letters, or, in

technical language, the reader builds grapheme-phoneme relationship (p. 25). First, the reader recognizes letters then jumps to the words. In the same way, he /she moves further in order to reach to clauses and finally comes to the sentence level to have the complete sense on the text. "The readers build up a meaning from the black marks on the page: recognizing letters and words, working out sentence structure" (Nuttall, 1996, p. 17). Nuttall further says that textual comprehension involves adding the meanings of words to get the meanings of clauses. Similarly, Harmer (2007) states that in bottom-up processing, the reader focuses on such things as individual words, phrases or cohesive devices and achieves understanding by stringing these detailed elements together to build up a whole (p. 270). This approach follows simple to complex way in reading.

The Top-down Approach

The top-down approach in reading is the process of reading, concerning the text as a whole. The reader comes along with some sorts of meaning or the prior knowledge related to the text that he or she is going to read. Tickoo (2003) mentions, "In top-down model, the reader is seen to reconstruct meaning by using much more than the knowledge of letters, words, phrases, or even sentences" (p. 26). Therefore, while reading, the reader is not going to focus on all the content as in the bottom-up approach, but at the same time focusing on the overall meaning of it. No matter, the reader can escape some of the words or phrases but certainly, he/she comes with the meaning intended by the writer. Urquhart and Weir (1998) state that in top-down approach, the reader comes to the text with a previously formed plan and perhaps omits chunks of the text, which seem to be irrelevant to the reader's purpose (p. 42). In regard of top-down approach, Harmer (2007) says that the readers try to get the general understanding of the text rather than focusing on every structure. Here, in the

top-down approach of reading, the reader's background knowledge has an important role to play.

Interactive Approach

Tickoo (2003) states that a theory, which attempts to bring the two models; bottom-up and top-down together, is known as the interactive model. In it, the good reader processes texts by simultaneously making use of the support that comes from both KOW (knowledge of the world) and KOLS (knowledge of the letters) (p. 27). He further mentions, "Successful reading relies on both bottom-up and top-down processes and result in comprehension at various level: from a surface level understanding of stated facts to a critical, judgmental, and creative view of everything that shapes the text: from facts to opinions, preferences to prejudices, beliefs to biases" (p. 53). Similarly, Hudson (2007) presents the idea of the Stanovich model where he mentions, "A key feature of interactive models is that a pattern is synthesized using information that is simultaneously applied from the reader's sources of knowledge. These sources may be orthographic knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, syntactic knowledge and background, or schematic, knowledge" (p. 46). From this perspective, what an EFL teacher needs to know is his/her learners must possess the knowledge on both KOW and KOLS for appropriate comprehension.

Theoretical Review

Theories of learning are vital because they inform effective teaching (Wyse and Jones, 2001). Keeping the fact, in the mind, I went through the theories applicable in my reading classroom.

Task-Based Approach

Willis (1996) and Ellis (2003) view "A task is an activity which promotes interaction among students by focusing on the meaning or message of language" (as

cited in Phyak, 2009, p. 57). Here, tasks can be viewed as tools for making the students engage in some sorts of activities that need meaningful communication to accomplish. Tasks, in language classroom, play a vital role for effective learning. Students feel bored when lesson follows a long lecture, so teachers can use different activities that breaks the monotony on the part of the students. Moreover, task helps learners make sense out of their own effort.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), "Engaging learners in task work provides a better context for the activation of learning processes than form-focused activities, and hence ultimately provides better opportunities for language learning to take place" (p. 223). Tasks are meaning oriented. In other words, the tasks focus on some sorts of product, which assists in learning a language. Here, Nunan (1989) mentions, "The communicative task (is) a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is primarily focused on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right" (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 227). It is wise to select task based on interest, need and level of the learners. Similarly, concerning usefulness of the tasks, Ur (1991) highlights the importance of task in the language classroom mainly for the two reasons. First, the task provide the purpose of reading which supports for the interesting and effective classroom. Second, the teacher needs to know the learners' understanding of the reading materials. Hence, the teacher can be greatly assisted by the results of the comprehension tasks accomplished by the learners (p.145). EFL teachers to make their learners enjoy working with the task in assistance of the co-learners should follow the idea. The classroom dynamics provides the learners better opportunity to have meaningful communication that helps

them to complete their task with fast and ease, so the learners will be continuously motivated for the lesson.

Types of Learning and Teaching Activities. Teaching and learning activities involves different set of tasks as Richards and Rodgers (2001) argue, "It could include not only summaries, essays, and class notes, but presumably, in some language classrooms, drills, dialogue readings, and any of the other 'tasks' that teachers use to attain their teaching objectives" (p. 233-234). In Willis's (1996) view, there are six task types built on more or less traditional knowledge hierarchies. She labels her task examples as listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences and creative tasks. Similarly, Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun (1993) classify tasks according to the type of interaction that occurs in task accomplishment and give the following classification:

- Jigsaw tasks: These involve learners combining different pieces of information to form a whole. For example, three individuals or groups may have three different parts of a story and have piece the story together.

- Information-gap task: One student or group of students has one set of information and another student or group has a complementary set of information. They must negotiate and find out what the other party's information is in order to complete the activity.

- Problem-solving task: Students are given a problem and a set of information. They must arrive at a solution to the problem. There is generally a single resolution of the outcome.

- Decision-making tasks: Students are given a problem for which there are a number of possible outcomes and they must choose one through negotiation and discussion.

- Opinion exchange tasks: Learners engage in discussion and exchange of ideas. They do not need to reach agreement (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 234).

The aforementioned tasks are important for a reading classroom. An EFL teacher needs to be wise to make the use of them based on their supportive nature in language learning. Jigsaw tasks, information gap tasks and problem solving tasks can be useful for while-reading stage, whereas the decision making tasks can be supportive for the post-reading stage as the learners come up with the text understanding in the while-reading stage. Similarly, the opinion exchange tasks can be used in pre-reading stage of teaching reading. Not only that, it can also be used in the post reading stage successfully.

In an EFL reading class, it is important to make the learners read the text themselves. After reading the certain text, it is worth making them engaged in various tasks like presentation, writing summary or solve the comprehension questions under the aforementioned tasks headings.

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching is meaning-based, learner centered approach to L2 teaching where fluency is given priority over accuracy and the emphasis is on the comprehension and production of messages, not the teaching or correction of language (http://link.springer.com). Here, communicative language teaching (CLT) can be viewed as an effective means for motivating the learners to generate ideas with worrying about making too many errors. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2001) have a view regarding communicative language teaching as:

Communicative language teaching can be best considered an approach rather than a method. It refers to a diverse set of principles that reflect a

communicative view of language teaching and learning and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures. These principles include: learners learn a language through using it to communicate, authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities, fluency is an important dimension of communication, communication involves the integration of different language skills and learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error (p. 172).

In this regard, CLT gives importance to the process of language learning rather than the product, as trial and error is the basis for language leaning. The learners engage in communication to complete the task assigned by the teacher. In the task completion process, they do not only communicate with their co-learners but also come up with the product, which integrates language skills. Harmer (2007) argues, "(If) students are involved in meaning focused communicative tasks, then 'language learning will take care of itself' and that plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty of opportunity to use it are vitally important for a student's development of knowledge and skill" (p. 69). He further inserts that role play, simulation, solving a puzzle, writing a poem or construct a story together require sharing information which are popular in CLT.

Schema Theory

Here, I have reviewed the schema theory as the backbone for reading. Schema, originally a term in cognitive psychology, was generally thought to be put forward by Bartlett (1932) based on Gestalt psychology. Nuttall (1996) defines a schema (plural schemata) as a mental structure and views (the schema) as a useful concept in understanding how we are able to interpret texts (p. 7). Similarly, Nunan (1999) mentions that schema theory is based on the notion that past experiences lead to the

creation of mental frameworks that help readers make sense of new experiences" (as cited in Bhusal, 2011, p. 39). In this regard, the schema is an abstract phenomenon, which functions as a bridging gap between the reading texts and experiences of the reader that ultimately enhance understanding the new world(s). According to such a principle, meaning exists neither in oral nor in written language itself, but in the reader's mind, depending on the activation of his or her brain schemata whose controlling structure or basic moving pattern is navigated through bottom-up processing and top-down processing. Further, in reading, the operations of bottom-up and top-down processing are simultaneous (Rumelhart, 1977, as cited in Xie, 2013, p. 67). In relation to schema and reading comprehension, Xie (2013) refers to Rumelhart (1980):

> He believes that comprehension is the process of selecting the schema illustrating input information and variable constraints. Reading comprehension is first, inputting some amount of information and then searching for the schemata illustrating the information. Comprehension is generated, when such schemata are found, some schemata are specified, or slots are filled. Just as various concepts operate at different levels, schemata in human's mind also have different levels, and the comprehension process is bound to reflect the levels, that is, the input information has to be processed at different levels successively from lower level schema specification to higher level one (p. 68-69).

Urquhart and Weir (1998) call it, schema, background knowledge, which is a part of this theory of comprehension associated with the notion of schemata that a text is never complete and that the reader must supply additional material derived from their existing knowledge of the world (p. 63). From this perspective, one can realize

the role of experience in reading comprehension as it is almost impossible without having some sorts of basic understanding before jumping to read. Therefore, it is necessary to take the schema activation activities as the regular components of EFL reading lesson for making the learners able to grab the sufficient information from what they read.

Review of Pervious Research

Koul (1984) views, "A careful review of the research journals, books, dissertation, thesis and other resources of information on the problem to be investigated is one of the important steps in the planning of any research study" (p. 88). In this regard, here, I have presented a brief account of the research in the same discipline:

Bhusal (2011) carried out research on "Independent Extensive reading development in the EFL classroom", to find out the teachers overall perception of teaching extensive reading and to explore the strategies used to motivate the learners towards extensive kind of reading. He found that the regular concern and motivation from teachers' side, from selection of books to write reviews, adaptation of encouraging incentives and organizing as well as initiating extensive reading program in school can highly motivate the students towards independent extensive reading. The finding suggests that motivation plays a vital role to make the students active in their extensive reading where the stakeholders have the great role to play. However, the extensive reading is not merely purpose of reading. We need to understand the text as the overall where the readers come up with the critical responses.

Similarly, Mahato (2011) in his masters' dissertation entitled "Using interactive teaching reading approaches in secondary English language classroom" tried to find out the teachers competency and performance on teaching reading. The

objectives of his research study were to explore the understanding and practices of teachers in using interactive reading approach in secondary English language classroom. In his findings, he has mentioned that there is a vast gap between the teachers' competency and the newly invented approaches in teaching. Due to being unfamiliar with the innovative approaches, techniques and methods in teaching reading, the teachers are least effective in their teaching. Being unaware of using effective strategies in teaching reading, they do not follow the stages; pre reading, while reading and post reading nor they use any teaching learning materials in their class. He further added that teacher talk time (TTT) is maximum rather student talk time (STT). Class, of course, is diversified as the learners come from different environment. The students who come up with psychological, intellectual and environmental barriers, hesitates to participate in communicative activities, which results the passive class and finally poor competence in English.

Shrestha (2009) has carried out research on "Practices of interactive teaching reading skills by secondary English teachers of public schools" with the aim of tracing out the classroom practices of the interactive teaching reading skills in public schools. Her study has attempted to analyze and describe the perception and classroom practice of interactive teaching reading skill of language teachers of public schools in Lalitpur district. As the findings of her study, she has mentioned that many English teachers of public schools have sufficient perceptions of interactive teaching reading skills. However, the problem is there, a large number of English language teachers do not use all the steps of interactive teaching reading skill in the classroom. Only few language teachers use pre-reading activities, while reading activities and post reading activities, applying all the process and steps of teaching reading skills in classroom effectively. During her study, she found common problems to practice the

steps of interactive teaching reading in classrooms. Students not having equal level, English as the foreign language, vocabularies problems, pronunciation problems, lack of interest to the topic, large and noisy classes, limited teaching materials and insufficient time are some of the problems faced by the English teachers in their classroom. As the conclusion of her findings, she has mentioned that using interactive approach in the classroom is beneficial to enhance the students' creativity.

Similarly, Khatiwada (2009) has carried out a research entitled "Analysis of secondary English teachers' strategies of dealing with reading skills". The objectives of the study were to explore English language teacher's prevalent perceptions and the strategies employed in classroom while dealing with reading texts. He has found out that the teachers as facilitator in the classroom and the supportive behavior of teachers is helpful to make the learners active learners. Similarly, Gnawali (2009) has carried out research on "Secondary English teachers' understanding on testing reading comprehension". The main purpose of his study was to find out teachers' understanding on testing reading comprehension of grade ten students. Meanwhile, he has also tried to find out the problems of reading comprehension ability of grade ten students as perceived by teachers. As the findings, he has mentioned that an unseen passage is the best way to test reading ability as they are made to test only reading ability of the students. But the teachers believe that reading passage do not improve English language because schools do not focus on communicative aspects of language. In order to achieve communicative skills the learners need to engage in communicative activities in the classroom. Besides, Gnawali (2009) has also pointed out that the public school students are facing problems even in learning new vocabulary. In such a situation, it is very difficult to meet the objectives of teaching reading as they are set by Curriculum Development Center, Nepal.

Besides, Miller (2011) has carried out an action research with the aim to improve teaching reading comprehension to the students in primary level. As the result of the study, it has been mentioned that the students could improve their reading comprehension level where the teacher had a crucial role to play.

The Research Gap

Research in teaching reading is not a new, as there are some researches carried out even from the University. But, the studies show the evidence that the most of all researches were limited to find out the teachers' perception and practices in teaching reading. Such as, teachers' perception and practice of interactive approach in teaching reading, communicative approach in teaching reading, developing independent extensive reading on the part of the students, understanding of teachers' on testing reading comprehension of the students, analysis of secondary English teachers' strategies dealing with reading skills. In addition, 'improving practices in teaching reading comprehension of the students in third graders' was only the action research. Here, the researchers were found to be restrained in exploring the 'others' i.e. teachers' understanding, perceptions and practices. However, as I was concerned, no research had been carried out for improving reading comprehension of the students in secondary level from the University. In addition to this, neither the researchers were ready to change their teaching practices for a second language reading class nor were they interested for improving their secondary learners reading comprehension. The 'reluctant' issue on the part of EFL teachers has led to their learners towards poor performance. Therefore, I carried out action research for improving reading comprehension of the learners in the public school.

In the Nepalese context, performance of the secondary learners determines their further career as the good performance in English allows them to choose the

discipline as per their interest. Therefore, the learners must be provided with the necessary exposure in EFL reading. In this regard, my action research provided the learners with ample exposure in the second language reading, as the result, the learners improved their reading comprehension. In addition, I have built myself a better teacher in teaching English as the second language.

Conceptual Framework

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│        IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION OF THE SECONDARY            │
│                   SCHOOL EFL LEARNERS                              │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐  ┌─────────────────┐
│ Reading Comprehension   │  │ Task Based       │  │ Interpretive    │
│ Sub Skills/Components in │  │ Approach         │  │ paradigm,       │
│ Reading Comprehension   │  │                  │  │                 │
│ Text as a Tool for      │  │ Communicative    │  │                 │
│ Language Learning       │  │ Language         │  │ Qualitative     │
│ Stages of Teaching      │  │ Teaching         │  │ method          │
│ Reading                 │  │                  │  │                 │
│ Extensive and Intensive │  │ Schema Theory    │  │                 │
│ Tasks                   │  │                  │  │ Intervention    │
│                         │  │                  │  │ through Action  │
│ Classroom Dynamics      │  │                  │  │ Research        │
└─────────────────────────┴──────────────────────┴─────────────────┘
│            Development of EFL Reading Comprehension                │
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The conceptual framework is the gist of the overall aspects that I exploited in the action research. In other words, it presents the core of the elements that I made use in my action research for improving reading comprehension of the students. In addition, it presents my understanding to the literatures that are related to EFL reading classroom. As I am concerned, EFL reading is a complex act than the reading in the native language. However, it can be made easier on the part of the learners using

various tasks in the classroom. In this regard, I made the use of task-based language teaching and the communicative language teaching approaches for designing the classroom activities. These approaches were successfully implemented with the help of the classroom dynamics, which honored the value of schema theory. In other words, the learners engaged in multiple tasks before, while and after reading. It provided them the sufficient exposure to learn the English language. The research methods that I used in the field gave me the valuable insight about the weakness and improvement on the part of the learners.

Chapter Summary

In this Chapter, I have presented the account of the literatures that I used in my action research. I have dealt with the thematic as well as the theoretical part related to my research in improving the EFL reading comprehension of the secondary learners. Moreover, I have also presented the short account of previous research in terms of the review of the previous research, which has been followed by research gap as well as the conceptual framework of my action research study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter begins with the philosophical consideration of the research. Similarly, I will be discussing the paradigm, ontology, epistemology and axiology in relation to my research work. Besides, methodology, research site and the participants, data collection approaches, data sources, data analysis and quality standards followed by ethical considerations are the concerned topics for this chapter.

Philosophical Considerations

Research is guided by philosophy. Therefore, researchers need to stand on a certain philosophical point. It supports the researchers to have the standpoint. The standpoint enables them to have the appropriate process in order to capture the necessary data on their own effort in the research field. In other words, the researcher can address the existed problems related with knowledge, value and reality. Since, it provides idea to the researcher to maintain his or her position in the research study; it is very useful in any kind of research to determine the appropriate methodology and design tools, because selection of appropriate research design and the whole methodology process are influenced by philosophical views of the research.

Research Paradigm: Interpretive

Research paradigm was the guideline for me through which I collected information and generated the knowledge out of it. Here, Willis (2007) says, "A paradigm is thus a comprehensive belief system, world view or frame work that guides research and practice in a field" (p. 8). Similarly, Richards (2003) mentions, "Research paradigm tells a researcher about his or her research position and what the implication of such stand might be" (p. 33). Of course, the research paradigm gave me

a standpoint in order to complete my research work successfully. Standpoint in the sense that, I was assisted in data collection and in interpretations. I had chosen data collection techniques in reference to my research paradigm. Therefore, it was the guideline or standpoint for my action research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) say, "Interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experiences (p. 21). Each and every individual understand and interpret the world in a different way which gives no objective result in a particular subject matter. In other words, it varies person to person. They further mention "Positivism strives for objectivity, measurability, predictability, controllability, patterning, the construction of laws and rules of behavior, and the ascription of causality; the interpretive paradigms strive to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors" (p. 26). As an action researcher, I was the actor along with my learners. The classroom context and the learners were the valuable medium of imparting knowledge. Moreover, the classroom was the prime source of knowledge.

I directly involved in the research field, spent a prolonged time with the learners acting and reflecting in research consequence. Similarly, I also revised my plan based on the results and again implemented in the class. Every time, I changed my teaching strategy as it was directed by the former action and reflection. Based on the interpretive research paradigm, I selected classroom observation, reflective journals, field notes, photos, performance tests as my data collection tools. I used all the tools and analyzed them carefully. The act of analyzing research data helped me to make sense out of it. The sense made by the different data collection tools helped me to review the teaching learning process. Moreover, it helped me to design lessons in the way that could tackle the learners' problems. Finally, I got the evidence of

improvement on the part of the learners that was the result of exploiting the research process in a meaningful way.

Ontology

Opie (2004) states that ontological assumption determines whether a person sees social reality or aspect of the social world as external, independent, given and objectively real or instead as a socially constructed and subjectively experienced (p.19-20). Of course, this research was not far from the social context as the school itself is a society. The classroom context and the students are known as the social site in my action research. The classroom activities, students' involvement and its result in terms of learning had of great value in the whole research study. Therefore, the data emerged in the classroom had been considered as truth where the students had played the great role on it. Something that appeared in the classroom while teaching learning has been clearly mentioned in terms of data, which may or may not be of worth for many others as Cohen et al. (2007) argue, "Individuals seek the knowledge as personal, subjective and unique" (p. 7). It is claimed to be meaningful for providing the better opportunity to the learners to engage in various tasks, which gave them the positive result as they improved their reading comprehension.

Epistemology

Epistemology is a philosophy that deals with the theory of knowledge where the nature of knowledge counts or how and what we know play the great role (Lichtman, 2010). The process of knowing and prioritized matters has a significant role in the research. Of course, there are various ways of exploring the hidden reality but the one which is appropriate for one's context is more significant than that of the others. Similarly, Richards (2003) states that epistemology is the science or study of knowledge that refers to the relationship between the knower and known (p. 35). In relation to the action research, what the teacher does and how the students respond to

the instructions as well as classroom activities have great impact. I had planned the activities keeping the students' reading level in the mind. The process I followed in the action research was particularly significant to my context. As the result, the students got the opportunity to engage in the multiple tasks. The engagement made them respond to the reading materials in the meaningful way. The regular practise in terms of solving the comprehension items led the students towards the better comprehenders. The communicative method made them easy solving the problems as the learners shared their problems in pairs and groups. In this regard, the process I exploited helped me to generate knowledge on my own. Besides, the data that I grabbed in the reading classroom assisted me to check my students' comprehension level so that I could keep on using effective strategies for multiple tasks.

Axiology

By nature, human beings are different from one another. As their differences in many ways, they also come up with their own value system, through which they guide themselves in every step of their entire life. Richards (2003) argues, "All the truths, like all investigations and understandings are value laden" (p. 36). As researchers are guided by the value system, my action research was of course, guided by my certain values. I valued my research participants; the students, their background knowledge and their understanding to the reading materials. Not only that, I valued to the task-based language learning and communicative language teaching where the classroom dynamics were hardly missed. Through the broader term theory: schema, I shifted into methods, which I believed to be effective in my reading classes. In the similar way, the students realized that they had problems in dealing with the reading texts whether the texts were seen or unseen to the learners. In addition, they gave importance to the classroom activities and participated as the

instructions were given. It is true that they felt quiet uneasy working in pairs and groups in the beginning days. However, they kept on following the instructions and completed the assigned task regularly. Working in pairs and groups became rituals for them. Later, they started enjoying working with the co-learners. The exploitation of different strategies and techniques in reading slowly and gradually gave the positive result in EFL reading comprehension of the students.

I gave importance to certain theory, methods, strategies and techniques for teaching reading, which gave a shape in my practices. Making the students busy with the task; oral or written was not of course, an easy job to carry on. However, the regular planning in terms of reading materials and its proper implementation helped learners to improve their reading comprehension. As the result, the learners could respond to the comprehension items more appropriately.

Qualitative Research Method

Hancock (2002) views qualitative research as a tool for enriching our knowledge in relation to the people and the way of doing things by them in a particular social setting (p. 1). This form of research studies the phenomena in a close relationship between the researcher and the social setting. Best and Khan (2006) refer to Patton (1990) where they view that there are three kind of data collection in qualitative research method. They are in depth, open-ended interviews, direct observation and written documents. In the first, researchers expose the reality in terms of the direct quotations about the feelings, experiences, ideas and knowledge of the people being studied as the research participants. Similarly, observation uncovers the reality with the help of detailed description of the action and activities taken place in the research site. The last means of exposing things from the research field is written document. It flashes out the information with the help of quotation, extracts, personal

diaries and records (p. 247). It takes extended time to carry out qualitative research. In this regard, the researches need to know the essential aspects within it through which they can maintain the research objectives.

Maxwell (1998) highlights some considerable aspects as the components of qualitative methods. The first considerable aspect is the researcher's relationship with the research participants, the appropriate time, and the settings. The second is the sources of information that the researcher decides to use in his/her research and the process of gathering research data. In addition, the last considerable aspect in the qualitative research method is that the way of using information in sense making process (p. 86). In whichever form or step, it is the researcher's role to follow the guideline of the research method, without which, it is almost impossible to claim the study to have educational values.

Creswell (2003) introduces seven core traditions in qualitative research and they are ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, case study, life history, action research and conversation analysis (as cited in Bajracharya, 2012, p. 32). Similarly, Richards (2003) highlights the importance of adapting qualitative method, where he states "A reason for adapting a qualitative approach is that it is a person centered enterprise and therefore particularly appropriate in our work in the field of language teaching" (p. 9). Concerning the qualitative research, I followed the action research tradition. The process of action research guided my way and actions in the classroom. It gave me the right direction as I kept on following the every step.

Action Research as Method of Inquiry

One of the founding fathers of the action research, Corey (1953) argues that the action research is a process in which practitioners study problems significantly, so that they can evaluate, improve and steer decision-making and practice (as cited in

Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2008, p. 297). As the action research has concern with solving teaching learning problems, it helps to improve the current situations for enhanced performance. Here, Nunan (2010) defines action research as a form of research, which is becoming increasingly significant in language education (p. 17). However, Carr & Kemmis (1986) argue, "Action research is implying a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out" (as cited in Norton, 2009, p. 52). In whatever form, the scholars are agreed upon the fact that action research is carried out mainly for improving the current situations in teaching and learning process.

In addition, Freeman (1998) opines action research as an approach that enables university academics to understand better the process of teaching and learning. In the same way, Kember & Gow (1992) claim the action research as a method of continuing professional development for university academics (as cited in Norton, 2009, p. 60). Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) describes the action research process as a spiral of activity: plan, act, observe and reflect (as cited in Berg, 2007, p. 225). During my action research, I went through all the activities so that it was successful to address the problems, making necessary changes in its process.

Steps in Action Research

The action research followed steps wise procedures. I followed a model presented by Ferrance (2000) in a paper 'Action research' (http://www.lab.brown.edu/ pubs/ themes ed/act research). The model includes five different steps: identify the problem, gather data, interpret data, act on evidence, evaluation of the results and next steps in the action research.

Figure1. Action Research Cycle
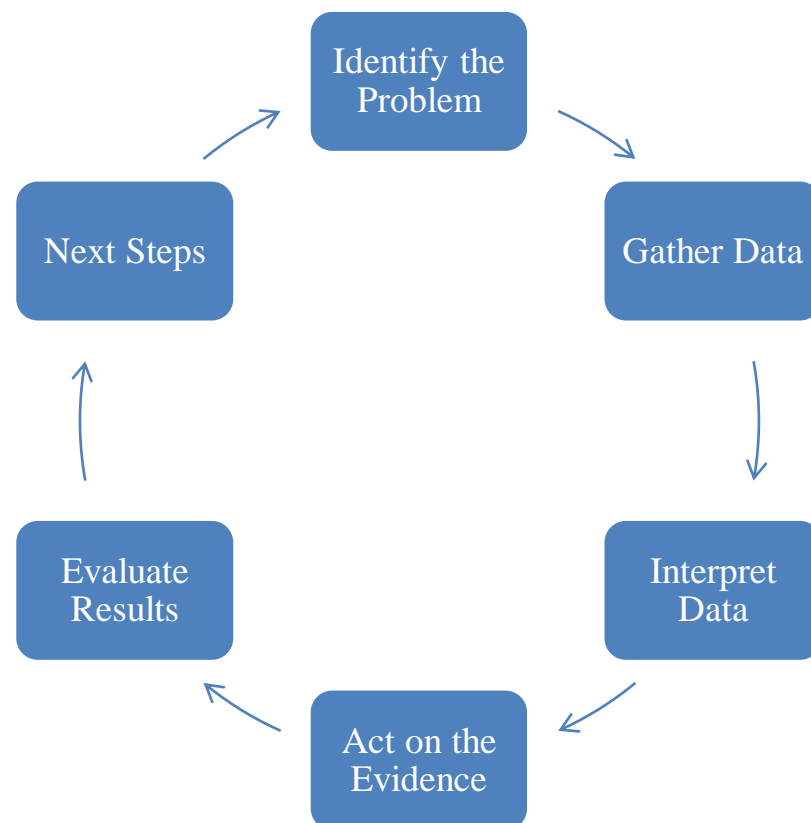
Source: Action Research Cycle, adapted from Ferrance 2000, p. 9.

I, as an action researcher, made a plan verifying the learners' problems in reading comprehension and implemented it in the classroom. Therefore, planning was done in reference to the problems faced by the learners. I had different activities according to the plan. I kept on implementing my strategies in the class and observe all those happenings carefully. I collected evidence on the results as I had done in identification of the problem. Later, I analyzed the change with the help of my colleague and moved on the further action. The reflection upon the results gave me a right direction to move. I went on implementing my lesson as the plan where the learners could improve their performance in reading comprehension. By its nature, I made comment on my practices as a critical teacher. Planning, action, observation and reflection were the cyclical process exploited in my research. They are elaborated more systematically in the phases of action research.

Research Design

A research design is the general outline of the research, which guides the researchers into their research field. The proper use of research design leads to have the successful completion of the study. Bryman (2009) views research design as an important tool for providing framework for research which includes the data collection and analysis (p. 37). A systematic research design helps the research not only to take initiative but also in other process needed for a research. As it was the action research, it took place in one of the government school in Lalitpur district. My research participants were the secondary learners as I carried out my research in class ten. In this process, I used field notes, journals, classroom discussion, photographs as the data collection tools, which I later analyzed in terms of my research question.

My Research Site

As I was very much fascinated carrying out the action research in a government school as I was from the same background. Therefore, I chose one of the schools in Lalitpur District. The school where I carried out my action research was Prabhat Higher Secondary School. It is located in Tyagal-Chaupokhari, Lalitpur. The school has a long history. First, there was a library Prabhat Pustakalaya established in 1952 by the educated youths at Sundhara, Lalitpur. Later, it changed as Prabhat School in the same year. As the time passed, the school faced financial problem that led to the completely closed state. In 1968, the locals established a coaching centre Prabhat Preparatory for the SLC appearing students, which later on changed as a lower secondary school in 1973 and as a secondary school in 1982. Laxmi Lal Shrestha was the chairperson of the first school management committee whereas Nirkeshari Shrestha was appointed as the principal of the school. In 1982, 17 students first appeared in the SLC examination. The secondary school was changed into the

higher secondary school in 2005 only. Now, the school has 36 teaching and non teaching staffs. The total number of the students in the school is 1050. It has two buildings with sufficient classroom, staffs room and the library along with the basic facilities needed for a school. Moreover, it has six subject wise departments and the administrations. The school was established with the aim of making aware to the locals as it had slogan Education is the source of Awareness. It is continuously devoted for imparting quality education in the area. Repeatedly, the school launches the extra-curricular activities for the all round development of students.

As the need of the changing context, the school has focused in teaching English language from class one. However, the learners' performance in English is not yet satisfactory. One of the secondary English teachers said, "*Around 75% students in class ten fail to read the English text in front of the class and they have the performance similar to the learners of class two in a reputed boarding school.*" In my curiosity, he added that the learners have problems with all the language skills and even they are not serious about their study. He also reported that the secondary learners are struggling with reading in English, which covers the highest weight in the SLC examination. In addition, those students face greater problems in dealing with the comprehension questions assigned in the test. The interaction with the English teacher also helped me to locate the problems on the part of learners in relation to the language learning.

Action Research Participants

The action research participants were the learners from grade ten. There were altogether 38 learners in the class. According to the teachers, most of the learners in the secondary level are from out of the valley, even neglected by their parents and staying with their relatives for continuing their study. Therefore, they have difficulties

managing things, which lead them to have poor performance in their study. I wanted to improve the secondary EFL learners reading comprehension as they had problems; I designed and implemented the intervention plan for the learners. They knew that they had problems in reading, so they were interested to be guided in terms of the different tasks in the class.

I decided to carry out my action research in class ten with the aim of improving their reading comprehension so as to share my findings with the English teachers to prevent many other learners from the same problems in dealing with text in English.

Data Sources

Classroom was the data source for my action research. In other words, the classroom context, which included learners, was the furthermost data source of my action research. The discussion with the learners, field notes, tests and reflective journals were the valuable products of the class, which gave me sufficient data for my action research.

Data Collection Techniques and Procedure

Techniques for collecting action research data are generally qualitative in nature (Nunan, 1989) reflecting the primary purpose to investigate practice critically and to work towards changing it within the context of the teaching situation (Burns, 2010, p. 78). Burns further categorizes the data collection methods into observational and non-observational methods. The observational method includes observation, notes, diaries/journals, recordings, transcripts and diagrams. On the other hand, the non-observational method includes interviews and discussions, questionnaires and surveys, life/career histories and documents (p. 79 &117).

In addition, Ferrance (2000) argues, "The collection of data is an important step in deciding what action needs to be taken. Multiple sources of data are used to better understand the scope of happenings in the classroom or school. There are many vehicles for collection of data: field notes, diaries, journals, photos, memos, records-tests, report cards, attendance, focus groups" (p. 11). I have used multiple sources of data, which gave me the better understanding of the phenomena being studied. I used observation, field notes, journals, photos, discussions and tests as the tools for data collection. Throughout the research, I used those tools and gathered ample evidences on the happenings. Data collection is a long process where numerous tools are necessary to be exploited. The followings are the tools for gathering data in my action research.

Classroom Discussions

I used classroom discussions technique in the research work. Especially, after each test/evaluation on reading comprehension, we use to have discussions. The following extract best describes the use of classroom discussion in my action research;

An important element, of the course…(Was)aimed at building independent learning strategies. In order to do this and collect part of the data for our research, the students were involved in regular discussions, both in and out of the classroom, about the usefulness of various activities and situations for language learning. Their responses to these discussions were then documented. In addition, I carried out a feedback session with the students after each competency assessment which, although focusing mainly on the test used for the assessment, also included some discussion of the assessment task. Again, I documented the students' responses (Carroll, 1995 as cited in Burns 2010, p. 127). I found discussion technique very useful for providing

feedback to the whole class at once. Besides, the learners would share their ideas without hesitation, as it was open sharing. It helped me to build close relationship with the learners and vice versa. Similarly, I knew their likes and dislikes in terms of various activities in the class that helped me to make effective plans for further lessons. Those discussions had several positive outcomes. The most important part of the discussions were reflection, evaluation and further plans.

Similarly, I wanted the learners to know about their performance in the pre test. Therefore, we, myself, my colleague and the learners sat together and discussed about the learners' performance. The learners who had appeared the test studied their answer sheets. By then, they were aware on their problems in dealing with reading test. In addition, they also reflected the same idea that they find reading and solving comprehension question as a difficult task. We wanted the learners to be serious on the problem, so we shared our experiences with the learners. Our focus was to make the learners more aware on the strengths and weaknesses based on the test. Moreover, we wanted them to take the problems seriously. In the discussion, the learners shared their ideas in terms of the test, their difficulties, and their commitment for the further improvement. They were happy hearing that they were going to have class on reading for about three months. The discussion gave the positive result to verify the learners' problems in reading comprehension. As reflected by the learners, they had the main problems with 'vocabulary' that creates further problems in reading the text and writing the correct answers.

Classroom Observation

The next technique exploited in data collection for my research was observation. Observing is watching something from the nearer distance. Observation is the process in which one or more persons observe what is occurring in some real

life situation, and they classify and record pertinent happenings according to some planned schedule (Koul, 1984, p.170). Similarly, Robson (2002) says, what people do may differ from what they say they do, and observation provides a reality check; observation also enables a researcher to look afresh at everyday behavior that otherwise might be taken for granted, expected or go unnoticed (as cited in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 396). However, as it was the action research, I was going to observe my practices and their effects on the learning. Therefore, I observed my research participants; learners and the classroom activities and I collected data necessary for the action research. The close observation had given me the chance to be exposed with all the classroom aspects; instruction, activities, management and the outcomes of the lesson on the part of the learners. During observation, I focused the aspects as stated by Bogdan and Bilken (1992) "Record aspects such as portraits of the information, the physical setting, particular events and activities, and your own reactions" (as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 134-135). After each observation, I made reflection on the data and planned further lessons. I found the observation as an important tool in data collection as it provided the details of the classroom scenario. I found the learners cooperative in the groups and pairs. Sometimes, some of the learners seemed to be uninterested working in collaboration with the others. My observation supported me to analyze the happenings of the classroom. I could see the learners getting serious about their studies and classroom activities after each discussion.

Field Notes

Burns (2010) states, "Notes, or field notes as they are often referred to in qualitative research, are descriptions and accounts of events in the research context which are written in a relatively factual and objective style" (p. 87). I maintained

note when I was in the class. In the note, I had jotted down the information that I found necessary for the further study. I had a very limited time for maintaining notes in the class but whenever the learners were busy doing their task and just after my presentation, I would write the information. The notes included the major aspects of the teaching learning process like, the instruction for the task, the learners' involvement and its results were the focused aspects of my notes. My notes supported me to reflect on the classroom practices. As they were written, they helped me to memorize the major classroom events and I would write my reflection when I found comfortable time for me. Burns (2010) further writes, "Notes, when taken regularly, provide an excellent way of chronicling both ordinary and extraordinary research events, and later help to form the basis ordinary of a research report or oral presentation" (p. 88). It was not that all the activities went as I had planned. There were so many instances where the lessons went messy. Especially, in the beginning stage of my research the lessons were overlapping. I had dealt with the same lesson plan even in the second day. However, the regular reflection over the classroom activities led to the successful stage of the action research where notes were of great support. In other words, the notes assisted me to know about remarkable and distractive or problematic events from the class. Besides, they gave me the information about the learners' reaction on the reading materials and activities exploited in the classroom.

Reflective Journals

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) argue, " (The) significance of keeping a journal or diary is not only the emotional security it may afford but also for the researcher to reflect on the research, step back and look again at the scenes in order to generate new ideas and theoretical directions" (as cited in Burns, 2010, p. 89). Similarly, Doff

(1995) takes it as a learning material and Ur (1991) sees reflective journal as a tool for developing writing skill to the EFL teachers. For the research purpose, mainly, I maintained reflective journals just after each class. I would take the help of the notes and make a description of the information along with my feelings for the classroom practices. Moreover, in journals, I would write everything; strengths and weaknesses of the classroom activities including the objectives and the results of the particular lesson. Every time, I produced journals based on the facts where I added my perspectives and planned the lessons accordingly. The information included in the journals were supportive not only for selecting contents and methods in future plan but also for self evaluation as it assisted me to judge where I was and what I was doing for what. Writing the reflective journals helped me to analyze the classroom situation and learn from it.   The most important part of the reflective journals was that they gave me the details of how the classroom activities went. Many times, I had to modify the lesson plans even in the classroom. Moreover, I had done that to make the activities interesting to the learners where they could learn in fun. I meant, the reflective journals gave me the overview of the activities and their result where the learners' as well as my feeling was reflected. The facts and feelings in my reflective journals had assisted me to evaluate the process and plan further lessons and implement them in the classroom exploiting the necessary strategies. Later, they helped me to underline the progress of the learners in terms of the reading comprehension as well.

Photographs

Burns (2010) mentions, "(Photographs) are a way of greatly enhancing classroom analysis and providing visual stimuli which can be integrated into reporting and presenting the research to others. The use of photographs is also a technique for

data collection that combines effectively with a range of language classroom tasks and activities where visual aids are an invaluable support in learning" (p. 101). Sometimes, I took photographs of the learners and kept them safe. Before taking photographs, I would take the learners' permission. Especially, I took the photographs when the learners were presenting on a certain theme, doing task in pairs and groups and appearing in tests. Later, I used those photographs to intensify the descriptions I made in the research report. Not only that, the photographs helped me to analyze the group work in terms of gender, their level and cooperation. In this regard, the photographs were of the great value in my action research.

Tests

Tests were greatly valued in my action research. It was not sufficient action research process without evaluating the learners' progress. Many times, I had assigned oral test to the learners. In other words, the classroom activities were to make the learners comprehend the reading materials in sufficient way rather than only testing by taking a long time. Therefore, every week I assigned test to the learners on the reading comprehension. The tests were designed based on the reading materials that they had practices throughout the week. The tests gave me the clear information about the learners' progress, their strengths and weaknesses. Every time, the learners got chance to study the answer sheets. It helped them to realize their mistakes and correct them by the help of the friends and teacher if not on their own. All the tests were carefully analyzed and the further intervention plan was made. Therefore, the tests gave me sufficient evidences to underline their progress as the time passed.

In this regard, I assigned several tests; pre-test, tests, post-test on reading comprehension. Every time, the learners had tried for the best performance from the first test to the last. However, they had not the same level of performance. The

difference in scoring helped me to analyze my strategies and classroom practices. So, the tests were the significant tool for collecting evidence on the learners' performance. The pre-test helped me to find out the real problems related to reading comprehension on the part of the learners. Similarly, the test assigned in between of teaching learning helped me to determine the level of effectiveness of my teaching and plan accordingly, and the post-test helped me to analyze the progress made by the learners in comparison to the pre test.

In addition, in relation to the classroom situation I had modified the tests. Those tests were in both of the forms: written and oral. The data of the oral test had been jotted as notes where there was no problem with written test as I had collected answer sheets. Therefore, the tests were important tool for collecting data on the learners' progress from the beginning to the last stage of my action research.

Data Analysis Process

Only the collection of data has nothing to do in research study if it is not analyzed carefully. In other words, data analysis is one of the most important tasks of a research study. There is an intimate relationship between data and analysis. In the same way, it is the meaning making process out of collected data. Regarding the data analysis, Cohen et al (2008) state that analyzing data is organizing, accounting for and explaining the data. They further mention data analysis as a series of tasks through which we can grab the intended meaning (p. 462). Similarly, Creswell (2007) views, "Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs for analysis) then reducing the data into the themes through the process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion (p. 148).

In relation to the action research, Burns (2010) says, " Data analysis in action research involves moving away from the 'action' components of the cycle, where the main focus is on planning and acting, to the 'research' aspects, where the focus changes to more systematic observing and reflecting" (p.153). However, Berg (2007) argues, "Data analysis, from the action research perspectives, involves examination of the data in relation to potential resolutions to the questions or problems identified during the first stage of the research process" (p. 227). Interpretation of data involves analyze and identify major themes (Ferrance, 2000). Research data are collected by the various means such as diaries, interviews, questionnaires or any other methods. They have a very little sense until they are analyzed and evaluated. Therefore, it is necessary to place them into categories that only makes sense to the researcher or the reader (Bell, 2004, p. 171-173). I studied the data and made sense out them. The field notes, tests and photos were described and the journals were summarized as the interpretation act. The act gave me further assistance in analyzing the effectiveness of the classroom activities in reference to the progress made by the learners. My action research aimed to improve EFL reading comprehension of the secondary learners. I had to bring change on the part of the learners out of my action research process. Therefore, I planned my research which lasted for 12 weeks only in the field (Appendix 3). Throughout the period, I supported the learners learn reading materials exploiting the different strategies in teaching reading. At the same time, I observed the classroom, discussed with the learners about their problems, and likes and dislikes about the classroom activities, maintain notes and reflective journals, and had learners write their reflection. Besides, the frequent tests assigned to the learners also had the great support for collecting sufficient data and the careful analysis of those data gave an enormous answer to my research question.

I analyzed the collected data carefully. Based on the evidence, I kept on designing different tasks for the class. Moreover, I used different strategies, which had greater impact for the classroom learning. The process continued for three months by then the learners changed their learning level. The comparison was made in reference to the pre-test and the post-test in reading comprehension. Similarly, many other tests were assigned for supporting the learners to learn better (Appendix 4). They had given me the positive result not only to compare the results but also to judge the effectiveness of the classroom strategies. In addition, the classroom activities, tasks, home assessments, and evaluation helped the learners for the upliftment in their learning. They had got sufficient exposure to practice integrated skills for the better reading comprehension. The learners were well motivated in their learning, as they had desired to practice more and more. They were hopeful to improve their performance out of the exposure.

Not only that, the classroom discussion made the learners more aware, even serious about their performance. They could analyze their performance in reference to the tests. Every time, I made them speak something about their study, their effort and results. The learners would analyze their fellows answer sheets and compare the results. They would discuss with their fellows and make commitment for further improvement. I would encourage the learners sharing stories of great personalities who were failure many times. The discussion would inspire them for superior effort in their learning.

Sometimes, I had the learners comment on the classroom activities. At the end of the lesson, one or two learners would share their views about the activities and their impact in their learning. The learners would comment as they witnessed. Many times, the strategy helped me to improve my practices as well. Similarly, the reflective

journals produced by myself and the learners gave me the right direction in teaching. Mostly, the learners would write positive aspects of my practices. However, they were helpful tools for making teaching learning effective. On the other hand, my journals helped me to refine the overall aspects of teaching learning that gave the valuable result on the part of the learners. I studied the data collected throughout the action research process. In this regard, I analyzed the learners' mistakes from the answer sheets and their exercise books.

Inappropriate or wrong response for vocabulary items was the major problem found in the learners' performance. Similarly, the learners had left vocabulary items in the tests, which led them to have poor scoring in reading tests. Besides, the learners' had inappropriate answers for the comprehension items. Similarly, sentences were found to be written in incorrect structures along with the wrong verb forms. Not only that, the learners also had mistakes in the minor punctuations; capital/small letter, comma, full stop and spelling.

Similarly, I also studied the learners' performance during the action research process. I studied the reflective journals, field notes and tests results as well as the important information written from the discussions and made themes. In order to check the learners' performance, I also assigned post-test at the end of the action research. Then, I compared both of the results and concluded that the learners improved their EFL reading comprehension. The performance of the learners before the action research and at the end of the action research was found drastically changed. In addition, those learners who were regular in the class, performed better than those who were frequently absent in the class. The answer sheets of three of the learners are given in Appendix 5.

Quality Standards

Quality standards are important to the research as they help to maintain the quality issues of the research. Moreover, it is necessary to take into account as they reflect the inner value given by the researcher for the study. Researchers need to make the study authentic, reliable and valid paying full attention to the considerable aspects. In relation to my action research, I have maintained quality standards through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, and negative case analysis.

Authenticity

One of the quality maintaining aspects of qualitative research is authenticity. Authenticity refers to the fairness of the study. I did not have any bias perspective towards my research participants. I knew that if I become loyal to only some of the students, the others would take the issue negatively. I had to motivate all the learners so there was not any misbehave or misunderstanding between the researcher and the participants. I valued their voices and kept the record of the classroom as it was. In this regard, Richards (2003) states that authenticity in research depends on making available an honest and representative selection of the records of the research process such as transcripts, logs and field notes (p. 268). I had understood the learners' context so as my practices in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. The action research was a long process. However, I was continuously committed to my research as I planned, implemented, observed and reflected upon the actions.

Trustworthiness

The information we reflect in terms of our findings needs to have such quality, which indeed is trustworthy. In research, researchers need to go to the particular field, establish the relationship with the research participants and collect the data. In this

regard, the prolonged period was necessary to be spent in the classroom. Planning, action, observation and reflection took a quite long time. In other words, in the regular and extended period of engagement with the research participants helped me for generating meaningful information. I had enough time for my action research. Therefore, I could success to grab the data in the sufficient way that made the sense in my research. As the English teacher, I had a very good relationship with my learners. The learners were day by day motivated to learn as they were going to learn more reading materials in the class.

Besides, I had a critical friend to observe my classroom practices frequently. Not only that, he also supported me checking the pre test and the post-test answer sheets of the learners. We analyzed the evidence carefully and I made sense out of it. Similarly, I also addressed negative case analysis issue, judging the learners performance critically in relation to my hypothesis

Ethical Considerations

Burns (2010) says, "Ethical considerations are important parts of any research enterprise" and she further states responsibility, confidentiality and negotiation are the key principles in the ethical conduct of action research (p. 70-71). Identities of the research participants are not made public as others; colleagues and supervisors, may judge them negatively. The issue of confidentiality has been fully considered in my action research. The research is not far from taking consent of the concerned; students, colleagues, principal and the school administration. It was begun after the introductory discussion with the principal and the colleagues. In the same way, the students were known to the research as I had clearly stated the purpose of the whole programme. They were intrinsically motivated to know that they were going to have class on 'reading', which of course, was a difficult task for them. In other words,

having minimum exposure in English the students from government school face various problems while reading texts in the English language. So, they were ready to involve in the programme. Besides, the students were involved in making decisions for the classroom activities. Not only that, they were equally responsible to make the plan for regular classes which made me easy to complete the research in a friendly setting.

The students were well known about the test and its results. They were known about their progress and digress which worked as a reward for improving their reading comprehension. The students who were not interested to involve in the classroom activities so as the tests were freed. Only in the consent of the participants, the activities were launched and the test was taken. Except with the colleagues, the classroom activities and results along with the names of the students were kept secret. Therefore, this action research claims to have honored the ethical issues during the research period.

Chapter Summary

In the beginning of this chapter, I discussed the philosophical considerations, my research paradigm, and the action research as a method of inquiry along with qualitative research method. Similarly, I also explained about my research design, data collection tools, procedures, and analysis of the research data. Finally, I have explained about my quality standards and the ethical issues in relation to my action research.

CHAPTER IV

IMPLIMENTATION OF ACTION RESEARCH PLAN

In this chapter, I have illustrated the action research process in detail. Mainly, it deals with the different stages of my action research and its various aspects involved in the teaching learning process. I also have inserted pictures and the written sample from the classroom activities.

The Initiation

I had a strong desire to speak in English since I noticed people speaking in English in the various places. I often used to think about learning to speak in English. Moreover, it was my dream to communicate in English with the foreigner. However, I could not make my dream come true until my bachelor's degree. It all happened as I had very low level of exposure with English in my schooling. There was no access for learning English except the bored classes. In fact, the English classes were boredom as the teacher was an authoritarian. In addition, he was all in all in the teaching learning process. The same ritual repeated not only in the intermediate but also in the bachelor level. The most important thing that the learners were supposed to do was listening to the teachers passively. I still remember, I hardly spoke to the teacher in English. The same case was with the others in the school and in colleges. Besides, the teachers barely encouraged us to read English texts or do activities in the class that required reading. However, we were supposed to, sometimes, answer the question based on the lecture.

Later, when I enrolled for my master's in ELT, I was greatly encouraged even urged for reading different materials and preparing for sharing ideas or presentations

or writing. As I devoted myself for those activities, I knew the power of reading. If I have to share my ideas regarding learning English, I would blindly say that the reading is the most important. The influence of rearing behind my current English led me to the way of action research for improving reading comprehension of the students in one of the government schools in Lalitpur district.

Stages of Action Research

Scholars have divided the stages of action research into two main phases; diagnostic and therapeutic. During my action research, I went through those phases. Sometimes, I found myself as an EFL teacher and other times as a researcher.

Diagnostic Stage

In the first phase of the action research, it was necessary to identify the problem that lay in the course of teaching learning. Therefore, I was mindful to question my hypothesis regarding the problem in reading comprehension as faced by the second language learners in a government school. In addition, I was interested in 'researching' on the same aspect as I had bitter experience of reading classes. In other words, it was necessary to fix the problems that the learners were facing in their reading classes. Without identifying the problems, there was nothing to do with the action research. Therefore, I analyzed the learners' performance based on the pre test. After the careful study on the learners' performance and in reference to my teaching learning experience, I was attentive towards the problem. I, later on, finalized with the help of the pre-test in reading comprehension assigned to the target group of learners in the same setting. I concluded that the inappropriate and incomplete answers as the major problems on the performance where the learners have very low level of vocabulary knowledge. The task gave me the standpoint for my action research to undertake. Moreover, the identification of the learners' problem was necessary in

order to determine the learners' proficiency level in reading comprehension so as to design materials for the improvement. Here is a short account to the pretest:

First, the students from class ten appeared in the pre-test. As the test was assigned for measuring reading comprehension ability of the learners, the three different texts were included in the test. It had several test items; true/false, gap filling, synonyms and antonyms, ordering, short answer questions as well as matching words with the meanings (Appendix 1). The students were given 1:03 hrs for the examination for the test paper carrying 35 marks. Before the test paper was handed over, they were given clear instructions based on the test. Only a few numbers of students had finished solving by the allocated time. As the time was over, the examiner had stopped the students from writing and the answer sheets were collected. It could be seen that the students were busy in discussing for the correct answers with their friends even though the test was over. The class was noisy enough, so the students were given short break. After that, some rules and regulations were made for the class, as it was necessary to manage the large class (Appendix 6). The students had enthusiastically participated in the activity.

I was, as far as possible, conscious to make the research fruitful, at the same time, valid and reliable. In this regard, I had my colleague to check the answer sheets of the test. It was done with the help of marking scheme. The test helped me to determine the level of the students in reading comprehension. Moreover, it helped me to find out the problem in the specific way. It was, of course, the evidence of the problem. So, I analyzed it carefully and planned the further activities accordingly.

Therapeutic Stage

Therapeutic phase involves planning, planned intervention, observation and reflection. In this stage, I went through those actions and completed the action research cycle.

Planning

In this phase, I designed my plan (Appendix 3) and started working for solving the problems that were fixed in the previous phase. In other words, act on the evidence and reflecting upon the action were the focused activities in this phase. I had studied the sufficient literature. Besides, I was well guided by the dissertation supervisor. Hence, I planned for the problem intervention. I worked with the strategies and designed activities for the classroom. After the full preparation on the lessons, I moved to the research field. Ferrance (2000) states, "Using the information from the data collection and review of current literature, design a plan of action that will allow you to make a change and to study that change (p. 12). I had a day-wise plan for the action. In reference to the plan, I started implementing my activities in the classroom. Teaching learning was the implementation of my plan where testing the inseparatable part. I helped the learners creating learning environment in the classroom. The learners worked with the materials designed for them. In addition, I monitored the classroom practices and gathered data. I planned the further lessons based on the sense made in the earlier step. I was more familiar with the classroom strategies and their results in teaching learning. In other words, I had analyzed the data based on the techniques that I used in reading classes. I continued those strategies that were fruitful for the classroom. Similarly, I could modify the lesson plans as the learners' need and interest.

Planned Intervention

The action research would be incomplete if the learners had not given their effort for learning. The seriousness on the part of the learners was the first effort done by them. Besides, they started following the instructions given by the teacher. Not only that, the learners did individual as well as collaborative effort to accomplish various tasks in and out of the classroom. In other words, they were going to learn reading materials so they were made more responsible for their learning.

The learners need support and the proper guide in their classroom learning. I played the role of the supporter and the guide for making the classroom learning meaningful creating the learning environment for my learners. In order to accomplish my responsibilities, I followed the various strategies for my classroom. Many times, I encouraged my learners collect reading materials from various sources. I also collected reading materials from newspapers, magazines, books and internet, and passed them for reading and sharing in the class. In addition, I had planned my lessons based on mainly two approaches; TBLT and CLT that I implemented following the different methods, strategies and techniques. Often, I tried to make the classroom a good place for solving learners' learning related problems making them cooperative in pair and group works. The continuous effort of the teacher and the learners helped to achieve desired level performance on reading comprehension

Teaching Learning Activities

The collection of data and examine had given me the sufficient evidence about the learners' performance. I had decoded the learners learning level in the mind out of my experiences in teaching. Moreover, the tests, classroom performance by the learners and the whole class discussion had given me the chance to be exposed with the learners' strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, I made further intervention plan,

which could minimize the learners' weaknesses and accelerate the strengths. The following details make clear about the strategies mainly exploited in my reading class:

Prediction

It was my concern to deal with the reading materials. In this process, I had to do so many activities in the class. Moreover, I wanted to make the learners engaged in the different activities so that they could get the real taste of reading materials. Nuttall (1996) argues prediction as the tool for activating schemata and readers make use of schemata to interpret the text and the activation of relevant schemata helps in understanding the text more easily (p.13). In this regard, I provided the reading materials to the learners and made them predict the central idea of the text. They had, sometimes, title to analyze and guess the sense, and the other times, they simply read first few sentences from the reading materials and predict the sequence of events as well as the main ideas that would be grasped from the text. In this activity, I asked all the students to make some sorts of sense and share in the class. All most all students tried to share their ideas after going through the title. They had always something to say in the class. I made the sharing systematic asking them to raise their hands before they speak. They took their chances and shared the things among their friends. It made me easy to motivate the students for the lesson. The students would be curious to read the text and share their ideas in the class. It was very effective to gather more ideas out of the single issue or title. In addition, the students who had poor ability in prediction also got chances to be exposed with the different ideas from their friends.

I used prediction technique in my reading class for activating the schema on the part of the learners. The learners seemed to be interested towards this prediction activity so I continuously used it whenever I had a new text for the class. It helped, mainly, for arousing interest on the learners for reading. My learners enjoyed sharing

ideas even if they had not read the text, which I found very good aspect on them. I responded positively, all the times, whether they had contextual ideas or not. It made me easy to go to the further activities as planned.

Brainstorming on Short Questions

I was conscious to make the learners interested in reading so that I used the technique for the class. I asked simple questions, as it was the initiation of the reading. The learners were asked very simple pre-reading questions based on the same text that they were going to practice. Asking questions to the learners was not for testing their ability but to help them to learn by sharing what they know. Moreover, the short questions were asked to activate the background knowledge of the learners. I asked questions to the individual learners as well as to the whole class. They were supposed to raise hand and tell their responses. It was very interesting as the others got chances to comment and add some new ideas on the answers given by their friend. I asked simple to complex questions and made them respond immediately. This made the learners active in the class. In case of the failure to answer, I provided them the feedback and helped them to have the appropriate responses.

Demonstrating Pictures

Porter (n.d.) says, "Pictures and other visual material can activate a students' prior knowledge" (http://departments.weber.edu/teachall/reading/prereading.html). In this regard, I demonstrated, sometimes, pictures in the class that were related to the text. Before handing over the text to the learners, I made them look at the pictures and tell what they saw. It encouraged them to tell something in the class. They looked at the pictures and described on their own words. For this activity, I called the name of the particular learner and asked to tell something about the pictures. I gave chances to those students who were interested in describing the pictures. Later, I summarized

their ideas as well as linked it with the text that we were going to read in the class. As it is said, 'A picture describes thousands of words,' the learners interpreted the pictures based on their understanding that helped them to comprehend the reading materials. Based on my experience, demonstrating pictures had the significant role in activating prior knowledge of the learners, which has the direct link with the reading comprehension.

Word map

Word map is a technique useful in teaching vocabulary. Harmer (2007) argues, "Word maps are an extremely engaging way of building up vocabulary knowledge as well as provoking students into retrieving and using what they know" (p. 235). I used this technique in my reading class. The learners were given vocabulary from the text and they were asked to find out the similar meaning to the word in the centre. In other words, the learners wrote meanings to the word given in the centre of the diagram. It helped them to have more vocabulary based on a single vocabulary. I made the students complete the diagram and present in the class. It helped me to teach them vocabulary whereas the learners to learn vocabularies.

Figure 1: Learner's written sample
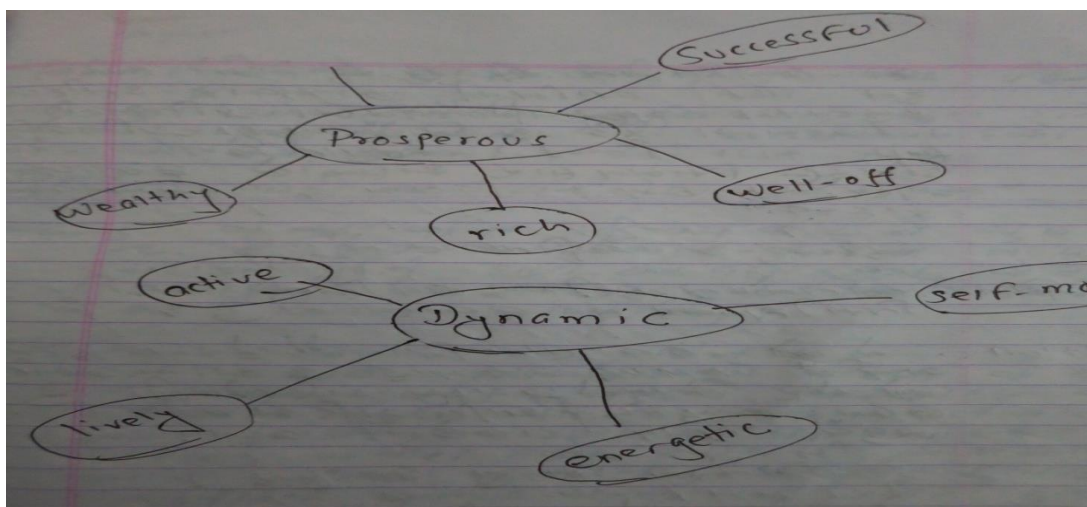
Source: My Data

Synonyms and Antonyms

Beare (2013) mentions, "Learning synonyms and antonyms helps build vocabulary". He further says that one excellent technique of improving vocabulary is to learn synonyms and antonyms together (http://esl.about.com/od/ learning techniques/a/Synonyms-Antonyms-ESL.htm). Synonyms and antonyms were the frequently used technique for teaching vocabulary to the learners. After the learners went through the reading materials, they had a long list of vocabulary that they were unfamiliar. There was no alternative of making the students familiar with those words for helping them understand the text better. Therefore, I provided synonyms, sometimes, of the vocabulary and sometimes antonyms. In other words, it was mostly done in the whole class providing them the two different columns of vocabularies and their meanings in terms of similar and opposite meanings. The learners did this activity individually as well as in groups. When they work alone, they had difficulties so I changed the instructions and made them work in pairs and groups as required. After they solved the given problems, they got feedback immediately. It helped them to make sense of the text better. Therefore, I found synonyms and antonyms technique very useful in dealing with the vocabularies in the reading class.

Figure 2: Learner's written sample
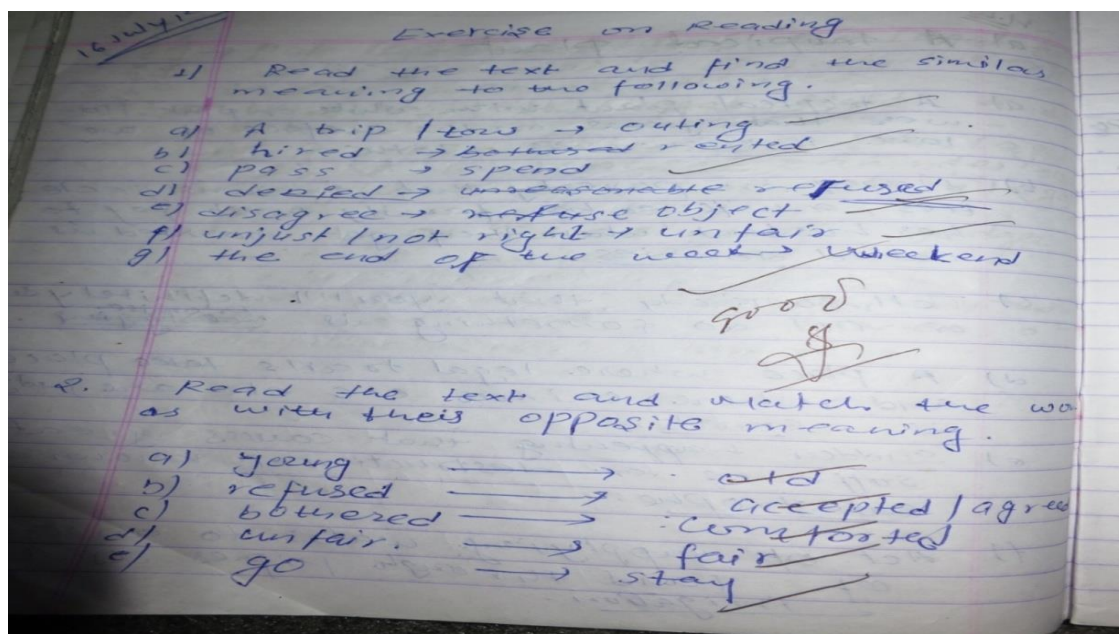
<div align="right">Source: My Data</div>

Use of Dictionary

Sometimes, I made the learners use the dictionary for the vocabulary practise. For this activity, I divided the class into groups and provided the list of vocabulary that the students had felt difficult while reading the text aloud. I provided the words from my list that I had written on the board at the time of reading. The learners went through the dictionary and came up with the correct pronunciation as well as meanings to the assigned vocabularies. It's true that the dictionary had several meaning for a single word. Hence, the learners were asked to write all the meanings that they found and write them in their exercise book and have discussion in order to find out the appropriate meaning for the context in text. Of course, it took a quite long time, as the learners were not habituated to with the activity. However, the learners made progress upon the instructions given to them. It was easier to provide different vocabulary to the different groups and made them share with the other groups. Moreover, the examples in the dictionary were supportive to make the learners habituate with the use of different words in the different contexts. My learners

enjoyed practising the dictionary where they had more exposure with the language learning materials. Bilingual as well as multilingual dictionary were found to be supportive for my reading classes. For the quick search of the meanings, the learners also used mobile phones in the classroom which was fun as well as effective in teaching learning vocabulary in English as the foreign language as Harmer (2007) argues, "Dictionaries, whether they are in book form, on CD-ROMS, online or bundled into the electronic machines that students like to carry around, are perhaps the greatest single resources students can have at their disposal" (p. 239).

Translation

Larsen-Freeman (2000) mentions, "The meaning of the target language is made clear by translating it into the students' native language" (p. 18). I also used translation technique in the reading lessons. First, I used it to make the learners familiar with the vocabularies that were not intensified with the other techniques. In other words, I used the translation technique to make the students clearer on the vocabulary. I translated the English vocabularies into Nepali and provided the context to make the learners easy to learn. They had nothing to do accept listening carefully, but they realized and felt that they understood the meanings after I translated into the mother tongue of the learners. Second, I used this technique while dealing with the texts as well. Particularly, when the learners found difficult in understanding my interpretations, I used the translation and made the learners understand the context.

Gap filling Exercises

Smith, Avinesh and Kilgarriff (2010) state the importance of gap filling exercises in language teaching as they allow students to demonstrate that they understand vocabulary in context, discouraging memorizations of translations. They further mention that the gap filling items are widely used throughout the language-

teaching world (http://www.academia.edu/2859791/Gap-fill Tests for Language Learners Corpus-Driven Item Generation#). During the practice stage in reading, I provided the worksheets to the learners and asked to fill the gaps with the help of the appropriate word(s). The learners read the text carefully and discussed on the items with their partners. Sometimes, they did the same activity individually and shared their understandings with the friends. I designed the worksheets for the particular lesson in advance, so there was no problem in assigning tasks to the learners. However, I paid more attention while giving feedback on their products. The learners wrote frequently when they had the wrong responses. Later, they improved their understanding and came up with the correct responses as they went through the text or discussions. Gap filling items were significant to make the learners understand the text better. They had to fill the correct information in the gaps, which made them easy in understanding the reading materials, making sense themselves.

Figure 3: Learner's written sample
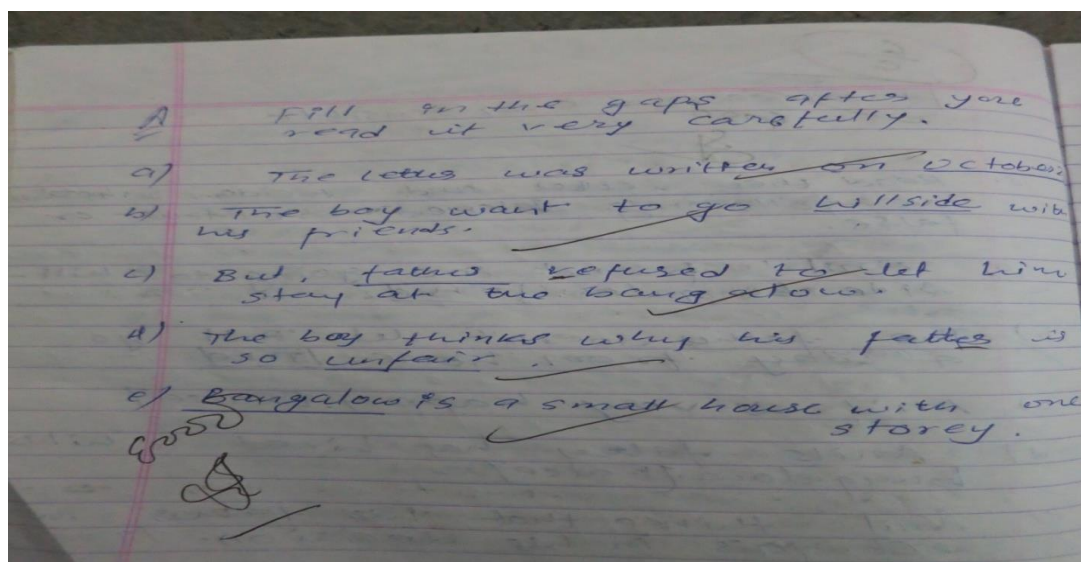
Source: My Data

Matching Items

The learners had matching items to make associations with words and meanings. They practiced the item in the class. Moreover, the learners found the matching items easier than that of the others, as they had to go through the text and match based on it. In other words, they had vocabulary in one of the columns and on the other hand, they had meanings of the vocabularies. I provided the worksheets to the learners and made them practise in my lessons. This was one of the items that I used more in the class not only for testing but also for helping them out to learn vocabulary. Matching item was one of the comprehension based tasks that I found useful for the reading classes.

Figure 4: Learner's written sample
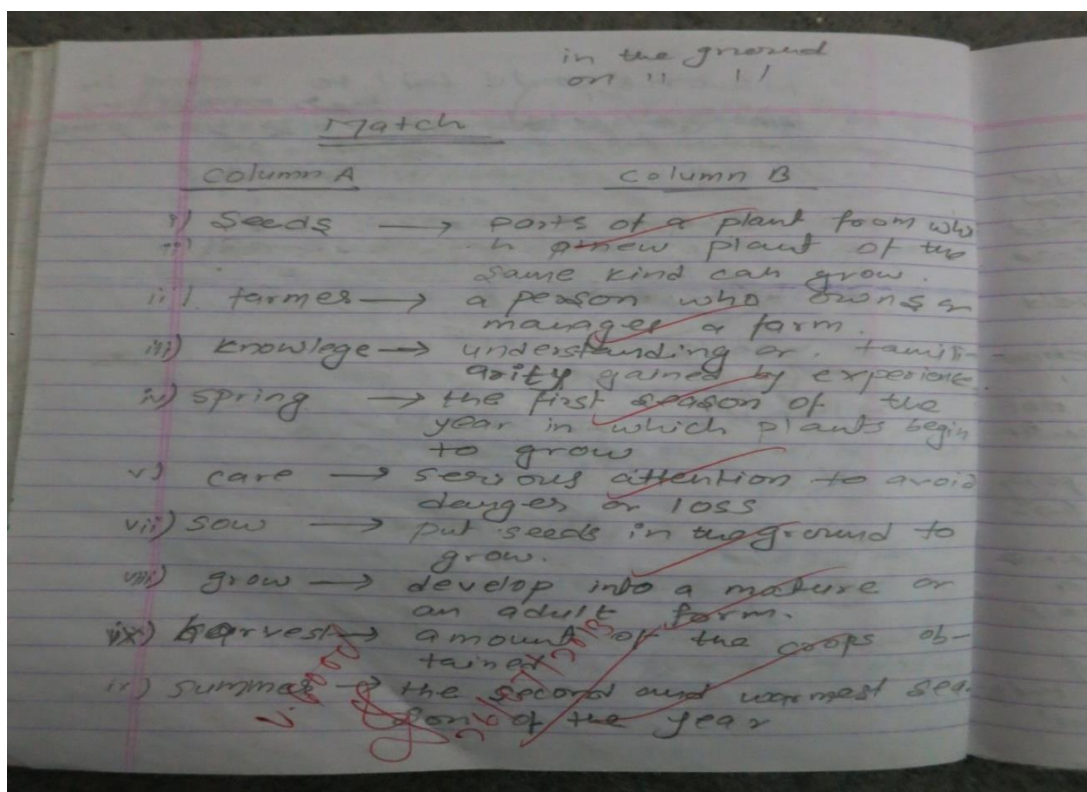
Source: My Data

True or False Statements

I used true or false item for my reading class very often. True or false items were assigned to the learners after they read the text. They had to decide whether the given statements were true or false. As I had worksheets ready for the learners, I provided printed, and sometimes, I wrote the statements on the board and made the students decide true or false. There was no more flexibility for answering to the items so the learners were careful as well as successful. They also found the true or false items easier that is why they used to complete the task sooner. I chose this item for my reading lessons because the learners had to know the text for deciding true or false statements where they had to know what the text was all about and how the sequences of events developed in the text. I made the learners practise the items both in written and oral forms.

Figure 5: Learner's written sample
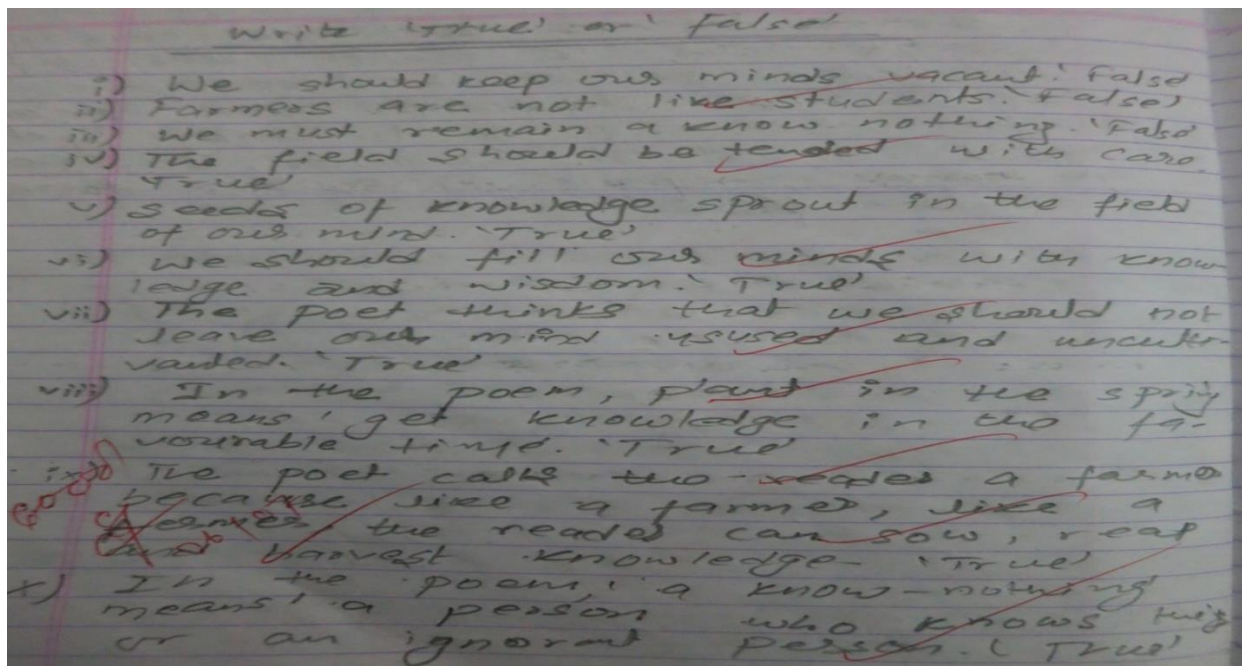
Source: My Data

Arranging Statements

I used this item in my reading lesson because I wanted the learners to know the sequence of events or content in a text. After the learners practiced several activities, I provide the statements from the text they read and asked them to arrange them into the correct order. They did well however, it was not a very interesting activity for the learners. Moreover, some learners found it difficult than that of the other items in reading comprehension. Arranging statements was not actually an easy task for the learners, as it required the depth understanding of the text. And, we know that these sorts of items are not always based on the statements that come first in the text. In order to have success in arranging statements, the learners needed to understand the reading materials intensively. I exploited pair work and whole class discussion for helping the learners to have better understanding of the content or events.

Figure 6: Learner's written sample
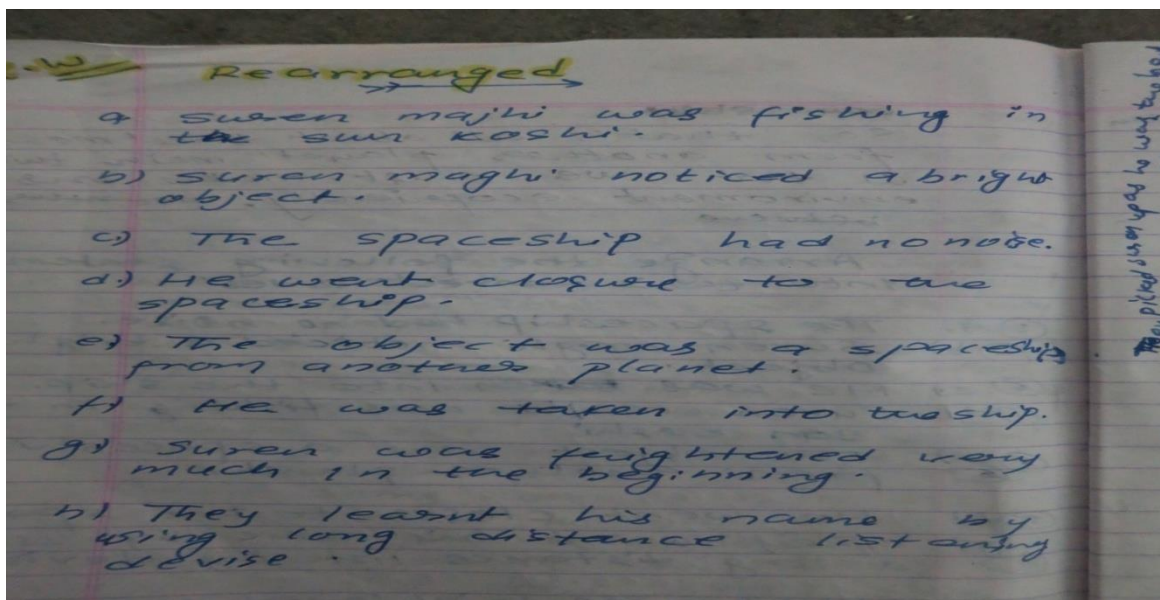
Source: My Data

Question and Answer

I used question/answer technique before, while and after reading stages. The questions I used were in both of the forms; written and oral. The learners were made to answer the comprehension questions after they read the text, but before reading, they were made to brainstorm for arousing their interesting in reading. Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) state that asking questions is to make the readers brain ready to understand the reading materials. They further put the following view for asking questions:

- Asking questions allow readers to understand why they are reading the text.

- Asking questions give readers a chance to make predictions and then later change their thinking.

- Asking questions allow readers to make connections based on things, they already know (their schema).

- Asking questions give the reader a chance to use context clues to identify unfamiliar words.

- Asking questions allow the reader to decide if the content/story was good or not.

- Asking questions give the reader a chance to review important information from the text.

- Asking questions give the reader a chance to clarify any information they may not understand (http://thepicturebookteachersedition. Blogs pot. Com / 2012/09/the-importance-of-asking-questions.html).

The learners solved the comprehension questions in the class and shared their responses with the fellow learners. In this activity, I used classroom dynamics as per the needs. When the learners had finished writing, I made them have the correct

answers by sharing, commenting or offering feedback immediately. It helped the

learners to understand the reading materials sufficiently.

Figure 7: Learner's written sample
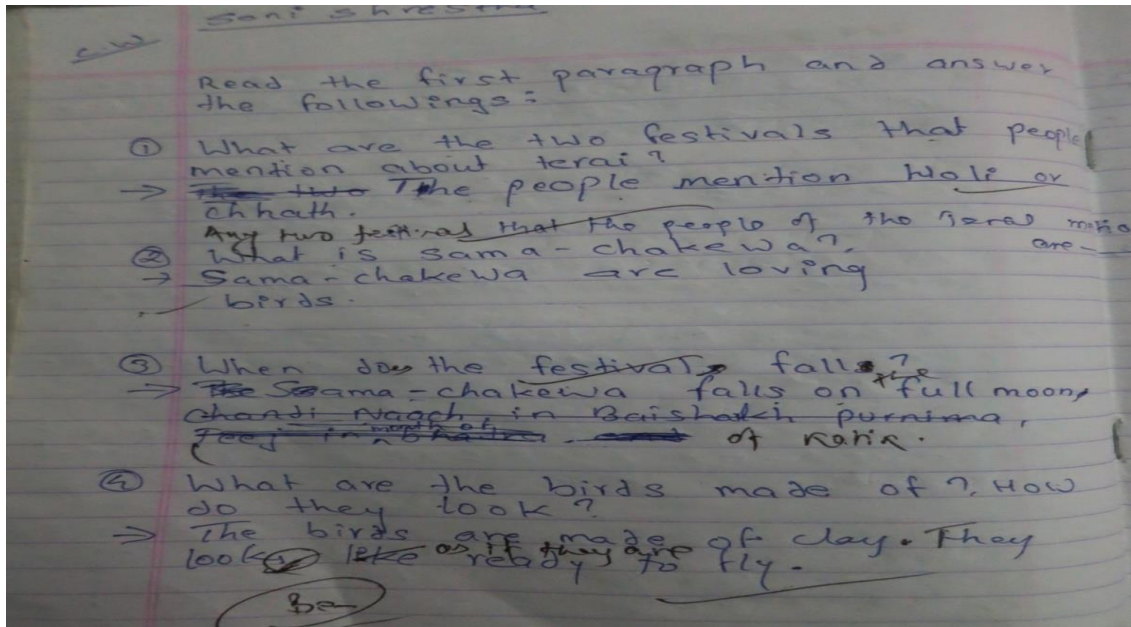
Writing Summary

Levy (2013) mentions, "Writing a summary is an important skill that students

will use throughout their academic careers". She further claims that summarizing

improves reading skills as students pick out the main ideas of a reading; it also helps

with vocabulary skills as students paraphrase a reading, altering the vocabulary and

grammar as they do so. Moreover, critical thinking skills are improved as students

decide on the main ideas of the reading to include in the summary

(http://busyteacher.org/6214-how-to-teach-summary-writing.html). Summary writing

was one of the tasks that I assigned to the learners. First, I provided the reading

materials to them and asked to make some points based on their reading. Second, they

discussed in the group about their summary points and created a piece of summary as

their group work. Writing the summary based on the reading was supportive for the

learners to make them engage in meaningful activity regarding reading comprehension.

Figure 8: Learner's written sample
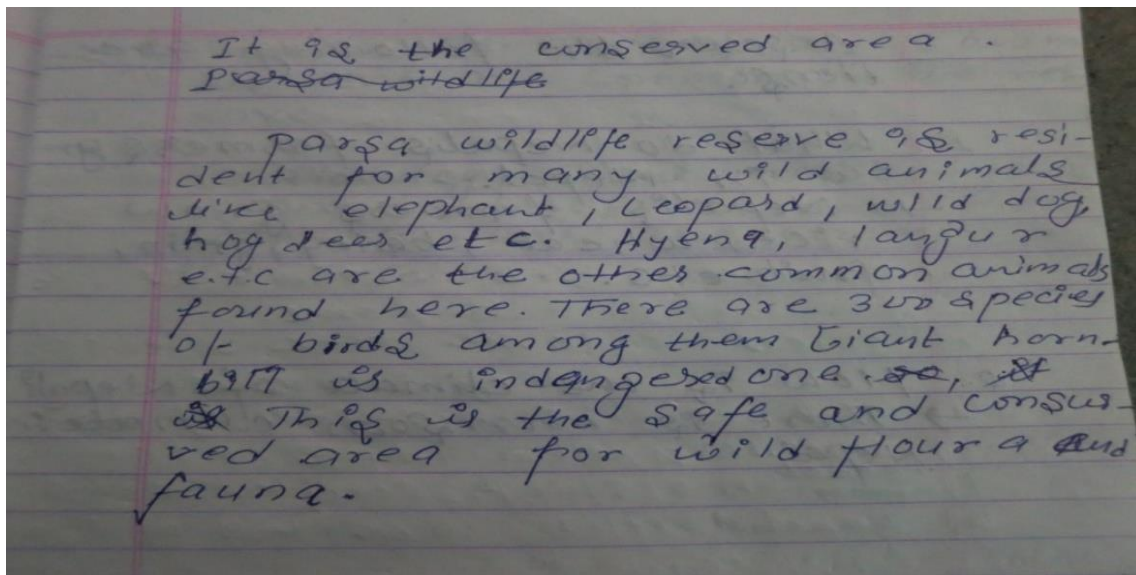
Presentation

There were many activities in a single lesson where presentation was one of the activities used, frequently, in the reading lessons. I assigned presentation task to the learners for helping them to comprehend the reading materials out of presentations. Normally, I divided the class into groups and provided different passages to the groups. They read, discussed, made notes and presented in the class. Each group had a leader who presented the ideas gathered from the discussions. The presentation was effective not only to make the learners comprehend the reading materials but also to promote their communicative skills in English. The learners had improved their speaking out of the presentations.

Lesson Summarizing

Lesson summarizing was one of the inseparatable part of the daily classroom activities. Sometimes, I had the learners summarize the lesson and the other times; I

summarized the whole lesson at the end of the entire activities over a lesson. In the beginning, I did know about the importance of lesson summarizing, but when I went through the literature and research, I came to know the effectiveness of lesson summarizing. That is why I just followed which I found very effective to make the learners focus on the core of the lesson.

Error Correction and Feedback

The classroom activities had given the learners sufficient exposure to learn reading materials. Almost all the activities were based on the cooperative learning method, so the classroom dynamics were used throughout teaching reading. The cooperative learning method assisted the learners read and complete the entire assigned task on time. They would read individually but solve the problems through discussion where one would share, and the others comment and add more information on the particular topic. So, there was very less chance of making mistakes. However, the tasks were not free from the mistakes. Every time the learners completed their tasks, I would help them to correct errors and learn the correct form. The learners' error was corrected based on self-correction, pair correction and teacher correction techniques:

a) Self-correction

Error correction made by the learners themselves is called self-correction. I assigned them to correct their writings because I had to make them aware about the mistakes they made. Moreover, I gave the responsibility to the learners, which helped them to take the ownership of learning. Especially, when I assigned objective sorts of comprehension items, at that time I made the learners correct their answers on their own. They consulted their reading materials and corrected the writings. It helped them to realize their mistakes

repeatedly. In the later days, the learners had better writing in terms of handwriting as well as appropriate answers. I found this technique very useful as I could manage time for planned activities. I was assisted sharing my load with the learners where they got the chance to learn out of their effort.

b) Pair correction

The learners were made swap their writings with the friend sitting next to them. They swapped their writings in each other and studied them. This technique helped them not only to correct others mistakes but to learn from others writings. The learners were happy correcting the mistakes of their pairs. It motivated them towards further learning. They corrected their fellow learners' writings with the help of reading materials.

c) Teacher correction

Self-correction and pair correction were not worth all the time. Some tasks were difficult where the most of the learners had confusion about their performance. Besides, the teacher correction technique was used when there was less time for the correction purpose. I would stand in front of the class and elicit the students' responses on the particular question. They would raise their hands and take the chance to speak. It helped me hear their responses and correct accordingly. I had used this technique frequently whenever I had time to correct individual mistakes. Not only that, I used to correct the learners mistakes taking one copy from each of the groups. Especially, I used this technique in correcting objective answers. Then, the learners would correct rest of the copies in reference to the correction made by the teacher. All the learners got chance to be exposed with the correct answers. Therefore, I found this technique very useful in the EFL reading classroom.

Evaluation

As I started working with my intervention plan, I evaluated the process, the classroom activities and their results. The evaluation of overall aspects involved in the action research gave the reflection of its effectiveness. The evaluation was carried out in terms of the paper pencil tests. In this regard, I assigned five different of tests on reading comprehension. The first I assigned was the pre-test and the three tests were assigned while teaching learning. Later, I again assigned the post-test on reading comprehension. The learners found to be improved in the second test than the pre-test. This process continued till the post-test. It was not the case that all the time the learners performed well as I expected, but they were conscious about managing time for all the questions. They had tried their best in every test. Gradually, it confirmed that the learners have improved their reading comprehension in English. The entire tests were the references used for evaluation of the learners' progress.

I considered test as the significant tool for improving reading comprehension of the learners. Therefore, several times, I assigned tests to the learners. Those tests were in both of the forms; written and oral. When we, myself and the learners, had sufficient time at the weekend, the learners would sit for the test. In case of holidays and other disturbances, we would postpone the test date and manage it by the next week. The test was given equal priority as the classroom activities. Moreover, it was one of the most important parts of the action research. Based on the written tests, the learners would get score and determine their level in comparison to the previous tests. Not only that, the tests boosted up their self-esteem that is why, the fear of examination was found to be decreased in every test. They would analyze their performance after the answer sheets were provided.

Similarly, the oral test was taken in between of the classroom activities. Based on the sampling, I asked to the particular learner and he/she would answer the questions. It was more likely the evaluation but we had given the name 'oral test'. The test had made the learners more aware on their performance. Besides, the learners would get immediate feedback on their performance and they would realize their mistakes and correct them. In one or other form, the learners were assigned several tests through which they got the chance to improve their mistakes realizing themselves. Therefore, the tests have very significant role for improving the learners' learning level.

The learners found classroom strategies interesting as well as supportive for bringing change on their performance. They found extensive tasks easy, as they had to know the reading materials in general. But, the intensive tasks required the understanding of underlying meaning, like writing themes of the certain texts, arranging statements into their correct order, gap filling without the help of the alternatives, and creating titles for the different paragraphs difficult in comparison to the first. However, they enjoyed the tasks exploited throughout the teaching learning process. Summary writing and the presentation were hardly practiced activities in their regular English classes. They found both of the activities helpful for learning reading materials. Besides, the learners had quoted that they ever had such systematic activities in vocabulary practice, which enhanced their reading performance. Almost all the activities were based on the classroom dynamics through which the learners have learnt to be more cooperative in learning. For correcting the learners' errors, pair correction, group correction and the whole class correction were frequently used strategies in the class. As individual correction was not possible for all the time, theses strategies found to be useful for the class, and the learners had enjoyed working

in different situations. At the end of the action research, the learners were assigned the post-test on reading comprehension. The result showed, have wonderful performance of all the learners. Their success had compelled them to thank me by their inner heart.

I had kept the record of all the activities exploited in the classroom. The record included activity, process and its result. I studied the data and evaluated the whole intervention plan. The initial data had given me the sufficient evidence of problems faced by the learners in reading comprehension. The data also reflected the gradual change in learning as everything was in system. The reflective journals produced by myself and the learners helped me to reflect on the practices. Based on the reflection, I would move to the next step. The evaluation act helped me to determine the effectiveness of my intervention plan for improving the learners' performance. The data clearly provide the evidence of improvement made by the learners in reading comprehension.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the process involved in the action research along with the details of its activities. Moreover, I discussed the two different stages of action research and its important components.

CHAPTER V

OUTCOMES AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the action research's outcomes along with the interpretations of reflective journals produced by myself and the learners.

Making Sense of Data

It may not be true that everyone has to read in the same way. However, it is true that all the readers have to understand message of the written texts. Otherwise, it is not the concerned of reading. As reading is a receptive skill, it enables learners to learn the message it carries, new vocabularies and structures. Not only that, reading provides the better understanding of the new culture so that one can acculturate in a foreign cultural setting. Nevertheless, the issue is how one reads. In other words, whether the reader is able to read the text appropriately or not. The appropriate reading is such a skill where the reader becomes able to have not only surface meaning but also the underlying meaning of the text. Moreover, s/he should be able to interpret the text with the help of background knowledge in order to grab the intended meaning of the writer or text. So, reading is a broader skill in itself. This mostly applies in the second language reading where the learners come up with the various barriers in learning.

A failure in such a skill can lead to the failure in academic achievement. In this regard, teachers need to be serious enough for providing the ample exposure in reading activities in their classroom. Unfortunately, the traditional method of teaching, where Grammar Translation method is dominant, has made the reading class a place for listening plots of various texts into mother tongue, Nepali. As the

result, the learners have a very low level of performance in comprehension items in the target language.

In my action research, it was necessary to find out the specific problems of the learners so I designed a pre-test item, assigned the test and collected the evidence of reading comprehension problem based on their performance. In the next step, I designed the reading activities based on task principle. Every day, I planned my lesson dividing tasks into extensive and intensive. Almost all the lesson followed the same approach. The class was divided into groups and pairs, and assigned tasks with the clear instructions allocating time to solve them. In the beginning lessons, it was harassing for me, as I could not launch all the activities planned for the day. Few days passed, the learners also became used to with the instructions, tasks and the specified time for the particular task. Slowly and gradually, they could follow the instruction appropriately enjoying tasks with co-learners.

Progress Made by the Learners

My research focus was to bring change in learners with the help of the different activities/task in reading. The learners' performance in the beginning of my research had made me embarrassed. They could hardly follow the instructions given in the target language. Without understanding the instruction, it was almost impossible to complete the task for the learners. I had to repeat my instructions in the mother tongue and they would start activities. As I was aware on the fact that, the regular and maximum use of mother tongue may harm the learning of English, so I would give them just clues in mother tongue and shifted into the target language. The regular engagement in different sorts of task in both of the forms; written and oral made the learners able to tackle with the problems that they had in reading. Slowly and gradually, the learners became used to with the instruction and the activities. As

the result, they could finish the task on time if not in time. It made them to have greater practice in reading activities, which led them to improve performance in every test in reading comprehension, which was the measuring tool of the progress of the learners. The learners had proven that practice makes a man perfect.

A very noticeable progress on the part of the learners is that they could write answers of the comprehension questions in the correct structures. The correct structure is necessary to reflect the appropriate sense out of the sentence. And, the failure to do so would get less marks in the reading test as it was error of the student. Similarly, the learners improved their vocabulary repertoire in English. It was not the case that they did not know anything but the matter was of the target language; the English. They would puzzle to hear many vocabularies even from the text that they had already studied which was one of the great problems of the students. The communication in English, in terms of giving instructions, assistance in activities and feedback made them used to with many of the English words that helped them to associate the Nepali vocabulary with English. As the result, they could improve their vocabulary. Besides, reading the text, communication with friends and teacher, presentations, sharing and discussion, and writing exercises enabled them to have greater practice in vocabulary, so they progressed in the knowledge of the target language vocabulary. As the result of sound knowledge in target language vocabulary, the learners used appropriate diction while writing synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, and different vocabulary from various word classes.

The regular involvement in reading and writing activities helped the students to improve their knowledge of grammar. As they spoke or wrote in terms of practising reading activities, they would get feedback immediately after the activity that helped them to write answers appropriately. In addition, the learners improved in reading

skill. In the beginning of my action research, the learners used to hesitate to read the text loudly because of the fear of making mistake where they could be fooled by their friends. But, as the classroom activities progressed and the amount of reading in the class increased, the learners became successful to overcome their problems in reading. At least, two to four hands could be seen raising whenever they were asked to read for the class which is one of the major achievements of my action research.

Interpretation of the Journals

Journals produced by myself just after everyday class had a crucial role in my action research. The journals gave the information about my classroom practices. It reflected my instructions to the learners, my presentations, learners' behavior and their reaction to different activities. Not only that, the journals gave the account of success and failure of the classroom practices in terms of reading comprehension. In this regard, the journals, written by myself, had a great worth for my action research, which I had mention as one of the data collection tools for my research.

In the pre-test, most of the students had fear of the examination. They were surprised to know that they were going to appear the test on reading comprehension. However, they appeared in the test and tried to solve by the allotted time. The psychological fear of the examination had disturbed them as they shared their feeling just after the test. The learners were informed about their performance in the test of reading comprehension. They did not have much worry about their performance, but got serious when I make them aware about their problems and consequences of repeating the same errors. From the day, the learners paid more attention towards the classroom activities, which was the first sign of their improvement in terms of classroom behavior. Even the learners from the back of the class started asking questions and asked for repetition in their confusion. They stopped side talking

behavior. In this regard, making learners aware about their problems and consequences of the problems had considered as vital step in improving the learners' performance in the reading comprehension.

Similarly, I had planned reading activities keeping the learners' level in my mind rather than their performance, so the activities in the first week had overlapped. I had to deal with the same activities even in the next class, which was quite unpleasing for me. Later, as I fixed the problems of the learners I had developed fewer activities so that I could give them enough time for practising. Of course, it was a problematic class as the learners' had problem even with understanding classroom instructions, reading texts, writing short answers for comprehension questions, writing similar and opposite meanings in English. At the same time, they could hardly speak in English where there was no habit of working in groups in an effective way. In that context, it was not an easy job to lead them towards the better performers in reading comprehension. In spite of the situation, my regular effort in terms of designing various tasks, implementing them in the class in an appropriate time, testing the learners' performance, and giving immediate feedback on their performance gave the positive result on the part of the students, which is the greatest achievement of my action research.

The learners had learnt to be cooperative in pair and group work activities. The regular support and encouragement had made them work in a collaborative way, otherwise, the learners would show interest in working alone. One or two of the members out of five would sit quietly as they do not speak to each other. This sort of behavior had made me very difficult to deal with them but the friendly behavior with the adolescents made me even easy to make them engage in tasks to lead them perform better. Beside the fact, I also changed my strategy in terms of giving tasks for

the class as well as home. I used to assign them a lot of writing tasks, as I believed that they give more practice to the learners. But, the incomplete assignment was not worth doing, so I started exploiting communicative tasks in the class along with the short writing practice. It became very useful to engage all the learners. Moreover, the learners enjoyed such tasks, as they required less time and effort both. Similarly, there was no risk of making mistake in communication which they thought to be risky in writing tasks. I had understood the students' psychology for the class. So, I changed my strategies now and then, which helped me to motivate the learners towards the classroom practice. I assigned less homework to the students to arouse interest in doing homework. The same sorts of strategies were used throughout the action research, which proved to be meaningful for the learners.

Learner's Commentary on the Strategies

The learners, who had written the commentary over the class, had mentioned that they liked the teaching strategies exploited in the classroom throughout the research process. They had a very good opportunity to engage with the various tasks in the classroom. Learner 1 said, "*I liked the teaching strategies used by Ganesh Sir because we got the opportunity to learn many things."* They commented that they had enjoyed the tasks: oral and written. Writing was very difficult for them but the oral activities made them find the correct answers, which assisted in writing. In other words, the pair work, group work and the whole class discussion helped them to complete almost all the class works. Learner 2 mentioned, "*Vocabulary game helped me to find out meanings for many words which were also fun".* Similarly, Learner 3 said, *I liked using dictionary in the classroom".* Almost all the learners had commented that my style of teaching was helpful for them to learn from the reading

texts: seen/unseen. Moreover, they had become better helper of themselves for reading with the various reading materials.

Learners' Commentary on Their Progress

One of the learners had written on her commentary that was their fortune to get English classes by me. She said, "*The techniques used in the classroom were unique where she kept interest and learnt many things day by day. As they learnt vocabulary, the new hope was built up.*" On the same commentary, she had mentioned that her nervousness that she had experienced in an English test had vanished because of the weekly test. She further mentioned, "*Slowly, slowly I got increased in my marks. Our extra class was memorable time for reading texts of English. It was too much supportive for me and obviously for those who were involved in the classes*".

It was my immense pleasure to hear from the students that they could improve their reading comprehension because of my effort. Moreover, the written commentary by the learners also reflected the same feelings that they are happier to have the class to improve their reading. The most of the students had the same sorts of reactions on the teaching learning process. They mentioned that they had not got such opportunity to work with different materials and activities in their regular classes. The most they liked was their vocabulary enrichment, which helped them to understand the texts better. They could solve the comprehension problems in the first examination taken by the school with ease than they used to solve. In other words, the learners had fewer problems with reading comprehension in the test assigned by the school as the first term. They were very happy to state that they had written very well in the test so there was no problem in seen/unseen texts.

Learners' Commentary on the Overall Action Research

    "The class propagated craze of English." This statement was written by one of the learners on the reflective commentary. The action research time was the memorable time for many of the learners which they have mentioned in their writings. It was supportive to make them learn reading texts in English with great joy. The frightened feeling for the test in English was no more with them. In other words, the research was successful to boost up the learners' confidence in English. First, the learners had changed their perspective towards the English. Second, they had improved their performance in reading comprehension. The change was all because of the action research. The learners were found to be very positive towards the action research. Many of the students wanted me to extend the span of action research and make it for forever.

Colleague's Commentary on the Learners' Progress

    "The students have changed their performance by the six weeks," commented the regular English teacher of the learners. He added that those who were actively participating in the process have improved their overall English, and he was happy to see the progress on the part of the learners and very thankful to me. According to him, *"The learners were very positive towards the class and wanted me to deal not only with reading texts but also with grammar and writing skills."* He had faith over me, as I was a graduate student. Moreover, he used to encourage me to use listening materials based on reading texts, which was a wonderful idea. Sometimes, I had gone through the same process to assist the learners in listening skills along with the reading. In other words, the overall activities in the classroom had significant role to bring change in intended skill, the reading comprehension. The progress done by the

learners had made others, colleagues and the administration, faith over the action research.

Discussion of the Outcomes

The action research was carried out for improving reading comprehension of the students in secondary class. As it aimed to solve problems in reading comprehension, it was successful to address the learners' problems. As the result, the learners have improved their performance in terms of the second language reading comprehension.

It would be unwise to state that the learners have improved their performance in reading without the supporting details attached along with it. Therefore, I would like to mention these details, which led the learners' towards the enhanced performance. First, the learners became aware of their problems in reading comprehension with the help of the tests. The tests worked as panacea for many of the students to solve their errors and mistakes as they got immediate feedback on their performance. It helped not only to measure the learning ability of the students but also to assist them to understand the reading materials in a better way. Doff (1995) says, "The main purpose of asking comprehension questions should be to lead the students to look closely at the main points of the text, and to help them understand it" (p. 63). Second, the learners used to hesitate even to speak a sentence in English, which was a great challenge for me. Gradually, the learners could give presentations based on reading texts. The presentations or speaking activities helped them to overcome their hesitation in speaking (Harmer, 2007). The learners have come up with far better speaking than they had before the action research. Now, they are interested to take the chance for sharing their ideas with the class.

Third, the learners were interested in working with the other partners in the same group. Of course, it took a long time to make their habit of working in groups but it helped them to solve comprehension problems with ease and fast. The learners' perception towards the group work had been changed as the result of the action research as Harmer (2007) argues, "It promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to make their own decisions in the group without being told what to do by the teacher. He further writes, the group work encourages broader skills of cooperation and negotiation (p. 166) that are essential for solving problems in learning which built up the habit of completing the assigned task successfully.

Fourth, almost all the learners had a very poor reading as they were found to be not interested in reading. In case of compulsion in reading, they just found to be moving their eyes over the printed letters rather than paying attention for the massage. The reading practice in the class had changed the perspective towards reading. Moreover, I used to repeat the fact that the just movement of eyes over the printed letters was not reading, there has to be meaning out of the text (Tickoo, 2003). In other words, the learners were aware on the fact of reading which also assisted them to pay attention in reading as the result they performed well with the correct pronunciation

Fifth, as the learners paid greater attention towards the classroom activities, they learnt something new from each of the lessons. The learners' effort and the teacher's support enabled the class to have mutual understanding and respect for the lessons. The learners learned to contribute the whole class discussion that was also a noticeable change in the learners. A very striking point is that there should be the feeling for respect to the classroom activities and students, otherwise, the class gets disturbed in many ways. In the class, I found, many times, the learners from the back

of the class contributing the discussion where I had paid proper attention to hear them. Sixth, the division of tasks, extensive and intensive into smaller units required the division of texts into paragraphs, which was very interesting for the learners. They read the whole text but deeply making sure that they were familiar with all the vocabularies from the paragraph. It was very useful to make the learners learn new vocabularies from the reading materials. Almost all the time, first, I made them discuss for the correct meaning of the vocabularies. Sometimes, they would use dictionary for multiple meaning along with the pronunciation. The use of dictionary helped the learners to be independent in learning. It helped them enrich their vocabulary repertoire, which has the very significant role for the enhanced performance in reading comprehension.

Seventh, generally, we separate reading and writing as two different language skills. But, in a critical sense, both of them are complementary in each other. Complementary in this sense, writing is assisted by reading related activities. In reading, the learners not only read the texts just for the sake of reading but they also solve comprehension problems discussing and writing frequently. As the learners had practices vocabulary in context, they had better knowledge of diction, which helped the learners to write responses appropriately. It was obvious that the learners had improved writing out of reading activities. Similarly, more the learners appeared in writing practices, the more they improved writing skill.

In sum, the action research had proven to be the milestone for providing maximum exposure to the learners to practice the integrated language skills. In general, it was a reading class but other skills were also included in the lessons. As the result, the learners were not only benefitted by the use of tasks in the class but they were also made aware about self-learning strategies, which was a career directing

guidance for the learners. Moreover, the action research is fruitful for inspiring the learners to learn English for making career.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the major outcomes based on the journals written by myself and the learners. The aforementioned account is ample to illustrate the beneficial aspects of my action research for improving the predetermined level of the learners.

CHAPTER VI

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

As this is the final chapter, I have discussed about the overall aspects of the action research. It gives the insight about my research agenda, my role as a teacher and researcher, and praxis. At the end of the chapter, I have briefly mentioned about the importance of action research for improving learners' performance as well as for developing myself as a good teacher in teaching English as a foreign language.

Developing Research Agenda

I spent my schooling in a government school. The teaching learning scenario of the then period was miserable. Miserable, in the sense, almost teachers had not met the minimum required qualification for teaching in the particular level. Sometimes, they would be absent for teachers training as well. However, their classroom practices were completely traditional. All the teachers, almost, spent time delivering their lectures where the learners had no role to play rather than sitting quiet and shaking head as if understood what the teacher said. Therefore, I have a bitter experience of my schooling. Especially, it becomes hard to me if I have to remember the secondary English classes. Meanwhile, reading was allotted the highest percentage in the secondary English curriculum. However, reading English text and solving comprehension items was like climbing the Mount Everest for me. This is all because of the influence of the teaching learning activities of the schooling. Whenever I sat for the English test, I could not recover myself out of fear of English. Mostly, I used to escape from the reading text even in the higher classes. If I tried, I would copy few sentences from the same place where I knew the same words that the questions had.

Knowingly or unknowingly, I continued the same practice when I sat for the English tests. Hardly, I could get the pass marks in English as the reading covered 45% out of 100% in English test and it was always striking to me if anyone started talking about the performance in English.

Later, as a graduate student in ELT, I learnt about the action research in detail. Moreover, I was influenced to know that the action research was for improving professionalism on the part of the teachers so as to enhance learners' performance. I was eager to grab the benefits out of the action research. Moreover, I wanted to compensate my performance in English as I had been victimized in schooling. I wanted to make myself a good English teacher. Not only that, I wanted to take the credit that some students changed their English performance through my classroom practices. In this regard, I chose action research as my master's dissertation. Ferrance (2000) argues, "An important guideline in choosing a question is to ask if it is something over which the teacher has influence. Is it something of interest and worth the time and effort that will be spent (p. 10)? There was no doubt that I had deep interest in carrying out action research on improving EFL reading comprehension of the learners. In this regard, I determined for improving the reading competency of the learners from the same schooling background; the government school.

In this process, first, I went to a government school in Lalitpur district where the SLC result was below 50%. I stated the clear purpose of visiting school with the principal. He was ready to help me for implementing the action research package in the school. However, the English teacher told me that they did not enjoy having such programme. I was quite desperate to hear him but that was not the end for me. After some days, I found a school having below 50% result in the SLC examination. In the same way, I stated the purpose of my visit to the principal and English teachers.

Perhaps, they knew the effectiveness of action research in language learning, they were glad to find me in the school. After the short introductory discussion, I moved to the class ten and made myself familiar with the learners. In addition, I stated the proposal to the learners but that was not sufficient for me to fix the problem that they were facing in learning English. Therefore, the next day, I assigned pretest on reading comprehension and analyzed the learners' performance along with the teacher who was the English teacher to the learners. The pretest helped me to underline the poor reading comprehension on the part of the learners. To be specific, inappropriate answer to the comprehension item was the greatest problem that the learners come with up. Therefore, I started carrying out action research over the same context.

Locating Myself in the Field

Researcher is the important person in any sorts of research study as he/she is trying to explore new knowledge from the field of study. In order to have the successful journey on the way to action research, I went through the various processes where I had to do many things differently. During the prolonged engagement with the research site, I played various roles. The roles changed according to the action research cycle. First, I had to identify the problems that the secondary EFL learners were facing. Based on my teaching learning experience, I had generalized the learners' problems of the learners in a government school. However, the generalized knowledge was not sufficient in my case. Therefore, I consulted to the teachers and the principal in the school and shared my ideas. They also had the same problem to say that the learners' comprehension power was very low, as the result, they deal reading texts inappropriately. Still, I had to make myself that the learners had the same problem in reading. Therefore, I designed the pretest items on reading comprehension and finalized the paper with the help of the English teachers in the

same school. Then, I assigned the test to the learners and collected the answer sheets. Those teachers helped me to check and verify the scoring based on the learners performance. Not only that, the careful study on the learners' performance gave the evidence that the learners had serious problem regarding text comprehension. As it was the first stage in the research field, I explored the problems that the learners were facing. Moreover, I played the role of an EFL teacher as well as a researcher, as I had collected data in the first stage of my action research.

Similarly, in the second stage of my action research I found myself as a planner. I planned lessons based on the scholars' ideas. I designed the classroom activities and the materials/worksheets needed for an EFL reading classroom. It took a quite long time, as I had to make things ready before I leave for teaching. Later, I implemented my plan in the classroom. Here, I played the role of an EFL teacher. I made the learners engage in reading as well as doing various tasks as I had planned. Most of the tasks required group work whereas in some other instances the learners had to do their task with a partner or alone. Harmer (2007) highlights the teacher's role very crucial to persuade students to read explaining the benefits of extensive reading being as an organizer, observer, feedback organizer, promoter, sometimes as a tutor and the most importantly being as a role model for the students (p. 284-286). I was just as a facilitator when the learner worked with the materials. I also observed if they were doing as they were supposed to, encouraged them and provided feedback on their effort. In addition, I evaluated the learning outcomes on the particular lesson and kept the record of the major events in the classroom.

Besides, I assigned weekly and fortnightly tests on reading comprehension. The major aim of those tests was to help the learners boost up their confidence and learn out of the mistakes they made. In the classroom discussion, I provided their

answer sheets and helped them to analyze their strengths and weaknesses. The result also helped me to know their progress or retreat on reading comprehension. As I was directly involved in teaching learning process, I observed the happenings in the classroom carefully. I also took the account of the classroom with the help of the field notes. I also reflected on and in my actions. Reflection on helped me to analyze the whole system of my actions in terms of planning, implementation and its results, whereas reflection in action assisted me to find out the effectiveness of the particular activity when it was happening. In the action research as a reflective practice, I was the practitioner. The process gave me the meaningful insight not only about my planning, classroom activities and the learners' involvement but also about the progress made by the learners and weakness so as to modify my further plan. During the action research, I found myself as a teacher and a researcher.

Responding to My Research Question

The action research was extended for 12 weeks and there was a reason behind this prolonged engagement in the research field. The reason was I had to answer my research question myself. I had a single research question "How can I improve the EFL reading comprehension of the students at Grade Ten?" Since I developed my action research agenda, I had always been in search of the appropriate answer to my research question. As it was the action research, I was supposed to do things myself for improving the current learning situation on the part of the learners.

In fact, the question led me towards the valuable insights for tackling with the problems faced by the learners in reading comprehension. Similarly, the idea forwarded by the scholars regarding learner centered teaching and its proper implementation in the EFL classroom had given the meaningful shape of the action research. In general, the learners improved their reading comprehension as the result

they could deal with the various authentic reading materials in everyday life in their level, which is the focus skill in reading as stated by the Secondary Level English Curriculum, Nepal (2007). Here, I have mentioned the major aspects of my classroom activities, which helped me to make the appropriate answer of the aforementioned question.

Theme 1: Pre-reading Stage

Before the actual lesson took place, I made the students involved in schema activation activities. The activities done under pre-reading stage played the significant role to activate the schema of the learners. Schema is a useful concept in understanding how we are able to interpret texts (Nuttall, 1996). As schema is the background knowledge, it helped for the further processing of the reading materials to grab the meaning. I demonstrated the texts related pictures, asked basic questions based on the texts, and made the learners guess the meaning providing contexts. It helped me to motivate my learners for the further activity in the class. In the beginning stage of my action research, the students hesitated sharing their ideas, but I regularly asked questions and made them guess the meaning or share their ideas about the title. The regular practice made the learners easy while sharing their ideas. I encouraged and valued what they shared about the lesson that motivated the learners for the class so as to understand the lesson. Moreover, in the second chance they come up with the better responses on their own. Making the students active for sharing ideas about the lesson helped the learners to understand the text better.

Similarly, I also made the learners involve in the silent reading and underlining the difficult words from the text. As the complex words in the text led the students' failure to understand the text many times, I provided the chance where they searched meaning using various sources. Making the learners responsible for finding out the

meaning of the difficult vocabularies was effective technique for the class. It was very

interesting to see the students busy for finding out the meaning of the difficult words

that they had underlined. They also discussed with their friend sitting next to them,

comment each other's ideas, consulted the glossary provided at the end of the text,

other times they used dictionary for the multiple meanings. Sometimes, they asked me

for the equivalent words in Nepali as well. This strategy helped me to make my

learners autonomous in the reading class. Banerjee (2011) argues that learner

autonomy as a shift of responsibility from teachers to learners. Learners should take

responsibility of their learning, which is necessary not only to develop skills to carry

out individual learning but also to change the traditional classroom (p. 25). However,

the learners also had some sorts of problems in quest of meaning. In addition, those

who had difficulty with the words were benefitted from the discussion. In this regard,

pre-reading stage is very important stage in teaching reading to the EFL learners. I

made the proper use of this stage through which the learners motivated for exploring

knowledge based on the reading materials though they had not rigorous practice.

Theme 2: While-reading Stage

While-reading stage helped me to make the learners involved in various

activities, like reading the text loudly or silently, pair and group discussion, solving

comprehension items, presentation, writing summary or the main ideas of the text,

and sharing information. All these activities supported me to lead the learners to

achieve text comprehension as Tickoo (2003) highlights the importance of this stage

for achieving the main aim through the learners' involvement in the text in many

ways. Reading aloud was effective for the reading class as it helped not only the

reader but also to the fellow learners to know the correct pronunciation if they had

problem. However, the reader also got support as he/she pronounced the words

wrong. I made all the learners silent when one of them was reading for the class. Later, they shared the text message, which helped me to check their understanding, and back support when they encountered problems.

Similarly, I helped the learners providing the variety of tasks. The learners read text themselves, discussed with the partners and come up with the products they made. I provided tasks one after another, which was interesting for them. Moreover, there was no burden on the part of the learners, only they had, the responsibility of their learning. The learners learnt well as they played with tasks. Not only that, the presentation activity directed towards very effective strategy in reading class. First, the students who had hesitation in speaking with the teacher had improved their speaking drastically. In fact, reading habit built speaking on the part of the learners (Harmer, 2007). At the same time, questioning strategy had the great influence in teaching reading. When I asked questions, the learners tried to answer. Those who had the correct response were encouraged to share with the class whereas others benefitted from the input given in an appropriate time in the classroom. In this regard, questioning and reading comprehension has the close relationship. A very interesting part of the class was that even the students from back of the class were actively participating in the activity, as their voices were valued.

Besides, group work made the students engage in many activities which was supportive for the reading class. Because, it made the learners communicate about the topic/problems, share ideas, even comment each other's ideas, and make an appropriate response to the question. It made them understand the reading so they could share something in the class, which was very difficult before discussing in the group. Meanwhile, writing activities were helpful for the learners to learn reading

materials better. The fair competition among the groups made them solve problems faster as they wanted to be the first in the class.

Theme 3: Post-reading Stage

Post-reading stage involves summarizing and evaluating activities. It was important as it helped me to check the progress made by the learners. Not only that, this stage was also supportive for sharing the central idea of the text, writer's perspective as well as the readers' opinion (Nuttall, 1996). The learners exchanged their ideas in the class, as they had understood the text. I provided feedback when the learners had misunderstanding about the message of the reading materials. In addition, sometimes, the learners failed to accomplish task. However, I was not ready to provide them the readymade answer. But, a little assistance and direction helped them a lot. I had noticed that, no sooner I had given the clues, the learners were able to find out the correct options needed for them. Moreover, a little bit assistance to the students can have the great success for completion of the task assigned to them. It made the students feel they can do it where they need the teacher only for minor help. For error correction, I had collected a copy from each of the groups. Frequently, I used it for checking objective items, which I found easy and effective for providing feedback in the appropriate time.

Theme 4: Test on Reading Comprehension

The tests on reading comprehension were useful for promoting learning. When the students appeared in the test, they had better realized their strengths and weakness of their performance. Moreover, the discussion with the friends just after the test made them more conscious which I have believed as the power of the test. It is worth mentioning that test on reading in the oral form was found to be very effective. As I asked comprehension questions to the learners, it helped them to see the reading

materials closely and grab the main points. The learners found direct test interesting and easy to solve the items than writing on the paper. It was a good strategy to help the learners understand the reading text. There was no fear on the part of the students because they could improve or refine their answers based on the others 'colleagues' responses. Moreover, in the oral test, the students were found to be competitive as myself and their friends could easily notice the correct responder. So, the oral test on reading had multiple advantages in my class. The oral activity needed full attention on the part of the students so it was also supportive as a motivating strategy in the reading class. The more they appeared in the test, the more they became confident as well as better performers. The combination of the whole activities throughout the action research supported me to answer my research question. Moreover, my quest for the appropriate answer to my research question had been ended up as I found the learners improved their performance along with the aforementioned package.

Summary of Outcomes

The result on the part of the learners shows that the action research has meaningful outcomes. In terms of the action research, I got chance to make improvements not only in the performance of the learners but also in my professional practices in an EFL classroom. The research outcomes are summarized below:

a. The learners started contributing the group works as the result they solved comprehension items more easily.

b. The 'text talk' activity or presentation turned to be helpful for an EFL classroom as it supported not only for reading comprehension but also for promoting communicative skills on the part of the learners.

c. The extensive and intensive tasks under pre/while/post reading stage played the significant role for developing reading comprehension.

d. The frequent tests helped the learners to boost up their confidence in learning English.

e. The learners have better performance in reading comprehension.

f. The learners improved their writing skills through the activities exploited in the reading classroom.

g. The regular planning for reading lessons played significant role to increase exposure for the language learners.

Praxis of the Action Research

Praxis is not simply action based on reflection. It is action, which embodies certain qualities. These include a commitment to human well being and the search for truth, and respect for others. Praxis is the action of people who are free and are able to act for themselves. Moreover, praxis is always risky. It requires that a person 'makes a wise and prudent practical judgment about how to act in this situation' (Carr and Kemmis 1986, as cited in Smith 1999, 2011). Classroom is the best platform to the learners to learn various materials in support of their teachers and fellows. Therefore, the teachers need to make themselves innovative in ELT practices in the global context. It provides the teachers a proper guideline to be followed in the post method era's language classroom. Therefore, I made myself fit into the classroom situation by adapting certain theories, methods and techniques. Moreover, reading is highly influenced by schema theory. As the schema is the prior knowledge, it plays the great role in reading. Smith (1994) argues, "Knowledge of relevant schemes is obviously essential if we are to read any kind of text with comprehension" (as cited in Hudson, 2007, p. 38). In this process, I was deeply assisted by TBLT and CLT that provided the learners opportunity to learn the reading materials lively.

What works?

Teaching learning is a complex process even challenging. Simply, delivering the lesson in the class may not make a good sense for meaningful learning. Therefore, an EFL teacher needs to be aware about the following facts through which he/she can make the process goal oriented.

Here, I have discussed the important aspects of my classroom in relation to the scholars' pint of view:

a. Planning a lesson is very important for every teacher as Harmer (2007) states, "New teachers, especially, need maps to help them through the landscape. And students, too, like to know what their teacher has in store for them. Evidence of teacher planning helps to ensure their confidence in the person who is teaching them. He further adds, a complete failure to plan may seem irresponsible to both students and others (p. 365). I planned my lessons before I started teaching. My plans were based on tasks principle. The regular planning for the classroom practices made teaching learning systematic. In a short time, I implemented various activities, which increased the exposure for language learning. Therefore, an EFL teacher needs the proper planning before starting the lesson.

b. Scene setting is crucial in reading classes. Scene setting and schema activation are closely related aspects for a reading classroom. Schema activation is the process of awaking background knowledge that the readers already have in their mind. In the pre-reading stage, I asked, sometimes text related questions to the learners, played a short audio, demonstrated a picture, asked the learners to predict the theme of the text with the help of the title, and so on. Nuttall (1996) highlights the importance of prediction in schema activation. She

asserts, "Prediction is important because it activates schemata: that is, it calls into mind any experiences and associated knowledge that we already have about the topic of the text. We make the use of schemata to interpret the text (p. 13). It is obvious that schema activation activity helped me to make the learners interested about the text they read in the later stage whereas it also helped to the learners to understand the text more easily then had not scene-setting activity in the class. Doff (1995) argues that before reading a text we can do various things that are not only supportive for the learners to make them understand the text but also for focusing attention while reading it (p. 59). The activities were not only motivating to the learners but also valuable in schema activation. As I found scene setting activities very helpful for my classroom, an EFL teacher need to use various techniques for the learners' schema activation, which can be done by setting the scene in the pre-reading stage.

c. The careful selection of the reading materials is an important aspect of an effective classroom. Moreover, the length of the text has found to be close in relation with the reading comprehension. In my classroom, the learners seemed to be uninterested in reading lengthy texts. When I knew the fact, I always divided the texts into smaller units and asked them to read and do the activities. It helped the learners to keep on interest in reading. Therefore, it is necessary to divide such texts into the different parts or paragraphs. The work makes the learners read with ease and fast, so they take interest in reading that helps to comprehend reading materials better.

d. Tasks are of great importance for a language-learning classroom. They provide the learners the opportunity to learn out of their own action. Willis &

Willis (2012) mention, "Proponents of task-based teaching argue that the most effective way to teach a language is by engaging learners in real language use in the classroom. This is done by designing tasks-discussions, problems, games, and so on, which require learners to use the language for themselves" (p. 1). I implemented various tasks in the reading classroom. The learners were supposed to read the reading materials and do the activities. The task I implemented was in chronological order. In other words, first, the learners were assigned extensive tasks. As they completed the tasks, they were led to intensive tasks after a short interval of reading. Usually, the tasks required discussion, so the learners discussed in groups and came up with the product in terms of writing or solving comprehension items. The task division made the learner easy to complete one after another, which helped them to understand the reading materials. However, the learners, sometimes, failed to complete their tasks as they found complex. In this regard, dividing the task into the smaller units is a good technique for a reading classroom.

e. Students from the government school have very low level of exposure in English. As the result, they face many problems while reading a text in English. From my experience, the greatest problem they face while reading a text is because of the difficult vocabulary. In addition, when I assigned test on reading comprehension, the learners were found to be escaped from vocabulary items or responded inappropriately. Therefore, teaching vocabulary has the great value for the reading class. Mishra (2006) emphasizes the role of the teachers to make the learner able to use right choice of diction that can only be done by teaching vocabulary and it is the very serious responsibility on the part of the teachers (p. 13). Similarly, Archer (2008)

argues, "If students understand meaning of critical vocabulary in passage, their comprehension will be enhanced" (p.12). Keeping the fact in the mind, I designed various activities like guessing game, spidergram, matching items, odd word out, dictionary practice, synonyms and antonyms, asking questing between the learners, using the glossary from the textbook, choosing the best answer from the alternatives, and underlining and guessing from the context. Besides, I made the learners discuss the words that they underlined as the difficult words. In one or other way round, I made the learner familiar with the vocabulary before they were assigned extensive and intensive tasks. However, when the text was not very complex one, I asked the learners to solve the comprehension items as they read text. They had very enthusiastic work with the co-learners. As the result, they solved most of the problems themselves. The most interesting part I noticed was the use of L1 in teaching vocabulary. In case of the learners' difficulty, I provided hints in the mother tongue that helped them a lot. The knowledge on vocabulary also helped the learners not only to read the text and comprehend it but also to speak and write in a better way. Moreover, it mainly provided multiple meanings and the correct pronunciation skills to the learners, which was supportive to overcome the fear of making mistakes while reading. Therefore, it is essential to the teachers to make sure that the learners have no problems with vocabularies from the text that they are going to learn. In this process, use of dictionary, vocabulary games, guessing meaning from the contexts, defining, imitating, drawing, demonstration, and translation can be very useful techniques. In one or another way, the learners need to learn vocabulary by no means from the reading materials; otherwise, they face problems with comprehension items.

f. I exploited tasks with the help of pair work, group work and whole class discussion. The classroom dynamics were useful techniques for my class as they give equal opportunity to all the learners. While the learners were busy in the group work, I helped whoever needed my support. In a little assistance of the teacher, the students found easy solving comprehension question. However, the learners were encouraged for exploring meaning themselves and produce result on their own rather than supporting continuously. Meanwhile, the whole class discussion was important for listening to the large number of learners at a time where the rest or the poor performers got benefits out of sharing. It was equally valuable for managing time for extended activities in the classroom. Mostly, the learners were encouraged to use English language for sharing ideas in pair or group, but the learners felt very difficult. On the situation, I allowed them to use mother tongue, which helped them share their ideas in the meaningful way. Deller (2003) highlights the importance of L1 where he argues, "When students use their L1 between themselves and with the teacher, it has a positive effect on group dynamics, and it allows students to give ongoing feedback about the course and their experience of learning much more fluent than they would if they were only using English" (as cited by Harmer 2007, p. 133). When I made the learner work in pair and group, they shared the information of the text they read. In addition, presentation technique was very interesting and effective in my class as one of the leaders was presenting the product of the group, the others were raising hands for commenting his/her ideas. This strategy helped me to motivate the learners so as to make them collect more ideas on the same topic. In other words, to comment on others ideas, one should have understood well what the text says.

However, the learners were ready for that which promoted text comprehension.

g.   During my action research, the learners were assigned weekly and fortnightly tests. However, those tests were formative except the pre-test and the post-test on reading comprehension. To quote Harmer (2007) formative test are related to the kind of feedback teachers give students as a course is progressing and which, as a result, may help them to improve their performance (p. 379). However, I can claim, from my experience, that tests are not only important to the learners but also inevitable for promoting learning. This aim certainly be achieved if they are designed carefully. I designed the comprehension items and make the test paper valid and reliable letting the other teacher comment and verify it. Not only that, the teacher also checked the answer sheet of the pre-test and post and helped me to verify the improvement made by the learners. Meanwhile, I assigned written test and gave feedback to the learners. After each written test, I provided opportunity to the learners to analyze their performance and discuss with the co-learners. This strategy helped me to improve the learners' performance on reading comprehension. After every discussion, they realized their mistakes and committed not to the same mistake again. Harmer (2007) says that the learners also have a very clear idea about their performance and if the teachers help them to develop this awareness, it will be of great support for enhancing learning (p.140). He further associates students' self-assessment with the whole matter of learner autonomy. It is necessary to encourage them to reflect upon their own learning through training or classroom, which is the process of equipping them with a powerful tool for future development.

Meanwhile, I found tests supportive, first, for reducing fear of examination on the part of the learner. Second, for learning out of the mistakes, and the third is overall improvement on their performance including writing skills. Besides, the tests were worth to evaluate the teaching learning process. From my recent experience, I have found oral tests useful, as they are easy to assign and give an immediate feedback to the particular learner. In a short time, I ask several items to a learner where others got benefit out of it. In addition, the content coverage can be maximizing in the oral test. Furthermost is the immediate feedback and no cost in testing where the fear of speaking on the part of the learners can be minimized with the help of such tests. The immediate feedback was very important as it motivated the learners. In my reading class, the learners were always eager to get immediate feedback, which ensured the learners about their weaknesses and strengths. Moreover, they get chance to improve as it was fresh in their mind.

h. The activity done under the post reading stage was important for the learners as Tickoo (2003) mentions that the post reading stage seeks to utilize the text and the meanings derived from the reading materials in other activities. In this stage, I made the learners summarize the text or paragraph they read. Often, the learners narrated the text in their own words, and other times I asked them to write summary based on the reading materials. I found summarizing technique practical for the reading class, as it was supportive for the learners to remember the sequence of events that went through the text. Moreover, it worked as the remedy to the learners, which helped them to make a clear vision of the plot, theme, or massage and characters of the texts. In this activity, the learners also used L1 when they felt difficult in describing events

in the target language. They translated the text message into mother tongue and share with the class. As Naimushin (2002) sees translation as the 'fifth skill' after reading, writing, speaking and listening (Harmer 2007, p. 133). I encouraged the learners to practice text translation in the class. As the result, the learners were able to answer most of the comprehension questions asked to them. In this regard, an EFL teacher needs to make the learners involve in meaning exploration activity, which enhances reading comprehension.

Conclusion

The action research was carried out for improving the reading comprehension of the students in the secondary class. The entire process exploited while researching has made the research objectives achieve. It was, in fact, not an easy task because of its challenging nature in itself. However, the proper planning, implementation and review has given the task a meaningful profile in order to undertake the learners' weaknesses and accelerate their ability in reading comprehension.

The action research has proven the facts that even the learners who were calculated as the poor performers by their teachers and fellows, can learn more or less similar to the pace that the so-called talents learn. One of the learners who had poor performance in the pre-test in action research could perform well by the end of the action research. The learner performed in an equal way that an average learner had performed. So, the bias perspective towards the poor performers should not be entertained in the classroom as it discourages learning rather than facilitates. All the learners learnt the reading materials in their own pace in spite of their problems. Some of the learners were even struggling just for the pass marks where they were failure. By the end of the action research, all who had struggled for the criteria, had performed well and obtained more than the minimum pass marks, which was the

matter of thought for their fellows and the teachers. Not only that, the learners had almost similar contribution in the whole class discussion. It made them overcome their hesitation in the classroom and became cooperative in the classroom activities. Hence, the action research has become the bridge to reach up to the desired level performance on the part of the learners.

Mainly, I used task based language learning and communicative language teaching approach in the reading classroom. These two approaches has unmeasured benefits to enhance the learners performance. I designed almost all the activities based on the TBLT and implemented the activities with exploiting CLT approach. The compiled use of these two approaches gave the learners the opportunity to work with their fellows and practice the integrated language skills as they accomplished the assigned tasks. It is important to mention that in the beginning days of my action research, the learners would hardly raise their hands for sharing ideas based on the materials they read or practiced. It was nostalgic experience for me as I also had the same problem in my school days. But, there was no alternative of evocating interest on learners in the classroom activities. So, I introduced the reading text and many times summarized for the learners. The strategy gave the learners a track to follow while summarizing and sharing ideas in the classroom. It also provided assistance with the content knowledge. The input strategy gave me the positive result as the learners could comprehend the reading materials and respond the questions more appropriately. Vocabulary games, extensive and intensive tasks, group /pair discussion and presentation has worth result to make the learners overcome their psychological problems in learning like hesitation to take risk, fear of making mistakes and being fooled by the fellows and the teachers where they have learnt to be cooperative. Besides, the learners were aware of their problems in reading, so they

had kept interest in the classroom activities. It led them solve their problems in the greater amount.

It is not only the learners who were benefitted by the action research; I am not less than the learners to be benefitted by the action research. The action research has made me feel a better teacher for the level. The entire process has a very significant role to make me a better helper, facilitator, guide or mentor for many of the learners. Moreover, I could make the learners feel that the English was not very difficult for them, which, I have believed, to be the greatest achievement of my effort in terms of the action research.

Implying for Myself and Others

I had been in a puzzle, as a question would strike in the mind. The question was, "How the action research can solve classroom problems"? Now and then, here and there in the ELT journals and articles I had read about the action research, but no article had given the answer of my question in depth as I have understood the action research now. I was very much interested to know the action research in relation to solving language-learning problems. Not only that, the bitter experiences that I had experienced in my school days had given me the power to think about the second language learners in the government school. I thought the matter critically. 'The critical thinking' led me towards the marvelous process through which I could improve my learners' reading comprehension in English language. The process was the 'Action Research' and it has given an enormous answer to my aforementioned question.

I followed the action research process to solve my learners' problems in reading comprehension. In this regard, I went through the various literatures and the guidance by my tutors. Both of them assisted me to find out useful strategies that I

could apply in my reading classroom. I knew scholarly presented views for the foreign language reading classroom. The prolonged engagement with the sources of knowledge and in the research field gave a meaningful shape for my action research. In this process, I planned lesson for my everyday class, designed tasks for the learners, implemented in the classroom, reviewed the classroom activities and its result, writing journals of the everyday class, assigned tests in an appropriate time, and provided constructive feedback to the learners. The continuous engagement with these activities gave me a better platform to make myself a good teacher in 'Teaching Reading in the EFL classroom'. As I came to the stage, in one hand, I knew more about myself in relation to the EFL teacher in our setting. On the other hand, the learners have better performance in reading comprehension, which are the greatest impact of the action research.

My long experience in teaching and learning English conveys the massage that the EFL learners in the government-funded school are victimized in the Nepalese context. They do not have an ample exposure in English neither in the classroom nor in the real life situations. The least exposure has led them failure in English in the performance tests, and I think, this is the serious problem to be addressed soon. In addition, we know, the teacher can change the learners' performance. Our little effort for our English language classroom can accelerate the learners' performance where we can make a part of their success and feel proud on it.

No matter whether all the learners learn in the same pace and all hold distinction position in the test. Only the concern is, they could practice maximum materials in the classroom where they have their fellows share the problems, and be cooperative in the tasks, and the teacher on their hand to support learning. As the result, just before the every English test the learners would not feel frightened and

even miss the test. In this regard, the action research has been a great help for the teachers to provide the learners maximum exposure in the class and improve their performance in reading comprehension. At the same time, it has made me feel that the teacher can make him/her an expert for the English language classroom as I have realized myself.

Looking into the Future

Action research is a cyclical process. The cycle moves continuously generating new issues in the classroom while teaching learning a foreign language. As the foreign language practitioners, the learners face many problems in acquiring native like proficiency in English. Moreover, classroom can be considered as a laboratory for testing and implementing new ideas, theories and methods, teachers can solve the classroom problems and lead to the learners for their better achievement in academic journey. In this regard, teachers need to continue the action for making themselves the guide, the coach and the facilitator for the learners in the language learning process. I am better exposed with the learners and their language related problems in English as I dived into the real problem solving approach. While carrying out the action research on improving reading comprehension of the secondary learners, I have grabbed some other problems on the part of the learners, which need to be solved for their success in learning. In addition, my interest in the action research has become more vibrant. In reference to the action research, I explored additional issues from the classroom. Hence, keeping the fact in the mind, I have made myself ready for continuing the action cycle. In this regard, I am determined to carry out the action research for 'Improving EFL wiring skills of the secondary learners' through reading'. With the next step, I have tried to follow the truth that it is

the teacher's role to make a meaningful learning environment in the classroom where the learners get maximum exposure to play with the language and learn.

Chapter Summary

Through this chapter, I have made the backbone aspects of the action research explicit. I mentioned the research agenda, some theoretical perspectives on language teaching in relation to my context as well as the role of the action research in improving teaching learning process.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX-1: PRE-TEST PAPER

Class: X   PRE –TEST ON READING   FM: 35   PM: 12   Time: 1:03hrs.

1. **Read the text and do the activities that follow: 10**

When Tom decided to go on a holiday to England, he wrote a friend of his who was living in London and asked if he could meet him at the airport. The friend wrote back that he would be there. So, Tom was rather surprised when he reached the airport to find that his friend hadn't turned up. He walked around for a short while and then, because he had a slight headache, went into a restaurant and had a cup of strong black coffee. After that, he felt much better. He brought a couple of magazines at the bookstall and went into a lounge to read them. He felt sure that his friend would come fairly soon, thought he was beginning to get married. He had just started to read his magazine when his friend arrived with a young lady.

Tom's friend apologized for being late and explained what had happened. Apparently, he had arranged to meet the young lady at six O' clock just outside the underground station not far from where he was living. The young lady had only traveled the underground once before, had set out in good time but unfortunately she had got on a train going to the wrong direction. She traveled for several stops before she realized this, because the train was very crowded and she could not see the names of the stations. By the time she got to the right station, she was nearly three quarters of an hour late.

A. **Read the text and find out the similar meaning for the following words/phrases 0.5x4=2**

i. Determined   ii. Minor   iii. Lie about   iv. It sounds as if

B. **Answer the following questions.** $1 \times 4 = 4$
   i. Why did Tom write to his friend?

   ii. Why did he go to the restaurant?

   iii. How late the lady was when she got into the right station?
   iv. Why was the young lady late?

C. **Rewrite the following sentences arranging them in correct order. 0.5x4=2**
   i. He started telling Tom the cause of being late.
   ii. Tom's friend did come there even it was late.
   iii. The young lady made Tom's friend wait for her about 45 minutes.
   iv. Tom passed his time having coffee and reading magazines.

D. **Decide whether these statements are 'True' or 'False'.**   0.5 x 4=2
   i.   Tom expected to find his friend waiting at the airport.
   ii.   Tom's friend lived far from the underground station.
   iii.   Tom's friend had a slight headache at the airport.
   iv.   The lady was in the right direction on the way to home.

1. **Read the advertisement and answer the following questions:**   15

WANTED

'Mt. Everest Peak', a reputed and established Travel Agency, invites the applications for the following posts.

1. **Post**: Account Officer (one)
   Qualification: BBS or above
   Preference: 3-5 years experience in Travel Agency Accounting
   Salary: Negotiable
2. **Post:** Ticketing Officer (one)
   Qualification: Intermediate or above
   Preference: 2-3 years experience in Travel Agency Ticketing and able to handle a computer.
   Salary: Negotiable

Interested candidates are requested to send their applications with two recent PP size photographs and complete CV to the following address not later than Dec 13, 2010.

To

The Managing Director

POB 350, Kathmandu, Nepal

A. Match the words in Column A with their meanings in Column B: 4 x 1 = 4

Column A	Column B
(i) Experience	(a) to be discussed
(ii) Negotiable	(b) resume
(iii) CV	(c) degree of academic achievement
(iv) Qualification	(d) practice

B. Fill in the gaps with appropriate words or phrase from the given text. 3 x 1 = 3

i. The employer announcing the vacancy is ……….

ii. Preference is given to those who have ……. in travel Agency.

iii. ……. are to be submitted along with the application.

C. Answer the following questions. 4 x 2 = 8

    i. What should be the qualification for the post of Ticketing Officer?

    ii. What are the vacant posts?

    iii. What is the salary for the candidates?

    iv. Who should be the application sent to?

3. **Read the following text and do the activities given below**.

I went in to the restaurant, which was already crowded, and ordered a my meal, while I was waiting for soup to arrive, I looked around to see if I knew anyone in the restaurant. It was then I noticed that a man sitting at the corner table near the door kept glancing on my direction, as if he knew me. I certainly didn't know him, for I never forget a face. The man had newspaper open in front of him: he was pretending to read, though all the while I could see that he was keeping an eye on me. When he waiter brought my soup, the man was clearly puzzled as the time went on it grew more and more obvious that I was well known in the restaurant. Eventually got up and went in the kitchen. After few minutes he came out again, paid bill and left without another glance in my direction.

When I had finished and about to pay my bill, I called the owner of the restaurant and asked him what the man wanted. The owner was a little embarrassed by my question and at first didn't want to tell me. I insisted "well" he said "that the man was a detective. He followed you here because he

thought you were the man he was looking for. The owner said, "When he came in the kitchen, he showed me a photograph of the wanted man. He certainly looked like you. Since we know you here, I was able to convince him that he had made a mistake."

A.   Find out he words from the passage having opposite meaning to the following words.   4 x 1 = 4

a) Perusal

b) Doubtfully

c) Enlightened

d) Dissuade

B. **Answer the following questions.   3 x 2 = 6**

a) Had the writer and the stranger seen before? How can you say so?

b) Why did the writer follow him?

c) Why did the stranger go without another glance to him?

APPENDIX-2: PRE-TEST ANSWER SHEETS OF THE LEARNERS

परीक्षा नियन्त्रण कार्यालय

न.	उत्तर	

Q1

(i) Tom passed his time having coffee and reading magazine.

(ii) Tom's friend did come there even it was late

(iii) The young lady made Tom's friend wait for her about 45 minutes.

(iv) He started telling Tom the cause of being late.

D.1.

(i) Tom expected to find his friend waiting The airport. T

(ii) Tom's friend lived far from the Underground station. F

(iii) Tom's friend had a slight headache at The airport. F

(iv) The lady was in the right direction on The way to home. F

प्रश्न न.	उत्तर	प्राप्तांङ्क

2.1.

A. Match the words in column A With meaning in column B

(i) Experience ←→ (d) practice

Negotiable ←→ To be discussed resume

(ii) CV ←→ To be discussed

Qualification ←→ resume To be discussed

(iii) Qualification → Degree of academic Achievement

(iii) CV ←→ To be discussed

B.1.

(i) The employer announcing the vacancy is Ticketing officers

(ii) preference is give to those who have a reputed and established in travel Agency

(iii) Account officers are to be submitted Along with the application

C.1.

(i) # The qualification for the post of Ticketing Officers should be application. able to Handle a computer.

(ii) # The vacant posts is Ticketing officers.
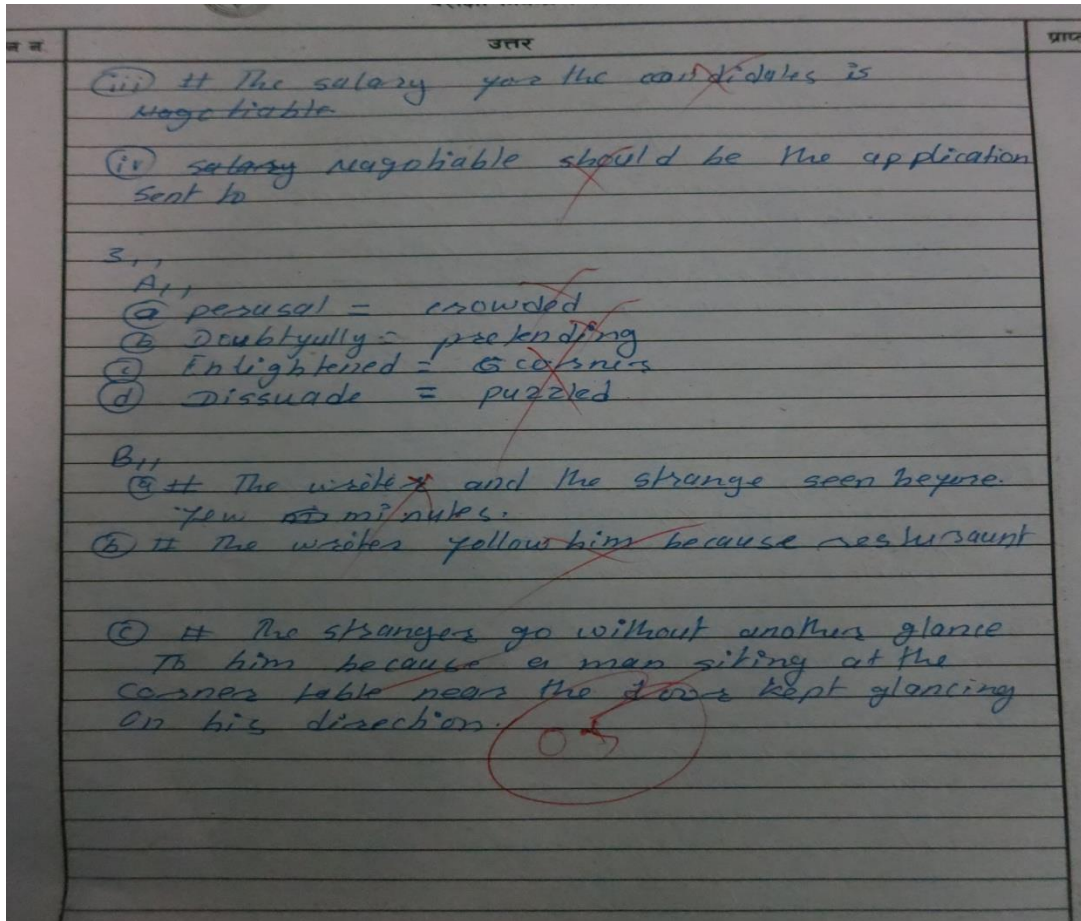
APPENDIX-3: Gantt Chart

Gantt chart/week 1

Days \ Particulars	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Introduction	■						
Pre test on reading comprehension		■					
Learners analyzed their answer sheets/Classroom discussion			■				
Made plan with the learners				■			
Spidergram activity for vocabulary learning					■	■	■

Gantt chart/week 2

Days / Particulars	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Synonyms and antonyms	■	■	■				
Dictionary practice				■			
Evaluation					■		
Individual feedback to the learners/ Discussion						■	
Text summarizing activity							■

Gantt chart/week 3

Days / Particulars	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Extensive and Intensive tasks	■	■	■	■			
Summary writing and sharing activity					■		
Note taking exercise						■	
Evaluation							■

Gantt chart/week 4

Days / Particulars	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Learners analyzed their answer sheets/Discussion	■						
Extensive and intensive tasks		■	■	■	■	■	
Text briefing activity							■

Gantt chart/week 5

Days / Particulars	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Extensive and Intensive tasks	■	■	■	■	■		
Presentation by the learners						■	
Use of Dictionary							■

Gantt chart/week 6

Days \ Particulars	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Use of Dictionary	■						
Extensive and intensive tasks		■	■	■	■	■	■

Gantt chart/week 7

Days \ Particulars	43	44	45	46	46	48	49
Evaluation	■						
Extensive and Intensive tasks		■	■	■	■	■	
Text talk activity							■

Gantt chart/week 8

Days \ Particulars	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
Extensive and Intensive task	■	■	■				
Presentation				■			
Summary writing					■		
Text talk						■	
Evaluation							■

Gantt chart/week 9

Days \ Particulars	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
Extensive and Intensive tasks	■	■					
Summary writing			■				
Jigsaw reading				■			
Text talk					■		
Extensive and Intensive tasks						■	
Evaluation							■

Gantt chart/week 10

Days \ Particulars	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
Extensive and Intensive tasks	█	█	█				
Narrating text				█			
Note taking					█		
Summary writing						█	
Evaluation							█

Gantt chart/week 11

Days \ Particulars	71	72	73	74	75	76	77
Information sharing	█						
Extensive and Intensive tasks		█	█				
Note taking				█			
Text summarizing					█		
Text briefing						█	
Evaluation							█

Gantt chart/week 12

Days \ Particulars	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
Extensive and Intensive tasks	█	█	█				
Text talk				█			
Review of the activities					█		
Post-test						█	
Discussion on the learners performance							█

Note: Reading was inseparable part of all the aforementioned activities except on the

EVALUATION day.

APPENDIX-4: SAMPLE TEST

Test on Reading Comprehension-3

Class:10   Subject: English   FM: 15

Time: PM: 5

Candidates are requested to give answers in their own words. Those answers will be preferred in marking.

1. Read the poem and do the activities given below: 5

Where the Mind is Without Fear

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action………
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, Let my country awake.

-

Rabindranath Tagore

A. Find out the similar meaning to the following words: 2

    a. awareness   b. divides   c. enlarges   d. liberty

B.   Answer the following questions: 3

    a. What do you mean by "Dead habits"?
    b. Where should our arms be directed?
    c. What does the poet wish for his country?

2. Read the text and do the activities:10

Human milk is biologically specific for human babies. Simply put, this means that each species of mammal makes milk that is uniquely suited for its young. Cow's milk is high in protein and minerals because baby calves are up and running within hours after birth – rapid muscle and bone growth is necessary for their survival. In contrast, the human survival organ is the brain. Human milk is high in factors that promote brain growth. Human milk is high in factors that promote brain growth. This means that children who were breastfed tend to score higher on IQ tests, due to the beneficial effects of human milk on neurodevelopment. As a side note: why not choose a mammal closer to humans to provide an artificial milk supplement for human infants – a primate, perhaps? Can you imagine a gorilla sitting passively, attached to a milking to a milking machine like a cow? Not very likely, but kind of fun to think about.

Human milk contains enzymes, hormones and immunoglobin that simply can't be duplicated in formula, although formula manufactures keep trying. They advertise that their brand is "most like mother's milk", but even they agree that breast milk is the best.

Look on the can of formula – it says so right on the label. Since breast milk is always raw and fresh, you don't lose any of the nutrients that are destroyed in formula

processing. Breast milk is living tissue that changes to meet your baby's nutritional needs, and to protect him against disease. The fat content of human milk varies month to month, day to day, and even hour to hour. For example, the milk produced for a premature infant is higher in protein and calories than milk produced for a full-term infant, giving the tiny baby what it needs to catch up on growth. In cold climates, human milk contains more fat – in warm climates, more water.

A. Fill in the gaps with the help of the appropriate word/s from the text: 0.5x4 =2
   a. Human milk is high in factors that ….…….brain growth.
   b. Cow's milk is high in …………
   c. In cold climate, ……………milk contains more fat.
   d. The milk produced for a ………… infant is higher in protein and calories than milk produced for a full-term infant.

B. Answer the following questions: 2x4=8
   a. Why mother's milk is important for babies?
   b. What is necessary for calves' survival?
   c. What is the main difference between human milk and artificial milk?
   d. What does human milk contain?

APPENDIX-5: POST-TEST PERFORMANCE OF THE LEARNERS

Q.V.2,,
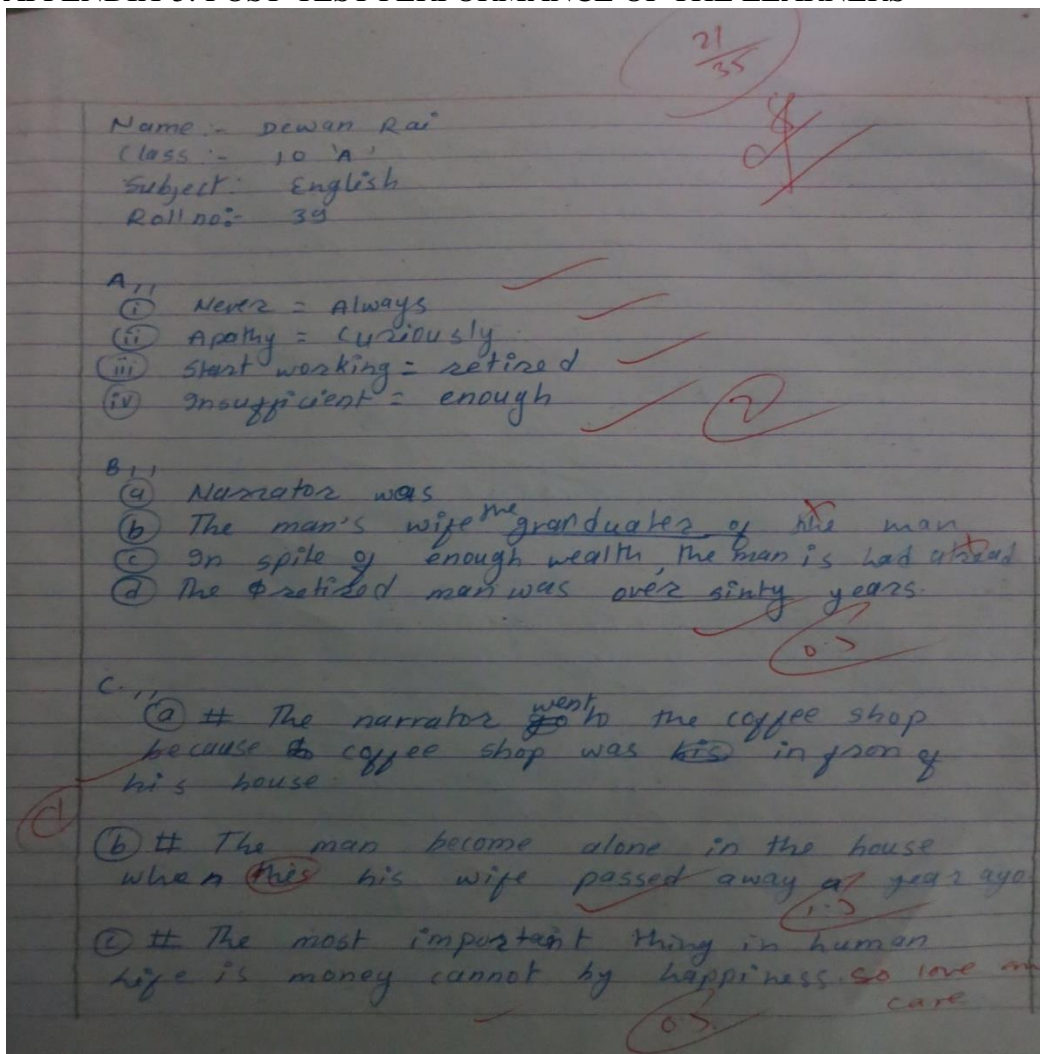
B,, ① In the past, psychology was defined as the science of body. (False)

② Behaviour is objective and can be observed. (True)

③ Many people bite their nails consciously (True)

④ psychology is systematic study of huma behaviour. (True)

1.5

A,,

Character = behaviour nature

guesses = assumptions
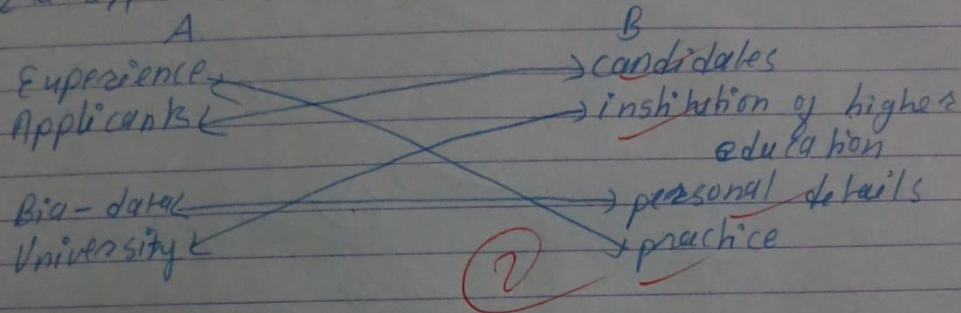
individual = vidual personal

orderly = systematically

1.5

C,,

ⓐ # physical phychology was defined as the science of conscivusness or consious Experience.

1.5

ⓑ # Others cannot enter in anybody's experience because they perform unconsciously. Besides, anybody's experience is his/her own private and personal world into which others cannot enter.

2

ⓒ # We can a person's behaviour be observed directly because it can be directly studied and it is better to conform the study of

Phychology to behaviour alone, to those activities of the individual which can be observed, compared and analyzed by all things. It is systematic study of all the man does in response to his/her to world of things and persons.

Q.N. 3₁₁

A   B
Experience ——————————→ candidates
Applicants ——————————→ institution of higher
                                         education
Bia-data ——————————→ personal details
University ——————————→ practice   ✓

B₁₁

ⓐ The employer is Civil Engineer. ✗
ⓑ The candidates must have a least 30 years of age of work experience. ✗
ⓒ The applicants must be good in English and Nepali languages. ✓
ⓓ Rural Health support project is the deadline to apply for the post.

ⓔ Interested candidates need to send

ⓓ 7 september, 2013 is the deadline to apply for the post   ✓

(i) # © Interested candidates need to send bio-data references, a pp sized photograph and contact number to project manager.

(i) # The main duties of the successful candidates is supervise construction and renovation activities of various health facilities, equipment maintenance and repair.

(ii) # The minimum academic qualifications to be candidate is a bacholer's degree in civil engineering from recognized university with a minimum of 5 years experience.

(iii) # salary do the selected candidate get

(iv) # P.O. Box no. 1234, Kathmandu, Nepal

APPENDIX-6: REULES AND REGULATIONS MADE BY THE LEARNERS

1. All the students are expected to come in the class on time.
2. They are not allowed to leave the class before the bell rings.
3. The students are supposed to sit in their respective places.
4. The students are always welcome to bring newspapers, story books and other reading materials.
5. The students need to follow the classroom instructions without making unnecessary noise.
6. Class work and homework should be completed in on time.
7. All the students are supposed to be cooperative in pair or group work.
8. The student will raise hand if he/she has anything to share in the class.
9. Others are not allowed to speak if someone is speaking in the class.
10. All the students are encouraged to be regular in the class and share their responsibility.