CONCEIVING A VISION FOR CULTURALLY CONTEXTUALIZED CURRICULUM: A JOURNEY TOWARDS MEANINGFUL LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is for the fulfillment of the requirements for Master of Philosophy in Education (Curriculum and Instruction) of Kathmandu University.

Title: - CONCEIVING A VISION FOR CULTURALLY CONTEXTUALIZED CURRICULUM: A JOURNEY TOWARDS MEANINGFUL LEARNING

Abstract approved:_____

Assoc. Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD

Assoc. Dean and Dissertation Guide

This dissertation depicts my multifaceted and emergent inquiry into the problem of culturally decontextualized curriculum practices of students and teachers in classroom. Teaching and learning were basically teacher centered, meaningless (i. e. algorithmic and abstract) and locally detached from students' life world. I generated initial research questions on the basis of my experiences as a student of school and university levels and as a school teacher of Science and Mathematics subjects of a secondary school. Through an autobiographical excavation of my experiences of teacher centered and decontextualized teaching and rote learning based on centralized curriculum materials, I came up with four emergent research questions leading to four themes of inquiry: culturally decontextualized and fragmented curriculum materials, culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning, traditional and impractical teaching, and centralized curriculum and textbooks.

I used a multi-paradigmatic research design space to articulate the inquiry. I applied mainly the paradigms of interpretivism, criticalism and postmodernism under a

multi-paradigmatic research space. The critical research paradigm offered self reflection to critically identify the research problem and to reflect my experiences as a student and a teacher. The paradigm of postmodernism enabled me to construct multiple genres based on my experiences of culturally decontextulized learning and teaching, fragmented subjects and meaningless and impractical learning, whereas the paradigm of interpretivism enabled me to employ self reflection.

Within this multi-paradigmatic design, I chose narrative inquiry, critical research and self study as the methodological referents. Narrative inquiry helped me to present and generate learning and teaching experiences and practices as stories, scenes and contexts, whereas critical research enabled me to reflect critically on my personal practical experiences and knowledge for transformation in constructivist ways. Self study helped me to generate and present my personal practical knowledge and professional practices to move forward. The visions cultivated through this research include the following aspects for culturally contextualized curriculum and meaningful learning: (i) classroom interaction between student and teacher, (ii) cultural examples, knowledge, daily life activities, students' experiences and prior knowledge, (iii) classroom management, movable furniture and small group teaching, (iv) active participation and engagement, (v) teacher preparation and teachers' effort to blend local, cultural and central subject matters in teaching and learning.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to them

who are involved in learner centered teaching and learning practices

inthe remote areas.

DECLARATION

I, hereby, declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for the candidature for any other degree.

---------- May 4, 2014

Jitendra Raj Oli

Degree Candidate

A dissertation of Master of Philosophy in Education has been submitted by Jitendra Raj Oli and presented on May 4, 2014.

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I have understood that my dissertation will become a part of permanent collection of the library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purpose.

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ACRONYMS

B S	Bikram Sambat
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CTL	Contextualized Teaching and Learning
DEO	District Education Office
EDSC	Educational Development Service Center
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GON	Government of Nepal
KU	Kathmandu University
IPL	Indian Premier League
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCTM	National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
SEDU	Secondary Education Development Unit
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTING MY RESEARCH AGENDA

In this chapter, I have explored my past experiences as a student and a Science and Mathematics teacher in schools to identify research questions. Based on my experiences of professional activities and field work with participants, I have presented how I have conceptualized the influence of fragmented subjects[1] in teaching and learning as a research issue. More so, I experienced that culturally decontextualized[2] and meaningless[3]learning experiences were some penetrating aspects through teacher-centered teaching practices, integrated context, and locally detached subject matters. Hence, how can I contribute to transforming this traditional educational landscape to meaningful teaching and learning enterprise? This questioning has helped me to problematize my study, and I have developed four research issues-Learning, Teaching, Curriculum, and Contextualization. As I excavated my learning and teaching practices and found them to be culturally decontextualized, meaningless, and impractical[4] (abstract and cannot be used for new learning), I have developed four emergent research questions. This chapter also presents significance of the research in the context of Nepalese school and my professional interest in the study. The chapter ends with the delimitation of this study.

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[1]Fragmented subjects are detached subjects from each other e. g. Nepali, English, Mathematics subjects are disconnected/separated subjects.
[2]Decontextualized learning refers detached learning from students' live world, experiences, and local contexts.
[3]Meaningless learning is culturally, conceptually and linguistically divorced from students' experiences and daily life activities (Luitel, 2009).
[4]The terms impractical teaching and learning refers to unrealistic and not connected with practicable in daily life.

Situating Myself: Background of the Research

Before moving on the main discussion, I have some experiences to share about my being a student and Science and Mathematics teacher in different public schools of Mid-Western Nepal that prompted me to choose this unique area of "Cultural contextualization[5]of curriculum and meaningful learning[6]".

The Journey of My Learning: A Culturally Decontextualized Education

My formal education started in 1978 from a primary school[7] of Mid-Western Nepal. A six-roomed hut with rough wall, the school had a thatched-roof constructed with local stone. The school was situated at the end of village by Bheri River[8], with fertile farm land situated around. The dazzling scene of the hill always initiated me to cross them and peek beyond the horizon which met plain Terai region. In the dusk, the black Mahabharata hills were like autocratic and incomprehensible images as if they liked to depict my teachers' teaching. The school's walls were decorated with different filthy words, like the insulting names of teachers and students, boys and girls with broken lines. Every Friday (end session of teaching within a week) we had to splash uneven

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[5]Contextualization is an instructional strategy focuses teaching and learning squarely on concrete applications in a specific context that is of interest to the student (Mazzeo, Rab, & Alssid, 2003, pp. 3-4). Curriculum contextualization is also known as "context-based learning" or "contextualized teaching and learning (CTL) which is defined as "a group of learning experiences that encourages students to transfer their understanding to classroom learning and real life situations" and this is the strategy of blending the content-based and context-based approaches (King et. al., 2007, pp. 366-379). Contextualized teaching and learning (CTL) is the strategy that relate subject matter or content to meaningful situations that are relevant to students' lives; helps teachers to relate subject matter to real world situations; and motivates students to make connectionsbetween knowledge and its applications to their lives(Berns & Erickson, 2001, p. 2).

[6] Meaningful learning is the constructivist approach in which learner seeks to integrate new knowledge with relevant existing knowledge (Ausubel, Novak, & Hansian, 1978).

[7] Primary school was an elementary school in which grades one to five operated.

[8]Bheri River starts from Dolpa (a district of Karnali zone) and meets with Karnali River in the west of Surkhet (a district of Bheri zone).

floors with mud and water. We had to sit on those old wooden benches or sometimes even on the floor. Very seldom, teachers wrote few words on the wooden-board. The half broken doors, muddy porch and door threshold always welcomed us into the rooms. In winter season, we often suffered from common cold due to chilly foggy drops that would frequently enter from broken windows and cracked roof, later covering us.

In my primary level education, I studied the subjects Mahendra Mala (Nepali Language and Literature), English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science which were taught in a fragmented way. Although, I had applied mathematical basic operations (Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, and Division) in daily life I felt very difficult to apply the Fractions, Algebraic Variables, Monomials and Binomials, and Equations in daily life. The shift of Devanagari[9] counting system (०, १, २, ३, ४, ५, ६, ७, ८, ९) to Indo-Arabic counting system (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), pronunciation of English words in grade four, the problems of time (Days, Hours, Minutes, Seconds), money (Rupees, Paisa), distance (Kilometers, Meters, Centimeters), life cycle of house flies, volcano, earthquake were the subject matters very problematic in my learning that weredetached from my understanding, prior learning and cultural contexts. The imported subject matters were others' text, knowledge of elder men, and developed countries. Here, during this writing, I have constructed the image of such subject matters as foreign subject matters[10] and school learning as detached subject matters learning (Luitel, 2003). During my secondary and post-secondary education, these images- fragmented, foreign, and culturally detached subject matters sustained.

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[9] Devanagri is the script for Nepal Nepali language.

[10] Foreign subject matters refer to the subject matters which are detached from local knowledge and examples, students' experiences, and cultural background; imported subject matters.

In 1982, I was enrolled in a new secondary school for lower secondary and secondary level education where the classrooms were always densely crowded (more than eighty students in a classroom) and the heavy loaded bag (with books and notebooks) used to be transported from home to school and school to home. I still remember that we did not have geometry box, base ten blocks, number charts in Mathematics, maps in Social Studies, nor did we have any Science apparatuses. In my secondary level education, due to the unavailability of Science and Mathematics teachers, school administration appointed some teachers of southern part who might be from India to teach Science and Mathematics in my school whose culture, language, examples, and teaching styles were totally different from my contexts.

During my secondary education, mathematics teachers separately taught Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry parts turn by turn in a week; force, pressure, biology chapters, chemical names and concepts, astrology chapters were clearly separated as Part I- Physics, Part II- Biology, Part III- Chemistry, Part IV- Astrology and Geology. The second period's subject was almost new from first period's and first period's subject teaching and learning did not help the second, third or fourth period's subjects. There was a very less practice of integrated teaching and learning. The mathematics learning rarely helped science or social studies learning. English alphabets, words, grammar were rarely used in Nepali or in other subjects. This made me think that English and Nepali, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies subjects were totally different subjects from one another. Feeling that a detached teaching was always unhelpful in learning process, I have constructed the image of school subjects as fragmented subjects.

The culturally decontextualized teaching and presentation styles of lessons, experiences and prior learning; detached language and inadmissibility of the teachers' culture enticed me to construct image of teaching and learning as culturally decontextualized and meaning absent process. I had very few experiences of learning by doing or using locally available materials – wooden blocks, matchboxes, small pebbles, number cards etc. The abstract, culturally decontextualized and fragmented subject matters, rote memorization were some experiences of learning in school to university education.

In my journey as an Intermediate[11] and Bachelor[12] level student early in 1990s, I studied Anglo- Indian writer's books- Nelson Parker's Advanced Level Physics, Brij Lal's Optics, V K Kapoor and S C Gupta's Statistics[13] etc. Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics subjects were full of definitions, numerical problems, signs and symbols and sketch diagrams. The examples, symbols, and knowledge were detached from my contexts and prior experiences. Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics were the collection of unchangeable concepts, definitions and signs and symbols. From such characteristics of different subjects and teacher centered learning styles, I have constructed the image of teaching as reproduction of textbook definitions, signs and symbols, deductive process;

CurriculumasTextbook as	
Something for teachers	Something for teachers
Nothing for students	All thing for students
All things for center	Testing thing for
center	

[11]Intermediate Level is the closest equivalent to 10 + 2, the 12 year schooling.
[12]Bachelor Level is an undergraduate degree after intermediate level.
[13]Nelson Parker's Advanced Level Physics (5th ed.) was recommended book for Intermediate level of science (I Sc) published from London; Brij Lal's Optics, V K Kapoor and S C Gupta's Statistics books were recommended books for Bachelor level of science (B Sc) published from India.

learning as rote memorization and blind repetition of those definitions, signs and symbols.

In my university education, the syllabus available guided my study. I used the textbooks as key learning materials. Within the centrally developed subject syllabus, my learning journey was dominated by the didactic pedagogy as listen-repeat-remember-recall and do-what-your-teacher-says (Luitel, 2009, p. 7). In this way, the foreign textbook knowledge and examples made my learning decontextualized and the process was difficult. From my school and university level learning experiences, I have developed the image of curriculum[14]as "list of subject matters and written document" (Walker, 2003).During my M Phil study, I remembered the centrally developed curriculum and subject matters that helped me to conceptualize the image of "curriculum as subject matter"(Schubert, 1986, pp. 25-34). In this way, I have conceptualized that curriculum is a 'thing', 'list of content' and 'decontextualized text'.

The Journey of Teaching: Traditional and Meaningless Instruction

When I was appointed as a secondary level mathematics and science teacher[15]in 1990, all I had with me were textbooks as teaching resources. I used those centrally prepared textbooks as key teaching materials and to set questions for annual summative evaluation. There was a chalkboard in every classroom to write topics/subtopics of teaching lessons which I frequently used to solve mathematical problems deductively.

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[14] The term curriculum means “different things to different people” (Connelly, 1988) and that it carries a multiplicity of meanings. Curriculum, from the Latin etymological root *currere*, carries two shades of meaning: 'to run a course' (practicing a race with a pre-determined goal) or 'the running of a course' (to *experience* the process of running a race). Curriculum as a *process* is learner focused, anywhere, anytime, with the teacher acting as facilitator, and the natural world as the school for acquiring/producing knowledge by the learners and the teachers.(Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995)

[15] In most of Nepali schools, there is only one Mathematics and Science teacher.

Most of the class time, students were busy to copy the definitions, theorems, and answer of questions.

It was only by the end of 1999, I got the curriculum which was developed by Curriculum Development Center (CDC). By studying that curriculum, I knew that the subjects like English, Mathematics, and Science were overloaded by centrally developed course materials with certain time limit to complete the course. During this writing, I remember that the curriculum was confined within a prescriptive written document.

I entered into the class
Discolor wall and windows without glass
Huge mass of students in the class
Their nervous, feared, dehydrated, and dim faces
The classroom was worthless
The students were helpless
When I picked a piece of chalk
They started to move and talk
Their interest was in dancing and singing
They wanted to go field trip and travelling
Some of them looked curious
Some of them seemed furious
They started to shout no math
But I enforced that to pass you learn math
I controlled the class with stick strictly
Embarked lessons stridently
'Be quiet' I commanded loudly
The geometrical theorem shouted vocally
However, none paid attention
Overcrowded and unsystematic perception
Their needs, context I could not find
I could not take their interests in mind

While my teaching journey was fully active during the days of 2002, I was describing some solving processes of two simultaneous linear equations with examples in the chapter *"Two Simultaneous Linear Equations"* of Algebra. Nearly eighty to ninety Grade X students were hearing my descriptions silently, looking at the blackboard; busy copying. At that time one student raised his hand, stood and asked, *"Sir, where and how can we apply these skills; and what is the use of this chapter in our daily life?"* These questions stopped me to describe the computational process. How can we use such knowledge and skill in our daily life? Where are these used? I thought a bit longer and replied, "*This is very useful in industry, different companies, and economic sectors, and is*

also useful in higher level studies. Your questions are not concerned with your course. You have to read, reread, practice, and repeat. Then, you can pass the annual exam." In this way, I pretended that I can show the "daily life uses" of mathematics.

After returning from one month science training which was organized by Secondary Education Development Unit (SEDU), I was interested to teach Science and Mathematics subjects by using no cost and low cost materials. In my school there was no science lab, apparatuses and charts. I talked to head teacher and members of school management committee (SMC) to buy some necessary science apparatus, charts, and pictures. I also requested some budget to buy science materials. But the head teacher, and members of SMC refused to buy the science apparatuses without help of government or other institutions. Then, I started to collect and construct some locally available materials in school and home. I demonstrated them by teaching Science and Mathematics in class 8, 9 and 10. I found that students were enthusiastic to learn. Then, I deeply devoted myself in constructing and collecting the materials. I collected plastic beads, bottles; wooden blocks, cubes, cylinders; playing cards, marbles. I constructed several models such as animal and plant cell, Ursa Major[16] constellation models, and *geo-board*. I continued teaching by experimenting, demonstrating and group discussions. Columned classroom sittings, immovable desks and benches, uncontrolled discussions, unnecessary talking of students, heavily crowded and congested classroom aroused problems of uncontrolled classroom leading to a more insignificant or meaningless teaching situation. After some time, people started to ridicule me. I heard some insults that the classes were out of discipline, and students disturbed by talking loudly in the course of discussion.

[16]Ursa Major is a major constellation and the shape of this constellation is like a question mark (?)

After all these incidents, I was frustrated and much worried. However, I continued working. From these life episodes, I have conceptualized that centralized subject matters are insignificant without adding students' experiences and local examples. Densely crowded classrooms, immovable desks and benches, congested classroom, students as passive receptors, transmission of subject matters, inexplicable and impracticable knowledge were some common features of my classroom. In this way, my classroom teaching was based on traditional learning environment as Duch, Groh and Allen (2001) mentioned that in a traditional learning environment, teaching and learning practices are usually content-driven, emphasizing abstract concepts and examples. The didactic instruction emphasizes delivery of content and students are the passive receivers of knowledge. (p. 4)

शिक्षा ऐन तथा शिक्षा नियमावलीअनुसार विद्यालयले नेपाल सरकारबाट स्वीकृत पाठ्यक्रम तथा पाठ्यपुस्तक लागू गर्नुपर्ने व्यवस्था गरेको छ । यस पाठ्यक्रम विकास केन्द्रले विद्यालयमा अध्यापन गराउने पाठ्यपुस्तक तयार गर्ने व्यवस्था पनि रहेको छ । त्यसबाहेक विद्यालयले थप पाठ्यसामग्री तथा पाठ्यपुस्तक पनि प्रयोग गर्न चाहेमा स्वीकृति लिनुपर्ने प्रावधान शिक्षा नियमावली २०५९ को नियम ३५ मा रहेको छ ।
(Trans: It is legally managed that schools in Nepal have to take permission to implement curriculum, textbooks, and teaching materials from Government of Nepal [GON] according to Education Regulation 2059B. S. Rules (35).

My classes were also much dominated by textbook subject matters where *Yaad Garne, Ratne, or Ghokne*[17]were some rote learning[18]practices (Sarangapani, 2003, p. 164). In my teaching journey, less supportive school environment, time bound and

[17] *Yaad Garne, Ratne, or Ghokne* words are frequently used in Nepalese schools to signify the process of rote memorization.
[18] Rote learning is the learning strategy in which learner makes little or no effort to integrate new concepts and propositions with relevant concepts and propositions already known (Ausubel, Novak, & Hansian, 1978). This is a learning technique which focuses on memorization with very less understanding.

teacher proof course content gradually demotivated me towards the use of contextual subject matters, daily life experiences, examples and practical activities.

In this way, my teaching was confined in the readymade content developed by CDC in national level. My teaching practices were centered in preparing the students to pass the examination, to make them secure higher marks in examination and were certainly not helpful for meaningful learning. With such practices, how can a teacher make learning meaningful and practicable in daily life? Teacher and student related factors, curriculum, and classroom teaching-learning strategies may be related with meaningful learning. Teaching-learning strategies play vital role to enhance meaningful learning. Upon reflection, I can say that Nepali public schools are still dominated by traditional teaching and learning strategies. Perhaps, teacher-centered strategies are dominant that transmit definitions, and examples in mechanistic ways. They might be taking students as mere objects. In this situation, I come up with a number of questions: Can learning be meaningful under such circumstances? How can "I" as a teacher make teaching and learning more culturally contextualized and meaningful? What are the perceptions and practices about curriculum and teaching and learning processes? How do teachers practice centralized curriculum and textbooks in their classrooms? How can teachers make use of curriculum materials (i. e. curriculum, textbooks, teacher's guide and evaluation materials), teaching and learning as culturally contextualized for meaningful learning? How can I contextualize curriculum and textbooks according to my students' cultural contexts? With these, I was inspired to explore the culturally contextualized curriculum keeping in mind the centralized curriculum and textbooks for the purpose of meaningful learning.

Constructing the Research Problem

From my journey of learning and teaching, I have conceptualized that teaching and learning processes are fragmented, decontextualized and detached from students' prior experiences. English, Mathematics and Science subjects are foreign. Centrally developed curriculum and textbooks are already fixed and monotonous.

The narrowly conceived understanding of curriculum materials presents formal, abstract, didactic and culturally decontextualized subject matters which are developed as the content to be delivered passive-receptive students based on "one size fits all" approach (Taylor, 2013; Koirala & Acharya, 2005). My experiences are similar to Luitel and Taylor's (2007) idea that terms, signs and symbols, rote memorization and recalling the rules and algorithms are culturally decontextualized and less relevant for learners.

Curriculum and teacher guides seem to emphasize to blend students' prior knowledge, active learning and classroom interaction. However, teachers (including myself) have been still using traditional method (e. g. lecture method, large group teaching, and transmission of own understanding). I argue that technical interest (Grundy, 1987) has dominated such traditional practices.

Teaching and learning is directly related with different aspects of learners-physical development, intellectual growth, and cultural influences. Culturally contextualized subject matters, examples, and experiences are essential aspects for meaningful learning (Wiles & Bondi, 2002, pp. 44-73).Learner centered strategies may be helpful to make learning meaningful even though teachers are practicing teacher centered strategies and own interpretations.

Luitel, Kafle, and Aryal (2012) have pointed that there are very less opportunities in classroom for students to question with teachers. Students are willing to share their experiences, understandings and daily life activities but teachers dislike questions from students. There is very little interaction in classroom between student and teacher.

There may be planned and unplanned curriculum in practices. Centrally developed curriculum represents objectives, a list of content and some prescriptive teaching and assessment strategies. I was more dependent on such curriculum and textbooks as a teacher rather than contextualizing the curriculum. In teaching, I felt more difficult to engage students in classroom teaching as blind repetition of textbook lessons, trial and error and rote learning. Prescriptive, didactic and transmission styles of my teaching became more problematic in meaningful learning through active participation of students and interaction. In this regard, how do teachers and I as a teacher perceive and practice the centrally developed curriculum and culturally contextualized curriculum, teaching and learning practices? How do teachers use the centrally developed subject matters in classroom teaching? What contextualized subject matters, knowledge, examples and experiences are they adopting and how are they changing those subject matters? Does culturally contextualized curriculum help in meaningful learning and to perceive the curriculum experience? How do teachers and students attempt to contextualize the centralized curriculum materials for meaningful learning? All these questions encouraged me to study the contextualizing practices of curriculum for meaningful learning.

Emergent Issues of My Research

From my and participants' learning and teaching experiences, I have translated the statement of problem into four issues of research. In the issues, I have tried to discuss culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning[19]in relation to traditional and impracticable (abstract and cannot be used for new learning) teaching. Such learning and teaching practices are based on the context of centralized and fragmented curriculum materials.

Issue 1: Learning

Through my autobiographical narratives of learning and teaching, my learning was culturally and linguistically detached from my prior learning, daily life activities and contexts based on centralized and foreign textbooks. Assuming such situations of learning, I tried to research how learning is perceived and practiced in schools. Due to culturally decontextualized curriculum materials and teacher centered teaching practices rote memorization may be more practiced. I aimed to explore how culturally decontextualized curriculum materials protracted meaningless learning.

Issue 2: Teaching

Culturally contextual subject matters, knowledge, examples, daily life activities, learners' background and their experiences may be attached with teaching practices. When I observed classroom teaching practices, centralized curriculum materials, very less classroom interaction and passiveness of students contributed to additional and impracticable teaching. Teachers were more likely to adopt textbook knowledge,

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[19]I have used meaningless learning to signify the learning culturally, conceptually, and linguistically insignificant and detached from students' prior experiences and live world (Luitel, 2009). Also meaningless learning demonstrates very little meaningful learning and rote memorization.

examples and concepts rather making practicable and meaningful. I attempted to explore how students and teachers perceive and practice teaching.

Issue 3: Curriculum

Curriculum materials were centrally developed. Curriculum was fragmented subject-wise and local contexts were integrated. Teacher proof curriculum and centralized and foreign subject matters might be helping to contextualize learning and teaching practices. I observed that fragmented curriculum materials initiated culturally decontextualized teaching and learning in classroom. I attempted to explore the integration of contextual subject matters, examples and experiences in teaching and learning practices. Moreover, I tried to explore the contradiction between fragmented curricula and integrated contexts.

Issue 4: Contextualization

From my learning and teaching experiences as a participant and a researcher, I found that culturally decontextualized and overloaded subject matters,and fixedtime bound lessons were some common characteristics of textbooks. Centrally developed textbooks and teacher proof written document were main teaching and learning materials in schools. In these standpoints, I attempted to know how teachers were practicingthose curriculum and textbooks and if they were changing or integrating contextualized subject matters with centrally developed subject matters. Furthermore, I hoped to explore how contextualizing practices enable teachers and learners to promote meaningful learning.

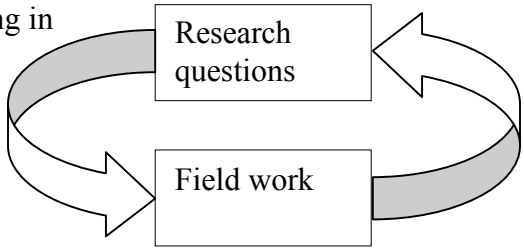
Purpose of My Research

Based on my research problem and issues, the purpose of study was to attempt to explore the participants' (i.e., teachers, students, parents) and my perceptions and

practices about curriculum, teaching and learning to create traditional teaching and learning culturally contextualizedand meaningful in the background of centralized curriculum materials.

My Emergent Research Questions

As my initial research plan, I had a number of research questions such as: What are the perceptions and practices of curriculum, teaching and learning? What are the teachers' practices for meaningful learning? How do teachers' practices promote meaningful learning? How do students imparting in classroom teaching? With some open ended questions, I travelled my research field three times, conducted interview, and informal conversations with teachers, students and parents; observing classroom teaching and learning practices; playing with data text, teachers' and my own stories and cultural contexts, I came up with the overarching emergent and field based research question "What are the perceptions and practices of contextualizing the centralized curriculum for meaningful learning?" and other complementary emergent andfield based research questions are as follows-



1. How do students (including myself as a student) perceive and enact learning process in my research context?
2. How do teachers (including myself as a teacher) use the centrally developed curriculum, and subject matters in teaching?
3. How do teachers (including myself as a teacher) perceive and enact the centralized curriculum in local contexts?

4. In what ways do teachers (including myself as a teacher) attempt to incorporate contextualized examples, experiences and local subject matters in classroom teaching for meaningful learning? How can I better help my students? How can I work more effectively?

Significance of My Research

Taking self-study as the methodological referent, I have critically developed my narratives of experiences and practices of learning and teaching in the perspectives of centralized curricula, teaching and learning practices. I have tried to envision the constructive and transformative pedagogy of teaching and learning. As a learner and teacher, the experiences and stories of my learning and teaching may help others for transformation and self-study. Personal practical knowledge, stories and lived experiences may help to develop professional knowledge and skills in constructive way.

There are numerous strategies of teaching and learning practices in classroom. Critically analyzing, culturally decontextualized, meaningless and fragmented lessons, didactic and teacher centeredpractices may be useful to move forward progressively (chapter-III & IV). I have explored some tacit images, beliefs and contexts of curriculum implementation in classroom. Such images and beliefs depicted the pedagogical practices metaphorically (chapter-V) and were found to be significant to visualize formal educative process. I have depicted some strategies to contextualize the curriculum materials according to local contexts. The strategies may be helpful to create meaningful learning by contextualizing curriculum materials and student centered teaching strategies (chapter-VI). I think this research provides some knowledge and experiences through narratives and autobiographical excavation for other researcher to research in the field of

curriculum, teaching and learning practices. Moreover, my study is significant and helpful for my personal-professional development and to develop some strategies for constructive teaching in my professional practices.

Theoretical Standpoints

This study has depicted my multifaceted and emergent inquiry withinculturally decontextualized curriculum and meaningless learning faced by students of our schools. Centralized curriculum as a teacher proof document may lack the experiences of learners and local examples. Without encapsulating the prior experiences of learners, examples,cultural contexts and local resources, meaningful learning may not exist. In order to carry out the research activities to articulate and envision, I employed constructivism, curriculum and metaphors, and curriculum integration.

Constructivism

Constructivism, as a standpoint, can be used as a set of beliefs to analyze learning potential in any situations (Tobin & Tippins, 1993). Therefore, constructivism helped me not only to describe teaching and learning processes, but also to shape my thinking in my research as well as my pedagogical practices. Good and Brophy (1994) have said that learners construct their own meaning; new learning builds on prior knowledge; learning is enhanced by social interaction; and authentic tasks develops meaningful learning. From these concepts, I have realized that traditional teaching approach may restrict meaningful learning and the enhancement of students' creativity and detach learning process from their prior experiences. Moreover, general principles of constructivist approach provide students for interaction and engagement with classroom activities, using experiences, thereby creating meaningful learning environment (Tytler, 2002). Therefore, throughout

constructivism, students can share their stories, experiences, daily life activities for meaningful learning. Every learner is unique and one way of teaching and learning may not fit all. Likewise, I explored varied strategies to give opportunities for students to learn by using experiences and examples based on daily life activities meaningfully. As a result, the learning process may become meaningful; learners accommodate the existing experiences, knowledge, and skill as contexts into their prior knowledge and construct knowledge as a process of meaning-making, not of knowledge-reception.

Curriculum Metaphors

Curriculum is a term which can be perceived as a noun and/or as a verb. As a noun, curriculum is a centrally developed and written document. Ornstein & Hunkins (2004) have pointed that if we only consider curriculum as planned document, then we may be too prescriptive in teaching. Teaching becomes only delivery of instruction, and we may fail to integrate contextual examples, daily life experiences, and local subject matters. As a verb, curriculum may be learner centered, and we can take local examples, daily life activities, and learners' experiences. (pp. 12-110)

Teachers may use curriculum as a course given by experts to be run (Turner, Christensen, & Meyer, 2009, p. 362). The useof curriculum in this way may little account students' experiences and local examples.The scenario of curriculum implementation is largely influenced by curriculum as content, intended learning outcomes, discrete tasks and concepts, and planned activities. These images of curriculum constitute the powerful transmission-oriented teaching and passive-receptive learning. In my learning and teaching practices, curriculum was perceived as cultural reproduction, agenda for social

reconstruction, experience and curriculum as currere(Schubert, 1986) were very rarely practiced in my school and university level education.

I have accepted Connelly and Clandinin's (1988) notion that "Your curriculum is a metaphor for understanding your students' curriculum'' (p. 31). Curriculum can be understood as metaphorical images. Metaphorical understanding is more clear and explicit than literal and propositional definitions (Schubert, 1986). Based on this notion, I have used curriculum metaphors to understand teaching and learning practices and reflect upon my practices. I have chosen curriculum as experience and curriculum as currere. These metaphors helped me to understand and analyze enacted curriculum in classroom. Integrating teachers' and students' experiences with subject matters in classroom may give opportunities for students to reflect and transform their practices (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Curriculum as currere may provide opportunities for students to engage in teaching and learning process within their living experiences. By using these images, I interpreted participants' teaching and learning practices and experiences by observing classroompractices and collecting stories.

Curriculum Integration

The idea of curriculum integration by Beane (1995) as an empowering strategy to apply in learningand teaching helped me to reflect on my teaching and learning practices integrating experiences, examples, disciplined knowledge and concepts within a topic or lesson of different subject areas is curriculum integration. This idea empowered me to interpret students' learning and their engagement and fragmented teaching in integrative ways.

Curriculum integration as a theoretical standpoint helped me to break up the isolation between different school subjects and to create holistic perspectives for my students (Ducoffe, Tromley,& Tucker, 2006). I have taken main idea of curriculum integration to explore culturally decontextualized and detached curriculum, teaching and learning practices. This also offered me the integration of learning experiences focusing on context, and empowered me to envision new knowledge and real life experiences (Luitel, 2003). School teaching and learning processes are detached from students' prior learning, experiences, and daily life activities. Teachers may integrate daily life activities, local examples and experiences with centralized curriculum.

Delimitations of My Study

Contextualization is a broad term and in this study I have attempted to see curriculum and textbooks as centrally developed which may be culturally decontextualized and detached from experiences of teachers and students. In this research, I have used contextualizing process of teaching and learning as the process of using contextual signs, symbols, examples and prior experiences with centrally prepared subject matters.There are different meanings and practices of meaningful learning and I have used meaningful learning according tocontextualization practices of subject matters. In this way, I have tried to use contextualization of curriculum and meaningful learning based on the notion that "Contextualization includes contextual teaching and learning"(Perin, 2011). There are different qualifiers to signify contextualization and I have used cultural contextualization. The interpretations of data text are my and I did not use member checking. Moreover, this study does not consider curriculum development process, curriculum policy, recommendations for implementation of curriculum and

school curriculum structure. This study has taken into consideration the key participants-students, teachers and parents of different schools of Surkhet[20] to collect data text based on emergent and multiple paradigms (interpretivism, criticalism and postmodernism).

Structure and Presentation of My Research

My research problem and research questions have been developed out of my personal and professional experiences as a student and a teacher. The following table shows the diachronic organization of my research report with timeline and contexts, research questions, chapters and regarding main themes.

Timeline and contexts	Research questions	Themes	Metaphorical Images
1978 to 1988: As a student ofschool. 1988 to 1992: As a student of university 2012/13: As a M Phil student (Researcher)	How do students (including myself as a student) perceive and enact learning process in my research context?	Culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning (Chapter-III)	Learning as rote memorization and cramming process, learner as passive receptor, and culturally decontextualized subject matters.
1978 to 1992: As a student. 1990 to 2010: As a Science and Mathematics teacher2012/13: As a M Phil student (Researcher)	How do teachers (including myself as a teacher) use the centrally developed curriculum, and subject matters in teaching?	Traditional and impracticable teaching (Chapter-IV)	Teaching as didactic transmission of centrally developed subject matters, learning as ought to know.
1990 to 2010: As a Science and Mathematics teacher in public schools 2012/13: As a M Phil student (Researcher)	How do teachers (including myself as a teacher) perceive and practice the centralized curriculum in local contexts?	Culturally decontextualized and fragmented curricula (Chapter-V)	Curriculum as subject matter, and time bound written document, Fragmented curriculum and integrated context.
1990 to 2010: As a secondary level Science and	In what ways do teachers (including myself as a teacher)	Centralized curriculum and textbooks	Curriculum as a teacher proof text and as different

[20] One of the districts of Mid-Western Development Region of Nepal

Mathematics teacher 2012/13: As a M Phil student (Researcher)	attempt to incorporate contextualized examples, experiences and subject matters in classroom teaching for meaningful learning? How can I better help my students? How can I work more effectively?	(Chapter-VI)	possibilities. Learning as active engagement and interaction.

This thesis is organized as chapters, and subchapters (Chapter I, II, III, IV, V, VI, and VII). Specifically, I have used stories, episodes, scenes and anecdotes which I developed from the collected data text. The data texts, images, metaphors, Nepali words, proverbs, and local tropes are presented in *italic* form. Each chapter addresses a particular set of research questions arising from my life world. I have organized research problem in four threads which are presented in subsequent chapters. In the following paragraphs, I present a brief outline of each chapter of the thesis:

Chapter I: Introducing my research agendaexplores the research problems, research questions, theoretical standpoints and delimitation. Moreover, this chapter articulates how my research problems are embedded in my personal practical knowledge and experiences.

Chapter II: My research methodologies and methods depict my research methodologies and emergent methods based on multiparadigmatic research design to capture multiple realities, stories, experiences and daily lifeactivities, and teaching and learning practices.

Chapter III: Learning, learner and the nature of curriculum materialsis related with my first research question and explores how my and participants' meaningless, culturally decontextualized and rote memorization learning experiences detached from contexts, prior experiences, daily life examples. Moreover, how teaching practices help to continue meaningless and culturally decontextualized learning practices.

Chapter IV:Teaching, beliefs and concernsdepict traditional, impractical teaching practices in school level based on centralized curriculum and textbooks as main teaching and learning materials within my second research question. Also this chapter explores how my and participants' teaching practices were basically rooted in traditional beliefs and practices, centrally developed textbook knowledge and examples.

Chapter V:Curricular images and pedagogical practices present some perceptions and practices of centralized curriculum materials which were culturally decontextualized and centrally prepared foreign, fragmented and teacher proof document and are related with my third research question. Additionally, this chapter explores how teachers are follower of their teachers' traditional teaching practices.

Chapter VI:Centralized curriculum and contextualizing practices is related with lastresearch question and it explores some local teaching and learning practices to contextualize centralized curriculum for meaningful learning. Also this chapter explores how subject nature, grade-wise abstractness, students' engagement and classroom interaction help for contextualization of curriculum.

Chapter VII: presents my final reflections looking back to move forward and implications.

Chapter Recapitulation

Studying in physically and psychologically very poor classroom environment, and teaching in non-supportive school environment, I faced much more difficulties in learning and teaching practices. I have tried to explore how teacher centered environment; traditional, impractical and textbook dominated teaching practices shaped my learning practices as passive reception and transmission of knowledge. From my experiences, I have tried to explore how I was confined with culturally decontextualized curriculum materials. Besides these, I have conceptualized some images of curriculum, teaching and learning through my learning and teaching experiences based on Schubert's eight images of curriculum to conceptualize the practices. From my experiences, I have generated problem statement and research questions. I have conceptualized constructivism, curriculum images and curriculum integration as some theoretical standpoints. Based on problem statement and research questions, in next chapter, I depict multiparadigmatic research design, methodologies and methods, and quality standards to explore complex teaching and learning practices in diverse contexts.

CHAPTER II

MY RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND METHODS

In Chapter I, Ihave conceptualized my research agendas by exploring fouremergent research questions from the research problem based on my experiences as a student, teacher and researcher.This chapter depicts my research design into multiple facets of research problems in my study. I have tried to address my philosophical assumptions which helped to create a multiparadigmatic research design, methodology and methods. These direct meto take interpretive, emergent and flexible space for capturing multiple realities and understandingcomplexities of teaching and learning practices. Moreover, for further thinking and articulating, I have discussed how I used multiple research logics and genres- metaphorical, dialogical, narrative, poetic and non-linguistic for holistic envisioning and analysis in my research. Also, I have addressed quality standards and ethical considerations inmy research.

Philosophical Assumptions

I address ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical and methodological assumption as philosophical assumptions based on Webster and Mertova's (2007) concept that the key philosophical issue is the relation between learning as a process and knowledge (p. 5).

Ontological Assumptions

The aim of my research is to explore the contextualized practices of centralized curriculum to make meaningful learning based on my experiences, stories and contexts of as a student and teacher as well as with other students and teachers. There is no single

truth. There are multiple realities that exist in the form of socially and experientially based, local and specific (Guba, 1990, p. 27, as cited in Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). In this way, my ontological assumptions are output of social realities i. e. classroom realities which were expressed by teachers' and students' experiences, stories andpedagogical practices (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). This assumption has made me understand that creation of knowledge occurs only because of dealing with multiple realities of teaching and learning practices. Furthermore, my ontological assumptions are concerned with the nature of the centralized curriculum and textbooks in school setting, me and my understandings of curriculum, teaching and learning as a student, teacher and an M Phil student as well as other teachers' and students' experiences.

Epistemological Assumptions

I advocate that a reality is not pre-given but it is socially constructed and interpretedby those who experience the world (Gergen, 2009) and for me contextis a socio-culturalprocess. In these respects, being a researcher as well as participant of this research, I have attempted to understand the world from my own position in it (Pereira, 2007, pp. 189-203) as my and participants' experiences, voices, and practices within classroom and society (Guba, 1990, as cited in Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). I have observed classroom teaching and learning practices, interviewed, interacted and discussed with my participants to understand the practices and perceptions about curriculum, teaching and learning.

In this way, I began to construct meaning making process employing interpretive strategies. In doing so I believe knowledge is contextual with multiple meanings, subjective and personally experienced. In search of knowledge, I took hold of the

meaning as context-dependent and contexts are boundless (Wilber, 1998, as cited in Pereira, 2007, pp. 189-203). In this process, I questioned the traditional notion of teaching and learning practices to envision the curriculum practices in the respect with centralization to contextualization practices. Similarly stories allow me to examine what an experience can do to people who are living that experience and contain knowledge that is readily put to use in the world (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 20).In this way, I have envisaged dialogues, stories, anecdotes, experiences, scenes and contexts of my and participants' by mutual and close relationship.

Axiological Assumptions

As myresearch is based on interpretive research paradigm, axiologically, the values are subjective, multiple meanings and understandings based on daily life activities, and experiences. Based on these axiological premises, I have tried to explore the values, and importance of teaching and learning in my research. The values are based on transformation of rote learning and culturally decontextualized teaching practices in school classroom underconstructive ways and I have conceded my research is value laden. I informally discussed, interviewed, openly observed classroom teaching and learning practices without any disturbances and hesitation being a participant. I have presented myself in autobiographical way and my personal experiences, stories of learning and teaching complemented with my participants' voices and my interpretation and presentation is as much as subjective and individual values asSaunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) argued stating that our values are the guiding reason for our action (n. p.).Axiologically, the values and importance related with teaching and learning guided me in each stage of research process.

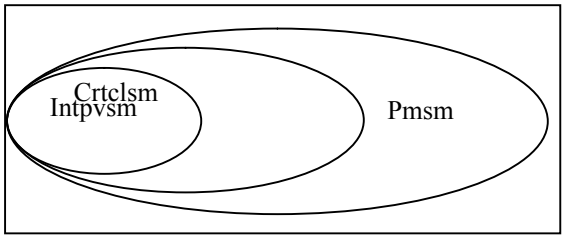
Rhetorical Assumptions

Rhetorically speaking, I have used autobiographical writing, personal stories, experiences, anecdotes, scenes, conversations to capture multiple, and contextual realities. I have used literal, informal style of writing using the personal voices, personal practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Autobiographical writing helped me to understand myself in my personal professional world. Presentation of stories, interview, observation, conversations, and visual texts is a significant way for individuals to give meaning and express understandings and experiences (Mishler, 1986, p. 75).

For me narrative is the study of how people make meaning from their experiences by telling and retelling stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I have collected and presented stories standing upon van Manen's (1990) notion that "We gather other people's experiences because they allow us to become more experienced ourselves" (p. 62). Furthermore, my purpose of collecting and presenting narratives of experiences is to provide the reader with richerand in-depth information and knowledge in order to communicate classroom teaching and learning practices. The construction of narratives-whether as written text or as the on-going lived narrative of school life - is powerful because such narratives take into account not only current practices and situations but the past lives and experiences of teachers, and future aspirations.

Research Paradigms: My Research Design

I have used multi-paradigmatic research to study my and participants' lived experiences about culturally decontextualized curriculum, for reflecting critically the roles of teachers and students,



and re-envisioning *curriculum as meaning driven activities*. I have used multi-paradigmatic world views- interpretivism, criticalism and postmodernism to capture multiple realities, to understand complex practices meaningfully (Taylor & Medina, 2011) in classroom contexts, teaching and learning practices indifferent school setting. The paradigms helped me to employ the metaphorical expression about curriculum,teaching and learning and to shape my research isinterpretive, constructivist and art-based ways (Luitel, 2009). For me as a researcher, a paradigm or world view is the basic belief system to guide actions (Guba, 1990, as cited in Creswell, 2007). These paradigms guided me in emergent situations to make meaning. The traditional paradigms-positivist and post-positivist strive to investigate and predict law-like patterns of behavior but my research is subjective in nature and based on multiple realities. Therefore, traditional paradigms very much narrowed me to understand and make meaning within multifaceted lived experiences, multifold teaching and learning practices.

Interpretivism: Emergent Space and Narrative Sensibilities

I have used interpretive research paradigm as it concerns primarily with generating context-based understanding of teachers' and students' experiences, beliefs, and values. This paradigm enabled me to build rich understandings of the life-world experiences and of the cultures of classrooms, schools where I served (Taylor & Medina, 2011). It has fore grounded me the unfolding subjectivity in shaping the process of

The interpretive fisherman enters the water, establishes rapport with the fish, and swims with them, striving to understand their experience of being in the water, questions his/her methods of interacting with the fish, remains doubtful about his/her ability to fully commune with them, and reflects on his/her own experience of being fish-like in the water. (Taylor & Medina, 2011).

inquiry; especially the act of interpretation of self and other's meaning. This inquiry has engaged me as a student and teacher, as reflective practitioner in developing enhanced understanding of my and students' life-world. As an interpretive researcher, I have embraced an open-ended research design process that allows emergent research questions, emergent modes of inquiry and reporting structure. The classroom realities and subjective meanings of experiences of teachers and students were varied and multiple (ontology). I have investigated multiples realities and perceived realities to produce interpretive knowledge by immersing myself as an insider and outsider through informal conversations, interviews, classroom observations and field notes (Taylor & Medina, 2011).

The paradigm of interpretivism has helped me to portray my narratives as a practitioner in naturally occurring social roles, as a learner and a teacher (Taylor, 2008) and also enabled me to embrace emergent research design for understanding.

Criticalism: Self Reflective and Transformative Concern

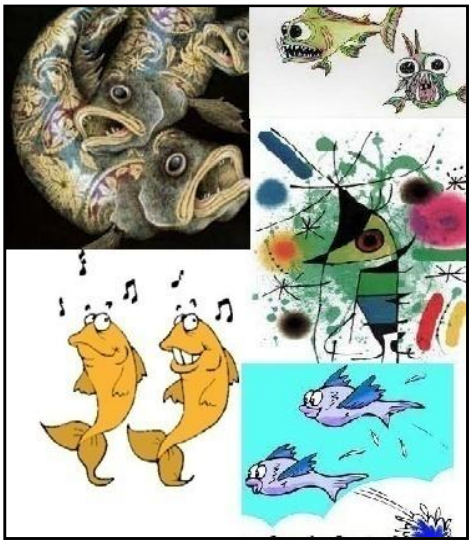
The critical research paradigm has offered me the opportunities to embrace social, and contextual values (Kincheloe, 2008) related with curriculum practices in cultural contexts in the respective of centralized curriculum and textbook to contextualize the centralized curriculum for meaningful learning. This paradigm has helped me to see critically the existing teaching and learning practices as teacher centered methods for transformation

The critical fisherman enables the fish to perceive the pollution in the water in which theylive, to find its source,and to identify itsharmful effect on theirbeing in the water. Also empowers the fish toorganize themselves as a lobby group and protest to theFisheries'Department, and s/he advocates on their behalf to have therivercleaned up (Taylor & Medina, 2011).

them into student-centered pedagogies. As a critical researcher, I have employed ideology critique to understand how centralized curriculum and textbooks pack the power of teaching as transmission and learning as passive reception. Being teacher proof curriculum, existing curriculum practices serve key sources to reproduce habituated behavior of teachers and students i. e. rote memorization, pipe transmission of teaching and learning practices.Moreover, criticalism helped me to raise my own critical consciousness (Brookfield, 2000) and to reflect on my own conscious awareness as a teacher about my established values and beliefs that underpin my seemingly teacher centered classroom roles (Taylor, 2008). Besides these, this paradigm enabled me to be aware of taken-for-granted and false consciousness, and to challenge the "one-size-fits-all" approach (Taylor, 2012).

Postmodernism: Art-Based and Autobiographical Excavation

The postmodern paradigm has provided me with the opportunities of using art based approaches in my research (Taylor and Wallace, 2007) and helped me to be suspicious of traditional teaching and learning practices within teacher proof and centralized curriculum matters (Taylor, Taylor, & Luitel, 2012).



This paradigm has revealed the opportunities of representation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) of my thoughts, feelings and meanings through various means of communication e. g. stories, poems, anecdotes, contexts, dramatic ways, non-textual ways (photography, figures etc.). This paradigm has helped me to challenge the

conventional writing ways through narrative texts including my personal experiences, stories, anecdotes. The autobiographical turn of postmodernism has served as a key referent for employing creative and constructive methods of accounting lived experiences through multiple forms of epistemic metaphors, expressions, logics (Luitel, 2009). By using autobiographical narratives of experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 2004), I have presented my feelings, thoughts, actions and lived experiences of learning and teaching. In this way, this latest paradigm has helped me to use art-based ways, to perceive knowledge, and to portray my personalized views.

Methodological Approaches of My Research

The multi-paradigm research design has informed me to choose narrative inquiry, critical research and self-study as the methodologies for my research. As my research is interpretive, critical and postmodern, these methodological approaches have provided flexible, emergent and open space for investigation.

Narrative Inquiry

My research problem, paradigm, personal experiences and encounters, stories and contexts were some criteria for choosing narrative inquiry as my research methodology. Narrative may be oral or written, an interview, or a naturally occurring conversation and may be elicited or heard during field work, (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, pp. 651-672). Narrative inquiry is a methodology for me where I, as a narrative researcher, treated narrative-whether

To make choices
Leave the fudge classroom

To recognize responsibilities
Enter into the folk

To become human
Walk in the field

To develop humane
Find stories of people

oral or written. Based on this notion, I chose narrative inquiry to study perceptions and practices about curriculum, teaching and learning.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have explained that narrative inquiry is the best way of understanding and representing experience (p.18). Constructing a narrative understanding of my participants' experiences has offered me new perspectives from which I understood my journey on the professional knowledge landscape. I tried to find local, contextual narratives by taking field notes, informal conversations and interviews and memorizing the data text.As an interpretive narrative researcher, I viewed curriculum as experience and one's personal experiences- school experiences and out of school experiences. To study experiences, practices of classroom teaching and learning and personal practical knowledge, I chose narrative inquiry as methodology.

Parker, Pushor and Kitchen (2011) have presented the practical methods for understanding personal practical knowledge: reflection (e.g., journal keeping and biography), shared reflection (e.g., storytelling and teacher interviews), and other aesthetic and creative means (e.g. images, sketches, narratives, personal understanding and metaphor) (p. 9). In this way, narrative inquiry offered me the space to use auto/biography, storytelling, interviews and conversations.

I have used narrative as an effective way to undertake the personal experiences and meaning (Reissman, 1993, p. 78) as well as it is uniquely positioned to address the most chronic problem in teaching (Ben-Peretz, 2009; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). My participants' and my narratives have been captured. To capture lived experiences, beliefs, and practices narrative inquiry provided me with flexible, emergent and contextual space.

Critical Inquiry

In my study, I have employed critical approach to investigate my participants' and my learning and teaching experiences and practices. Through my research, I have intended to transform my personal practical knowledge i. e. learning and teaching practices. I agree with the notion of critical research as a process of inquiry to uncover culturally decontextualized and meaningless teaching and learning to transform my teaching practices as constructive ways (Neuman, 2006, p. 95 as cited in Henn, Weinstein & Foard, 2010). For me, critical inquiry helped me as ideology critique approach and utopic thinking. These two ways of critical inquiry enable envisioning pedagogical practices according to constructivist ways.

I wish critical research helped me to understandlearning practices and to create new understanding by making myself conscious about the contextual and professional assumptions that support my actions. It allowed me to learn viaexperiences and actions, and transform for success Stein (2000) defined that "Critical research is the process by which we identify the assumptions governing our actions, question the meanings and develop alternative ways of acting" (n. p.). In this way, this methodology helped to identify and improve the practices through retrospective investigation of my practices and experiences.

Self-Study

I accepted the notion of Connelly and Clandinin (1988) that "There is no better way to study curriculum than to study ourselves" (p. 31). Inspired by this notion, I have

used self-study as a research methodology which provided me the space to transform my professional practices by questioning and reflecting. Also this helped me to understand my teaching practices better. As a reflective practice, I raised the questions myself: How can I better help my students? How can I work more effectively?

I used self-study to clarify my problem(s) with experiences of teaching and learningas a research resource according to Feldman's (2002) concept "Self-study researchers use their experiences as a resource for their research and problematize their selves in their practice situations" (p. 971). I have usedself-study as a research methodology to problematize my experiences and practices. This helped me to do pedagogical practices more effectively.

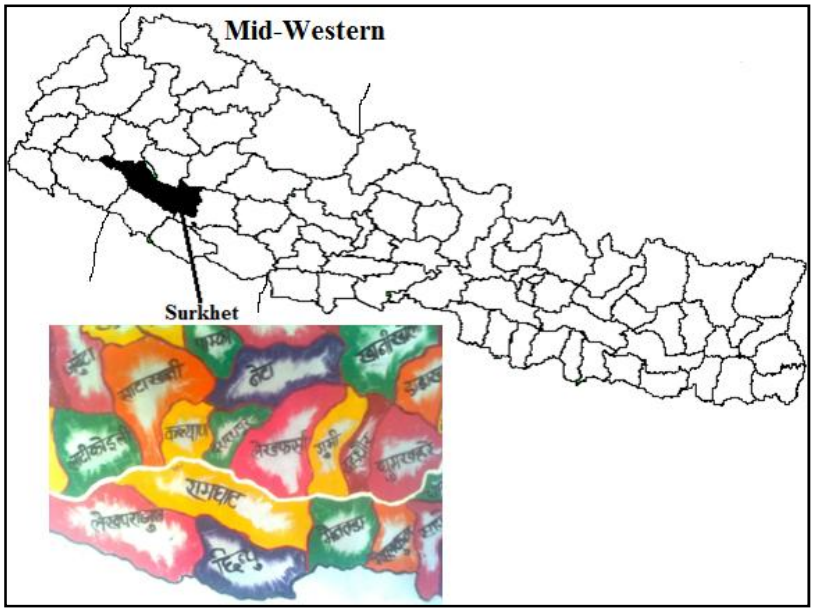
As a self-study researcher, I conducted my research with multiple and diverse qualitative methods (LaBoskey, 2004b). I have used autobiography, narrative and multiple artistic modes.Kosnik, Beck, Freese, and Samaras (2006) identified three purposes of self-study: 1) personal renewal, 2) professional renewal, and 3) program renewal. Based on this notion, I have used self-study for personal and professional renewal.

Emergent Design of My Research

Initially, I planned that my research would be flexible, imaginative based on proposed research design to collect data texts and analyze. But, when I visited field, dealt with my participants in the natural setting, started to write stories of experiences, and to reflect critically the practices of learning and teaching then my research process was changed and shifted with time, narratives, data texts and contexts.

Research Site and Participants

My research site is Surkhet district of Mid-Western region of Nepal, which is a headquarter district of Mid-Western Development Region and center of Hilly district of Mid-Western and Far-Western districts. I as a participant (a learner and teacher) and researcher, I selected Surkhet district which is my own district from where my formal education was started and I am working as a Mathematics and Science teacher in a government school. The selected schools were government and private schools which lie in the villages- Ramghat, Chhinchu, Dasharathpur, and Kalyan. These villages are situated near to Bheri River.



I am also a participant and other participants are school teachers, students and parents. There were eight teachers, three students and two parents as participants.

Introducing Research Context

As the context of my research on the influence of my own narratives of experiences, personal practical knowledge, I planned to studyexperiences, and practices of myself, and other teachers, students and parents as co-participants. In this way my research context has two parts- i) self (as a student, teacher, and researcher) and ii) others (students, teachers, and parents). As a participant and researcher, I have used my

experiences of learning and teaching which culturally decontextualized textbook knowledge, examples and concepts; rote memorization of centrally developed subject matters. Still the centrally developed curriculum materials have dominated learning and teaching practices and textbooks are key learning and teaching materials. Observing classroom teaching and learning in different schools of Surkhet, from informal conversations and interview with teachers, students and parents I have conceptualized that teaching and learning practices are parallel with my experiences and practices. Classroom teaching and learning is based on textbook knowledge, rote memorization, and is traditional. Unused words, number crammed mathematical problems, the deductive methods, abstract signs and symbols, foreign examples and facts are overused in classrooms which are detached from local contexts, and students' prior learning. Abstract mathematical and scientific facts; foreign structured knowledge; teaching as reproduction of definitions; learning as passive reception; unchangeable scientific and mathematical definitions and facts have remained the same in schools.

The schools of Surkhet are full of as cultural, linguistic, geographical and professionaldiversities. The classrooms are heavily crowded and congested with immovable furniture, and teaching as transmission and learning as receptionpractices. However, there are some practices of teaching and learning that are contextual and meaningful.

Access and Trust Building

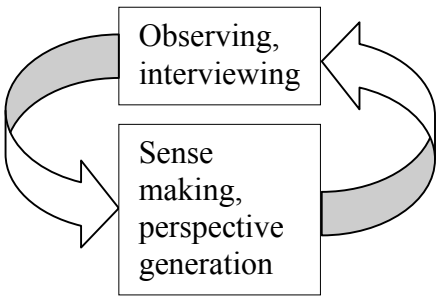
I viewed access in two ways. First access was with my participants, their cultural context and the process of construction of knowledge between me and my participants. The second means of access was the availability and the representation of research notes,

transcripts and data texts. In this way, my access was related withcontext, process and construction of knowledge.

I followed Connelly and Clandinin's (2006) processes of negotiation, structures (time, place and events), and tools for the access and trust building. I negotiatedwith participants, the characters and the contexts in which the study was set. For me as a narrative inquirer, negotiation began with the gaining of permissions, acquisition of ethical approval in which my research was undertaken. For structure (time, place and events), access to information, resources, field notes, documentation, rapport building were undertaken and negotiation was very essential criteria for trustworthiness (Guba and Lincoln, 1981).Timewas essential for me to explain the event, and plot. My stories contain a beginning, middle and end related to past, present and future (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990).

Data Text and Field Notes

I have collected narratives in different forms (e. g. conversations as dramatic way, lived experiences and knowledge as stories, observational data textas poetic and non-linguistic ways). Stories were told in conversations and in formal interviews. Memories, filed notes, photos, key notes, sketches of scene, plot, character and events in drawing the narrative sketches or critical events that constitutes the narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, as cited in Webster & Mertova, 2007).

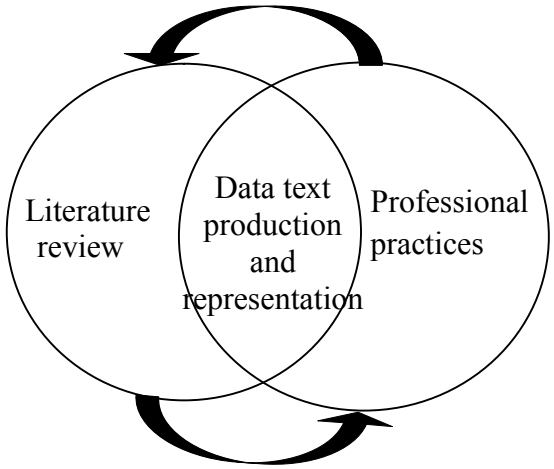


I accepted Webster and Mertova's (2007) notion that "Narrative inquiry is an approach to constructand reconstruct human experiences as personal stories; and it is well

suited to address issues of complexities" (p. 1).My participants and I recalled experiences and unfolded the stories of those experiences. The stories were associated with the memorable events. Memories,key words, metaphors, daily life words were taken to develop new understanding as a consequence of the particular experience and to make them meaningful and presentable.

Data Production and Representation

In my research, there are two types of data: generated and collected. The data were generated from my memoirs, incidents, past events and experiences of learning and teaching.Also the data were collected through informal conversations and interviews with teachers, students and parents, observations of classroom teaching and learning practices. My interviewing process became more informal, conversational and emergent. (Ellis & Berger, 2003, p.161)



Data generation was carried out before, during and after the collection of the field data. With the notion of writing-as-inquiry (Richardson &St Pierre, 2005), the data was generated through two sources: i) my history as a Science and Mathematics school teacher (professional practices) and ii) my current role as a researcher (literature review). In both kinds of data generation, I employed writing as/for inquiry in order to capture my in-depth understanding while acknowledging that writing demonstrates my reflexivity. Although, there was a blurred landscape among collection, generation and interpretation

of data, I have visualized the landscapes of teaching and learning in terms of many viable episodes, stories and experiences.

The collection of narrative sketches, observations, and interview data provided me with a holistic view of investigation. As teaching and learning are complex, highly

diverse, and frequently individualistic phenomena (LeCompte, 2009, p. 25), observation of classroom teaching and learning practices, informal conversations, interviews, memories and key notes were used as data production and representationapproaches. Conversations were informal and emergent rather than pre-structured, and my observations were conducted to make sense of the everyday life of classroom realities. The findings are presented through the narrative in the forms of scene, plot, character and event sketches.

Documenting My Narratives

Elbaz-Luwisch's (2002) conceptualized that "writing or documenting of stories is a coming to know" (p. 410). I documented my experiences and my participants' stories, lived experiences around centralized curriculum materials, teaching and learning practices. I wrote my thoughts and feelings during the field work reflectively.

Clearly, the story I have presented in subsequent sections of different chapters is "sustained in my ways of thinking, knowing, and being" (He, 2002, p. 517).There was not a particular schedule for documenting my experiences. As I documented my and participants' stories of experiences and practices, I did not necessarily write full pages of text. But rather, I sometimes wrote key points or themes to help me recreate what had actually happened, when it happened, and perhaps why I thought it happened. I always

attempted to write about my feelings and thoughts. Moreover, I always attempted to recreate the actual experiences in as much depth as possible.

Using Theories and Perspectives

In my study, I have used behaviorist learning theory- trial and error, practice makes a man perfect and Habermas interest theory (technical and practical interest) to capture the existing classroom practices. Constructivist learning theory is used according to Good and Brophy's (1994) notion (chapter I) to understand contextualized and meaningful practices critically. Schubert's (1986) eight images of curriculum is used to envisage my and participants' perceptions and beliefs metaphorically. Beane's (1995) concept of curriculum integration is helpful to understand fragmented subject matters, detached teaching and learning practices and integrated context.

Trial and error learning approach was used much more in Science and Mathematics teaching and learning according toblind repetition of bookish subject matter. According to constructivist learning theory, blind repetition of textbook knowledge demotes meaningful learning. Constructivist learning theory emphasizes on learners' prior experiences, interaction and active participation, and contextualized examples. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) concept of metaphors helped me to capture pedagogical practices according to conceptual basis.The teaching and learning perspectives helped me to elaborate the space for promoting culturally contextualized practices and to portray different facets of teaching and learning.

Contextualism is an instructional perspective which signifies the primacy of context-based learning which can be viewed from the perspective of prior experiences, contextualized examples and learners' understanding (Pritchard, 2005). In this way,

different theories and perspectives are theoretical referents and used in my inquiry to understand different perceptions and practices.

Multiple Research Logics and Genres: My Ways of Thinking and Articulating

The collected textual and visual data and my experiences as narratives were articulated through the highlighting and capturing of critical events contained in stories of experiences. Narrative sketches detailing place, time, characters and events assisted me to identify the critical event. I formed stories, anecdotes, episodes and scenes with the help of my experiences, field notes, and key notes. Further, I constructed and reconstructed the stories, anecdotes, episodes and scenes looking for critical situations, pattern of narratives and textual coherence to make sequences of meaningful utterances (Blommaert & Jie, 2010). My construction and reconstruction of different types of narratives and description were ongoing processes. Also, I adopted ‘storytelling’ or narrating in the manner of ‘what is out there’ and describing how things are in their contexts or settings, and showing different perspectives through the views of my participants and my lived experiences.

Further, I envisaged five different research logics and genres to enrich my multiparadigmatic research design to explore rich, detailed and flexible ways for holistic analysis and interpretation regarding the research problem. These logics and genres enriched my thinking in different ways and helped me to envision school teaching and learning practices within centralized curriculum materials. The dialogical, metaphorical, poetic, narrative, non-linguistic logics and genres helped me to portray textual and visual data based on my and participants' teaching and learning practices and these logics and genres are my thinking and articulating ways.

Dialogical Logics and Dialogues

Narrative research can enter into dialogue with people's stories. The dialogues helped me to prepare stories of experiences and personal practical knowledge. People tell stories in order to revise their self-understanding. Stories reshape the past and imaginatively project the future; stories revise people's sense of self, and they situate people in groups (Frank, 2006). Stories are always told within dialogues. Dialogue is not simply two or more persons talking but it is the co-construction of meaningful practices for transformation. Dialogues open the possibilities of listening and responding to what is heard. Teaching and learning are dialogical practices for meaningful understanding; research is a dialogue requires respecting each participant's capacity for continuing change

Moreover, dialogical logics and dialogues helped me to understand stories as artful representations of lives. As Linde (2009) described this logic provided me with the space to reveal my identities by means of my stories (n. p.). In this way, by using this logic, I developed stories and sustained my identity.

Metaphorical Logics and Metaphors

I have used metaphorical logics, genres and metaphors based on Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) notion that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life; thought processes, concepts and our thinking and acting are fundamentally metaphorical (n. p.).

Metaphorical logic enabled me to understand teaching and learning practices within centralized curriculum and textbooks and to transform my teaching practices into constructivist. *Landscape shapes mindscape, life as Bheri River, Sajjan Manche, Thulo Manchhe, teaching as a child's play, school as jail, head teacher as jailor, teachers as*

guards, classroom as cell, students as prisoners, teaching as commanding, lessons as scripts and classroom as studio are some metaphors used to demonstrate my experiences of teaching and learning. *Curriculum as experiences, currere, dynamic text, others' text, materialization, exemplification, meaningless mathematics and science, foreign imported and structured knowledge, learning as cramming and passive reception, Science and Mathematics as unchangeable subjects*are some metaphors used in this research to depict teaching and learning practices.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), this logic helps me to capture the complexity of traditional teaching and learning practices; to portray my self-concepts, understanding, experiences for exploring multiple facets of knowledge and knowing (as cited in Taylor, Settelmaier & Luitel, 2009). Metaphor permeated me not only to depict my language but also my localities, cultural contexts and meaning making process.

Poetic Logics and Poems

The popular saying in Nepali society "*जहाँ पुग्दैनन् रवी, त्यहाँ पुग्छन् कवी*"[21](A poet reaches beyond the sunrays) is my inspiration to use poetic logics and poems in my study. Poetic logic enabled me to experience and to capture multiple realities related with classroom teaching and learning practices of teachers and students. It helped me to broaden my imagination, to express my feelings, to reach beyond the horizon of my conscious awareness (Luitel, 2009) and contributed to a holistic understanding of the world (Leggo, 2004). Poetic genres helped me to represent my knowledge claims, and to portray my participants' and my knowledge embedded in teaching and learning practices.

[21]"*जहाँ पुग्दैनन् रवी, त्यहाँ पुग्छन् कवी*" in translation- "A poet reaches beyond the sunrays" is a popular saying in Nepali society and literature. It connotes that poet is more powerful than sun.

This logic and genre is the source for personal growth (Shulman, 1986, as cited in Mulholland, 2007). This is important for me to understand the complexities of curriculum, teaching and learning practices for transformation and growth.

Narrative Logics and Narratives

Narrative logic promoted my thinking grounded in everyday life worlds (David, 2006). Clandinin and Connelly (1998) described that storied thinking enables transformative researchers to contextualize their knowledge claims within their personal, professional and cultural contexts. In this way, narrative logics and narratives helped me to put my narratives of experiences as a learner and teacher of school level Science and Mathematics subject. Narrative genres are used to speak from a lived storied perspective bringing contexts, events and people to the textual space, thereby, depicting richly the complexity of human experience. My narratives have feelings, experiences, and knowledge. Reviewing these, I have become a transformative teacher and researcher. I have used narrative logics and genres to depict local experiences and contextualized teaching and learning in the perspectives of centralized curriculum and textbooks. These logics and genres helped me to structure narratives, impressionistic tales of my personal-professional practices that paint holistic sense of being and becoming (Cumming, 2007). I have used narrative logic to communicate research outcomes also.

A narrative genre seemed to be an appropriate, ethical and authentic writing style to represent the research participants (Dawson, 2011, pp. 83-91). This genre allowed the voices of teachers and students to be heard in an authentic way. I chose this genre to portray the experiences of my participants as well as my own.

Non-Linguistic Genres

"Non-linguistic genres - photographs, paintings, cartoons, collage, creative models,help to represent knowledge claims otherwise unaccounted for by linguistic genres" (Sullivan, 2008, as cited inTaylor, Settelmaier, & Luitel, 2009)and I have used such non-linguistic genres to represent my participants' and my narratives of experiences to envision holistic sense and meaning making process. The photographs, pictures and paintings represent my field texts and non linguistic expressions. These genres helped in cultivation of visual imagination to bring clarity to the articulation of knowledge claims. Holistic envisioning can be achieved by juxtaposing linguistic and non-linguistic genres.

Quality Standards

Multi-paradigmatic research design informed me that my inquiry can be judged through quality standards arose from those multiple research paradigms. Illumination (postmodernism paradigm standard), transferability and verisimilitude as trustworthiness (interpretive paradigm standards) and critical reflexivity (criticalism paradigm standard) regulated my research. These set of standards were helpful for me to provide wide, deep, emergent and flexible space to maintain quality of my research.

Critical Reflexivity

As an interpretive researcher, I understood that my research is an interactive, complex, reflexive process shaped by my personal history, biography (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 2-3) as well as my participants' experiences, stories and personal practical knowledge. In narrative inquiry reflexivity is a quality standard and being reflexive, I was responsive to self, and located myself along with my own and participants' voices, experiences and stories. In addition, the process of being reflexive critically involved me

to be conscious of my own and participants' teaching and learning practices, socio-cultural contexts and beliefs. I was being reflexive about how my personal experiences, cultural beliefs and values shaped the practices and interpretation of the social world as well as participants.

Reflexivity is a hallmark of excellent qualitative research and it entailed myability and willingness to acknowledge and to take account of many ways that shaped my inquiry and helped me to create social interaction (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002, p. 222). This standard helped me to be critical reflective researcher to construct and participate in constructing our world and our knowledge about the world, to shape interaction within a given time, space and situation.

Transferability

Transferability is the quality standard of my research activity to transfer into another setting or context by identifying similarities and dissimilarities between the researched and would be research site (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) and this is not the replicability of my research but this is the adaptability to a new context. Transferability is the judging standard of relevancy of my research in another context.

Moreover I attempted to address transferability by providing rich details of teaching and learning contexts, events and moments in which I have experienced traditional learning and teaching as rote practices without meaningful understanding and future researchers can use some aspects of my research design to investigate similar research agendas. In Lincoln and Guba's (1985) view, the critical, like and other events described in the context of a narrative inquiry provide richness of detail and accessibility

that a reader be able to make applications in another setting.In this way, my research can be used similar contexts but not same way that is replication.

Illumination

I encoded my experiences in the form of narratives, particularly those experiences dealing with my participants and narrative and illuminating my actions, experiences and complexities. I illuminated my personal practical experiences as revealed by Schon's (1983) studies that in those professions working with people, stories and experiences are used to explain and justify thinking and actions (as cited in Webster & Mertova, 2007). My experiences came naturally to illuminate learning and teaching via narrative, metaphorical, poetic, dialogical, and non-linguistic genres (Luitel, 2009, p. 66). These genres enabled me to be more richly expressive about my participants' and my own experiences, practices and knowledge.

Gudmundsdottir (1995) suggests that narrative is the tool of the practitioners to make sense of experience and organize it into a body of practical knowledge (as cited in Webster & Mertova, p. 21). In this way, my narratives are the tools to make meaning of my learning and teaching practices to develop practical knowledge and skills for transformative and constructivist teacher. I have articulated my experiences, feelings, thoughts and actions through which I gathered stories, conversations, interviews, field notes, memories and various kinds of data regarding the experiences of teaching and learning in classroom (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2011, p. 58). As a tool, this standard helped me to be a transformative teacher and to construct around notions of personal empowerment, to make meanings enriched, deepened, and made vivid (Barone, 2007as cited in Luitel, 2009, p. 53). I have used narrative, reflective, poetic and non-linguistic

genres for vividness. The logics, genres helped me to be a self-conscious and reflexive researcher.

Verisimilitude as Trustworthiness

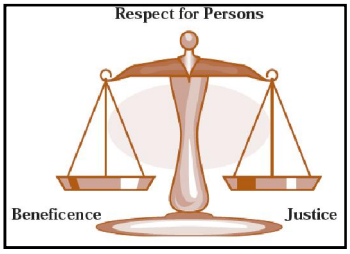
Regarding the believability, truthfulness and lifelikeness of narratives of experiences (Luitel, 2009, p. 67), I have attempted to adopt the quality standard-verisimilitude as trustworthiness in my research. For this I used prolonged period of time in the field interacting with participants, making sense and understanding the phenomena of classroom teaching and learning practices using rigorous techniques and methods of gathering data text. The data texts were interpreted from my own understanding and practices according to constructivist approaches of teaching and learning. I did not take member checking of interpretations for accuracy. But, I considered confirming and disconfirming cases to understand the curriculum, teaching and learning practices. In addition, I interacted with the participants and interpreted collected voices and experiences for representation and to grasp the complexity of the pedagogical practices, and created depth and richness of understanding of school contexts.

Ethical Considerations

In ethical considerations, I accepted Gibson's (2007) notion that the use of pseudonymsto address issues of anonymity and visibility based on the issue of narrative writing is an integral part of the representation of this inquiry. Furthermore, I considered the desired degree of exposure (i.e., vulnerability) of myself for my own safety and care.

I was respectful of my context, culture and people. I have used pseudonyms in the place of true name of participants as Capron (1989) described that any kind of research should be guided by the principles of respect for people, beneficence, and justice (as cited

in Gibson, 2007). In this regard, I considered that respect for people is the recognition of participants' rights, including the right to be informed about the study, the right to freely decide to participate in a study.



In my study, I honored by informed consent, which means making a reasonable balance between over-informing and under-informing (Kvale, 1996) for voluntary participation. In my research, beneficence helped me to minimize possible harms and maximize benefits; justice helped me to distribute benefits and risks of research fairly; honesty and openness helped in disclosing methodology, research design and procedures, presenting my findings without any distortion due to political and personal pressures; informed consent helped for willingness.

Chapter Recapitulation

I believe that knowledge is created and recreated based on multiple classroom realities and situations ontologically.Epistemologically, knowledge is created by close and mutual relationship with participants. Using autobiographical writing, personal stories, experiences, anecdotes, scenes, dialogues, and conversations I tried to explore values, importance and aesthetics rhetorically.

Based on philosophical assumptions, I have used interpretivism, criticalism and post modernism as multi-paradigmatic research design to capture multiple data texts. They provided me with emergent space and narrative sensibilities; self reflective and transformative space; and art based and autobiographical excavation opportunities. Based on multi-paradigmatic design, and research context, I chose narrative inquiry, critical research and self-study as methodologies. For further thinking and articulating data text,

different contexts, holistic analysis and interpretation, I used different types of research logics and genres with quality standards and ethical considerations. In third chapter, based on first research question, I am going to explore how I as a student and other students perceive and practices learning.

CHAPTER III

LEARNING, LEARNER AND THE NATURE OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS

In first chapter of this thesis,I have articulated how culturally decontextualized learning and teaching in the respect of centralized curriculum materialsbecame the research issue. Based on research problem,in second chapter, I conceptualized philosophical assumptions,research design to explore stories of learning and teaching experiencesand practices of myself and others.

In this chapter, I have discussed my own and participants' learning beliefs, experiences and practices which were basically rooted by the learning experiences of rote memorization of definitions, concepts and examples in science; number crammed and deductive ways of mathematics; blind trial and error practices. Overall, this chapter responds to my first research question based on first issue: How do students(including myself as a student) perceive and enact learning process in my research context?

Primarily, I have tried to represent participants' and my own images, beliefs, and experiences of learning practices and how we struggled for meaningful learning and in what ways parents think about their learning to guide their children.Secondly, I have presented students' frustration, worries due to the formularized and structured text book lessons without considering students' interests and their choices in classroom learning. Thirdly, I have tried to explore and interpret the parent's ways of learning to guide their children, and how landscape shapes mindscape while teaching in different contexts.

Story I: Yaad Garne, Ghokne or Ratne[22]: Last Minute Preparation for Examination

It might be 1979/80, at that time I was studying in Grade III. I was not so happy by the result of grade three. I was not so enthusiast to say, "Hurrah! I passed. Now I am Grade IV student." I turned towards the north direction. The Mahabharata range seemed teasing me and that was not so brilliantly happy. I did not feel the West Wind. I was a very weak student in mathematics from first grade. I always feared with mathematics teacher. When I was in front of mathematics teacher, my heart, lungs stopped to beat and breathe. My weaknesses increased as with the addition of new subjects- English and Science in Grade IV. I was going to become a weak student in Mathematics, English and Science. The upgrading added more scolding of my teachers. When teachers' sounds reverberated in my ear, I remembered my teachers' teaching styles. My teachers often said in class: 'Now we have completed the lesson, all of you must memorize the answers at home. Tomorrow, I will ask you in class or 'Ko, Ko Padhera, Jaanera Aayako Chha?' (Who have come with reading and knowing?). If any of us could not answer a question, my teacher used to scold 'Murkhaharu, Yaad Garera, Pheri Padhera Bhana' (Idiots, memorize, again read, recall and tell me). We would often ask the teacher: 'Sir, Phadna Kin Garho Chha?' (Sir, why is it difficult to study?). I memorized parts of speech, tense and its types, unspoken and unused vocabularies and their pronunciation in English, foreign definitions of force, pressure, work, energy and power in Science in lower secondary level with difficulty.

When I was student of Grade IX in 1986, there was a student named 'Pharsa Ram' who could memorize all the steps of simplification of algebraic fractions in

[22]Yaad Garne, Ghokne, or Ratne Nepali language words are frequently used to signify rote memorization practices.

Algebra. Pharsa Ram's memorizing power affected me. I was excited by his ways of learning and imitated his ideas of memorization. Also, I had memorized very hardly the solutions of harder problems of Arithmetic and Algebra. Sometimes later, I felt that such memorization was not good and might harm in examinations because I did not solve the whole problems. I forgot the steps of operations or definitions. The student who was able to memorize long essays, poems, stories, grammatical rules, was praised by teachers and other students. I never prioritized understanding, but I focused more on memorizing anyway. All we students tried to memorize answers independently in whole mornings, evenings and nights. If any student had ability to memorize long answers, he/she was taken as a model of the class. Other students tried to copy their memorization skills. Mathematics, Science and English teachers always forced for more practices saying that "*Practice makes a man perfect, so you have to practice. Trial and error reduces your errors, so you have to try more and more.*"

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It was a chill day of mid January of 1987, the playground of school was silent and drops of dew were hanging on the grass shinning as pearl. I was in the last year of my school leaving. Some friends and I were sitting on a bench outside the classroom. One, two students were entering into school. It was very calm and no sounds except flowing sound of Bheri River could be heard. My SLC Examination was near to run and I was worried about the exam questions. When I was discussing with classmates, Man Bahadur, one of my classmates came and sat near to me. Man Bahadur was one of my friends in Grade X; he had good sense of humor. First he listened to our conversation and started to talk about the up-coming SLC examination.

Man Bahadur (with few laughs and chattering voice): How are you preparing for SLC?

Me (thinking a bit longer): Reading books, revising notebooks and practicing question-answering.

Ram Kumar (next friend with cough and smile): What's the question? Don't you have jokes and comments on math teacher's style of teaching?

Man Bahadur (seriously): Really the iron gate SLC is very near and this is pressing from upper part of head but I am not so worrying. I have good ways for preparing the exam.

Me (curiously): What are the ways? Please tell us.

Prem Bahadur (laughing): What are you talking? These guys are laborious, and silly. Don't talk about exam more. It's boring and I hate this.

Man Bahadur: Please be quiet. Listen my ways. Ratne and Ghokne[23] are the best methods to pass exam. "Ratne[24] Rat, Jite[25] Ghok and Yame[26] Yaad Gar" [27] (Ratne revise, Jite rote memorize, and Yame recall).

We all laughed at once at this joke.

Ratna (being serious): SLC is not a joke Yar[28], be serious. It is very tedious job to take examination.

Me (laughing): Man Bahadur, I do not understand your methods. What are the meanings of these?

Man Bahadur: Path Ratne, Ghotne, Ghokne, Doharyaune, Teharyane as you can (Rote memorize, repeat twice, thrice).

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[23]These words signify rote memorization process.
[24]Ratne is a name in slang language signifies Ratna
[25]Jite is a name in slang language signifies Jit
[26]Yame is a name in slang language signifies Yam
[27]*RatneRat, Jite Ghok and Yame Yaad Gar*is a trope to signify learning process.
[28]Used for close friend.

Prem Bahadur: Path Bujhnu Pardaina[29]*(it's not to understand the lessons), why are you talking about Ratne and Ghokne? (Without understanding, why are you talking about rote memorizing?).When we were laughing, math teacher came near to us. We stopped talking and greeted him. The math teacher signaled us to go class and we entered into the classroom.*

Prologue: Extending the Story

In this way, "*Yaad Garne, Ratne* or *Ghokne*"were my best preparation ways for exam.*'Yaad Garne', 'Ratne','Ghokne'* are the verbs of Nepali language for memorizing and recalling. Rote memorization is the traditional way of learning and this learning process is still famous in schools (Sarangapani, 2003, p. 164). These were the great methods for us to secure more marks and pass exam. My initial narrative writing starts with this lived story about my learning experiences as a school student. We had only these methods- *Yaad Garne, Ratne* or *Ghokne*—to learn textbook definitions, examples and answers of questions without any understanding.Content based and textbook questions highly demanded the rote memorized answers as described in textbooks. We had very little space to explore our experiences, and daily life examples in those answers. My teachers often emphasized on *"Trial and Error",* "*Practice makes a man perfect"* the behaviouristic notion for rote memorization and forced us for blind repetition.

[29]Bujhnu, Bujhne are Nepali words to signify understanding.

"*Yaad Garne, Ratne* or *Ghokne*" depicts that the teaching and learning is very less enjoyable and students are very less happy in monotonous and repetition of same styles of teaching and learning in classroom. Students are weak in compulsory subjects like English, Mathematics and Science (Mathema & Bist, 2006). Rote memorization of unspoken and unused vocabularies, their spelling and meaning in English; definitions of force, work, energy and power in Science; simplifications of algebraic fractions, work and time problems in Mathematics are more problematic to students in examination. My learning practices equated with Habok's (2008c) notion that "Learning equals memorization of the learning material on a word for word basis" (as cited in Anita, 2009). Students tried endlessly to rote memorize the textbook lessons, solutions of number crammed mathematical problems; English grammatical rules, essays and stories in schools. Reading textbooks, revising notebooks, and rote memorizing answers of textbooks questions were noncreative and non reflective and students are unable to link with daily life experiences and activities. In this way, teachers stressed on paper-pencil examination with meaningless learning practices. I felt more stress in the content heavily content overloaded and all at once examination pattern (Smith, 1996, p. 16 as cited in Moore, 2003, p. 160). The yearly paper-pencil test enforced textbook centered teaching and rote memorized learning. From these rote memorization experiences, here I want to present the images of my learning as rote memorization, and passive reception.

Rote Memorization as the Only Option

"*Yaad Garne, Ratne or Ghokne*" are my learning experiences. Based on these experiences, I envisage that learning is memorization process. Memorization of textbook definitions, descriptions, examples, answers of questions was my learning. When I was in

the research field in March/April and November/December of 2012, I situated myself with the students, in the village, the school and the classroom, talking with teachers and observing the teaching and learning practices, still there are rote memorization practices without proper linkage with students' experiences, and contextual examples.

According to Sarangpani (2003), *'Yaad Garne'* deliberately referred to the process acquiring the *ought-to-know* textbook subject matters (p. 164). My teachers often told the whole class *"Padha, Lekha, Halla Nagara"* (Read, write and don't make noise). Here "*Padha, Lekha"* means read loudly, memorize the textbook concepts, definitions and examples. In this way, I learned the textbook knowledge, concepts and examples by*'Yaad Garne, Ratne, or Ghokne'*.

In this line, I argue that rote memorization anyhow may be essential for students to be able to succeed in examinations-to be able to answer the asked questions in yearly summative paper-pencil exam. Memorization dominates ought-to-know text book facts, concepts and answers. Classroom delivery and tests emphasize and promote rote memorization in schools. However, my experiences of memorization and rote learning influence my teaching styles in classroom. I always suggest my students to memorize text book lessons.

Framed in a Culture of Textbook-is-Everything

Let me remind my lived experiences of learning. In secondary school level, my teachers very much tried to describe the chapters of textbook as it is. The first lesson of compulsory English of grade nine was "The Fables of Aesop" and from this chapter one question was sure in SLC examination. In 1987/88, the courses of grade nine and grade ten were compulsory in SLC exam and anyhow I had to answer that first lesson's question

because that was the starting question in English paper, and then I hardly got any opportunities except for rote memorization to know the answer of that lesson. All questions were compulsory and there were very less opportunities to choose questions in that paper-pencil exam. Such framing of textbook dominated my learning practices. The textbook frame was centrally developed and my teachers were completely dependent upon textbook knowledge, examples and questions.

My learning journey at the University level was also monotonous, based on textbook learning (Sarangapani, 2003, p. 127), and that learning was strongly framed by syllabus- a list of content. The syllabus or list of content was attached in the front pages of textbooks and based on the syllabus my teacher exercised to control the classroom. The teacher did not try to seek my experiences, and prior knowledge. In I. Sc. and B. Sc. level, I had tried a lot to do experiments in controlled and laboratory well equipped with scientific apparatus and chemicals with the help of practical books and teachers' directions. There were very little spaces for my feelings, motivation, enthusiastic mood and I framed within the laboratory experiments for confirmatory tests andlab preparation of H_2, O_2, and CO_2 gases. From these concepts, I argue that teachers' textbook dependency, monotonous and textbook framed teaching practices, centrally developed textbooks, summative and rigid examination system, centrally adopted knowledge, examples and questions created culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning.

Story II: Equating Black Letter with Buffalo[30]

"Hello Suman" I call him. Suman turns toward to me and greets me saying "Sir Namaste" when I reach his house in the evening at 5 pm of hot month of May 2012.

[30]Equating Black Letter with Buffalo (काला अक्षर भैंसी बराबर c.f. Kala Akshar Bhainshi Barabar) is a popular adage among villagers to signify their inability to read and write.

Suman is a fourteen years old boy and he is studying in Grade X in Himalaya Higher Secondary School which is near to his house. This grade is supposed to be more difficult than others because he is in the final national exam of secondary level i. e. SLC. His parents are farmers; they have two acres of fertile land, some buffalos, cows, oxen and goats. They are hardly mending livelihood with these. They work fifteen to eighteen hours in a day in farm and household works. They are sending their children to schools hoping for better future.

Suman is busy in finishing home assignment for next class. He gives me mat.

I sit on mat.

"How are you? Where is your father?"

"Fine sir" he says and calls his father "Buba, Buba (Father, Father). Sir is here." His father comes near us and greets me "Namaste Sir." I reply "Namaste, how are you?" he nodes head for being fine. He asks, "What are the reasons for coming here". I clarify my aims. His father seems fifty years old with some wrinkles in his face.

His mother comes and listensto our conversation. I turn towards her and she greets "Namaste." I reply, "Namaste." Their innocence has been reflecting with their behavior. I request them to sit but they go to finish their household work.

"How do you want to learn in your classroom?" I ask question (observing his assignment papers)

"I like to learn practically. How can I use bookish knowledge and skill in my daily life related with my experiences. Stories, examples, debate, field visit, quiz contest, writing poems and essays and demonstrations of different materials are important in learning the new knowledge. The classroom is full of friends' teasing voices, loud talking

andwhispering sounds and these bore me. My classroom is densely crowded and every morning students quarrel for their sit. In the classroom, I cannot concentrate my attention in reading and writing." He says.

"I want active participation in classroom discussions, examples, question-answers, sharing my experiences, rituals and folk stories." Suman dislikes long lectures, descriptions and subject matters unrelated with his experiences. Teachers' one way lecture, descriptions, unrelated and impracticable knowledge, vague and unspoken words are meaningless.

Suman describes his teachers' teaching process, "Most of my teachers command us as do this and that, write this, come with answers, I will ask questions in next class. You have to come with good preparation of the lesson."

"Which styles of teaching do you want?" I ask.

Suman says, "I want my teachers to perform question-answer session, and my active participation and engagement in teaching and learning process. I always want to learn new ideas and concepts related with my life. I am willing to learn by sharing and discussing the topics with teachers as well as friends. I dislike the one way lecturing of teachers."

Meanwhile Suman's mother brings hot milk in two Batukos (two bowls). We drink milk.

"Which subjects do you like most and least?" I continue the conversation.

He stops for a while and says (with hesitation), "I like studying Nepali, Economics, Education, English subjects and I am average in Mathematics and Science. I actively participate in debate, quiz contest, and in playing volleyball.There is very little space for stories, and daily life activities in Mathematics, Science classes."

While observing Suman's notebooks, Suman's father arrives and I tell him to sit down. Sumans's father sits on mat.

I turn towardsSuman's father and ask "Your son is studying well and now he is in the final year of school education and is going to take SLC exam. Have you met head teacher and teachers to discuss about your son's study? Have you ever visited school? Do you ask about progress of your son regarding learning and exam result?"

"No sir, I do not know about teaching and learning process. We are busy in farm and household work all over the day. We have no time for going to school and for meeting teachers. The most responsible persons are head teacher and teachers. If they teach well children will easily pass. Hamro Lagi Padhne, Shikhne Bhaneko Kala Akshara Bhainsi Barabar Ho (Teaching and learning means equating black letter with buffalo for us)."

I experience the strange sense from "Equating Black Letter with Buffalo" at the moment and I think it is a very experienced version from entire experiences of life.

Prologue: Stretching the Story

The story *"Equating Black Letter with Buffalo"* is my field experience during April/May 2012 and represents that farmers and villagers may have very little time to care their children, share their stories, experiences, and they may have less experience of school teaching and learning practices. *"Equating Black Letter with Buffalo"* is a common local trope of villagers. The illiterate villagers take black letter as a buffalo; buffalo is their everyday life's working as students' working is reading, black letters in a book. From story, it has been evident that most of the school teachers havevery less preparation of teaching and they transmit locally detached textbook subject matters. This story matches with the view that "teachers are so under-prepared that curriculum must do

everything for them and it must tell them exactly what to do, when to do it, and in what order" (Russell, n. d.). Students' classroom participation is based on teachers' behavior, and their presentation, directions in classroom and out of classroom. If teachers are controlling to maintain discipline, students have very less opportunities of questioning in classroom with teachers and friends. I accept Luitel, Kafle, and Aryal's (2012) conclusion that teachers neglect active participation of students in classroom.

Suman's experiences are likely to demonstrate the teaching and learning in classroom of Nepali schools. From this story, I have conceptualized images of learning as-silent-listening-teacher's-interpretations, receiving-expert-generated-concepts-as –it-is rather than co-learning, co-constructing, and active-participation-and-interaction. Suman's condition in classroom teaching and learning is opposite to Biggs's (1999) conclusion that interaction has central importance in the teaching and learning (as cited in Lublin, 2003, pp. 2-3).

After returning from field, I wrote this story and came to realize that most of the Nepali teachers may be willing to describe more subject matters in short period without linking with daily life experiences and examples. They enter in classroom without proper preparation; often ask students today's lesson and start to interpret. They may be very less enthusiast to review, revision, interaction, discussion, and group activities. Active participation of students in classroom teaching may not suitable for them and numerical problems may be described step-by-step deductively, there are very less opportunity to practice.

Story III: Formularized Lessons and Frustration

It is the any day of April, 2012. I meet a student named Reshma Kumari. She is a student of any private English school of Surkhet. She is from remote village and she is living in rented room. I meet her in that English school where she is a Grade IX student.

"Why are you studying in private English school? Is there no any school near your house?" I ask her.

With shame and hesitation, she replies "One government secondary school is nearby my house but there are no regular classes, most of the teachers are absent. The SLC result is very poor. My brother and father have enrolled me in this school because the SLC result of this school is good."

"Do you have any problem with thisnew school that is far from your house?"

"I bring rice, pulse and vegetables from home and I cook myself."

"Did you study in English medium school before this?"

"No sir, I am from government Nepali medium school that's why I am studying in Nepali medium classes in this private English school. In this private English school, there are two mediums of teaching- one is English medium and another is Nepali medium. We the Nepali medium students are second level students and teachers as well as principal think that we are weak students."

She is revealing her inner feelings with hesitation.

She becomes silent for awhile and says, "I have fear to ask questions and participate in class discussions. I am a student of Nepali medium and my teachers take the Nepali medium students as second level students and we are not important for teachers.

Generally, most of the teachers scold us. Teachers do not understand girls' problems and we cannot share our problems openly."

"Which subjects do you feel easy and which one is hard?"

"Mathematics, English and Science subjects are more difficult for me than Nepali, Health Population and Environment Science, Economics, and Education subjects. Math teacher provides problems but he never asks students' difficulties. In mathematics, it's very difficult to understand the unitary method, simplification of algebraic fractions, profit and loss, and theoretical proofs of geometrical theorems. The mathematics teacher writes the theoretical proofs of geometrical theorems with figure on the blackboard and asks us to memorize line by line but I cannot rote memorize all these. All these processes give me frustration in school and I think to stop study but there is fear of brother and father."

"Which teacher's teaching styles do you like most?"

"Nepali subject teacher starts to teach from very simple concepts and daily life examples and joins our prior knowledge and experiences. The Nepali subject teacher describes the complex concepts relating with examples. He writes the meaning of difficult words and he does not give more home assignments. The lessons, knowledge and concepts in Health Population and Environment science subject are related with our environment. Living and non-living things, climate change, natural disasters, jungle, population increase, human reproductive system are more interesting lessons. The teacher of Health Population and Environment Science subject describes the lesson with simple and short examples."

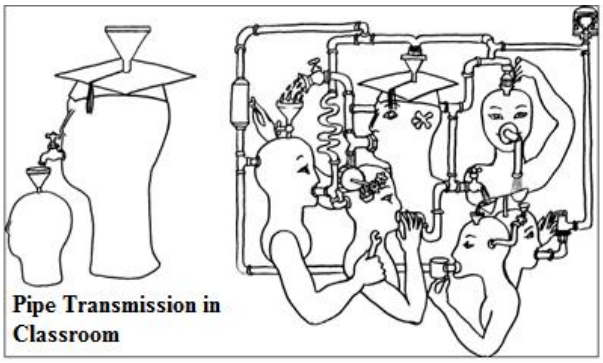
She opens Education book and says, "In Education subject, characteristics of child development, puberty, adolescence; learning process, psychological causes are more interesting to study."

Again she opens notebooks of English and says, "In English subject, I do not know the meaning of words which I haven't used in daily life; the formulas of grammar are very difficult for me to rote memorize without clear understanding. For example: the rigid structures S + V + O, Subject + am/is/are + V_5 +Object….. are very difficult for me. Sentence making, V_1, V_2, V_3 forms of verbs have to be memorized forcefully and pressurizing the mind. Who get develops such formulas and structures? I do not like these."

From her questions, I perplex sometimes and I have no any readymade answers.

Prologue: Extending the Story

From Reshma Kumari's story, it can be understood that there are different issues related with meaningless teaching practices that create frustration and worries in learning. Some students have difficulties in rote memorization of the rigid structure based lessons, and formula based knowledge and that may be the reason of frustration. Students have interests to learn different subject matters. The rigidly structured, formula based and centrally developed subject matters may be very less helpful to contextualize according to students' interests, individual differences and context specific knowledge. If any students



Pipe Transmission in Classroom

seek the application of bookish knowledge, teachers may not easily describe and such disseminated subject matters may be less useful in real life situations.

Definitions, formulae, structure-based knowledge and concepts may be the canon of subject matters. Students often frustrate due to the paper-pencil mode of assessments. Students are more willing to learn local examples, experiences and locally linked subject matters. The structure of subject matters has a considerable impact on student learning and however, a successful teacher can reorganize subject matter into a learnable form (Luitel, 2003). Reshma Kumari felt that learning process seems like a series of attempts to reproduce other's ideas.The rigid structures *S + V + O, Subject + am/is/are/ + Object, Subject + am/is/are +* V_5 *+Object*described by Reshma Kumari are some examples of subject matters of school textbooks. From this story, I have conceptualized the image of *teaching as transmission* and *learning as passive reception and rote memorization*.

Story IV: Different Learning Interests

I meet a male student in school uniform and school bag that is hanging on left shoulder in dusty village way at nine am on a day of May 2012.

I ask, "Hello student, what is your name?"

The boy looks at me as an unusual person who is asking his name unnecessarily.

I reach nearer to him and ask further, "You are going to school. Am I right?" He does not pay attention to me. What is the matter? I do not understand. Is he a hearing-impaired student?

I again question him, "Do you listen to me?"

I see his angry face when he replies, "I am not a deaf. I can easily listen. Is it necessary to reply?"

I get perplexed by hearing the replies. I guess the boy is nearly 11/12 years old and may be a primary student. The boy is ahead of me and I follow him. The boy turns back and sees me. I smile but he does not smile.

After this, wedo not speak any word.We walk nearly fifteen minutes silently. I think the boy may be a participant of my research and I will talk with him later.

The boy enters into the compound of Nepal Rastriya Prathamik Bidhyalya (primary school). I walk to school's office. I know he is looking at me strangely.

Until the bell rings to inform Tiffin time, I observe school's physical situation, teaching-learning activities in classroom. I talk with teachers and head teacher. When I reach classroom of Grade V, I find he is coming outside of that room. I know, he is a Grade V student.

When he sees me his face changes red with fear. He may think that I am a new teacher of this school.

"Are you studying in Grade V?" I ask.

"Yes"(nods head).

"Are you a new teacher of our class?"

"No, I am here for observing school".

After Tiffin time, classes are not running and some students are playing, some are running on the school compound. Some students are walking to go home.

His name is Dil and his house is located at half an hour walking distance from school. Dil says, "I have never failed in any level. I am regular student and I always submit my assignments but when I see my teacher, I feel scared and difficult to answer the

questions. My teacher always scolds and beats us. My parents never scold me. I feel shame and fear to talk with strange people."

"How do you want your class to be?"

"If teachers sit with us, care us and teach by demonstrating, playing, storytelling, singing, dancing, providing examples, telling meanings of English words then I like to learn. I want lovely and relaxed environment in classroom. My teachers are always unhappy with us and they do not care properly."

"Do you see beaker made of glass in Science class?"

"No sir, I do not know about beaker. Is it like a tea glass?"

"How do you learn in classroom?"

"Our teachers always ask to us write the answers of questions. If we have no assignments, teachers slap. I do not like English and Mathematics teachers. I have a lot of stories and my teachers do not provide any opportunity to tell the stories."

In the time of conversation with Dil, other students surround us. I ask other students, "How do you like to learn in classroom?"

Rim Bahadur says," I like songs and Ram Bahadur sir teaches us by singing. I like that."

I turn towards Raju, he says, "I like climbing trees, swimming, and playing."

I see Chandra Kumari, she says, "I like books' stories, and to watch Television."

Another girl Tila says,"I like to observe birds, butterflies; to do household works."

The last boy Nar Bahadur expresses his detest, "I want no more questions and home assignments."

The next girl seems enthusiast to share her feeling, "I like to sit with my mother and to help her to cook food, sweep room, and take vegetables from farm."

When I ask her name, she says, "My name is Prema."

Prologue: Extending the Story

Story IV"Different Learning Interests" shows a number of cases: the ineffectiveness of fear, scolding, punishment and teacher imposed assignments; safe and relaxed learning environment; dislikingEnglish and Mathematics teachers; interests and hobbies in learning. There were controlled classroom environment, fearful learning environment, over assignments and uninteresting learning. From this story, I accept that "fear is one tactic or strategy that schools and teachers have used for a long time to control, discipline, and motivate students" (Mathema & Bista, 2006). When I finished my writing of this story from my field note and memories, I was perplexed and it forced me to recall my school days. I have experiences of frustration, dissatisfaction and fear in classroom teaching; teachers are seen as dictator of learning rather than facilitator (Hein, 1991).

Dil and other students' learning experiences are likely to depict that teachers used behaviorist notion of

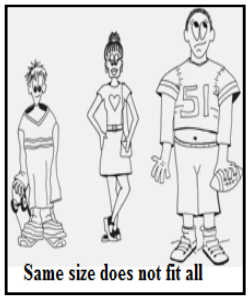
Interests and curriculum images
Teacher in teaching-learning process plays vital role
Use teaching materials to motivate students from soul
Not to deliver the lessons before the mass
Does not end the lesson in mess
As if playing the educational chess
Tries to envision the students' interests
A good education with motivation and interest
For this, teacher has good vision
In school, there may be good mission
Curriculum has some currere vision
Administrator can manage currere mission
Currere is deep down inside the earth
It is up above the everlasting sky
It is on the top of majestic Everest
It is in the multicultural classroom
It is in the self- reflection of own life
It is the self-actualization side of life
School environment may be pleasant and calm
School may be as home with dad and mom
Progress in both pressure and pleasure
Interests are needed every pace of life
By interests, there is full attention
There is real teaching and learning
There is full satisfaction in the evening
There is learning art of great living

teaching as animal training (Hilgard & Bower, 1977) and school learning is different from Ausubel, Novak and Hanesian (1978) who say that meaningful learning occurs when new ideas are presented relating with prior learning, experiences and knowledge structure of learner. However, teachers take textbooks as key teaching materials and unique information resources. There is very little space for learners' unique characters and use of relevant materials. The fact that different people learn in different ways is neglected. Students have different interests and they want to learn according to their wish. They do not like much more assignments due to the monotonous teaching and behaviors of teachers in classroom.

From this story, I have conceptualized that in traditional teaching and learning practice, there are images of knowledge-as-commodity and teachers-transfer-from-their-interpretations-to-students'-head. Like Grundy's (1987) notion technical interest guides such teaching and learning practices and practical interest is very less in practices, which emphasizes interaction and active participation. In this way, classroom interaction, active participation, and learning interests of students are practiced very less in learning process.

Same Size Does Not Fit All

Can I say that *Dil, Rim Bahadur, Raju, Chandra, Tila, Nar Bahadur, Prema*in Story IV had different learning interests and culture? Their family backgrounds were different. Generally in a school there may be students from Brahmin, Magar, Raji, Bote, Tharu, and some (non)touchable culture. They sittogether and listen to teachers' interpretations and instructionin a classroom. Theremay be mismatch between school knowledge and out of school experiences. How does a teacher teach with a single method


Same size does not fit all

or with same centrally developed curriculum materials in the situation as described by Goodwin, Lefkowits, Woempner, & Hubbell (2011) that "Classrooms are full of diverse learners both culturally and linguistically" (as cited in Gregory & Chapman, 2013).Students have different backgrounds, experiences, needs and interests. No two learners are the same; every person is unique (Howe, 1984, p. 87 as cited in Moore, 2003, p. 155), then how does one size fitall? How does everyone learn in a sterile and single setting of teaching and learning environment? In this way, the centralized curriculum materials may not match with the culturally and individually diverse situations of classroom.

Story V: Dhawanti Kheti, Ghokanti Bidya[31]: Parent's Learning Tips

It is the any cold day of November 2013. Again I am in my research site. I walk to meet one parent Bir Bahadur whose son is studying in the village school. Bir Bahadur is a farmer with ten Ropanis[32]farm land where he works all over the day. His village lies in hilly region and there are people of different castes living harmoniously: Brahmin, Chhetri, Magar, Gurung,Kami, Damai, Sarki, Badi…and there are different cultural rituals. Bir Bahadur's mother tongue is Magar but he speaks in Nepali very well.

"Namaste" Bir Bahadur is busy in weaving bamboo Doko[33] and turns to me.

"Namaste."

"What a beautiful Doko! You have good skills. From whom did you learn such skill?"I initiate my conversation.

"I learnt by seeing and practicing during my childhood."

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[31]This is a common trope using by local peasants which literally means *concentration in farming, rote memorization in education* are very necessary practices.
[32]Ropani is the unit of land area which equals 508.74 m^2.
[33]Bamboo basket is used for carriage purpose.

I sit down on wooden log.

"What is the condition of your child's study? Are they studying well or not? What type of knowledge, skills do they get in school?" I ask.

"Aahh… Ke kura gareko?" (Aahh…What do you talk about?

"I am asking your child's schooling. Do they study at home or not?"

"Hami Napadheko Munchhelai Ke Padhaiko Kura Sodheko Hola Yo Masterle? Hami Anapadhlai Chhora Chhoriko Padhai Thaha Hudaina." (As we are illiterate, don't ask us about child's study. We do not know anything about study).

"Do you pay attention to your child's study?" I am encouraging him to talk about the education of his child.

He says, coughing "The main responsible personsof child's study are head teacher and teachers. We have given birth to the child, god provides food, head teacher and teachers provide education. If rainfall is good then we harvest more corns. We the farmers are living by the help of god."

"Do you meet head teacher, teachers of your child's school? Do you ask them about your child's progress in learning?"Bir Bahadur is continuously weaving Doko. "We the peasants have no time to do such works. All the day we are busy in works and we get little muris[34] of corns. How can we pay attention to child's education? It depends upon god's will, what god provides us, we get happily. If son is adult he can earn money going to Kala Pahad[35]."He says.

"How long does your child study in house?" I further initiate the conversation.

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[34]A muri is a Nepali unit to measure cereals and flour, equivalent to seventy-one kilograms.

[35] Kala Pahad is a local saying which signifies to go different places of India to earn money.

"If we scold them to study, then they seem to sit to study. That is not our priority. I had heard that Dhawanti Kheti, Ghokanti Bidya (Concentration in farming, Rote memorization in education). Students should know about their study. I have to plough, grazecattle, collect grasses and fire wood, weavedoko and then I have very little time to pay attention the child's education." Bir Bahadur says.

"Do they help you?"

"They help in cleaning the threshold of house; taking water from stream, collecting grass and fire wood."Bir Bahadur prepares to go to farm taking smoking pipe and digging blade.

"We are Magar caste people, our home is dirty and pigs and goats are near to home. We are simple and we do not know any cheating activities. Do not write bad things, do not lose our prestige, and do not write any harmful conversations."Bir Bahadur presages about our conversations.

Prologue: Extending the Story

The story "*Dhawanti Kheti, Ghokanti Bidya*" means farmers have to concentrate their observation in field for good cultivation, and students have to rote memorize for learning and this adage is much more popular in Nepali society. Parents often guide and motivate their children as this adage. In this way, parents enforce their children to *"Ghokne" or "Ratne"* as effective learning strategies and they may think that this is a good method for learning. *Dhawanti Kheti, Ghokanti Bidya* is local peasants' guiding cliche for their children's learning. Azcarate (1997) concluded that memorization is the preferred method for handling students in classroom and memorizing the definition of a concept is no guarantee of understanding its meaning (as cited in Putten, 2008). But our

parents are enforcing their children to learn by rote memorization of what teachers teach in the classroom and what are in textbooks. Parents seem to think that textbooks are written by more knowledgeable, experienced experts and without such textbook knowledge student learning has no meaning. The cultural, daily life experiences, students' feelings, emotions are less useful than textbook knowledge. Parents seem to think that teachers are more experienced and knowledgeable persons in society. And, teachers having experienced the same approaches to learning during their student life are prone to follow the suit. These approaches are opposite towhat Schoenfeld (1988) says that good teachers advocate understanding rather than blind memorization and rote learning. In this line, I argue that our parents are hooked with the traditional notion that learning is not possible without textbook knowledge.

Landscape Re/Shapes Mindscape

I am in the research field since 2012 April. I have visited two schools during the two weeks of 2012 April. I have observed two programs in schools. I would like to share my observational data text with two metaphors: anarchy, and landscape and mindscape. The harsh and anarchic situations of school are creating some uncertaintiesin teaching and learning. The landscape anarchy and conflicts are creatingparadoxes, blaming and dilemma in schools. The landscape of local schools is shaping the mindscape of teachers and students. The anarchy and conflicts help to continue thetraditional, meaningless, and culturally decontextualized practices of teachers and students. I have used the metaphor landscape shapes mindscape (Ornstein & Hankins, 2004) to demonstrate anarchy and paradoxes

which shape teaching and learning practices. On the basis of my fieldwork, I have some anecdotes to demonstrate that landscapes shape teaching and learning mindscape.

Anecdote I: The Courtyard of Schools

It is 7.00 AM on April 15, 2012, the result announcement day of annual exam and there is prize distribution program to the topper students of the Educational Year2011/2012. The place is the compound of Nepal Madhyamik School (Nepal Secondary School). The morning school assembly is going to begin. Ten lines of students are formed and students are joining the line of their respective classes. Some students are still arriving; some are out of the lines. Two teachers gather them but some students are still out of the line. Class teachers are running from one end to other end of the student rows trying to stop the unnecessary disturbances of students and to maintain discipline. Head teacher commands students to sit down on ground.

The students sit in the ground which is covered with dry leaves of Sal[36] *tree and little grass. The members of School Management Committee (SMC), representatives of the political parties, ex-teachers, head teacher, teachers and parents sit in front of the students.*

After a while, the program begins with the announcement of assistant head teacher Parbat. He announces different speakers' name. Different speakers comment about students' discipline, low pass rate in SLC, teacher regulation, school administration, school buildings, furniture, and computer education. Some of them

[36]Shorea robusta (scientific name of Sal tree)

motivate teachers and students for teaching and learning. They promise to help school for better performance. Some speakers aggressively insult school's different program, head teacher and teachers' activities. SMC members and teachers request to stop such blames andanarchy in schools for student centered learning environment.

Parbat announces the name of the topper students in annual examination and requests to distribute the prizes. Finally, head teacher Prem congratulates all the students who are standing in the position and succeed in annual examination. He speaks about the result of different classes, causes of students' failure, disciplinary cases, distribution of scholarship and some programs for new educational year 2012/2013. At last, Prem ends the program.

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It is a cool dawn of hot "Baishakh[37]" (April/May). I am in the courtyard of Gangamala Higher Secondary School. It is the first week of 2012/2013 new session and school has opened student admission program for new session. The school is situated at the highway. The infrastructure of school is good-looking. Well fenced compound around the school, painted buildings, door and threshold are pretty.

I am in the school and I see that some teachers are gathering in the shed of Sal tree and some students are playing volleyball. I meet some teachers who are going to classes taking chalk, duster and student attendance register. I meet head teacher and I know that school is organizing student enrolment campaign-2012/13 for new educational year. After the student enrolment campaign, classes are running. Irun door to door of classrooms. There are some students sitting in classrooms. Some textbooks, notebooks

[37] *Baishakh* is the first month of Lunar Calendar (Bikram Sambat) and is used in Nepal.

are on desks. I reach nearer to Sal tree and meet teachers. I sit with them."Shiyaram sir, why students weak in learning? Do they have good concepts?" I initiate conversations. "Students are very weak in learning. They are upgraded adding extra marks in examination. Their learning is insufficient and they are very less interested towards learning. They have very less fundamental concepts, which are not sufficient for upper grade's learning."Shyam sir replies.

Raju sir addscoughing, "Students have no textbooks in time. Curriculum and textbooks are changing and there is no refresher training."

"If students do not learn meaningfully, how do students develop good understanding?" I raise question.

Min sir says, "We are trying our best. We are teaching using teaching materials. We are completing course in time.They are upgraded without proper testingin primary level.In this way, students have no sufficient prior knowledge."

I ask, "Why are students cheating and duplicating answers in examination?"

Rim replies, "Oli sir, students are very less enthusiast to repeat, read, and practice lessons. They try to pass examination anyhow, and they are trying to cheat and duplicate the answers of questions from textbook, guide books and guess papers."

"Sir, let's stop these talking. Let's go to teashop." Shyam ends conversation.

Anecdote II: Teaching as a Child's Play or a Hard Nut to Crack[38]

It was another day of April 2012, the day was little cool than other days due to the rainy clouds in the sky and I was standing in the ground of private English medium secondary school. I observed students and teachers assembly in front of school office

[38] This is a metaphorical expression to signify teaching is a very simple and easy task or very difficult and complex task depending upon the context.

room. Teachers were commanding students to hold position in the rows in disciplined ways, and they were observing students' cleanliness, faces, heads, and nails. Students prayed and entered into classroom.

Peon rang the bell, "Twang." The gate of school was closed after 10 am. Teachers started to enter classroom with board marker, student attendance register. Principal was directing teachers as per the discipline, academic rules and regulations, and assignments.

The grade X classroom was densely crowded and hotter than outside. The classroom was fulfilled with the rows of desks and benches. Girl students were sitting in leftend and boys were sitting in right rows in congested way. Between these two rows, there was very small passage to go to the back of the room and there was very small place for teachers in front of the classroom.

Pembu sir started to check assignments. Some students had no assignments and he scolded and punished them. I felt that in such congested and crowded classroom, teaching and learning is difficult task. The solution of mathematics problem filled the white board.

Pembu sir first of all cleared the white board and started to write the topic "Copper metal" in compulsory science. He wrote symbol, molecular formula, occurrences, valency, as the introduction of copper and described physical and chemical properties of copper writing on the board. Hehad chalk, duster and textbook to teach and there were no materials related with the topic. He frequently moved from left to right and walked from forward to backward of that classroom and wrote some descriptions on whiteboard.

At the end of the lesson, Pembu sir asked some questions to the students and added some more. Students were busy in note taking and they often looked at the teacher and some were busy in reading the lessonsilently. They seemed to be tired and they were not so motivated to learn. Some students were doing side talks. Some were peering through window.

Creating Extended Meanings from Anecdotes

TheAnecdotes I and II offer a number of issues, anarchy and paradoxes with teaching and learning process. Social and school activities, administration of school, annual summative exam, blaming culture, lack of teaching and learning materials may demotivate and hamper students' learning practices. These anecdotes match with the situation described by Luitel, Kafle and Aryal (2012) that despite schools being good in physical structure, classroom management styles do not promote meaningful learning. Head teachers are interested in management and learning is not in their priority. Teachers seem to take teaching as a child's play, a very easy work to be performed.

In my experiences, most of the Nepali teachers may stick to the book. Students' needs, interests, prior learning and experiences, and contexts may be neglected. In this way, I conclude that teachers may enforce students to memorize textbook, and lecture notes by*Ghokne, or Ratne.* Students may feel more problems to memorize culturally decontextualized subject matters. Sticking to bookish abstract knowledge and preplanned structure of lessons with estimated time period may enforce rote memorization.

Connected Context and Fragmented Content

From anecdotes I and II, I hope to demonstrate that the subject matters are fragmented according to subjects. The first period's subject does not help directly to

second period's subject learning. For example, algebraic factorization does not seem to help students to solve numerical problems in physics nor does it connect with language arts. The teachers are different in different periods and subjects. Their teaching styles are likely to createdilemma as to how to connect the text with context. Students often think that the texts presented in Mathematics, Science and other subjects are different from the context, much akin to the divergence between worlds and words that students experience.Cultural context, individual characteristics and daily life activities are connected with one another but school subjects are fragmented within themselves, thereby giving the primacy to the curriculum as discrete task and concept. How can teachers use connected contexts to make sense of the fragmented subjects?

Chapter Recapitulation

The beliefs and perceptions of parents, and teachers shape students' learning. *"Ratne, Ghokne or Yaad Garne"*, *"Equating Black Letter with Buffalo"*, *"Landscape shapes mindscape"*, *"Teaching as a child's play or a hard nut to crack"*are some metaphorical beliefs and learning practices. Not only teachers' and students' traditional practices emphasize to regulate learning as rote memorization but the parental ways and thinking styles also support it. Parents think that farmers have very little experiences of learning and teaching. However, they guide children according to their own experiences. They conceptualize that the better way for good harvesting is *"Dhawanti Kheti"* and the good way for learning is *"Ghokanti Bidya."*

The formularized and structured bookish lessons emphasize the rote learning and make students more dependent and faithful towards teachers and textbook lessons. Over rote memorization practices may frustrate students and demotivate them. This chapter

tried to analyze critically students' diverse interests and very less choices in classroom learning and why same size does not fit all. Teachers' lack of preparationand confidence may help to create meaningless learning. The anecdote *"Teaching as a child's play or a hard nut to crack"*depicts thatteaching is very simple thing and not soimportant for teachers or it may be very difficult. Teaching may be nothing than transmitting descriptions. Based on learning as rote memorization and students as passive receptors of culturally decontextualized, locally detached and fragmented subject matters, I am going to depict how teaching is perceived and practiced in school level in chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

TEACHING, BELIEFS AND CONCERNS

In third chapter of this thesis, I tried to explore that rote memorization and cramming practices of learning are outcome of centrally developed curriculum and textbooks, and teacher centered teaching practices. Rote memorization of bookish knowledge, culturally decontextualized learning, culturally detached textbook lessons and examples, fragmented and centralized curriculum materials creating meaningless learning were some practices of my student life.

In this chapter, I have tried to explore participants' and my teaching practices which were basically rooted in traditional beliefs and practices, bookish knowledge and examples. From my experiences, I have tried to explore why I used traditional teaching practices. In this chapter, as a narrative researcher, I have used multiple data texts as stories, experiences, poems, photographs and other reflective texts. Overall, this chapter responds to my secondresearch question based on traditional and impractical teaching issue: How do teachers(including myself as a teacher) use the centrally developed curriculum and subject matters in teaching? In this chapter, firstly, I try to explore the nature and practices of locally detached teaching practices. Secondly, I explore centrally developed textbook help to traditional teaching practices. Thirdly, I try to seek out some images, and metaphors of teaching and learning practices.

Story I: Idiot Questions or Questioning Idiots

It could be any Thursday morning of June 1987. I am much enthusiastic to learn about geometry, triangle, quadrilateral and etc. In earlier classes we never reached in

the last portion of mathematics textbook that is geometry part. The initial part is arithmetic, middle part is algebra and last part is geometry. From starting session of grade nine, Tiwari sir has started to teach equally the three parts of mathematics- Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry. Sunday and Monday for arithmetic, Tuesday and Wednesday for algebra and Thursday and Friday for geometry, this is the plan of teaching mathematics in our class. In this way, we start learning about geometry. Postulates, theorems, proofs, definitions, figures and descriptions are some subject matters I have seen in geometry part. First day of geometry portion is today.

Clearing his cough, Tiwari Sir starts teaching, "Have you heard about points, line, triangle, quadrilateral,…?Because geometry starts from these basic notions.

"Yes Sir" (classroom is covered with loud an unanimous voice of whole class).

"Then tell me the definition of point," Tiwari Sir starts to ask questions, class is in pin drop silence.

Suddenly pointing me by left hand he says, "Hey, What is the definition of point?" (I am sitting in first row of bench).

By the sudden question, I become nervous and with low voice, "Bindu Bhaneko 'Kalamako Thoplo", "Dherai Sano Thoplo" (point is a pen's stroke, very small stroke). Tiwari Sir laughs at my answer. My face turns into red. I feel that my mind is empty. I never heard nor read the definition of point in book and my primary level teacher Tikaram had defined point in this way about point.

"Gobar Ganesh[39]*(Idiot, illiterate person/not educated person), Next you" (pointing Hari). Hari stands up and bows his head.*

"Oh! Idiot cowboys, you have no ideas, no concepts, you do not try to learn" and criticizes previous mathematics teacher who did not teach us geometry.

"Listen carefully." Showing index finger Tiwari sir defines "Point is dimensionless geometrical figure." (He repeats it three times and all of us note down).

Point is a geometrical figure, how is it a dimensional figure? What is the meaning of dimensionless? I do not understand. This definition creates dilemma in my head.

"Sir", I stand and ask question with nervousness, "I do not understand how it becomes a figure. What is the meaning of dimensionless?"

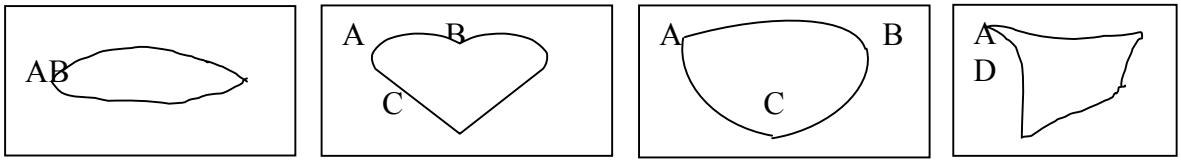
"Hey, foolish boy sit down. Don't make any noise. Do not become cleverer." He strokes tip of chalk two times in different places of the blackboard. "Can you measure it?" We all sit silently as statues without any responses.

"We cannot measure length, height and depth of these points. If we cannot measure length, breadth and height then that is called dimensionless figure. Line is the breadthless length or breadthless and heightless geometrical figure with only length. Triangle is an enclosed geometrical figure by three straight lines. Quadrilateral is an enclosed geometrical figure by four straight lines."

We all are busy to note down these words silently. I some confusion in my mind; I feel some torture, are there any triangles, quadrilateral enclosed with no straight lines or can we draw triangles by joining only two lines? Immediately I draw some figures in copy

[39]*Gober Ganesh* is a common saying in Nepali society which signifies idiot, illiterate person or not educated person.

with hesitation and nervousness, I stand up and show my drawings, "Are these triangles, quadrilaterals or not?"



Tiwari Sir looks at my drawings and laughs, "No, idiot boy, No! These are not triangles, quadrilaterals. Triangles, quadrilaterals are always enclosed by straight lines. Yasta Pagal Prashna Nagar (Idiots, don't ask suchquestions to me)". Then, Tiwari Sir writes the types of triangles, quadrilaterals on blackboard. We all students copy and try to memorize by reading silently.

"Twang, Twang, and Twang[40]" third period starts, and Tiwari Sir rushes out.

Prologue: Extending the Story

Story I: *Idiot Questions or Questioning Idiots* represents my learning experiences in school level and it signifies numerous cases, issues and situations of teaching practices in school level, such as: local planning of teaching the centralized textbook, no coverage of all lessons of textbook, organization of lessons in textbook, very little spaces in classroom interaction for students, fragmented subject matters. The contents may be locally detached,

Showing duster s/he commands
students to be duteous
Showing stick s/he asks
students to follow discipline
Rushing from front to back
s/he calls students to stand up muck
Throwing spit bubbles s/he scolds
students as cowboys
Why he is dux, are you like fox?

Standing and making loud voices
s/he lectures as stream
Shacking shoulders and hands
s/he continues content
Writing on black board
s/he joins definition and concept
Describing formulae
s/he writes heat equation in science

[40]*Twang, Twang, and Twang* is the bell's sound to signal next class period.

very little matching with students' prior learning, experiences and daily life world. I have conceptualized the images of teacher as transmitter of content, and teaching as transmission of subject matters. Such teaching may create learner as passive receptor and learning as ought-to know process.

The story "Idiot Questions or Questioning Idiots" reveals that teaching geometry in school level may be poor understanding of geometrical concepts and fuzzy notions about proof structure (Mogari, 2003, p. 69). The story depicts geometry teaching in school level like Mogari's (2003) conclusion, that learners generally find Euclidian geometry more difficulties than other Mathematics topics, the learners of rural, remote and deprived schools feel more problematic in learning geometry where good teachers and technological supports are hard to find (p. 70). In our school curriculum, geometry is one third part of textbook and students may have very little understanding. School geometry teaching is like Mistretta's (2000) conclusion which states that while geometry is a vital part of the curriculum, unfortunately, many students develop misconceptions, and feel that geometry is complicated and confusing. Then they start to memorize theorems and formulae without understanding (pp. 365-378). In this way,geometry learning is rote memorization and more complicated and confusing part of school level learning. The story "Idiot Questions or Questioning Idiots" depicts the images of geometry, as Putten (2008) concluded as a body of knowledge that is deep and complex, rigid and absolute, abstract and with no possibility of negotiating meaning (p.35).Geometry learning may be meaning-absent and abstract in classroom teaching.

Questions in My Mind: Failed to Find

Story I: *IdiotQuestions or Questioning Idiot* may depict that learning is not only the students' practices, but it is also the realm of teachers' teaching practices, their behaviors, classroom interaction between teacher and student, presentation of lesson, examples and experiences, daily life activities. As an insider, I have experienced that teaching and learning maybe collaborative practices of teachers and students. I have accepted Luitel, Kafle, and Aryal's (2012) conclusion that teachers' behavior is to keep students silent and teachers' role is more structured in classroom. Teachers are more willing to see the students sitting in classroom with discipline and obedience. There are no changes in traditional teaching ways despite many teacher professional development packages and interventions. Interactive learning practices are not praised. Student-teacher interaction is teacher centered i. e. teacher centered interaction. There may be very little room for students' experiences, daily life examples and local knowledge in classroom teaching. In classroom teaching, there may be very little places of different thinking and questions. If any students want to add experiences, examples teachers may not accept and neglect in classroom instruction. In my experience,Science and Mathematics teachers give very little emphasis on students' experiences, local examples and students' prior learning. Teachers give very less importance to local knowledge out of textbook. From the Story I, still I have so many questions related with triangle, and quadrilaterals, Euclidean geometry teaching and dilemmas but there is no placefor those questions in classroom teaching. Teachers' practices as traditional teachers do not give answers to my questions.

I have very little understanding of rigid and proof based geometrical theorems but I have no answers.

Textbook Culture and Ought-to-Know

Sarangpani (2003) has described "textbook culture" as teacher controlling the products of learning and regulating the effect of textbooks in teaching and learning activities. From my teaching experiences, such a culture promotes a hierarchical nature of interaction in classroom teaching. Often teachers depend fully on textbook and stick on textbook. They may be willing to implement centralized curriculum as that is. The central curriculum officers, textbook writers may believe that if there are no curriculum and textbooks then there is no teaching and learning in school. In such cases, teaching may be the process of implementing centralized textbooks. Curriculum may present that central level should provide well-structured and readymade goals, objectives, learning outcomes, content, evaluation process and strategies, fixed teaching strategies for teachers, fixed subject matters for students and on

Meaning???

Aware of student's freedom?
No knowledge of yours?
No place and value of your knowledge?
No full choices and responsibilities?

But what of the discipline and responsibilities?
By freedom you lose discipline and values
More rote process, you know more content
You learn more knowledge as mug-and-jug way
No meaning of your live, work and friend

But what of the local knowledge and skills?
Propel the subject matter into your brain
Learn what teachers providing knowledge
Vomit that knowledge in exams
Taken-granted for further

But what of the learner-centered ways?
Nine by picture, SLC by chance
I. A. by lecture, B. A. by dance
Chance and lecture provide certificates
Dance and picture provide romances

But what of the romantic visions?
Goad colorful butterflies into school hole
Same colored and sized butterflies out whole

the basis of these, teaching and learning processes run easily and more students pass exam.

I have come to realize that most of teachers give importance to textbook knowledge, examples, and concepts without connecting them with the world outside of the classroom. Textbook knowledge and examples may be pure and legitimized knowledge.These may be necessary for all students. Teachers may think that textbooks bear appropriate and necessary knowledge for preparing future citizens. They may enforce students to know anyway textbook knowledge as *ought-to-know* (Sarangapani, 2003, p. 125). In this line, I conclude that school teachers are emphasizing bookish definitions, examples and questions.

During the story *"Idiot Questions or Questioning Idiots"*, I remember that often teachersuttered words in a 'standard' manner as already structured such as:

Social studies teacheruttered:
----------Nepal-is-a-landlocked-country-situated-between-China-and-India.

Science teacher uttered:
----------Action-and-reaction are-always-equal-and-opposite.

English language teacher uttered:
----------Gore-Dai-is-a-fat-man, he-eats-a-lot-of-rice.

Mathematics teacher uttered:
----------Point-has-no-length-breadth-and-height.

In this way, teachers emphasized on the last few words of textbook lessons commonly. These may be some common and already structured knowledge and I think that such knowledge is culturally decontextualized, fragmented and detached from

students' learning experiences and being an ‘ought-to-know’ may be one of the characteristic ofmemorizing textbook knowledge.

Text/book Dominated Teaching

I have articulated two stories under text/book dominated teaching as data texts related with classroom teaching and learning. These narratives help me to consider textbooks as vital materials in classroom teaching. Teachers are dependent fully on textbooks and students are not so interested on textbook-based home assignment. In schools, teaching is dominated by textbooks.

Story II: Textbooks are Vital

"Wake up! Wake up!"It's too late to go for interview as you said yesterday evening. I woke up as my wife called. I looked at the calendar it was 4th of May, 2012. After taking tea, breads with pickle in breakfast, I was ready to go to my research field. When I reached school, teacher Umesh was ready to enter classroom. Mr. Umesh was a teacher of Red Rose Secondary School. After observing classroom teaching of Mr. Umesh, I had an informal conversation with him.

As I was sitting with Umesh, four to five students camenear Umesh and asked, "When do we get textbooks sir?"

Umesh asked, "We are trying to take as soon as possible. You have to wait for a few days."

At that time, I observed the room covered with spiders’ nets, book rack was covered with dust, and the old waste books were scattered in the room.

"Umeshji, what you taught in classroom few minutes ago, is textbook teaching, a traditional way of teaching. We can teach the lesson in different way, is it possible or not?"

Clearing his throat, Umesh spoke with hesitation "Yes, being fully dependent on textbooks for classroom teaching is one teaching strategy but if there are no curriculum, teachers guide and materials, the textbooks are main documents and directories of teaching and learning. But this does not mean that we do not use other materials and activities. I always give importance to extra-curricular activities and use of local materials."

In the meantime, two students entered and asked for volleyball to play in Tiffin time. Umesh told that, volleyball was bought in the last week, but there were no more balls left.

"Most of the teachers teach the centrally developed texts and subject matters without any change or adding contextual examples, experiences and local subject matters."I emphasized to concentrate on my research. "Have you any experiences of teaching in contextualized ways?"

"I am not only based on textbooks. Sometimes, I use posters, hand written newsprints, charts, pocket chart, numbers and word cards. I add some co-curricular activities-debate, quiz contest, and free writing within textbook activities. Also I use daily life examples,and cultural activities of society for teaching different lessons. This is my own village and I know most of the parents, children of this village. It is easy for me to link the social, cultural, daily life activities of students with textbooks' subject matter."

"Why are teachers taking textbooks so importantly as the main basis of teaching-learning process?" I asked.

"Textbooks have lessons with organized illustrated knowledge. Textbooks guide teachers to organize teaching process in classroom, to make lesson plan, to choose teaching strategies. In textbooks there are experiences, knowledge of subject experts, educationists, and different national and international perspectives, different concepts, and definitions. Textbooks are developed by subject experts based on certain principles. Textbooks are very essential for students in every time. Mathematics, Science, English, Economics, Additional Mathematics, Computer Science text books are very essential for teaching and learning."

Umesh worked following the daily teaching routine.

When he finished, I asked, "Most of the teachers are knowledgeable in content but they are lagging behind in meaningful teaching. Often educationists, government officers are blaming teachers and they often criticize teaching practices. How can we teach meaningfully?"

"Blaming culture is our social problem. Government has not provided textbooks, curriculum, teacher's guide and other teaching materials. Teaching is not based only on the teachers' activities; this is the accumulation of actions of teachers, parents, students, and curriculum i. e. government site."

Story III: Is There Home Assignment in Mathematics?

It can be any day of April 25, 2012.

I am in the porch of Nepal National Secondary School, Kalikhola,

Amar sir and I enter classroom of Grade IX.

The students stand up.

"Sit Down."

Students take their sits.

There are two rows of desks and benches, right row is for girls and left row is for boys and there is narrow passage between these two rows. I sit on the last and empty bench of classroom. There are different names of boys and girls on walls and desks. There are sixty three students.

Amar says, "Have you solved question number two, three and…? Show your home assignment."

"Hello girl, where is your assignment?Have you solved question number two and three?"

"I haven't any assignment, sir." The girl anxiously replies.

Amar asked, "Why! What is the reason?"

She replied, "I don't have any mathematics book."

Amar turns back and asks another student, "Hello boy, do you have home assignment?"

The boy says, "Ke Mathma Grihakarya Hunchha Ra Sir (Is there home assignment in mathematics?)."

"Surely, there is home assignment in mathematics also. Have you solved question no. two and three?"

The boy nods his head, "Sir, it is difficult to solve."

"Sit down."

"Now, turn the page number four and read question no. twosilently."

Amar writes Q. no. 2 on black board:

In a village, there are 50 people, among of them 30 like tea, 20 like milk, and 10 dislike both. How many people like both? Find and show in Venn diagram.

Amar readsthe question loudly and repeats providing the example of people's gathering in any place and one person surveying fifty people liking or disliking tea and milk.

"How many people are there in total?"

"Fifty."

Amar writes the total no. of people is fifty i. e. this number of people is universal set 'U'

n(U) = 50,

"How many people like tea?

"Thirty"

Number of people liking tea, n(T) = 30,

"How many people like milk?"

"Twenty"

Number of people liking milk, n(M) = 20,

"How many people dislike both?"

"Ten"

"This is the complement of set $n(T \cup M)$*"*

Number of people disliking tea and milk both, $n(\overline{T \cup M}) = 10$,

"What is to find?"

"The number of people who like both tea and milk." Two, three students say.

All students are listening teacher's descriptions and busy in copy.

Amar writes the formula and solves step by step as follows.

$$n(U) = n(T) + n(M) - (T \cap M) + n(\overline{T \cup M})$$

Or, $50 = 30 + 20 - n(T \cap M) + 10$

Or, $50 = 60 - n(T \cap M)$

Or, $50-60=n(T\cap M)$

$\therefore\ n(T\cap M)=10_{Ans.}$

Amar waits for some time.

"Have you finished?"

"Yes Sir."

"Now, solve question no. three in this way."

Amar comes near to me and signals me to go. I wait Amar out of classroom for a while.

"Continue working. I will come later."

Prologue: Stretching the Stories

Through Story II and III,I hope to demonstratethat textbooks are very essential for school teachers to teach their subject matters but they are not sufficient to create meaningful learning environment in schools. There is no doubt that textbooks provide basic ideas, knowledge and skills required for the discipline being discussed. Because of the nature of the textbook being more structured and author's text (Luitel, 2009), teaching is likely to be divorced from the everyday life world of the students. Upon my reflection, the classroom teaching is detached from local plants, animals, and environmental aspects in science; our daily life activities and materials in mathematics. I can say from my experiences that most of the Nepali teachers are dependent on textbooks and they usually use only textbooks in classroom teaching but my concern is how to use textbooks in classroom and how teachers are linking local knowledge and skill with the bookish knowledge and examples. I argue that most of teachers have long experiences of handling textbooks rather than contextualized teaching. From the story "*Textbook Dominated Teaching"*, it may be noticed that our schools may practice bookish knowledge

deductively, and there may be very less interaction with students in classroom. What teacher knows and what is in the textbook are the teaching resource for teachers. The images of mathematics and science as *already fixed, fully over loaded by structured and accumulated knowledge* may signify traditional notion of *learning-as-ought-to-know*anyway. Students' may think teachersare supreme knowerof all things.In these situations, school teachers, students and parents may give more importance on west-centric knowledge. Our school knowledge may create more proof-based, number cramming problems and bookish knowledge for students. From the story "Is There Home Assignment in Mathematics?"I argue that textbook teaching deductively make teachers and students more dependent on already written work. These practices are likely to detach teaching from daily life activities, experiences and examples.

Constructing Situatedness

When I discussed with Bal Chandra Luitel (my instructor and mentor), I knew that the culturally contextualized knowledge, experiences and examples may be more influential factors in Mathematics and Science teaching and learning.Lived experiences of students, and daily life activities may be attached with classroom teaching and learning. If we take technical interest as the defining lens, then we may say that Mathematics and Science are context free subjects (Grundy, 1987). Reflectively speaking, if curriculum is taken as intended learning outcomes then we may have a herculean task to fulfill the outcomes via readymade subject matters.

It is important to note that heterogeneity is a natural reality and learning is a social as well as individual process, teachers may deal with different contextual situations, experiences and examples. Students' performance is influenced by contextual knowledge,

experiences and local examples (Abreu, 1995). I am of the view that attitudes, understandings, and experiences of teachers and students may be situated within classroom teaching and learning.

According to my experiences too, students may be treated similarly. Classroom situation is a mosaic and same numeracy practices, monotonous teaching, and centrallydeveloped curriculum materials may create locally detached practices. I argue that most of the classroom teaching was based on teacher-centered environment where students may be quiet recipients of knowledge; teachers may very less attend towards children's psychological, social behaviors; their interests and expectations. Upon reflection, teachers are found less receptive about the use of culturally situated, examples, signs and symbols (Luitel, 2009). In this way culturally situated knowledge, experiences, and examples which are important for contextualization of curriculum and meaningful learning are often denied and overlooked in the process.

Story IV: The Fever of IPL[41]

It is a hot day of the first week of April 2013 and I am again in my research field according to my mentor's suggestion. The dawn is very little cool. It is the month of Kuhu, Kuhu[42]…sound of a bird. Trees have newly budding leaves changing from red to green.

When I am in the porch of school, it seems that school is frozen. There is no sound of teaching and reading. I observe that students and teachers are not so enthusiast

[41]*IPL* standsIndian Premier League, a cricket match.
[42]*Kuhu, Kuhu…*is the sound of Koilee bird especially in spring season. The scientific name of Koilee (Koel in Hindi) bird is Eudynamys scolopaceus categories in Cuckoo order of birds which is a brood parasite that lays its eggs in the nests of crow or other hosts, who raise its young.

to learning and teaching. Students are sitting under thenew leafy greensmall trees and classrooms. Their hands are empty. Every corner of school is calm except for the office room.

The office room is in upstairs of the building. There are chairs, head teacher's chair and tables. On a corner table, there are haphazardly scattered books, and student attendance registers. Apart from these, there is nothing in the room but walls are full of charts, name lists of different committees and posters. Head teacher's chair is covered with towel. The towel is dirty. Nobody cares.

Teachers are gathering nearer to each other and talking about the IPL game in the staff room.I hear teachers' gossip about IPL. I know that it is the month of Indian Premier League (IPL).

Teacher 1 says, "Kolkata Knight Rider club won the match."

Teacher 2 says, "That club has two famous persons- Sharukh Khan[43], and Juhi Chawala[44]."

I see that some teachers are gathering to listen toradio's news. The news is about IPL game.

The IPL is hanging on everyone's tongue. In the teacher staff room, the teachers are talking about the past night's IPL game, who balled, collected run, caught out, who succeeded to take 6 or 4 runs etc.

Teacher 3 says, "The balling was not so good. There were mistakes to catch ball."

"How sweet six runs! I was excited." Teacher 2 says

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[43]the famous hero of Bollywood
[44]thefamous heroine of Bollywood

Teacher 4 who is listening the gossip silently, says, "In my home, there was no electricity due to short-circuit. I am feeling bad, I am an unlucky person."

All teachers laugh at his unluckiness. At the meantime, two/three students requests, "Sir, our classes are not running. What should we do? May we go home or not?"

Teacher 1 scolds them, "Sale Pdhaiyaharu, Ja, Ja, Mukh Nadekha…. (Nonsense students, go, go and don't show your face here again)."

They rush silently.When I view the scene of playground through window, I see that students have started going.

I observethe annual work plan for new session, which is abstract and rough. There is half finished daily teaching routing on head teacher's table. The teacher preparation is insufficient.

Head teacher enters office room and talks with account teacher about auditing the bills of newly constructed building. Head teacher tells teachers to attend classes. Two teachers standwith chalk and duster to attend classes. Meanwhile, I see that the head teacher is going outside of school. Again the teachers who are ready to attend classes put the chalk and duster on table and start to talk.

Prologue: Stretching the Story

The story IV: *The Fever of IPL* depicts that the school context may be different from the context envisaged in the centrally developed curriculum. Social activities, incidents or events may affect teaching and learning. Attitude, concern and daily life activities may affect teaching and learning. The priorities of teachers, thinking and daily life activities are basic concepts directly related with teaching. In a village or in neighborhood, there may be any wedding ceremony, cultural program or household

ceremonies and such functions affect student's learning. Teaching and learning practices may depend upon daily life activities, teachers' attitudes, activities and their preparation and presentation of lessons in classroom. Already estimated and framed time bound, centralized curricula, centrally developed textbooks and intended learning outcomes may not work in local context. The parents merely meet the teachers and ask about their child's learning condition. There may very few discussions about the curriculum, textbooks, and teaching-learning problems in school.

As per my experience as a student, teacher and researcher, I have came to realize that teachers are less prepared for classroom teaching. They may think that they have no sufficient time for teaching five/six periods during school time. In my experiences, I want to convey my experience that teachers are less willing to share and discuss about their classroom teaching and learning experiences and knowledge with their colleagues. They may feel difficulties in student-centered teaching and learning. They may enter into the class as the dictators withoutandy preplan and preparation for teaching. Their teaching preparation, concerns, attitudes, teaching styles may not be satisfactory and may not support meaningful teaching and learning.

Story V: Old as Gold

My learning journey was started from 1978. My first school, a primary school (Grade I to V) was a milestone of my educational life. The school building was very old with thatched- roof. My experiences of learning in primary level are blurred and there are no any remarkable events and experiences. Every Friday, all we students were too busy in cleaning muddy floor. The windows and doors were very old and blackboard was rough. Every week, we had to paint blackboard by black color of waste dry cells of radio,

and torchlight. Then after completing primary level (after Grade V) I was shifted to a secondary school (Grade I to X) where I studied from Grade VI to X. The classes were more crowded and buildings were more in number than my first school. Both of these schools were little far from my home and situated near Bheri River. I remembered my feelings about river, water, sand and stone, river shore, swimming, and fish-hooking. My friends used to describe swimming, fishing and coolness of Bheri river shore. Those gossips excited me but I went very rarely to rivershore, some hidden power terrified me.

From school to university, my classes were arranged in row, separated from each other and very little opportunities were there for group discussion. Still I remember that the teaching was done in traditional disciplinary ways. The classes were heavily crowded, desks and benches were managed in row and there was a little space in front of classroom where my teachers stood and interpreted the subject matters. They rarely moved towards the back of the classroom and most of the teachers stood in front of classroom near to blackboard wall and started the lessons stridently. Mathematics, Science and English teachers used blackboard more but Nepali, Social, Economics teachers rarely used blackboard. From my prolonged practices of learning based on teacher centered teaching, I conceptualized that traditional teaching means teachers enter into the classroom, stands in front of student, asks students the topic of lesson and starts to transmit the lessons. Learning means silently sit on bench and listento the teachers' voices.

Most of my teachers read the lessons and described the chapters according to topics and subtopics. They rarely interpreted the meaning of difficult words and described the meaning with examples given in textbooks. In lower grades, I understood

the place value of numbers, addition of time (Hour, Minutes, and Seconds), money (Rupees and Paisa), distance (Kilometers, Meters) very little. I never repeated these chapters of mathematics and I became very weak in Mathematics.

The teaching method was lecturingand we all sat silently, and motionless as statues in classroom. We listenedto the description of teachers silently. I liked the moral and ritual stories in Nepali and Social Studies more. Nepali and Social Studies teachers always scolded and they showed dissipated and unsocial behaviors. I always feared with head teacher, Nepali and Social Studies teachers. If any student moved or talked with bench mates then he/she was penalized.

From school to university education (from 1978 to1992), the annual summative assessments were only to upgrade or fail students and questions were from textbooks or question collection books which was known as Old as Gold. To answer the questions, I had to memorize answers from textbooks. There were guess papers, and guide books. I repeated again and again the answers given in those books before examination time. I rarely turned the pages of textbooks but read guess papers, and Old as Gold book. Sometimes, I got tired of rote memorization. I thought that there are any easy way to understand, to learn bookish abstract knowledge and concepts. Passive receptive process of learning made me teacher dependent student. I have questions regarding this practice: What things are necessary to change traditional methods of teaching? Why teachers do practices as the followers of traditional methods? What things are necessary to teach meaningfully- the physical structure; teachers' beliefs, and perceptions; socio-cultural, local contexts, daily life activities, or old as gold?

Prologue: Student as a Wooden Doll

Story V "Old as Gold" is my narrative of experiences in metaphoric way. The story depicts that classrooms are congested, and crowded. Desks and benches are managed in row. The physical structure of classroom is unsuitable for group activities, discussions and other activities. Students sit in large group and it is very difficult to manage students in classroom. My learning and teaching experiences reveal that knowledge is not attained but constructed (von Glasersfeld, 1989). Knowledge construction practices may be dimmed by traditional teaching practices, in which teaching means teacher enters into classroom, stands in front of students, asks topic of lesson, transmits the lesson and rushes out from classroom. Teacher may dominate the classroom with the over use of the textbook (Kim, 2002). Teacher may give textbook knowledge more importance and takes it as the main source of teaching and learning. The teacher centered transmission of bookish lessons and passive reception of those lessons may depict students as wooden dolls. During field visit, I knew that most of the school teachers thought that students have no or very little knowledge experiences which are not sufficient for their life and to study further. This situation depicts that a learner arrives not with a 'blank slate' but with experiences, socio-cultural attitudes and prior knowledge (Jensen, 2000, p. 30).

Here, I want to present the images of teacher as autocrat, teaching as transmitting the textbook lessons, learning as rote memorization of answers of guide books, learners

as passive receptors and assessment as question-answering from old is gold books from my experiences of learning.

Traditional[45] and Unrealistic Teaching[46]

I have developed two stories from my experiences of teaching and from data text. These stories depict some scenes and practices of teaching in schools as traditional and impractical. Teaching styles are for rote memorization for textbook knowledge and there is very little space for students' engagement and practical use of mathematical knowledge in daily life. Reading and telling textbook lessons, transmitting them as teachers' understanding detached from students' experiences are some common features of teaching mathematics and science in classroom.

Story VI: Unanswerable Encounter

This is the story of my teaching profession in 2002. I am teaching mathematics and science. The classroom is densely crowded and there is very little space for standing in front of student. I feel very uneasy to control classroom. Grade X students are talking with bench mates and it seems that they are less interested to read mathematics. I scold them loudly to sit silently. I hear the flapping sounds of pages. They open algebra part of compulsory Mathematics. I once overview the whole classroom and start to teach the solving process of two simultaneous linear equations with examples in the chapter "Two Simultaneous Linear Equations."

"There are three process of solving two simultaneous linear equations: substitution method, eliminating method and graph method." I write two equations on blackboard:

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[45]Traditional teaching is a teacher centered practice in which a teacher stands in front of students and starts to interpret textbook lessons as their own understanding and examples without taking students' experiences and do not interact with students.

[46]Unrealistic teaching does not interact with reality i. e. situations, local contexts.

$3x - 2y = 6,$

$x + y = 7$

The students of Grade X are silently hearing my descriptions, looking at the blackboard, and copying the deductive process. There is no group work, and discussions only students are listening silently to capture my voices.

One student suddenly stands and asks, "Sir, where and how can we apply these skills; and what is the use of this chapter in our daily life?"

These sudden questions make me stop my lecture. How can we use the knowledge, and skills of such mathematical solving process in our daily life, where and how these can be used? I think a bit longer and reply, "These method are very useful in industrial companies, economics, finding the age of father and son, prices of different materials from relations of two variables and are also very essential in the higher level study. These questions are not related to the course of school study. That's why, I do not describe about such questions in my interpretations."

I ask the student to sit down. I describe the solving process of one problem deductively. Students silently copy that solving process. At the end of the class, I advice students, "Read, practice more and more, revise more and more then you can pass the SLC exam". Some students shake their heads as usual and most of students do not listen seriously. In this way, I finish mathematics teaching.

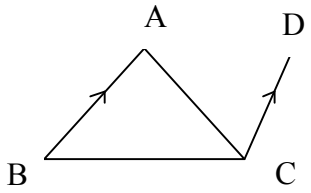
Story VII: Teaching for Rote Memorization

On a day of September, 2009, I am teaching geometry in grade nine. Teaching geometry means I am trying students to rote memorize the theoretical proof given in

mathematics textbook. I write whole proof on black board, draw figure and construct table.

"Prove that the sum of 3 angles of any triangle is 180^0 *"*

Figure:



Given: ΔABC

To prove: $\angle BAC + \angle ABC + \angle BCA = 180^0$

Construction: draw AB // CD

Proof:

Statements	*Reasons*
1. $\angle ABC + \angle BCD = 180^0$	*Two consecutive angles*
2. $\angle BAC = \angle ACD$	*Two alternate angles*
3. $\angle BCD = \angle BCA + \angle ACD$	*Whole part axiom*
4. $\angle ABC + \angle BCA + \angle ACD = 180^0$	*From 1 and 3*
5. $\angle ABC + \angle BCA + \angle BAC = 180^0$ *i.e.* $\angle A + \angle B + \angle C = 180^0$	*From 2 and 4*

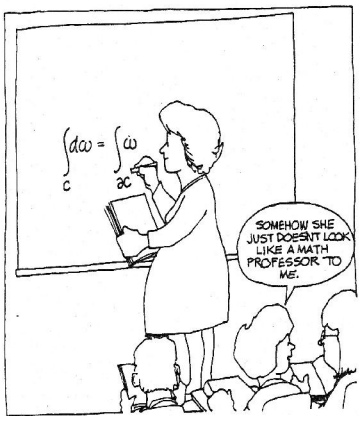
Proved

When I am making my studentsmemorize, one student who is irregular to the class to whom I often scold and neglect speaks, "Sir, I understand very little and it's very difficult to remember. Is it important to memorize such proofs?""Oh! Sit down. What do you mean? If it is difficult, what is easy for you?" I say angrily. "It may be difficult to understand for irregular student. If you memorize anyway, gradually you can understand such theoretical proofs."

"If you listen quietly and try to memorize, that is better." I raise index finger and point to all students. I continue my teaching.

Prologue: Stretching the Stories

My narratives of experiences of teaching and data texts "Unanswerable Encounter" and "Teaching for Rote Memorization" portrays some teaching styles in classroom. Here, mathematics teaching is largely deductive and is a transmissions of solving process of algorithmic mathematical problems. Students try to copy the deductive process. Most of the transmissions may be mechanistic that is teachers tell and students hear. Reading, telling, listening, and writing may be frequently used in classrooms. I still remember my classroom teaching which was deeply rooted in the transmission of subject matter and I was unable to link the theoretical proofs of geometrical theorems, linear and nonlinear equations, trigonometric ratios with daily life experiences and activities meaningfully. Teachers may take classroom control and discipline as important aspects of teaching and learning, they may be very less enthusiast about students' experiences and to teaching constructivist ways (e. g. group activities, discussion, presentation, and free writing).



Geometry TeachingThrough Deductive Method

The way of teaching the already structured lessons, foreign and imported scientific and mathematical concepts and definitions may have very less meaning with respect to our society, students' needs and interests. The geometrical deductive proofs are very less related with the work of world (Luitel, 2009). In geometry,there may be different concepts, postulates, theorems, facts, and figures detached from our physical world. How can teachers link the deductive proofs of geometrical facts with daily life

world? Being a Science and Mathematics teacher in school level, I did not complete whole mathematics course and geometry portion was given in the last pages of textbook. The geometry portion was left to teach and students did not do any self practice to learn.I feel that most of the theoretical proofs of geometrical theorems were difficult to link with students' experiences.In that situation, my teaching was hardly meaningful in classroom.

The Story *"Teaching for Rote Memorization"* may depict that the deductive proof of geometrical theoremhas very less opportunities of adding experiences and examples from the side of teachers and students. There may be very less possibilities to understand and remember such barren proofs. To remember this as it is, often students usethe method of *'Ghokne or Ratne'* (an act of rote memorization) and in such situations, learning may be dominated by text book assigned activities and learning may be obtainable through academic pipelines in our school setting (Nsamenang et al., 2008, pp. 49-50) and teaching may be pouring and filling process.

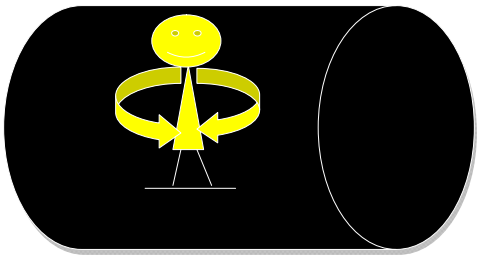
Reading and Telling: My Opportunities in Teaching

When I started to write this chapter, I remembered my student life. In college (1988 to 1992), I studied physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, atomic structures, chemical reactions, numerical problems, Dalton's gaseous law, Lens maker's formula and so on. I come to know that my learning as a science student was guided by rationality, mechanistic worldview and piped transmission (Luitel, 2009). I faced much more difficulties to memorize the definitions, examples, formulae, numerical formula derivations, calculus, matrices and determinants without proper understanding. My socio-cultural background and language very less matched with teachers' socio-cultural background. They very rarely used local examples and they ignored my prior learning,

and experiences. Often they entered into classroom and started the lectures as saying “So far as I have taught you about……. in previous lectures, now I will teach about…….” In this way, my teacher continued the lecture whole year. My classroom learning was dominated by textbooks and teachers and it was detached from my prior learning.

Story VIII: Setting Myself within the Traditional Landscape

My teaching journey from 1990 to 2010 was very challengeable. Before teacher training, I was more depended on textbook. Key teaching materials were textbooks for me. Textbooks helped me to rote memorize centralized subject matters.I tried much to teach the bookish definitions, concepts and number crammed mathematics by trial and error. During teacher training, I knew about constructivist and meaningful learning strategies. I was not aware of constructivism and postmodernism before the training. I think that the unchanging nature of management system of school, centrally developed textbooks, crowded classroom, and immovable furniture in classroom might be some factors to be a traditional teacher. Being a traditional teacher and the situations, I felt that I had no any power to change the existing conditions and problems in order to use some constructivist teaching approaches. I was into a long tunnel in which no light was visible in any ends.



I started teaching by using group work, independent reading, note making, writing summary, and group discussion. I made some materials in school and home. I collected local materials- playing cards, marbles, beam balance, number cards, posters, charts, bangles, sticks etc. I used these to teach trigonometry, equation, inequalities, probability in secondary level and numbers, circles, addition, subtraction, fraction in

lower classes. Conducting group discussions, presentation of summaries, using students in different activities, materials collection and demonstrations created some disturbances in other classes, some students did not actively participate in group works, and some side talks of students disturbed mealso. Some students were not satisfied and happy with me. Immovable furniture and large group of students in classroom were some difficulties in group discussions, in using materials and meet to them individually.

After some days, I heard some backbites. Some teachers teased me "Jitendra sir is a philosopher science teacher. His classes are out of control and he is unable to control students and maintain discipline in classroom." Some parents came to school and told "Jitendra sir is not a strict teacher, though he has good understanding of subject matters but his classes are chaotic. He uses playing cards and marbles in classroom. We do not think teaching with playing cards and marbles increases the result of school. This is out of discipline and students are not frightened with him." Head teacher said, "Jay is a strict teacher, he easily controls classes. How we teach is not important. Using materials, repeating lessons, using different teaching methods are not important but discipline, classroom control and rules are important. Therefore you have to control students and establish discipline in classroom. Take stick, slap the talking students and keep the class very quiet." I thought it is so difficult perception. I shared some teaching methods with other teachers which Ilearnt in training with head teachers and other teachers. They accepted my ideas but said that those teaching methods were theoretical knowledge and using such methods in our classroom setting is very much difficult. I thought "If I want to continue my teaching profession, I have to follow them, their advices and use traditional ways otherwise I have to leave this profession." The only alternative I had was to follow

the other teachers' styles of teaching and use of traditional methods. In this way, I returned to traditional teaching strategies.

Prologue: Extending the Story

The story "Setting Myself within the Traditional Landscape" depicts how traditional teachers teach in schools. Textbooks are key teaching materials for teachers. Unchanging nature of school management system, large group of students, immovable furniture and congested classroom may be some difficulties to teach by using materials, group discussions, field trip and other appropriate activities.Teachers and parents may be unhelpful to change the existing situations and practices.

Traditional teachers may think that their duty is to provide the textbook knowledge only. Students may be forced to memorize what teachers and textbooks provided them.They may be unwilling to initiate students for questioning, to motivate for learning. They may enforce students to memorize the bookish knowledge for exam. They may feel easy in providing readymade answer of questions.

In these stories, I had a flashback of my past. When I entered classroom to teach Mathematics and Science, I started to recall my teachers' teaching practices and my learning ways as described as Giddens rule-like style of doing and taking the daily life activities (Kaspersen, 2000, p. 59). From my habitual mind, I memorized my teachers' teaching practices and my learning process and that recall transferred into my teaching practices. The habitual practices shaped my teaching practices. Teachers may be habitual in transmitting the textbook knowledge, content in verbatim (Sarangapani, 2003). Based on my learning and teaching experiences, I argue that teachers practice what they experienced and practiced.

Guru-Shisya[47] Relationship: Teacher Dependent Student

By the story VIII "Setting within the traditional landscape", I want to share my experiences of learning of primary level. When I sat to read books, often my grandparents gave their attention to my reading. I often read textbook lessons loudly. After listening, they often asked about my teachers: how they teach, which teacher was good for me, how many subjects didI read in school. Then I started to describe about my teachers' teaching styles. Sometimes I demonstrated caricature of their teaching styles. My grandparents often advised me, "Follow your teachers; they are supreme knowers of all knowledge and do what they say." My grandfather described about the Great Gurus of Vedic time: Dornacharya[48], Bishwamitra[49], Parashuram[50] etc. I believed that my Gurus (teachers) took me toward *Moksha* (liberation) of my life and I would go to *Swarga* (God's place) after death. He gave a *Vedic Sloke* (verse) and every morning I repeated loudly that:

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।

गुरु साक्षात् परंब्रह्म तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः ॥

(Gurur Brahma, Gurur Bishnuh, Gurur Devo Maheshwarah

Gurur Sakshaat Parabrahma, Tasmain Sri Guruwe Namah)[51].

Still such Vedic verses inspire me. According to Luitel (2009), there was dialogic relationship between Guru (teacher) and Shisya (student) in Vedic time. Question-

[47]Teacher-Student according to Vedic notion.
[48]Dornacharya in short Dorna was a guru of Pandavs and Kauravs.
[49]Bishwamitra was a guru of Ram, and Laxman.
[50]Parashuram was a guru of Karna.
[51]Teachers are as Brahma, Bishnu, Maheshwar, directly they are eternal force. That's why, I have greeted teachers.

answer, Baad and Bibaad[52] were some dialogical activities to create knowledge. The teaching and learning methods were discussions, debate, question-answering, self inquiry, and self realization. I think that such methods are still important for contextualized teaching and meaningful learning.

In Nepal, culturally decontextualized pedagogy is likely to represent the British-Indian educational legacy of colonialism as Nepal imported its school education from the then East India Company before the 1950s (Luitel, 2009). Such pedagogy helped to create centralized curriculum materialsand textbook culture. The culturally decontextualized curriculum emphasized in teacher initiated strategies of teaching definitions, examples and other's experiences rather than that of the students. The relationship between me and my teachers was very less dialogic and I became a teacher dependent student. Here, I want to demonstrate my argument that such relationship may be deductive and detached due to over dependency on centrally developed curriculum materials and the dialogic relationship between teacher and student may be colonized.

Teachers' Beliefs, Attitudes, and Practices

From my experiences of teaching "Setting within the Traditional Landscape" and "Teacher Dependent Student", I have tried to depict how teachers' beliefs and attitudes shape teaching practices in classroom. I am writing this paragraph based on Thompson's (1992) concept that nature of teachers' beliefs, and perceptions about subject matter influence teaching and learning practices. Here, I want to demonstrate that often

[52] Baad, Bibaad are Sanskrit words and their English equivalent terms can be proponent and opponent respectively.

mystudents created jokes *"MathleLyath Parchha"*[53](Mathematics makes all tired) from my deductive and abstract teaching styles as Ernest's (1996) view that students perceive mathematics as "difficult, cold, abstract, and masculine" (p. 802). But these are not only jokes; these are images and beliefs of students about mathematics learning practices. Teachers also believe that mathematics is for male and talent students. I want to demonstrate that mathematics learning is difficult (Mtetwa & Garofalo, 1989, as cited in Sam, 1999) as students have negative beliefs and images of mathematics and is for super minds despite consistent call for mathematics education for all. Most of the teachers and students believe that Mathematics, Science and English subjects are only for the clever students. Why should I make them part of core curriculum then?

Chapter Recapitulation

Curriculum as a syllabus, curriculum as a list of learning topics, teaching as transmitting, learning as cramming process and rote memorization are basically some images of teaching and learning practices in respect of centralized curriculum. Mostly, teachers are practicing the traditional ways of teaching and students are rote memorizing the textbook knowledge, definitions, concepts, facts, examples. They believe on centralized curriculum and textbook knowledge. Mainly Mathematics, Science and English subjects are taken as male dominant, hard, complex and not directly related with socio-cultural contexts. The local knowledge, experiences, and examples can be linked with centralized curriculum with the activeness and facilitation of teachers. Teachers have good perception of linking the centralized curriculum knowledge with experiences and examples but they are little practicing the contextualization of curriculum in

[53]Often students talk in classroom that mathematics subject is difficult, and rote and cram practices tire all. Students create some jokes based on classroom practices.

classroom teaching. In the traditional practices students are taken as passive receptors of bookish knowledge, and examples. Teachers' beliefs are reflected in their classroom teaching practices. There may be restrictions, problems and challenges in learning and teaching practices. Guru-Shisya relationship is far from constructivist ways and that relationship makes students teacher dependent. Through my experiences, here I want to demonstrate that I was a rote memorizer as a learner, lecturer as teacher, follower of teachers and textbooks. The perceptions and practices of curriculum shape teaching and learning practices which I hope to depict in next chapter.

CHAPTER V

CURRICULAR IMAGES AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

In chapter III, I have presented how centrally developed curriculum materials, and teacher centered teaching practices are helping for learning as rote memorization practices. Culturally decontextualized subject matters and examples, fragmented and centralized curriculum materialsare some traditional and impractical practices for meaningless learning. In chapter IV, I have tried to explore that there are very little spaces of prior experiences of students. Classroom teaching is dominated by textbook culture and teacher preparation is not sufficient.

In this chapter, I present some tacit curricular images by exploring teachers' perception about curriculum materials re/shaped by their beliefs, daily life activities and cultural contexts. Overall, this chapter responds to my research question: How do teachers(including myself as a teacher) perceive and practice the centralized curriculum in local contexts? And, in this chapter, firstly, I have discussed some beliefs and teaching practices. Secondly, I have tried to analyze the tacit metaphors in the classroom teaching practices, and thirdly I have explored some teaching practices.

Anecdote I: Leave Science Faculty!

This is the very beginning of my collegelife in 1988 October/November. I am trying to adapt in a big college environment in plain Terai region with no lasting horizon. The hot and dusty dusk scene of Terai region fails to attract me and I return to the west. The splintercloudy horizon in the time of sunset takes me from present life to past. I remember uneven floors, scratched and not painted stone walls of my small rural school

building. The college has smooth, large and colored buildings which are painted right now. There is no spotted ceiling but even ceiling with big electric fans and bulbs. In my school days, we often quarreled to sit on old and rough thick benches. The rough stoned side of walls pinched my eyes. The classroom filled with big furniture and there is large chalkboard. I am delighted to widen my knowledge as Terai horizon. After few days, I feel inconvenient with the disconnected subjects, fragmented knowledge, others' text, and countless lectures. I as an inexperienced student of university level, feel more uneasy to rote memorization, practice and repetition of the disconnected subject matters, teachers' formal elite language, English medium textbooks and instruction, culturally decontextualized figure and letter, number and alphabetic crammed lessons. Gradually, I experience that the inside of classroom was not as beautiful as the outside of the classroom and endless Terai horizon with golden sunrise. The teaching and learning is embedded with foreign writers' textbooks and decontextualized definitions, formulae, units and examples and the teaching and learning is not different as my school experiences. From daily abstract and monotonous teaching and learning practices, I am unable to find unerring methods of knowing textbook definitions, concepts and examples. Gradually, I feel bored and indifferent with detached knowledge of Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics from my experiences and daily life. I am a dulland noncreative remote village boy;professors degrade me in science faculty. I find that University education is also similar to my school level education.

In the first practical class of chemistry, I enter chemistry lab. The chemistry lab is filled with big tables, tap stand, different colorful bottles of chemicals, different apparatuses, and smell of chemicals.

Professor Dayal first of all presents long tale of his own background. Then Dayal sir writes topic of practical "Bend given glass tube into (i) acute angle (ii) right angle and (iii) obtuse angle."

Lab assistants arrange all students.And in front of me a big table is there with Bunsen burner, glass tubes. The table rack is filled with different bottles of chemicals.

Lab boy lights up my Bunsen burner and says "Now start your practical."

Dayal sir demonstrates the practical by heating the middle part of glass tube and bending it.

I take one glass tube and heat the middle part in the flame of Bunsen burner. When I start to bend glass tube it breaks. Then I do not try to do practical again.

I am standing and observing friends' practices.

Dayal sir is observing table to table. He sees me and comes near to my table.

"Why have you stopped practical?"

"Sir, I cannot bend glass tube."

"What! Heat glass tube and bend immediately."

"I heat glass tube and try to bend, but it breaks." I got frightened.

My body starts to shiver with fear.

"Oh! Steadily bend the glass tube."

Dayal sir takes a glass tube, heat and bends easily.

"In which angle?"

Teacher as omniscient Student as ignorant
Teacher as possessor Student as retainer
Teacher as leader Student as follower
Teacher as interpreter Student as listener
Teacher as live Student as corpse
Teacher as depositor Student as account
Teacher as nice wiser Student as ill foolish
Teacher as oppressor Student as oppressed

"……." I silently stand.

"Acute angle means?"

Again I have no answer.

"Do you know what acute angle, right angle, obtuse angle means?"

"Acute angle means……."

I cannot answer.

"Oh! You do not know what acute angle, right angle and obtuse angle mean. How can you perform practical?"

"Where are you from?"

"From remote hilly region." I answer very hardly. My body is shivering.

Dayal sir goes in front of blackboard, "Hello, Oli (pointing to me) you are from remote hilly region, you do not know the meaning of acute angle, right angle and obtuse angle.How can you continue your study in science faculty? If any students do not know such very basic concepts, I advice them to leave the science faculty."

"Oli, you can change faculty."

I see dark all around. I have no answer. Other students are looking at me. When other students are busy in practical and writing, I leave chemistry lab.

Prologue: Extending the Anecdote

"Leave Science Faculty!" is the anecdote of my university education.I remember how I faced my teachers when I was unable to complete homework and classroom activities and to understand the mathematical operations and formulae, scientific definitions, signs and symbols. I was uninterested towards Mathematics and Science learning due to my inability of understanding.

Due to foreign bookish knowledge and unfamiliar words (Luitel, 2003), I developed some problems such as fear, anxiety and adaptation. Students may have problems in learning due to detached subject matters and concepts from their experiences, unfavorable environment and unfamiliar teachers. Unseen signs and symbols, unused words, laboratory experiments and library study set me the ought-to-know bookish knowledge (Sarangapani, 2003). Also there were fear and anxiety with examination result. Monotonous classroom situations, teaching styles and language of the teachers, English medium textbooks and instruction were some causes of making me bored towards learning. I felt that it was very difficult to adapt in university environment for remote village students like me.

The Journey of M Phil Learning

In the journey of M Phil level learning, I studied curriculum theory and practices which was a compulsory subject based on reflectivejournal writing. I wrote seven journals during the first semester (first six months). Based on those class discussions and journals, I have developed some anecdotes. This section is my latest learning and may be more technical, but ithas rectified my traditional mind set towards constructive and transformative.

Anecdote II: Different Concepts of Curriculum

It may be any day of February, 2011. Still there is cold and the evening time is going cooler. The classroom is spacious and the chairs and tables are movable. We are thirteen students. I want to say that this is small group of students. We are waiting for Professor in Classroom no. 310. I have some excitement, curiosity being a University student again after a one and half decade. We all students are from different

backgrounds. Some of us are teachers, administration officers and some are freelance researcher. I am a school teacher.

Professor enters into the room: "Good evening everyone and warm welcome in the course Curriculum Theory and Practice."

We all greet him too and he starts classroom teaching with discussion, and PowerPoint slides to present the first chapter related with first journal "Curriculum and metaphors". Professor starts with introduction, "Originally, the curriculum was considered as the product of a technical process. In other words, curriculum was a document prepared by experts, depending on the state of the art of disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge. Historically, curriculum was the program of school and it was the school structure (Plato's academy) and it was the wisdom for Sages, Rishis, and Elders."

With gentle cough, Professor forwards Power point slides, "From colonial perspectives it was the means for colonization. It was main mandated education plan to prepare for ritual masters, transference of technical vocational knowledge. Nowadays curriculum is typically considered to be the official written document from a higher authority and sent to school levels to implement. Such a document is seen as a mandated template that must be followed by all teachers." Professor stops for a while and asks, "Have you any idea about curriculum?"

I understand very little and think that I have to clear my concept of curriculum.

I ask, "Curriculum is not only the course plan and syllabus. Taba (1962) has defined that curriculum is a plan for learning. Without curriculum how can a teacher teach in classroom and how are textbooks developed, how can we balance teaching, learning and assessment in classroom, I do not understand?"

"Yes Oliji, curriculum is not only syllabus, list of contents and it is the overall plan of teaching and learning process in classroom and out of the classroom. Tanner and Tanner (1975) have described that curriculum is the planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience, under the auspices of the school, for the learners' continuous and willful growth in person-social competence."

One of my classmates adds, "There are different definitions, concepts, issues and challenges in perceiving and practicing curriculum. Curriculum thinking and practices depend upon our thinking, understanding and daily life activities. Am I right sir?"

Professor clarifies with some more detail, "Yes, yes..., Curriculum Theory and Practice depends upon our daily life experiences, socio-cultural setting and national, international and local practices."

Another classmate adds, "There are so many curriculum definitions that how can perceive such diverse conceptions?"

Professor smiles and rejoins his description "There are traditional, outmoded concepts and constructivist concepts about curriculum. Curriculum denotes different things as a noun and as a verb. According to Eastern Philosophy, curriculum is Rita and Lila. Rita is completely order, sequence and stepwise process and Lila is enjoyable, aesthetic disorder."

Next classmate puts his perception, "Due to the different nature, perceptions and practices of our teaching and learning, curriculum is not only a thing or process of educating people but it is deeply rooted in our practices and thinking style."

"Thank you for wonderful concept. Due to its different nature and perceptions "curriculum is a language game", and William Schubert (1988) has conceptualized some curriculum images as curriculum metaphors to understand its different concepts, and practices."

After this discussion session, Professor distributes handout related with curriculum images for next class discussion.

Anecdote III: Sajjan Manchhe[54]

It is the day of first march of 2011 and this day is the class of Curriculum Theory and Practice. In previous class, we have discussed different perspectives and thinking of curriculum and today we are going to discuss metaphor and Curriculum Portrayal: Schubert's eight curriculum images. Professor provides some papers for class discussion, I read the first line about metaphor, "Metaphor is the daily life expression and we perceive one thing with the help of referring other thing" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1986). From discussions and sharing my experiences of learning and teaching in class, I realize that I am very less aware of the pervasive role of metaphor in our day-to-day communication and professional discourse and this discussion about the concept of metaphor tends to makeme think about my past student life.

Un/Knowingly in my life, there are different metaphors and metaphorical envisions. When I was primary level student in 1980s decade, head teacher Tikaram sir always inspired me to be a 'Sajjan Manchhe'(Honest man) and in the farewell program of school, Tikaram sir gave a speech and I have not forgotten him saying, 'Our life as Bheri River.' My village and school are near to Bheri River. Tikaram sir compared life

[54]*Sajjan Manchhe* is a metaphor to signify honest man. It represents moral attitude of a person.

with river. At that time, I was very less aware of such metaphorical expression and it was very difficult to understand life and life as Bheri River. Unknowingly I used such expressions in different situations of life. Now as a student of M Phil level, I know that 'Life as Bheri River' is a metaphorical expression and there are different metaphors e. g. music as heart beat, time as money, earth as orange etc. Knowingly/Unknowingly I have a lot of metaphorical expression. My father, mother, grandfather and grandmother always blessed me to do better, to be 'Thulo Manchhe'[55] *(Great man or famous person) and they called me as 'Thula'*[56] *(Great or famous) and nowadays I think 'Jitendra as Thula.' All these are metaphorical expressions. We are using metaphors to understand different concepts, processes and incidents.*

Professor provides more examples and links the chapter of book 'Metaphor we live by' with Schubert's eight curriculum images; I realize that metaphor is important in our daily life, profession, particularly in the teaching and learning field. One of my advantages as a

'Who' is metaphor?

One past night
There was no light
I saw metaphor
Standing in front me
S/He started crying
Be aware man!
Don't throw me in dustbin
I am not jargon version
I am not literal meaning
I am in beauty word
I have no sword
I am in picture
I am in nature

Also I shouted
You have no rooted meaning
Teaching as trimming
Go far from me
You are cold
You are hard
Don't be fired
I have no concept about thou
Why I understand you and how

Again metaphor appeared with cry
To understand, do try
Use me as 'Schubert'
Not to be corrupt
I have simile smile
I am in mundane
I am not vulture
I am in nature
Perceive me as 'X as Y'
Thank You Bye, Bye!

[55]Thulo Manche signifies great person or famous person. This is ritualistic version.
[56]Thula is a famous metaphor in Nepali society to signify great or famous.

teacher is that I easily realize the significant role of metaphors in Science and Mathematics and these subjects are rich in different metaphors.

From Professor's descriptions, I have developed the concepts "Curriculum as content, Curriculum as planned activities, Curriculum as discrete tasks and concepts, and Curriculum as intended learning outcomes constitute a powerful transmission-oriented epistemology of teaching practice and passive-reception learning. These four images focus on the teaching-learning as end-product,teaching and learning process control and teacher centered. Curriculum as experience, Curriculum as currere, Curriculum as social reconstruction, and Curriculum as cultural reproduction constitute flexible, transformative and constructive teaching and learning practices with the learners' active participation. These curriculum images emphasize that knowledge is not transmitted but knowledge is constructed by experience sharing, dialogic sessions, reflecting the actions ourselves and from local contexts.

Professor provides one page to fill of perceived and practiced curriculum mapping in teaching and learning practices.

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Anecdote IV: Interests and Curriculum Integration

In this way, I am writing journals continuously throughout the first six months of the year 2011. The year 2011 is a metamorphosis process to change myself from pupa stage to adult stage to convert my technical teaching andinterest to practical interest as Habermas conceptualized that the classroom control, goals and learning outcomes are outcome of technical interest; practical interest emphasizes on meaning making process

and dialogic relationship between teacher and student; and emancipatory interest is critical consciousness about own thinking and action (Luitel, 2009).

In the classroom discussion and paper presentation, Professor presents that "Technical interest approach formulates instrumental means of action. This is a fundamental orientation of control. Curriculum objectives, learning outcomes, and subject matters are means-ends; predetermined content, teaching learning strategies, and evaluation strategies serve for technical interest. The notion of technical curriculum interest emphasizes on controlling teacher's and student's behaviors in classroom. Teachers are implementers and students are followers of predetermined curricular activities. The curriculum is product-oriented and knowledge is commodity."

After break, we rejoin class discussion.

I say, "I think that my meaningless and decotextualized teaching and learning, classroom control and fragmented curriculum materials serve technical interest. I tried much more with technical interest."

"Yes Oliji. There is another interest, which Habermas called practical interest."

Professor further describes, "Practical interest emphasizes on experienced knowledge and curriculum is the process of social interaction. The knowledge generating from own experiences, and sense making are the notion of practical interest. Dialogic relationship between teacher and student creates knowledge."

In next session, Professor distributes some papers related with fragmentation and integration of curriculum.

"As Oli experiences fragmented curriculum enforces teaching different subjects separately according to essentialist notion. Curriculum integration helps teaching and

learning integrating the similar subject matters of different subjects with lived experiences for holistic vision. This is not only the mixing of similar concepts but it is the strategy for holistic understanding and more meaningful learning."

Prologue: Stretching the Anecdotes

The anecdotes II, III and IV are my M Phil learning journey and I have them to portray contrasting images that I encountered during the beginning years of my college education. I became able to broaden the concept about curriculum that I conceptualized before this class that curriculum is often taken to mean a course of study, a series of textbooks or specific outline of topics to be covered traditionally. The class motivated us to conceptualize that curriculum is not only author's text, or a thing but it is one's life course of action, and it is the path we have followed and the path we intend to follow (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988).

From my experiences of teaching, I used curriculum as document which focuses on specific subject matter and a pre-planned sequence of events. For me curriculum was a list of goals, objectives, learning outcomes and directory of different teaching and evaluation strategies.But from this class, I have come to know that curriculum denotes different things and practices for different people. It is the treasure.

For the first time, I have experienced that curriculum underlies domination, power, technical control, mastery learning and 'spatially' it is a thing, object, and as a constructivist concept it is a cultural construct, process and currere. Etymologically,curriculum is 'currere'in the West and 'Pathyakram[57]' in the East. I start to portray the concepts and practices of curriculum in different perspectives as colonizing

[57]Pathyakram is a Nepali word which means order of content or subject matter and it is used to signify curriculum etymologically.

aspect, materialist or constructivist ways. I question who runs curriculum and who is running it now? Whose experiences reflect in the curriculum? Who's 'Pathya'[58]? Who develops? What is the situation of emergent 'Pathya' and who's 'Kram[59]'? These questions may help to practice curriculum critically for renovation.

From Habermas interest theory, I have conceptualized that my learning and teaching practices served technical interest in which I had more power to control classroom learning environment and sticking on to the textbook, ought-to-know approach to teaching, rote memorization, and decontextualized curriculum materials featured technical interest. I think that teachers can make contextualized and meaningful learning by integrating similar subject matters of different subjects. Fragmented subjects and subject matters; deductive, transmission oriented teaching, and reception oriented learning might be the product of technical interest and fragmented curriculum materials.

Curriculum Images and Metaphors

The notions of teaching and learning are largely metaphorical. Our practice of teaching and learning is influenced by the metaphors we use to represent the notions of student learning (Dooley, 1998). I have used different metaphors to understand complex concepts of curriculum, teaching and learningpractices.

Revisiting chapters III and IV, *Curriculum as subject matter* helped me to understand that curriculum is a thing, which is used in teaching, learning and assessment. We can transmit thing from one hand to another. In this way this image signifies *teaching as transmission* and *learning as reception* from teacher to student. *Curriculum as*

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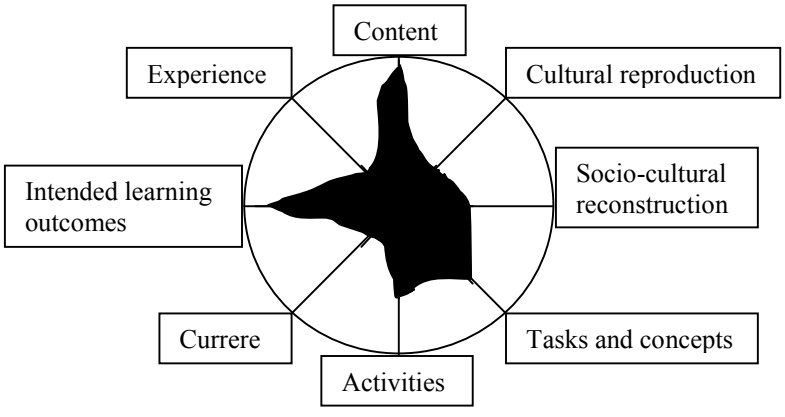
[58] 'Pathya' means content or subject matter for teaching and learning.
[59]'Kram' is an organizing metaphor which is important perspective as perceiving curriculum etymologically.

planned activities and curriculum and*intended learning outcomes* helped me to conceptualize that curriculum is a written document and fixed activities to implement in classroom. *Curriculum as experience* helped me to blend my and students' experiences with subject matters in teaching and learning practices. I have come to conceptualize that local examples, experiences and daily life activities can be used in teaching and learning and learners can select learning experiences according to their needs and interests. Similarly, I have conceptualized from image *curriculum as currere* that curriculum is not only a document but it is an action of reflection and experiences (Schubert, 1986).

In these perspectives, I remember that my detached, fragmented, decontextualized and meaningless learning and teaching practices depicted *curriculum as a thing, written document and learning outcomes*. I tried very less to link curriculum, teaching and learning practices with daily life activities, experiences and local examples. The curriculum images associated with my teaching and learning practices were shared in M Phil study. My classes were dominated by *curriculum as content, intended learning outcomes and discrete tasks and concepts*. *Curriculum as experiences, cultural reproduction and currere* practicedvery less. Based on these experiences of my learning and teaching, I sketched the mapping of curriculum images based on Schubert's (1986) curriculum metaphors as main referents.



Tacit Images/Metaphors in My Experiences

From my teaching and learning experiences and data texts, I have conceptualized some tacit images/metaphors of learning as *Yaad Garne, Ghokne or Ratne, silent listening and cramming expert generated contents, studying as Khaye Kha Nakhaye Ghich, education as Dhawanti Kheti and learning as Ghokanti Bidya*; teaching as *transmission* (chapter III), *transmission,* teacher as *transmitter of content,* learner as *passive receptor of bookish lessons and wooden doll,* geometry teaching *as didactic way, mathematics makes all tired, and mathematics takes out urine*(chapter IV). Moreover, I have presented some metaphors implicit in my learning and teaching experiences in this section.

Mug-and-Jug

My first school was a primary school (Grade I to V) and second school was a secondary school (Grade I to X). My classes were heavily crowded where my teachers described the subject matters. Most of the teachers stood in front of classroom near to blackboard wall and started the lessons stridently. Most of my teachers usually read the lessons and described the chapters, topics and subtopics. In this condition, we students had to sit silently, motionless as statue, and listen to the lectures of teachers. I understood that teaching means standing in front of student and describingthe textbook matters fluently, and learning means silently sitting on bench and listeningto the teachers' voices. These are just the ways described by Jensen (2000) as *mug-and-jug* (p. 170). Can I say that this metaphor represents how I experienced teaching and learning practices?

Jail, Jailor, Guards, Cell, and Prisoners

Due to the teachers' autocratic and controlling behavior in classroom, hard and fast rule of homework and bookish knowledge is to be gained by any way, the hard disciplinary rule is to be followed, sitting silently and motionlessly in classroom and listening to teachers' one way continuous lectures without any reaction I perceived *school as jail, head teacher as a jailor, teachers as guards, classroom as cell, students as prisoners and teaching as commanding*. In these traditional images being bookworm was necessary to get through the exam. My teaching profession was guided by these metaphors because I have been a product of such a situation of schooling and it was very difficult for me to leave such schooling practices.

Transmitter, Receptor, Studio, and Script

In my house, there was a *National Panasonic Radio*, which I listened pretty much enthusiastically in 1982/83. When I was listening to radio, I thought ever how the people of radio speak and how they send the voices from the air as my father described about my queries. I thought that the speakers of radio are very intellectual, knowledgeable persons from the world. Pandav Sunuwar and Ram Thapa (singer, announcer), Purusottam Sapkota (Religious program coordinator and announcer early in the morning 6.00 a.m.), Basudev Munal (child program presenter everyevening at 5.00 p.m.), Narayan Gopal, Tara Devi were frequently heard names. There was no provision of repetition of news. The radio is one-way communication system. The teaching learning program in school was like the transmission of program from Radio Nepal. *Teachers as transmitters, students as receptors, classroom as studio,* and *lessons as scripts* are some images tacitly envisioned in my teaching and learning experiences.

Experiences of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

From my participants, practices and perceptions of teaching and learning, I have conceptualized some images/metaphors such as curriculum as others' text, teaching as materialization and exemplification, and learning as memorization and blind repetition of others' descriptions. Here, I want to present some informal conversations with participants as episodes.

Anecdote V:Curriculum in Different Flavors

School Resource Center, Raniban, August 22, 2012

Raniban Resource Center lies in leader school of thirty two feeder schools. Regular meeting runs every month. The head teachers' meeting is running and I actively participate in the meeting as the vice-principal of my school. There are tables and chairs, whiteboard and display boards. Books, charts, posters and data based charts are hanging on walls.Rabin Sir is the resource person and he presents some district level programs, teachers' new pay scale and distributes some curriculum materials. Teachers are busy in reading the materials.

After sometimes, I announce, "Today we have some discussions with you. I am here as a vice-principal (participant) and as a researcher. All of you, who are interested, can provide your own understanding, lived experiences and practices of teaching and learning. Your information may be of vital importance for my research as well as for professional development." I wait a bit longer to manage participants.

I count. There are twelve principals, and head teachers willing to participate. I clarify about my research, "I will use pseudonym for your names, and other individual information. I respect your opinions and presentation."

"It's O. K. May I start?" I set a sound recorder to record discussions.

"Yes, you can start." Some teachers nod their head.

I start discussion by asking question, "How can we teach centrally adopted subject matters in the local contexts meaningfully?

Lok[60] sir says, "We can use of local materials, examples and knowledge in classroom."

Bishnu Prasad[61]says, "I accept Lok sir's opinion. Using the local stories, poems, people's rhymes, cultural customs, cultural knowledge, moral stories, examples and life stories are some contextualizing means of centralized curriculum."

"Yes, I agree with you. Have you any experiences to share?" I turn towards Prem sir, Lal Bir sir, Sarad sir and other groups." I initiate discussion. They turn by turn put their experiences.

Prem Bahadur[62] says, "Using local examples, and using students' experiences are some ways of meaningful teaching. I usually link the lessons with my and students' experiences.

Sarad[63] adds more, "Curriculum contextualization and meaningful learning are based on teachers' and students' background, prior experiences, nature of subjects and subject matter. Science can be contextualized more. Certain chapters such as profit & loss, geometrical shapes, bill & budget, domestic arithmetic of mathematics can be taught by using local materials.

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[60]Lok sir is teaching Nepali and Health Population and Environment subjects in secondary as well as lower secondary level.

[61] Bishnu Prasad sir is the Nepali language subject teacher, and his experience of teaching is twenty three years.

[62]Prem Bahadur has 25 years experiences of teaching in primary level.

[63]Saradis teaching Science and Mathematics from Primary level to Secondary level since 1988.

Lal Bir[64] says, "I frequently use relia (real object) method. I actively teach the lessons by demonstrating different things."

"Thank you sir. You have provided valuable experiences." I initiate conversation with the head teachers and ask question, "What are the materials and the local activities we can use in classrooms?"

Bishnu Prasad (coughing) says, "Sharing the experiences about their culture, stories, and daily life activities are useful.

Prem Bahadur says, "I use the local stories, rhymes, and moral stories. I ask students to write their experiences about their household works, essays about cow, river, Dashain, and Tihar etc. Jayant[65] adds, "In Nepali, Science, Social Education, Health Population and Environment (HPE) we can add more local experiences, examples, knowledge and skills."

Lal Bir says, "Different languages, cultures, and local professions help in curriculum contextualization and meaningful learning."

"It's very interesting to me. I guess you are teaching meaningfully in classroom." I ask question, "What is your understanding about curriculum? And how are you practicing centralized curriculum?"

Meanwhile, tea is served for all.

Lok (taking a sip of tea) says, "In my understanding curriculum is the playground of students and teachers. I am of the view that curriculum is not only the list of content but it is local life."

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[64] Lal Bir is the higher secondary level principal and he is teaching English in Higher Secondary and Secondary level.

[65] Jayant is the head teacher of a lower secondary school.

"I guess that curriculum as local life may be image of curriculum in your understanding. Am I correct?" I ask Lok sir.

"Yes sir, you are right." Lok nods his head.

Bishnu adds, "Curriculum as cultural awareness may be better."

Prem Bahadur accepts and says, "I think curriculum as exemplification may be suitable image."

Sarad says, "In Science subject, a teacher may be a tour guide and the students are the tourists. Curriculum may be a guide book. Curriculum as tour guide, experience, and practice are some appropriate metaphors.

Lal Bir nods his head and says, "Yes sir. From these conversations, I have conceptualized teaching and learning as materialization."

Some head teachers are in hurry to return to school or home. I look watch. It's 2:45 pm.

"How can we contextualize centralized curricula?" I ask my last question to finalize these discussions.

Sarad says, "We have no any mandatory provision to change the centralized curriculum. But we can link the subject matter with local examples, professions, and socio-cultural aspects. Teachers can make the lessons more useful for students by adding teachers' as well as students' experiences and daily life activities in the centralized curriculum. Teachers can manage teaching time according to the local contexts. e. g. the life cycle of fern in Grade IX can be taught in rainy season and the life cycle of mustard in Grade VIII can be taught in the autumn season. These strategies may be useful to contextualize centralized curriculum."

Other head teachers give attention on Sarad's description and accept, "Yes sir, you have illustrated well."Finally, I appreciate all the participants.

Prologue: Extending the Anecdote

From the anecdotes, I have tried to conceptualize the different metaphorical imagesof curriculum, teaching and learning practices- curriculum as cultural awareness, exemplification, tour guide, materialization and local life; teacher as transmitter, classroom as studio,student as receptor, and lesson as script. These metaphors signify the perceptions, beliefs and practices.

There are different concepts, understanding and perceptions about curriculum, teaching and learning practices. How we think, how we perceive curricula may determine our educational practices. Different teachers have different understandings about contextualization of curriculum and teaching and learning process as the use of local materials, stories, students' prior experiences, and daily life world. I was very less aware about cultural aspects, daily life activities and local examples to use in classroom teaching.

Teacher's Beliefs and Practices

Let me start quoting Zoest, Jones, & Thornton (1994) who have concluded that teachers' beliefs play important roles in teaching and learning. A teacher may believe that teaching is directing and ordering for solving the problems given in textbooks. Students' duty is to complete the assignments. Here completing assignments means solving the questions given at the end of the chapter end and submitting to the teachers.

As a mathematics and science teacher, I felt that the centrally prepared curriculum isless useful to teach mathematics and science in local context. I used textbooks, and

examples given in textbooks. I taught lessonsas given in the textbook. I was so confined with textbooks that I valued very less the local examples, students' experiences and daily life activities. Very less I felt problem to take local examples and experiences in classroom. As a student of M Phil, I have developed the beliefs that our centralized and unitary state mechanism of curriculum development is lacking the learners' experiences, local examples, engagement and interaction.

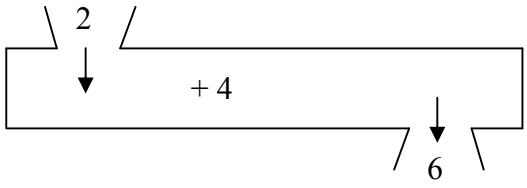
Anecdote VI: Function Machine and Uddhyogi[66] Nature

It is the cold day of December, 2012. In the dim cloudy day, I am sitting on the top floor of house. I am thinking about my research. On my study table, there is a book "Optional Mathematics"[67] of Grade X. I turn pages, my eyes stop on the chapter "Function and Graph". Some problems of function are solved by using function machine. The problem is like this:

$f(x) = x + 4$

In this problem, there is a fixed rule for processing and by that process we get the output according to the input. The rule is adding four (+ 4)

If we put 2 into that function machine, then that machine processes and gives 6 as output.



Thinking about the nature of function machine, input, process, and output I have came to know that there are fixed processes as given rule. In classroom, I take students

[66] Industrial, Entrepreneur
[67] In Grade IX and X, Optional Mathematics is an additional mathematics which is optional first subject.

as inert objects. They are part of processing unit in which I put bookish knowledge as input by teaching in classroom. I interpret the lessons and enforce students to answer given questions. These are processing processes. Students' answers are output. In this way, I am teaching textbooks.

In my teaching practices, curriculum materials are input, teaching and learning are processes in classroom and output are the answers given by students in examination. The solving process is like the industrial-managerial approach, in which we get output according to our input. This process is also matched with the function of any Industry where raw materials are input, activities in industry are process and product is output.

By this thinking, I get perplexed for a while. In this approach, I think about the roles of classroom situation, local contexts, cultural aspects, and students' daily life activities which are very less accounted in classroom. Students are forced to learn the textbook lessons in fragmented ways. The classroom teaching is clearly detached from students' experiences and local examples. Our schools are practicing Uddhyogi nature.

Mathematical operational knowledge and simplification skills; grammatical rules in English; chemical reactions in Science are like Uddhyogiprocesses. I remember that the diversities of world are for me or for others; I face problems to match the experiences with my learning. My father always enforced me to follow the teachers and textbooks as they are developed by the well knowledgeable and skillful persons.

Prologue: Stretching the Anecdote

In the industrial-managerial approach of curriculum, there are three parts-input, process and output. This approach takes goals, learning outcomes and subject matters as input in the school as an industry. Teaching and learning practices are processes and

result of students is output. In this section, I remember that subject matters, teachers' interpretations were input for me. Rote memorizing those subject matters and interpretations, answering the questions were process. The result of examination, my upgrading was output. As culturally decontextualized curriculum matters may be developed according to this approach, it is difficult for a teacher to attach, blend local examples, experiences of students with the subject matters. The textbooks are teacher proof texts.

Teacher-Proof Text

The excessive use of textbook is the process of being more near to the confined state of predetermined knowledge and skills boxes. The developing process of textbook is more technical and the writers write the textbooks on the basis of content pre-specified by curriculum. Textbooks include concepts, definitions, examples and workout problems. In curriculum materials, there are prescriptive subject matters and activities, and directions for teachers and students to follow. Kelly (2009) has described that *curriculum as content and product* serves the transmission process, instrumental ways and for mastery learning (pp. 56-87), and the course materials have time constraint to finish the bookish lessons. Such perspectives make teacher proof text and there are very less opportunities to blend experiences, daily life examples and cultural aspects with bookish lessons (Luitel & Taylor, 2005), andteacher-proof curriculum does not work (Kelly, 2009, pp.13-14).

Specialized curriculum experts design teacher proof curriculum to prescribe the goals (why), content (what), and methods of instruction (how) for teachers (Eryaman & Riedler, 2010) and the teachers who are dependent more on the textbooks seem to have a strong belief that the centrally readymade textbooks represent the true and essential

knowledge that are to be taken as very necessary to know. The textbooks are not based on my students' experiences, feelings, local knowledge and professions due to the detachment of textbooks from actual learners. The excessive use of textbook is likely to promote the technical interest.

Learning to Unlearn

I have been so much closed with centralized curricula that it determines my beliefs and actions. In my journey of M Phil learning, I have realized that I have to think and practice beyond the outmoded traditional thinking, and practices. There are so many opportunities of taking curricula as a thing, or process, or as a noun or as a verb. But within the limited time, it was difficult for me to have the comprehensive understanding of the concept of curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment. However, within the short time, the curricula unit provides the new illumination on my perspectives of curriculum and instruction. Throughout the learning journey at Kathmandu University (KU) the integrative and reflective journals enthused me not only to think critically on the issues, but also to think and envision reflectively on my own teaching practices. Back to my experiences as a learner in undergraduate education, I realized that I was a student taking content from the syllabus. Remembering the solutions of problems of Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics within the short time for examination was my learning aim. Learning for examination, anyhow passing the examination were some aims of my learning. After sometimes, I gradually forgot the learning which created problems to teach the content of those subjects in teaching profession.

Chapter Recapitulation

As a teacher, and student of different levels, I had some perceptions and practices of teaching and learning. Curriculum as a different thing is my conclusion during this chapter. Sometimes it is a government written document and sometimes it is a constructivist approaches of my teaching and learning. From my narratives as well as participants' experiences, curriculum is a guiding material for teachers. Also, it is a milestone for practicing the constructivist ways of teaching and learning. We are regulating the taken-for-granted behaviors, industrial-managerial approach of curriculum, and excessive use of textbook that influence our practices. My beliefs, understanding, and perceptions were strongly reflected in my classroom practices. Based on some traditional and constructivist perceptions and practices of curriculum in school level, I demonstrate some contextualizing practices of centralized subject matters in chapter VI.

CHAPTER VI

CENTRALIZED CURRICULUM AND CONTEXTUALIZINGPRACTICES

In chapter V, I have discussed my and participants' learning beliefs, experiences, and practices of learning based on culturally decontextualized textbook subject mattes, teaching and learning practices. I depicted my understanding about curriculum, metaphors, and curriculum integration. In this chapter, I have tried to demonstrate teachers' practices and experiences and their ways of teaching practices in local contexts.This chapter responds to my research question: In what ways do teachers (including myself as a teacher) attempt to incorporate contextualized examples, experiences and local subject matters in classroom teachingfor meaningful learning? How can I better help my students? How can I work more effectively?

To respond to the fourth research question, firstly, I have tried to discuss some local practices that can be incorporated in the centralized curriculum. Secondly, I have critically reflectedon some narratives of my experiences of conducting small group/individual learning, using keywords and daily life terms. Thirdly, I have explored teachers' practices in the context of centralized subject matters and locally available resource materials. At last, I hope to have demonstrated some practices of meaningful teaching and learning practices.

Episode I: Centralized Curriculum and Local Practices

Place: Educational Training Center's Canteen

Time: 1.00 to 2.00 PM

Date: Any weekend of December 2013

Participants: Trainees: Man, Ram, Shyam, Laxmi, Hari, Shrawan, Trainer: Om and Waiter

(It is December month's very cold day with winter season's chill raindrops. Educational Training Center is conducting two days refresher training for in-service secondary level teachers of different subjects. Man is an English teacher, Laxmi is a Nepali subject teacher, Ram is a Social studies teacher, Shyam is a Science teacher, Hari and Shrawan are Mathematics teachers. All teachers are secondary level and are participating in a group. Om is a Curriculum Officer of Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) coming from Kathmandu.

In a break session, these participants and trainers enter in Canteen room and sit around a round table. Waiter takes order- Chicken Momo, chapatti and curry, hot coffee and tea. They start the discussion with the agenda training session like curriculum, teaching and learning.)

Ram: (rubbing hands with each other) Oh! How cold is it out of the room?

Om: (Peering outside through windscreen) It's raining and day is very colder than morning.

Shrawan: (shaking head) Yes sir, it's colder than last year.

Man: But in the discussion of training session, what are we going to present our group conclusion. In my twenty years teaching experiences, I have not understood how a teacher can teach without curriculum and textbooks. Curriculum and textbooks are very essential for teaching and learning. They guide students as well as teachers. These materials help to organize, order, and systematize teaching and learning based on simple to complex and child psychology.

Om: (shaking head) Yes sir, you are right. Curriculum materials are very essential, and use of these materials in classroom depends on teacher's teaching styles, perceptions and practices. Teachers can add more examples, experiences, and local materials. Classroom teaching and learning depends fully on teachers.

Shrawan: Sir, students are very weak in major subjects- Mathematics, Science, and English. Most of the students are promoted (upgraded with additional marks) from lower grade to upper grade. They have no good understanding of mathematical signs, symbols, words, mathematical operations and definite structures. Their base is very weak and a building can't stand on a weak foundation. Students are very weak and mathematics textbooks are heavily loaded with contents. Classrooms are filled with crowds. Students are out of discipline and how can we teach meaningfully? Teaching is very complex in such situations. It's boring to be a Mathematics, Science and English teacher. I do not understand why lower level teachers do not teach appropriately.

Hari: (raising hand to call waiter) Hello, hot water. No Shrawan sir. Being a Mathematics, Science and English teacher is not boring but being a Nepali or Social studies teacher is boring. Mathematics teachers are earning extra money by tuition but students do not take tuition classes of Nepali or Social studies.

Shrawan: There is no meaning of tuition classes without meaningful teaching and learning.

Om: What's your understanding about meaningful learning?

Hari: If teachers use local knowledge, experiences, subject matters to link the students' prior knowledge and experiences then that is meaningful learning. Adding the

local examples, experiences, daily life situations, incidents, contextual knowledge, skill, professional workings are vital for meaningful learning. From the tutoring experiences with small group of students in my house, I am very eager to share that the small group teaching and individual learning process may be meaningful learning; in this way learning as personalization is a meaningful way.

Waiter: Excuse me sir, here is hot water.

Laxmi: (with a sip of coffee) Yes, the use of local materials, knowledge, skill, content, social values in classroom is contextualization of teaching and learning and if teachers use such local knowledge, experiences, subject matters to link the students' prior knowledge and experiences it leads to meaningful learning.

Om: Centralized curriculum, textbooks, and teaching materials are essential to fulfill objectives, unite diversities, guide teachers, and learning materials for students.

Ram: (with gentle cough) Centralized curriculum and textbooks may not be fully appropriate for local level. The centralized textbooks may not fulfill the local need, interests of learners and the centrally adopted subject matters may not match with the nature of learners. That is why adding the local examples, experiences, daily life situations, incidents, contextual knowledge, skills and professional working are more important for meaningful learning.

Om: (pushing tea glass) Yes, Ram sir. Blending of centralized curriculum and local practices is meaningful teaching and learning. This is contextualization of curriculum and curriculum plays vital role in global, national and local contexts.

Laxmi: In Nepali subject, I am using the local stories, poems, people's rhymes, cultural customs, rituals and cultural knowledge, Bed and Upnishad's stories andversions,

moral stories, daily life customs and social values and norms in the appropriate lessons. Local level's respectable person's examples, life stories of national and international personnel may be useful in motivation. I have made the students to write their experiences about their culture and cultural tales. I have asked the students to analyze the good and bad aspects of social customs, and cultural aspects.

Hari: Yes Madam. In Health, Population and Environment subject of grade eight, there is one chapter "Factors affecting the distribution of population" and climate factor is not given in that lesson. Climate factor is affecting in the population distribution and migration of people in our district. The latitudes and altitudes affect weather, climate change and season change but the latitudes' effect is not described in the textbooks. I started the lesson from the concepts of latitudes, the distance between them, altitudes, weather, climate, season, and their affect in the climate change. These supplementary concepts were provided first then I described other subject matters. Central textbooks may not match with local contexts. It is not important to implement the textbooks as they are but implementation of the textbooks adding conceptual and more cleared subject matters, local experiences, examples is more important. And it is not necessary to implement the textbooks as they are. Teachers can add more things from their insights without changing the intentions and essence of the lesson, subject matters.

Laxmi: (shaking head) Yes sir, local plays, songs, customs, legends, stories, daily life activities can be used in Nepali, Social Studies, and Physical Education. In

Nepali, Science, Social Studies, Health Population and Environment (HPE) we can add more local experiences, examples, knowledge and skills. In English, Mathematics it may be difficult to add the local experiences, examples, knowledge and skills.

Waiter: Excuse me sir, may I take these plates and glasses.

Shyam: (Yes, yes) There is very limited time and subject matters are more and it is difficult to finish textbook in an educational year. Personal creativity, activeness, experiences determine Science teaching. Locally available materials can be used in Science teaching. If we do some labor, we can use the contextual examples in English, Mathematics that help meaningful learning. e.g. to teach the chapter like characteristics of invertebrate and vertebrate animas, teacher can use local examples such as butterfly, crab, flies, bee, arthropoda, frog, birds, cow, dog, ascaris etc. Pictures, models, and classification charts, field trip, question-answer session may be useful. The life cycle of fern in class nine can be taught in the summer, rainy season and the life cycle of mustard in class eight can be taught in the autumn season. In this way teachers can manage and organize the subject matters given in the centrally made textbooks.

Ram: Thank you sir. You have shared very good experiences. Classroom teaching depends upon teaching style. A teacher can teach in traditional ways or constructivist ways according to their strategies based on curriculum.

Shrawan: (standing from chair) Yes sir and what is our conclusion?

Laxmi: (with slow cough) Centralized curriculum is needed to organize, guide and systematize our teaching and learning practices. Amalgamation of local

experiences, prior learning of students, examples, cultural aspects with centralized curriculum is meaningful teaching and learning. This may be conclusion.

Om: Yes madam. These are good ideas in the present situation. Now it's time to go. Let's go. (They gradually stand up and all go towards the training hall)

Prologue: Extending the Episode

The above data text "*Centralized Curriculum and Local Practices"* is the understanding and experiences of practices of curriculum in local level. CDC may enforce District Education Office (DEO) and schools to implement curriculum as trainer Om informed the teachers.

Teaching is a complex task and a single method may not fulfill students' expectations, needs and interests. From above conversation, I have come to know that students' experiences may be more meaningful for the teachers to develop their ownexperiences when teachers use the local materials, examples, experiences and provide more examples and opportunities of practices to students. From my own experiences of teaching, I have felt that if the subject matter is based on students' prior knowledge and understandings it is easy to present the topic in classroom and students easily participate in classroom activities than the extremely new concepts.

When teachers start their teaching from known concepts and examples, try to provide practicable knowledge, and motivate students then students may actively take part. Local materials are useful in a classroom. Teaching styles affect the practices of contextualization of curriculum and meaningful learning as McCalla (2010) has depicted

that learning is collaborative within community and there is amalgamation of learning and teaching in local context.

I want to depict that teachers are responsible for teaching and they can implement the curriculum in a passive or active way. They can use local materials; low or no cost materials or they can start and continue the textbook lessons in any way they like. In this way, contextualization has been defined by Taylor (2005) as freedom for schools or local education authorities to adapt curriculum to local conditions and as relating the content of the curriculum and the process of teaching and learning to the local environment (pp. 2-3). This flexibility can adapt the teaching and learning for students in local contexts.

Curriculum, Decision and Practices

The primary audience of a curriculum is teacher. Can a teacher discard centralized curriculum? Can a teacher teach without curriculum? According to my experiences, centralized curriculum and textbooks may be essential to systematize, order and guide teaching and learning in a classroom. Curriculum may be main guiding document for teachers and textbooks are main learning materials for students. Students may revise, and practice textbook lessons as per their needs. It is critiqued that centralized curriculum does not account the classroom lives and socio-cultural contexts and are detached from students' prior learning. A crucial failing of educational system worldwide has been lack of relevance the lives of learners (McCalla, 2010). From above dialogue, it may be clear that the relevance may depend upon classroom presentation, demonstration and evaluation strategies of teachers. The way teachers use the curriculum as local contexts may be more important than the concepts and overview about curriculum.

From above dialogue "*Centralized Curriculum and Local Practices"*, I conceptualize that centralized curriculum is helpful to systematize and order the classroom teaching and guide teachers to plan, organize daily teaching lessons, materials and other classroom preparation and presentation. There may not be any restriction of classroom demonstration of subject matter as classroom contexts, students' interests, demand and teachers may have full responsibility of implementing the curricula. Curriculum is indispensable to guide teachers to plan their instruction and the use of curriculum in classroom teaching and learning depends upon effectiveness of teachers as Good and Brophy (1994) described effective teachers as teachers who: 1) make maximum use of instructional time, 2) present material in a way to meet students' needs, 3) plan opportunities for students to apply learning, 4) re-teach when needed. I have experienced that, use of time, presentation of lessons, use of materials; opportunities for students depend upon teacher's decision. Effective teaching skills as Hunter (1979) described that, "Teaching has been described as a constant stream of decisions." In this way, teaching is based on teachers' decision, activeness and engagement.

In this way, some teachers' creativity can localize the centralized curriculum and help to broaden the narrow meaning of curriculum *as a document.* Contextualization of curriculum may change the exclusive and teacher-proof nature of centralized curriculum as inclusive image of curriculum that can help to integrate local cultural resources (e.g., different languages, cultural artifacts, and folklore) in order to enact curriculum as a *dynamic text*.

Contextualizing Practices for Curriculum Implementation

From 1990 to 2010, I taught Science, Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, and Education in secondary and lower secondary level. In twenty years teaching practices, always my classroom was always densely crowded with row lined desks and benches. The immovable furniture, side talks of students, and fluttering sound of pages of books were some common features in classroom teaching. Consciously or unconsciously, I tried to teach meaningfully here I want to present some of my experiences of teaching in school.

Episode II: Small Group/Individualized Teaching

This is a day of March, 1999, sky is whitish blue and earth is slowly warming. Recently, I have a new secondary level curriculum book. In my wrist watch, it's 4 pm. I take chair in the sun and turn the pages of that new curriculum. In new curriculum, vision, mission, goals; level, subjectwise objectives, learning outcomes, estimated time allocation, teaching methods, evaluation process, directions for teachers are given. The curriculum is well organized and developed. How can I use this in classroom? How can I finish the course within an educational year? I am thinking about plan for this.CDC has recently provided curriculum for classroom implementation recently and my duty is to complete the course in proper way within a year. If all students pass in the final exam, that will be good.

Some dazzling sound disturbs my attention. I look at that side, there are some students coming near to me. They surround me.

"Namaskar sir."

"Namaskar, why are you here? Have you any problem?"

“Sir, you are well known about our learning in classroom. We are very weak in English, Mathematics and Science. We have very little basic knowledge of these subjects. So, we want some home tuition classes.”

Most of the Science and Mathematics teachers are taking tuition and coaching classes. This is the benefit of being a Science, and Mathematics teacher in Nepal. I have to help students to learn. I accept to take tuition class.

“If you all come with practice books in tuition class, I will teach you Science and Mathematics in the morning time. We will start from next day."

"Yes?"

"Yes sir, we will come next morning."

From next day, I start to take tuition classes. There are twelve students in a group. For that, I manage tuition classes in a room.

First of all, I take exam of Science and Mathematics subjects with very conceptual, simple questions. It takes two hours. From this exam, I categorize them in different groups.

I discuss about their answering style, mistakes and counsel them individually. I start to teach them from very basic concepts and I clearly describe their mistakes and problems of learning.

I teach them in group and individually.

Nearly within one and half month, I provide necessary concepts, definitions, ideas, examples, and they practice the lessons from textbooks also.

I introduce course design, types of questions, specification chart, and examination rules and answer sheet checking process.

I teach them from very basic concepts, and through question-answer session and discussion.

Students are enthusiast to learn using their own experiences. I know that they have their own learning strategies. Some students like mnemonic method, some like key word methods, and some like linking local examples with bookish knowledge. Some are good in memorization. They learn writing skills in exam. They feel studyeasy.

****

Episode III: Using Key and Daily Life Words

For lower secondary and secondary level students, the abstract concepts, definitions, examples were very difficult to understand, assimilate, memorize and recall. Some students asked me the way to understand trigonometric ratios, simplification, valencies and electronic configuration. In classroom, students had very little knowledge to recall, memorize the definitions, relations, formulae, examples, derivations and geometrical proofs. They felt very difficult to memorize and use of the prior knowledge for new learning. I remembered my teachers' memorization ways e. g. mnemonic method, key words and concept words. My grade nine students did not understand the trigonometrical ratios and they felt very uneasy to memorize them. I developed some known key words, for numerator of sine ratio the initial letter of the word of Prabhu[69]"प्रभु" *p was taken and for denominator the initial letter of the word of* Hari[70] "हरी" *h was taken and the sine ratio*

Sin	Cos	Tan
Prabhu प्रभु (p)	Bol[68]बोल (b)	Prabhu प्रभु (p)
Hari हरी (h)	Hari हरी (h)	Bol बोल (b)

[68]Bol means pray
[69]Prabhu means god
[70]Hari means Hindu god's name

was p/h, in this way cosine ratio was b/h and tangent ratio was p/b and the ratios were taught as:

After making such key words for abstract concepts, students felt easy to memorize and they recalled easily when the ratios were necessary.

In any Friday program, students easily pronounced fourteen zones of Nepal. I knew that students had developed shortcut words for memorizing the fourteen zones of Nepal "भे ध ना ग लु मे से ज रा म को बा क स"(Bhe Dha Na Ga Lu Me Se Ja Ra Ma Ko Ba Ka Sa)[71]. *This was easy method for memorizing any list. For general knowledge (GK), such key word method was effective and students as well as teachers recalled easily when needed.*

In Science subject, oxidation and reduction number, electronic configuration and valency of elements were more abstract concepts and students understood very less. For memorizing the valency of elements in chemistry of grade ten, I had developed "Hy Po So", "O Ca Ma" *the mnemonic ways.* "Hy Po So" *means Hydrogen, Potassium, Sodium and their valency is one; in this way* "O Ca Ma" *means Oxygen, Calcium, Magnesium and their valency is two. I taught such key word methods which is also known as mnemonic way for quick memorization. For simplification problems in mathematics, I had taught the* "बदमास"[72]"BODMAS" *rule, a famous method. In this method,* B *stands for*

सरल गर : **55 - 576 ÷ 12 + 11 x 3**	
यहाँ, 55 - 576 ÷ 12 + 11 x 3	
= 55 - 48 + 11 x 3	[भाग क्रियाबाट]
= 55 - 48 + 33	[गुणन क्रियाबाट]
= 7 + 33	[घटाउ क्रियाबाट]
= 40	[जोड क्रियाबाट]

[71]Bhe Dha Na Ga Lu Me Se Ja Ra Ma Ko Ba Ka Sa means fourteen zones of Nepal: Bheri, Dhawalagiri, Narayani, Gandaki, Lumbini, Mechi, Seti, Janakapur, Rapti, Mahakali, Koshi, Bagmati, Karnali, Sagarmatha.

[72]BODMAS is a short form to signify fundamental operations of mathematics and often this is translated in Nepali as बदमासand this signifies bad boy/girl.

Bracket, O *for Of,* D *for Division,* M *for Multiplication,* A *for Addition,* S *for Subtraction operation* [{(÷ × + –) }]. *To solve the problems such as* 55 ÷ [33 ÷ {2 + (26 – 25)}], "BODMAS" *is an easy way. In textbooks and teachers are still using this method to solve basic operational problems from lower to higher classes.*

Prologue: Extending the Episodes

The experiences of teaching in a small group and individual may be better than large group teaching. School classrooms are densely crowded and most of the teachers use lecture method that is not fit for all students and lessons are overloaded with definitions, facts, charts and exercises. Within forty five minutes, teacher teaches thirty minutesonly, rest of time is for going into class, taking students' attendance, giving directions, and so on. This time is not sufficient for learning and practices for meaningful learning and understanding. From my experiences, I have understood that the image *learning as individualization* and that *small group teaching* may be better than monotonous lecture method in a large group.

Ball and Mcdiarmid (n. d.) have researched that one essential characteristic of effective teaching is that it is responsive to the individual needs of students, quality teaching entails being sensitive to individual differences in preferred learning styles by varying the rate, amount, nature or content of the instruction given and students are much more likely to participate actively in learning activities when they know that their teacher has carefully considered their needs.

Student-oriented teaching methods can help to motivate students and help them realize their potential. One of these methods is small group teaching. It is student-centered and the tutor plays the role of facilitator (Bakhtiyar Nasrabadi & Norouzi,

2003). From my experiences small classroom, few furniture, relevant materials and small group of students may be effective in student-teacher interaction. Uses of materials, demonstration, discussion sessions may be more in small group teaching than large group teaching and I accept Springer's (1997) notion that various forms of small-group learning are effective in promoting academic achievement, better attitudes toward learning. Moreover, students' working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats.

"*Guru Anusarko Chela, Manchhe Anusarko Bhela*[73]" (Students like teachers, gathering like people) is a popular adage of Nepali society. Students learn according to the teachers' teaching styles. Teachers' main role is to help students in every step of learning. These common sayings of Nepali society somehow guided my teaching practices. I thought that my responsibility is to help students in every step of learning. From my experiences, I had developed some learning strategies. From classroom teaching, question and answer sessions I knew that my students had difficulties in understanding, then I repeated classroom teaching for some chapters but they were still confused. Valencies of elements, electronic configurations, and chemical equations in science; simplification of algebraic fractions, indices, age of father and son, unitary methods and time and work in mathematics were some very difficult chapters to my students to understand. Then I developed some concept/mind map, key words, linking bookish knowledge with daily life words to facilitate memorization and easy recalling. There are different problems to memorize and recall when necessary. Students feel very difficult to understand and memorize the definitions, formulae, proofs, examples and

[73]This is a popular common adage in Nepali society. Students are as like teachers and gathering is as like people.

relationships. I felt that in mathematics teaching there were four problems: understanding, assimilation, permanence, and transfer of learning. How to understand, how to learn deeply relating with other situations, how to save from forgetting and how to use learnt knowledge in daily life situations or in other subjects are common problems of teaching.

In science teaching lack of relevant materials, apparatus, demonstration and field visit were some problems occurring frequently. In language teaching, lack of practices of communication, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills were some problems. Textbook knowledge and teaching practices were not matched with each other and unmatched and mismatched situation created misunderstanding.

Episode IV: Textbook Teaching and Local Materials

It was the 8th May, 2012 and I entered the classroom of Grade X with science teacher Mr. Sisir. Mr. Sisir stood at the side of white board and put some materials on table.

All students stood up "Good morning sir."

"Good morning. Sit down."

I went to the last corner of the room and sat on bench.

Girls and boys were sitting at the separate rows.

Mr. Sisir wrote "Chapter- Pressure" and started teaching by questioning:

"What is pressure?"

Pointing to a girl "Rita, What is pressure?"

"Force per unit area is called pressure."

"Thank you very good. Sit down."

"What is the unit of pressure?" After waiting a bit longer Mr. Sisir pointed to one of the first benchers, "Rajju, tell me the unit of pressure."

Rajju Stood "Pa (Pascal) Sir."

"Thank you very good and what is the unit of atmospheric pressure?"

Sisir sir signaled Rajju to sit down.

"Who can say?"

One of the last bench boys stood and said, "mmHg."

Another student said, "millibar."

"Thank you, well said. You have good understanding.

Mr. Sisir erased "Pressure", and wrote "Liquid pressure" on white board and grouped the students within 8 members in a group A, B, C, D, E, F and told them, "Discuss about the definition of liquid pressure and its characteristics in your group and present the conclusion."

The students started discussion with buzzing sound. They turned over the books, read, discussed and wrote the question's answer in notebook.

Mr. Sisir asked group 'A', "Tell the definition of liquid pressure."

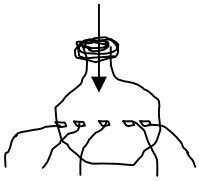
One boy stood, (probably he was a group leader), and said, "The pressure exerted by liquid is liquid pressure."

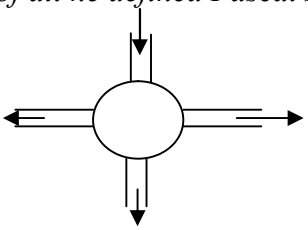
"Thank you."

Mr. Sisir asked the entiregroup to present their conclusion.

At last, Mr. Sisir described liquid pressure with examples of water of a tank pressure that exerts in the bottom of the tank.

"What are the characteristics of liquid pressure?" asking this question Mr. Sisir started one experiment related with Pascal's law. First of all he defined Pascal's law and sketched figure.

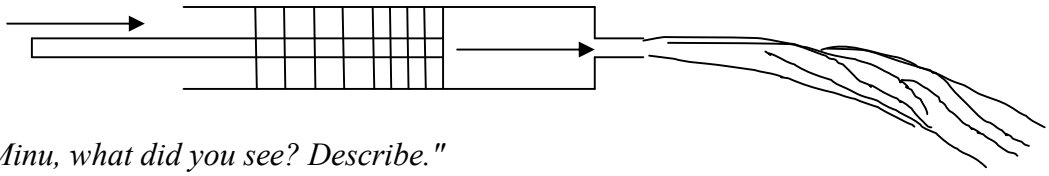




Mr. Sisir took one plastic bag filled with water and punched holes. The water spilled through holes as he pushed the bag tightly. The water spilled from the holes equally.

"If we squeeze the bag, the squeeze exerts pressure on the water and water exerts that pressure equally and perpendicularly in all directions. This is Pascal's law."

Mr. Sisir demonstrated Bamboo Pichkari[74] *and pumped water into the barrel and pushed the piston into barrel, and then the water spilled forcefully from the nozzle.*



"Minu, what did you see? Describe."

"When piston was pressed that gave pressure on water and water exerted pressure in all sides, then water pumped out forcedly from nozzle."

"Next girl, have you any idea?"

"Sir, if we press water in a closed vessel it exerts pressure equally and perpendicularly in all sides. But in Pichkari there is only one opening i. e. nozzle and water is pumped out from that."

[74] As like bicycle pump

"Thank you."

Mr. Sisir used the local materials Pichkari, and easily proved the Pascal's law. He described about the function of bicycle pump. At the end of class, he asked some review questions and gave some home assignment questions from textbook's exercise part.

Prologue: Extending the Episode

From Sisir's teaching style, I have conceptualized that classroom teaching is fundamentally based on teacher's knowledge, activeness,lesson presentation and decisions. Centralized curriculum is the main document and there are certain objectives, learning outcomes, content areas, teaching activities, evaluation strategies and planning ways of classroom teaching. Teachers can make, buy or collect local teaching materials as they need and they can present textbook lessons, chapters, and examples considering the classroom contexts and students' prior experiences. Sisir used different materials (plastic bag and Pichkari) which were easily available. The centralized curriculum has no restriction to use local materials; teacher can organize, and order the lessons as the contexts.

Sisir used question-answer session, short group discussion and demonstration of local materials to teach the abstract concepts, definitions and examples. These teaching strategies were based on teachers' decision, presentation styles, and skills of using teaching materials. In my observation, Sisir's teaching is a meaningful practice. Students learn and develop concepts with diverse opportunities of learning. We can make classroom varied to avoid monotonous environment. Such teaching practices make overstuffed and undernourished subject matters meaningful; increase student engagement and interaction between student and teacher; may be helpful to make alternative culture

in the place of traditional culture in classroom. We can create contextualized teaching practices to make learning more meaningful.

Classroom, Interaction and Engagement

Classroom is the center of learning, teaching and treating students. I emphasized classroom teaching more than outside of classroom. The classroom with chalkboard, columned desks and benches, students with textbooks and notebooks were some necessary conditions in my teaching. I always took classroom as conceptualized by Rosenshine & Furst (1973) that classrooms are the centerpiece of education and classrooms are inherently complex, and cultural settings (p. 122). I very less emphasized the student and teacher interaction. When I observed Sisir's class, I realized that classroom interaction may be important and an effective teacher can create interaction in classroom.

Students' active participation in classroom teaching, as Sisir's practices, initiates meaningful learning. Active participation may motivate, initiate students in classroom learning and may engage students in classroom. By engagement of students in classroom, teaching may be an effective as Kuh (2003) defines engagement as active participation in activities that promotes student learning, including time-on-task and collaborative learning and interaction with peers. Group discussions, small group teaching, individual feedback and diverse learning opportunities may be more meaningful than transmission-reception pedagogic practices.

Teacher Preparation and Different Strategies

I presented my experiences of teaching in secondary level in Episode II and III. During the field work, I observed some classroom teaching and learning in different

schools. Episode IV is the Sisir' Science teaching in secondary level. I was interested how first grade teachers were teaching the little children. The following episodes demonstrate different strategies of preparation and teaching alphabets in first grade.

Episode V: Local Materials and Rhymes

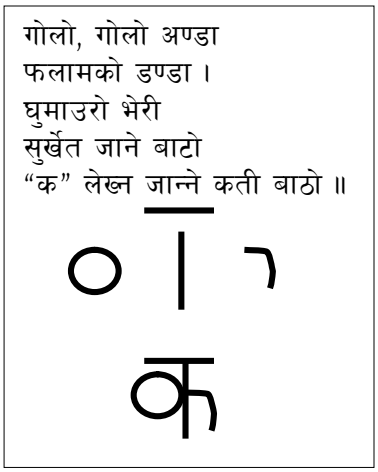
It was a day of May, 2012; I was with grade teacher Durg Bahadur. Durg Bahadur was a trained primary level teacher with twelve years' of experiences in teaching. In grade three classroom, there were 23 students. They were sitting on mat in lines. The classroom was filled with wooden blocks, models, dolls, balls, abacus, colorful beads, sticks, children story books, model of water mill, Kol (Mustard grinder), Jantto (Corn grinder), wheel and axel, axe, knife, Hanshia (cutting blade), cooking pots, wooden triangles, rectangles, cubes etc.

When I peeped Durg's class through door, he was busy in the classroom. He called me into the classroom.

The students were busy to pronounce and write Nepali alphabets "क, ख, ग, घ,....." I observed every corner of classroom and took some photos and sat in the last row of children. The students and teacher had no any textbooks, or any charts. First fifteen minutes he made the students practice to write different shapes:

ठ — ।

After students' practices of drawing such shapes in note book, Durg Bahadur started to practice to write first Nepali alphabet "क" relating the Nepali rhyme as follows:



*Durg Bahadur repeated the rhyme with lyrical sounds and the students also repeated. The teacher separately wrote the figures according to the rhyme saying lyrically. He said, "**गोलो, गोलो अण्डा**" and wrote "ठ", "**फलामको डण्डा**" "|" "**घुमाउरो भेरी**(turned Bheri river)" "ㄱ", "**सुर्खेत जाने बाटो**" "—" and he repeatedly sang the rhyme and wrote joining the figures "क" which was the Nepali first alphabetical letter "**क**" and at last he said "**कलेख्न जान्ने कती बाठो**". In this way he repeated the practices of writing "**क**".*

*I observed the children's writings; all of them easily drew the shapes and wrote the letter "**क**". Practicing 4/5 times students learnt to write in their notebooks within half an hour. After these practices Durg Bahadur provided rest for the children. Some children started to play with the models, dolls and other materials, some went outside of the classroom and some gathered with their friends.*

Meanwhile, I asked Durg Bahadur "You taught to write alphabet easily and effectively."

"I have developed such rhymes, chants, slangs and songs. I have twelve years' experiences of teaching in the primary school. I am grade teacher since five years with the training of grade teacher." Durg Bahadur said.

"Your classroom is filled with so many materials, are these helpful for teaching and learning?"

"I have collected and built all these materials myself and students can play, touch and move these materials, I use these materials for motivating them, and demonstrate for experience building. Children try to learn by seeing, touching, moving, playing, throwing these materials themselves. They pronounce the names of these materials, show their friends, share their experiences, and learn the words."

Durg Bahadur called all students to take their sit. He took one letter card of क *and started to ask each student turn by turn. All the students repeated* क, क, क,…

Episode VI: Daily Life Words

*It was the morning of Mid June of 2012, and when I stood at the door of Prema Miss's class, she signaled me to enter in the classroom. I had already talked with Prema Miss to observe her class. She was a primary teacher. I entered into the classroom and took sit in the last bench. There were less than forty students, small sized desk and bench and they were practicing to pronounce "*क, ख, ग, घ, ङ, च*". She wrote boldfaced letters* क, ख, ग, घ, ङ, च *on blackboard. She was pronouncing Nepali alphabets linking with daily hearsay words* कपुरी, खरायो, गाइगोडे, घर, नाक, चरी चुच्चे *etc which were easily understandable. Students repeated with Prema Miss.*

*About fifteen minutes later, she took some letter cards of alphabets "**क, ख, ग, घ, ङ, च**" and turn by turn she asked students. Some students pronounced correctly and some hesitated.*

कपुरी क
खरायो ख
गाइगोडे ग
घर जस्तो घ
नाक थोप्ली ङ
चरी चुच्चे च.....

After nearly fifty minutes, Prema asked children to stand up in four lines. All the children stood in the lines and she asked them to move outside the classroom. The children walked round of the play ground three/four times and then entered into classroom. Prema asked them to take rest.

I observed all these activities. In that rest time, I had conversations with Prema Miss. She said, "The early classes are most important and these should be motivational classes for the children. Teachers may use rhymes, chants, playing with materials, dancing, singing, and make them participate actively in the activities. To develop listening, speaking skills these activities may be very useful."

After Tiffin break, students were practicing English alphabets A, B, C,…. with the help of rhymes: A for apple, B for boy, C for cat, D for dog, E for elephant.

Students were continuously repeating the words pronounced by Prema Miss.

Episode VII: Same Pattern of Letters

*In the last July of 2012, I was in the class of Khima Thapa, who was teaching writing skill "**क, ख, ग, घ,...**" for grade one students. Thirty students were sitting on carpet. Charts, pictures, numbers and alphabetical posters were hanging on wall.*

*First of all Khima wrote न on black board and she told students to write **g** in their notebook. All students tried to write न and Khima checked all students note books and who those who could not write न she helped. After all students finished writing न she again wrote न on black board and told them to write it again. After writing न, Khima added vertical line from upper horizontal line to round part of न. All students did as teacher was to write म. After finishing that work, she pronounced that letter म.*

Khima told the students to repeat writing न and म. The students practiced writing for about half an hour. In that time Khima observed students' practices. I asked some questions:

"Why do you start writing from न not from क? In the book, it is started from त."

"I have already taught about न and students have already learnt to write न. It's easy to practice from known to unknown. I have used students' prior learning."

"It may be easy to start from क, ख, ग, घ...and in book there is a chart of Nepali alphabets (I showed the page)

"No sir, it's very difficult to start from क, ख, ग, घ... because these letters are different from one another. After practices of letters न, म, भ, झ,...then they can easily write क, ख, ग, घ...

Khima looked students' note books. After this practice session, he told students to read textbook.

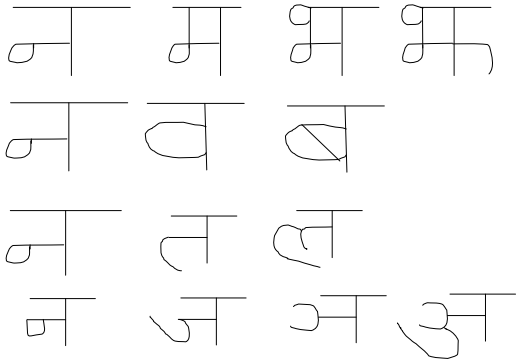
After reading and rest session, Khima told them to write **न, म**. *Again he told to write* **म***and she observed students' practices. She told students to see on black board and added one circle on the left upper part of* **म**.

"What is this? Read it."

Two, three students pronounced **भ**.

"Yes, this is **भ***and now you have to write* **भ** *as I did."*

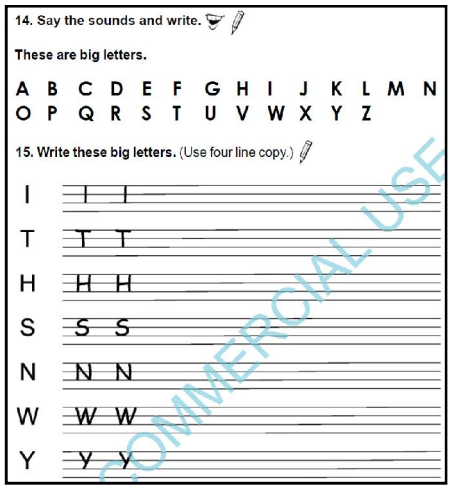
Some students wrote easily and some were confused. Khima helped them. All the day students tried to write Nepali alphabets starting from **न***and other letters* **म, भ, झ, व, ब, त ल**.



Prologue: Stretching the Episodes

From the above episodes V, VI and VII,I conceptualize that if teachers do some preparation before teaching they can teach more meaningfully than without any preparation. The collection and construction of locally available materials, use of different rhymes, slangs, chants, songs, plays, charts, meta cards, letter and word cards, pocket charts; use of daily life words, rest between different teaching period may be some meaningful strategies of teaching bookish knowledge in classroom. Starting from prior learning, known to unknown, simple to complex ways, using different strategies may

create meaningful environment. Brown (2006) has described that many of the songs, stories and rhymes that are ingrained in culture may help meaningful learning and increase classroom engagement, interaction, pronunciation practice and literary skills in English classroom (Brown, 2006).



Teacher Durg Bahadur was an active, trained and experienced teacher and he collected and constructed teaching materials. Durg Bahadur had skills of using teaching materials. Wickham & Versveld (1998) also investigated that classroom materials drive teachers' practices and good materials may improve teachers' practices and enrich learning environments. Teachers can use pictures, models, puppets and cards to teach, to complement materials like chalkboards and textbooks.

Subject Matter Nature, Structure and Grade-wise Abstractness

The learning and teaching practices are based on teaching styles, beliefs and images of students and teachers. I conceptualized that centrally developed and prescribed textbooks are like knowledge containers and help to regulate long lectures, one way descriptions, rote memorization and recalling as taken granted ways. Teachers may neglect learning itself is a social phenomenon (Cockrell, Caplow & Donaldson, 2000) and students have different ways of knowing (Gardner, 2000). The unmatched teaching and learning was due to the subject nature, structure of textbook lessons, teachers' preparation and teaching styles.

In episode VII, teacher Khima Thapa has organized and ordered the textbook lessons as classroom context, students' prior knowledge, interest, and experiences. Teachers can teach textbook lessons according to students' interest, their preparation, and experiences with their own order, organization, and modification as Khima Thapa did. In these regards, Ball, & Mcdiarmid (n. d.) haveconceptualized that teachers can alter instruction as individual differences, students' need, interests, and available resources. The episodes, VI and VII are some meaningful teaching practices and these are out of Bajracharya & Bajracharya's (2003) conclusion that the existing curriculum of primary level has little flexibility to accommodate multiple abilities of students at multi-levels or multi-ability levels.

From the observation, I want to demonstrate that in lower levels, the subject matters may have few abstractness and those subject matters can be easily contextualized according to the context and learner. In the upper level, there may be more abstract subject matters. Such subject matters are difficulty to contextualize. Contextualization practices may help to accommodate the centralized subject matters as contexts; teacher’s preparation, experiences, activeness and knowledge may be important.

Effective Teaching for Active Learning

By observing classroom teaching and students' learning practices, I have accepted Feldman's (1988) conclusion that effective teaching depends upon teacher's preparation, organization of the course, and teacher’s interest in the course.

From the field visit, I conceptualized that there were very rare cases of teaching meaningfully and most of the teaching was to transmit knowledge from the textbook to the blackboard and then to the minds of the students as rote teaching and most of teaching practices were matched with Bajracharya & Bajracharya's (2003) conclusion that existing

curriculum is more subject based and grade oriented and most of teachers are facing the problem of integrating the contents. Teachers' knowledge, engagement and activeness may mend teacher-centered courses which emphasize formal lectures and note taking, questions held until the end of class, and little student participation in learning activities.

As a teacher, I have experienced that my students have different ways of knowing and teaching is a component of classroom experiences and from the above episodes V, VI and VII it may be clear that effective teaching can promote student learning and may provide active learning opportunities (i. e. seeing, hearing, saying, physically experiencing the material, experience sharing, student and teacher interaction)

From my experiences of traditional learner and teacher, lecturing from class notes matches with Hativa and Birenbaum's (2000) notion that students may dislikesuch teaching, and this sort of practice correlates negatively with teaching effectiveness (Murray, 1990). In this way interest is a necessary aspect for learning.

From M Phil learning, I have conceptualized that learning is a social phenomenon. Learning is the product of a complex process. The classroom environment, the student's own learning needs, goals and preferences along with teaching strategies and curriculum all interact in producing cognitive and effective development. Students have different ways of knowing, teaching is multidimensional and complex. It embodies a wide variety of practices and methods as Piaget (1972) believed that meaningful learning takes place if students have the opportunity to construct their own knowledge. Through meaningful learning, students may be more creative and self directed learners.

Chapter Recapitulation

In this chapter, I depicted some teaching strategies as small group and individual teaching, key and daily life words. The small group and individual teaching, using key and daily life words were effective to learn abstract definitions and examples. My students felt easy to learn textbook lessons by these strategies. If teachers link textbook knowledge, and examples with daily life experiences, and examples that may be meaningful learning and students actively participate and engage in classroom teaching. Though teacher enforces to rote memorization, which may be detached from experiences and there are very rare cases of contextualizing the textbook subject matters in school level. Active and enthusiast teachers can use local, low and no cost materials for meaningful teaching, and they can organize textbook lessons according to their contexts. They can add more knowledge, experiences and examples, and engage students actively in classroom.

From field visit, I conceptualized that student-teacher interaction is very rare in classroom and even if there are some interactions that may be more male dominated and more students are passive listeners. Primary level teachers teach by using more teaching materials than upper level teachers.

CHAPTER VII

MY FINAL REFLECTIONS: LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD

Presenting my final reflections during this research from chapter I to VI, I have depicted my narratives of experiences of learning and teaching practices from school level to Kathmandu University with stories of other students, teachers and parents. In chapter VII as the final chapter of this research, I have critically reflectedon my experiences during this research. Also this chapter depicts my research journey, thereby articulating my research approach to deal with research problem/agendas. Being an insider as a student and teacher and outsider as a researcher, and narrator of self lived stories, my M Phil level learning journey was more confronting, challenging journey of my life in the background of a Science and Mathematics teacher of school level and almost positivist mind set. I experienced much more confrontation while changing my positivist mind set to multiparadigmatic- interpretive, critical, and postmodern research design. How do my research agendas get changed during this research? How did my own perceptions and practices of teaching and learning make a 'U' turn in the research process? What have I learnt from research site, observing classroom teaching and learning and writing narratives, scenes, contexts, poems etc from field data text? Based on emergent interpretive narrative research process and field work, numerous questions emerged, changed, and modified in the research process. This chapter provides my research experiences, some explorations and implications.

Emergences in/of My Research

My learning and teaching journey exploring the research agendas of school teachers and students within centralized curriculum materials, fragmented subjects, culturally decontextualized teaching and meaningless learning has been associated with my experiences as a student and a school teacher. While unpacking my research agendas, I came to realize the need of the multiparadigmatic research design space (Taylor, 2008), though I started to look this inquiry critically. Another aspect, I tried to look teaching and learning from the traditional and constructive perspectives at first but it needed to inculcate general, critical and contextual dimensions of teaching and learning practices. I assumed that existing traditional teaching and learning might have influences my teaching practices and teachers might have taken as granted what they learnt.

From different literatures, I knew that teacher dominated teaching and rote memorization learning processes are widely practiced in formal education based on behaviorism and cognitivism. Centralized textbook teaching and learning in classroom is like animal training, behavior shaping and mental practices. Behaviorist and cognitivist practices dominated classroom teaching and learning. Rote memorization, detached and fragmented content, decontextualized examples based on behaviorist notion give very little importance to learners' active roles in classroom, their needs, interests and interactions. On the other hand, constructivist learning theories emphasize on learner's background, and socio-cultural aspects, teaching and learning context, experiences and prior learning. I tried to analyze teaching and learning perceptions and practices of teachers and students in the background of localization of curriculum for meaningful learning. After visiting field three times, observing classroom teaching and learning

practices, informal conversations with students, teachers and parents, I knew that daily life activities, immovable furniture in classroom, teaching materials, annual summative assessment, densely crowded classroom, large group teaching, teachers' very less preparations and very little classroom interaction were some aspects affecting meaningful and contextualized classroom teaching and learning. In the initial stage of this thesis, I started to collect narratives/stories, experiences, anecdotes, scenes, contexts, nonlinguistic data based on localization of curriculum, teaching and learning practices. I conceptualized contextualization of curriculum as freedom for schools or local education authorities to adapt curriculum to local conditions and it is a policy of government. I continued regular discussions with my thesis supervisor and mentor Bal Chandra Luitel and studying different literatures, I came to know that localization of curriculum is the practice of implementation of curriculum as local curriculum which may not link with experiences, local examples, needs and interests. The perspective of local curriculum failed in effective implementation at local level due to lack of subject teachers, curriculum experts, and passiveness of local stakeholders. I was not interested with policy study or local curriculum but I wanted to analyze my own learning and teaching practices to transform my practices with centralized curriculum from traditional to constructivist by narrative, critical and self-study methods. In field visit, I observed that there was very little meaningful learning in classroom due to lack of preparation of teachers, relevant and appropriate teaching materials, contextual examples and experiences, using prior learning, active participation of students and interaction between teacher and student. Based on these contextual perspectives, I was interested towards meaningful learning and meaningful learning is the outcome of contextualization of curriculum. Contextualization

of curriculum shapes meaningful learning. Contextualization of curriculumis an instructional strategy to link academic content with prior learning, experiences, examples and daily life activities according to need and interest of students. Interdisciplinary learning, use of students' informal and out-of-school knowledge, student collaboration and interaction, real world examples and experiences, real life situations may be some components of curriculum (Darling-Hammond & Synder, 2000). Contextualization of curriculum and meaningful learning are constructivist strategies which emphasize on knowledge, which is constructed from experiences by active participation of learners and meaningful understanding not through pipe transmission (Luitel, 2009). Traditional practices of teaching and centralized curriculum materials are technical view of teaching, a behavioral view of learning, and focuses on the process of acquiring knowledge that involves memorizing facts and procedures. The experiences and knowledge that the students bring to a classroom have a significant effect on the way they learn new information. Teaching and learning are part of a living system, an interactive, dynamic, complex set of interactions that occurs in an ever-changing context of knowledge, space and time. In this way, starting from localization of curriculum, my research changed into contextualization of curriculum.

Recapitulating My Research Agendas

Based on my culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning journey, traditional and impracticable teaching journey, I tried to problematize my research topic. My learning was culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning. Fragmented subjects, foreign subject matters, teachers' unmatched language and culture were some characteristics of my learning. As being a Mathematics and Science teacher in school

level, I had centrally developed textbook to teach in classroom. Inappropriateness of student sitting, immovable desks and benches, lack of science apparatuses, very weak students, side talks of students, densely crowded and congested classroom were some factors to practice teaching as telling and interpreting lessons and chapters of centrally developed textbooks. I had content overloaded Mathematics and Science subjects and that was very difficult to finish in an academic year. I felt much more dilemmas, paradoxes and pressure within newly implemented courses. I practiced traditional ways of teaching and it was very difficult for me to add local experiences, examples and teach meaningfully. From my learning and teaching practices, I problematized my research in four research issues: first problem sets in the culturally decontextualized and meaningless learning. Second problem depicts traditional and impractical teaching. Third problem sets in the culturally decontextualized and fragmented curricula, and last sets in the centralized curriculum and textbooks. Based on these issues, I constructed the following four research questions of my research:

1. How do students(including myself as a learner) perceive and enact learning process in my research context? (Chapter III)
2. How do teachers(including myself as a teacher) use the centrally developed curriculum, and subject matters in teaching? (Chapter IV)
3. How do teachers(including myself as a teacher) perceive and practice the centralized curriculum in local contexts? (Chapter V)
4. In what ways do teachers (including myself as a teacher) attempt to incorporate contextualized examples, experiences and local subject matters in

classroom teaching for meaningful learning? How can I better help my students? How can I work more effectively? (Chapter VI)

Reflections on Learning, Learner and the Nature of Curriculum Materials

Moving to research question (RQ 1): *How do students(including myself as a student) perceive and enact learning process in my research context?,* I was much more concerned with my autobiographical narratives and participants' experiences, and their stories as students in classroom learning practices within centrally developed textbooks. I conceptualized from my learning experiences that learning is the process of gaining knowledge from teachers and textbooks and storing in mind to pass exam. Also the summative and annual examination system helped to continue the traditional learning strategies such as *Yaad Garne, Ghokne or Ratne* to train students towards rote learning for exams. From informal conversations, interview and observation of classroom teaching practices, I conceptualized that the behavioristic teaching practices like *Practice makes a man perfect, Trial and error* promoted rote learning and helped to continue memorization of textbook lessons from word to word. My learning practices were disconnected from prior experiences, interests,understanding, local contexts, and examples and I depicted some images of learning as*rote memorization, and passive receptive and cramming process*. From field data text and my experiences, I came to conclusion that students are teacher and textbook dependent, not self regulated and motivated.

Macedo and Bartolome's (1999) notion is that there is no teaching without learning and that learning ultimately determines and shapes teaching (p. 119). In this way, in different chapters of this thesis, my writing moves to and fro as learning and teaching are interrelated with each other. Teachers' lack of preparation, dominating

behavior, and presentation of lessons in classroom make learning silent listening, passive reception and receiving expert generated concepts rather co-learning, co-constructing, active participation and interaction. Such teaching creates frustration and worries about learning among the students. The already rigidly structured and formula based lessons make it difficult to contextualize according to students' interests, experiences and local contexts. Learning is the series of reproducing other's texts and ideas. Long lectures, over assignments, controlled classroom environment may be helpful to create fear, frustration, dissatisfaction and unsafe learning environment.

Based on my experiences as a student and teacher, I came to realize that classroom is like a mosaic with students of different backgrounds, and prior experiences. Safe and relaxed learning environment, prior experiences, local examples, interests and cultural context may help for meaningful learning.

Rote memorization has no guarantee of understanding and meaningful learning. In local schools and community, there are anarchies, paradoxes and such landscape shapes mindscape and teachers stick to the textbooks. There are integrated context and subjects of teaching and learning are fragmented.

Parents have very little time to share experiences and care their children. Teaching and learning for them is like *Equating Black Letter with Buffalo*.Parents guide their children to learn as *Dhyawanti Kheti and Ghokanti Bidhya* and such strategies emphasize rote learning of the textbook facts and definitions and number crammed knowledge. Parents take textbooks as reliable and formal sources of knowledge as that were developed by more knowledgeable and experienced experts. Parents may enforce their children for rote memorization of textbook lessons.

Reflections on Teaching, Beliefs and Concerns

Responding to the research question (RQ 2): *How do teachers (including myself as a teacher) use the centrally developed curriculum, and subject matters in teaching?*, I started to explore my teaching and learning journeythrough different logics and genres.

Teachers' motive was to stick to textbook lessons, to control classroom and make them passive receiver and as wooden dolls. Classroom interaction is teacher centered and there is very little space for experiences, examples and local knowledge. Nepali schools are dominated by textbook culture. Teachers are more willing to implement centrally developed textbooks without any change or contextualization. Teachers are transmitter of content, teaching as transmission of content. Geometry teaching is more problematic in rural, remote and deprived schools, where good teachers are not available. Students have very less prior experiences and understanding about geometrical concepts and knowledge. Students took geometry is a rigid, fixed, structured and purely defined subject and rote memorization is better way to know such geometrical knowledge.

In classroom, there may be very less interactions, teacher uses only textbooks and their preparation and presentation of lessons in classroom are not satisfactory and are not matched with students' experiences. Central curriculum and subject experts may emphasize centralized curriculum and textbooks to guide and direct teachers and students. Teacher centered classroom environment define students as quiet recipients of textbook knowledge. Teachers can contextualize textbook lessons by using locally situated knowledge, signs, symbols, names and language. Local knowledge, students' experiences and examples are very helpful for contextualization of curriculum and meaningful learning.

Already estimated time, centrally ordered textbook lessons, intended learning outcomes, centrally planned teaching and learning strategies may not work in local context. School teachers are fully dependent on textbooks and teaching becomes textbook dominated and monotonous.

I depicted images of mathematics and science subjects as already fixed, and knowledge that overloaded by structure and accumulated help *learning-as-ought-to-know*. These are different from learning is social and individual process. Students are treated as the same thing.

I envisioned that traditional teaching practices in classroom is guided by the notion *Old as Gold*. Teaching is taken as directing to solve problems given in textbooks and learning as completing assignments and submitting the assignments to teachers. Subject matters are culturally decontextualized, value-free and teachers feel uneasy to prove the practicability of such subject matters. Already structured lessons, foreign and imported scientific and mathematical knowledge has very less contextual meaning. The teaching of some subject matters such as culturally decontextualized and dislocated deductive geometrical proofs, chemical reactions, and oxidation and reduction number in Science were meaningless teaching and rote learning which were very difficult to relate with daily life experiences for me.

Textbook content, classroom size, structure and furniture, curriculum materials, densely crowded classroom help teaching in reading and telling from textbook and what teachers like. Such practices of teaching may be habitual practices of teachers. I felt more difficult to attach centralized content with local examples, experiences, and daily life activities i. e. contextualization. My classrooms were densely crowded, filled by

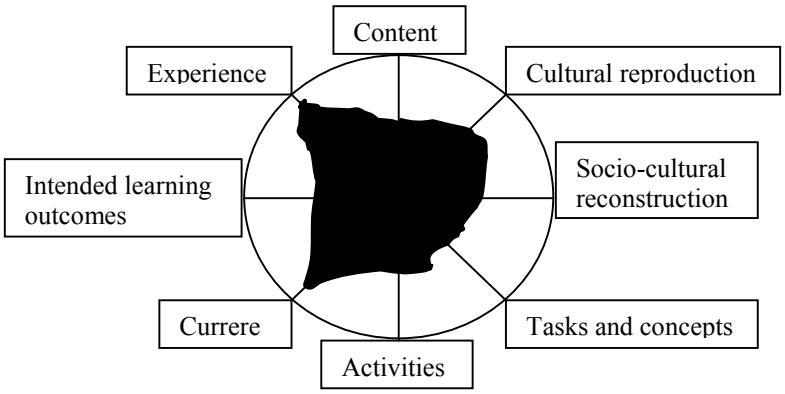
immovable furniture, congested and had lack of teaching materials. When I started to teach in classroom, I remembered my teachers' teaching styles and I followed them. In this way, I was a follower of my teachers, teacher dependent teacher and student. Parents, students and teachers' perceptions are negative about Mathematics and Science as subjects of foreign signs, symbols and definitions and teaching as telling and transmission practices.

Reflections on Curricular Images and Pedagogical Practices

The research question (RQ 3):*How do teachers(including myself as a teacher) perceive and practice the centralized curriculum in local contexts?*, led me to explore my experiences and teachers' experiences, practices related to school curriculum. According to my learning experiences, Mathematics and Science subjects were overloaded by foreign signs, symbols, notations, language, definitions and operations and these contents are decontextually taught and students were forced to memorize. I was very less interested in these subjects and I very rarely repeated the lessons of Mathematics, English and Science subjects. I was interested to read Nepali, and Social Studies subjects and these subject teachers accounted my experiences, local examples and stories. My Mathematics and Science learning was culturally decontextualized and meaningless. The contradictions among socio-cultural, linguistic, abstract content and context were major obstacles to learn meaningfully. I felt that the centralized curriculum, Science and Mathematics textbooks, classroom situation, socio-cultural background of students, their prior experiences were detached from each other as Jardine, Clifford& Friesen (2003) concluded that when curriculum is divorced from real life, children often lose connections with their own memories and histories (p. 21). Classrooms were full of

individual differences and socio-cultural diversities. It was very difficult for me to embed diversities and local contexts within teaching and learning Science and Mathematics. These were overloaded by centrally developed and adopted subject matters and estimated time period was insufficient to teach the given subject matters. Standing upon my experiences of teaching, I coined some images of curriculum as *the list of content, syllabus and written government document* to direct and guide learning.

From my M Phil learning journey, I realized that the metaphor of *curriculum as experience, curriculum as currere* ishelpful to create meaningful learning in classroom. In my M Phil learning what I perceived, understood and changed my conceptions about teaching and learning practices and developed new thinking about curricula, I mapped curricular images as follows:



In this way, my perceived curricular mapping is constructivist, transformative teaching and learning process practicing *curriculum as currere, curriculum as experiences, curriculum as cultural reproduction* are deeply rooted in teaching and learning

Reflections on Centralized Curriculum and ContextualizingPractices

Addressing the research question (RQ4): *In what ways do teachers (including myself as a teacher) attempt to incorporate contextual examples, experiences and local*

subject matters in classroom teaching for meaningful learning? How can I better help my students? How can I work more effectively?, I explored some teaching practices to make meaningful learning by contextualizing curriculum and textbook's lessons. I found that very less teachers strive to make their teaching learner-centered. Textbooks are often designed to teach subjects not students. Curriculum materials are necessary to help students in learning, guide teachers for teaching, to organizeteaching and learning. Teachers can add more local examples, experiences and local materials. They can plan according to local context. Centralized curriculum, textbooks and teaching materials are necessary to fulfill objectives and unite diversities.

If experiences and local subject matters link the students' experiences then that is meaningful learning. Adding the local examples, experiences and daily life activities is more important for meaningful learning. Centralized curriculum is needed to organize, guide and systematize our teaching and learning practices. Collection and construction of locally available materials, use of different rhymes, slangs, chants, songs, plays, charts, meta cards, letter and word cards, pocket charts; use of daily life words may be some meaningful teaching and learning practices in classroom. Starting from prior learning, known to unknown, simple to complex ways, teaching as individual strategies may make the centralized textbook lessons meaningful.

From data text, curriculum and textbooks are main guiding materials for teachers and students. Classroom teaching depends upon teachers' decision. Contextualization of curriculum makes curriculum as a dynamic text and experience. From my teaching experiences, I have come to know that small group teaching, individualized teaching,

using key and daily life words in learning, local examples and relevant materials are very helpful for meaningful learning and helpful to make curriculum contextualization.

From data text, I concluded that centrally developed content can be taught by using local materials and students develop better understanding. Spacious classrooms, movable furniture, relevant materials and small group of students can make meaningful learning. Contextualization of curriculum depends upon nature and structure of subject matter, teachers' preparation, experiences and activeness. During this research, I constructed some images: *Mathematics and Science-is-what-teachers-interpret, and curriculum-is-document-of-experts*. More structured and content overloaded Mathematics and Science make *students passive receptor and rote memorizer*.

Implications of My Research

On the basis of explorations and culminations, I have constructed following implications:

1. My envisioningabout active and engaged learning by using local examples, students' prior experiences and daily life activities based on the transformative and constructivist pedagogies may be useful to transform my existing practices and to develop personal-professional practices as well as others. The latest promising multiple research designs (Interpretivism, criticalism and postmodernism), methodologies (narrative inquiry, critical research and self study) and multiple genres and logics (narrative, dialogic, metaphoric, poetic and non-linguistic)offered me the emergent, autobiographical excavation, self-reflective, transformative and flexible space to capture multiple realities of teaching and learning practicesmay be useful to research about curriculum, teaching and learning.

2. My research can become helpful for teachers who want to transform their teaching practices from teacher centered to learner centered pedagogy. For this, they may employ my research texts (e. g. stories, anecdotes, interpretive-reflective texts) as referents to develop professional practices as transformative visions (chapter IV). Teachers can contextualize the centrally developed lessons according to their students' contexts (e. g. language, daily life activities, culture) and experiences using constructivist approaches (e. g. active participation of students in classroom, authentic materials, interaction). They can construct and use locally available materials in their everyday classrooms (chapter VI).
3. The effort to construct visions for addressing the problem of culturally decontextualised, and traditional practices, I envisaged a set of logics (e.g., Dialogical, metaphorical and poetic) which may be useful to promote active participation and interaction in classroom and for holistic thinking and articulating strategies needed to conceive contextualizing and constructive visions of curriculum.
4. Creative questions and activities may decrease the textbook culture (chapter IV). Teachers can create creative questions and activities to make teaching more meaningful.
5. Although curriculum materials are time bound, teachers can plan teaching according to local contexts and seasons (chapter VI). Curriculum materials and time setting can be developed and managed flexible ways.
6. Deductive and transmissionist teaching practices may emphasize on rote learning and textbook culture (chapter I). My research may become helpful to teach contextually and meaningfully in classroom and to help students to learn based on prior

experiences, local examples and students' day-to-day practices. Also, this research may help to transform beliefs, attitudes and practices of curriculum, teaching and learning by unpacking the traditional and meaningless teaching strategies (chapter V and VI).

7. Traditional practices of teaching and learning may be outcome of habitual mind and taken-for-granted attitudes. Through active participation, engagement, creative activities and lived interaction in classroom, it can be expected to renovate such teaching and learning practices by using small group and individualized teaching, students' prior experiences and daily life activities, local examples, rhymes, songs, plays and materials. Also, classroom interaction and active participation may be useful for professional development to create meaningful teaching and learning situations (chapter VI).

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