

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN ENGLISH: AN
ETHNOGRAPHIC INQUIRY

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Rom Nath Sharma* for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in English Language Education* presented on December 28, 2022, entitled *Cross-Cultural Communication Practices in English: An Ethnographic Inquiry*.

ABSTRACT APPROVED

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Assoc. Prof. Hem Raj Kafle, PhD

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This research study explored how English language teachers' cross-cultural communication practices facilitate meaningful learning and effective communication in English language and communication teaching cross-cultural classrooms. This study is based on the paradigm of interpretivism and criticalism following ethnographic inquiry as the research method. I selected one Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) class of a constituent campus of Tribhuvan University as the research site where a university lecturer taught Business Communication in English to the students of the class. There were students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. I collected data through class observations and open-ended interviews. I used the edited transcription style and enhanced ethnographic writing style. Hall's communication theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory supported analyzing the data to infer the research insights. I analyzed the data by applying inductive and deductive approaches.

Hall's communication theory helped me to explore how meaning and concept are affected by different cultural contexts. It guided the understanding of how mother

tongues and cultures of the students affect in language learning and communication process. This theory informed the examination of the aspects of non-verbal communication of the learners in the classroom communication situation. Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory enabled me to dig out how social interactions and shared learning practices of the learners create an effective learning environment. Both Hall's communication theory of learning and Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory contributed to the analysis of data from socio-cultural perspectives.

The study explored how learners' mother tongues and cultures affect the interpretation of the meaning, understanding the concept, decoding the message, English language learning, and intrapersonal and interpersonal communication. Cultures of the learners cause individual differences in their interactive practices, classroom participations, learning process, learning development and behavioral traits. This study examined how linguistic and cultural primacy, and cultural inharmony prevail in the cross-cultural communication context. The study revealed that learners engage actively in classroom participations, interactive learning activities, shared learning practices, meaningful language learning and effective communication process when the ownership of learning environment is created effectively and the issues related to cross-cultural communication are addressed properly.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted as a candidate for any other degree at any other university.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents and gurus. This dissertation is equally dedicated to the educationists and scholars who advocate to follow and protect ones cultures and respect the cultures of others and to the linguists, cultural activists and concerned stakeholders who contribute to maintain linguistic and cultural harmony in the society and in the academic institutions.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCC	Cross-cultural Communication
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELE	English Language Education
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
KU	Kathmandu University
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
AD	Anno Domini

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the anecdote that shaped my mind to start this study. It aims at presenting the lenses through which I experienced communication in cross-cultural context at the place where I grew up and the classes I taught. It further discusses the problem statement to decide my research questions and the rationale of this study.

Prelude to Cross-cultural Context

I grew up in a village in Rupandehi District, Lumbini Province. In this village mainly Tharus, Brahmans, Chhetris and Magars lived. However, the majority of the people were from Tharu community and I belong to Brahman community. As I spent my childhood there, I became familiar with the Tharu language and culture. My mother tongue is Nepali and I used to communicate with my family members and other Brahmans in Nepali. At the same time, as an innocent boy, I used to feel curious when I saw the Tharu people of my village speaking their language. Initially, it was a matter of surprise for me as I was not able to understand their language. But in course of time, I got some Tharu students as my classmates in the primary, lower secondary and secondary levels of education. By this time I was able to understand their language and speak to some extent as well. Moreover, I could notice some differences between my mother tongue and the Tharu language. For example, I used to use the word '*Dai*' to refer to the elder brother whereas Tharu people used to use the same word '*Dai*' to refer to their mother. But during that time, I could not make any sense for the reason of this differences. Even I did not know what the effect of linguistic and cultural differences was. I was not quite sure the value of mother tongues and our cultures. I

was unknown how these differences create misunderstanding and problem in the communication process. Actually, I began to realize the value of mother tongues and cultures while pursuing my Master's Degree in Arts in English literature as I had to study the bundle of information related to cultural studies like colonialism, cultural imperialism, decolonization, post colonialism and so on.

I started my English teaching career from Shree Kanti Boarding Secondary School, Butwal, Rupandehi. I found the students were from different cultural backgrounds mostly from Newar community, Brahman community and Magar community. During my teaching, I used to see the clear differences of those students in learning process, classroom participation, interaction, meaning construction, understanding the concept, behavioral traits due to their linguistic and cultural differences. I could see these students encountered problems in meaningful communication using the English language. It requires to understand the entities to be used in the communication in terms of the culture of other, and this helps to recognize and understand the phenomena of the communication situation (Menaka, 2018). However, I was not so focused then on the cause of this and to avoid the problems. Later, I started teaching at Aims College, Butwal. Again later, I moved to Lumbini Banijya Campus in the same city and Kshitiz International College (Academic Chain of New Horizon). When I taught the courses of Bachelor's and master's degrees in these educational institutions, I began to get some insights. I saw many issues in the use of English in global context and communication in cross-cultural context.

English has been used as an additional language outside English culture i.e. in cross-cultural communication context. English language is not the language of merely the people of certain countries or people. It has taken the form of the language used in the cross-cultural context aiming to communicate between people of diverse cultural

backgrounds (Smith, 2018). When English is used as the medium of communication between speakers of the diverse cultural contexts, chances of misunderstanding in the communication prevail.

The students to whom I taught, they learnt English either as a second language or third language. For example; mostly Brahman and Chhetri students had learnt Nepali language as their mother tongue before they started learning English. Likewise, Tharu students had already learnt to speak Tharu language as their mother tongue and then they had learnt Nepali. After they had learnt Tharu and Nepali language, they started to learn English, and so was the case in some other students. These students did not have only linguistic differences, they had also the differences in terms of culture and socio-economic backgrounds. In other words, they were from diverse linguistic, cultural and socio-economic milieu.

I noticed that Brahman and Chhetri students actively participated in learning process and could understand the concept faster than the Tharu, Magar, Newari students, etc. I also saw that they were different in their behavioral traits. For example; Brahman and Chhetri students were more extrovert than the Tharu and Magar students in the class. Brahman and Chhetri students were more conscious and careful in their study than the students of Tharu, Awadhi and Magar communities. I saw the differences in their learning process, learning consciousness, learning ability, meaning construction, understanding the concept, behavioral traits, maintaining communication etiquette and so forth. I also noticed the differences in their cultural mindset and maintaining non-verbal communication appropriately during the communication process. I felt the causes for these differences were their linguistic differences, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Being specific, when I taught a course related to cross-cultural communication and its problems in meaningful communication in cross-cultural context at Master of Business Administration (MBA) level, I realized this issue is a global issue and Nepal is not the exception of this problem. One research study claims that the globalization has increased the communal intercommunication throughout the world, and this has made the need of the study of intercultural communication in the fore front in the world of communication in today's context in every nation (Davidovitch & Khyzhniak, 2018). Hence, I felt it was reasonable to discuss the cultural issues and the practices of cross-cultural communication in English Language and communication classrooms in the context of Nepal.

In my class, students were from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and I often saw their learning being affected by their mother tongues and cultural backgrounds. For example, in one occasion two learners of my class namely Hari Shrestha and Rajani Chaudhary (pseudo names) interpreted the meaning of a Nepali word '*Bhuja*' (dried food stuff made from rice) differently. Hari understood as rice for the word '*Bhuja*' where as Rajani understood as dried food stuff made from rice. Therefore, it is necessary to blend the cultural insights effectively while instructing English because it may result greatly to produce meaningful communication (Sultana, 2011). For effective communication, it is important to direct ourselves to learn about the culture and the effect that occurs in the communication due to cultural differences in every day communication.

In addition, these days, English language is not limited to only high-class society and certain places. Modern information and communication technology have helped to distribute a wide range of knowledge across the countries rapidly as language is mainly a social phenomenon and language and culture are always

intertwined (House, 2016). Language facilitates to communicate and pass on the culture of groups of people each other. There are many cultural contexts which affect learning English in the context of Nepal and this research intends to explore these contexts. I felt issue of cross-cultural communication context in English language teaching and learning should be discussed more elaborately in the context of Nepal.

Exposure to social interaction, experience and study shape and change the mindset of the people consciously and unconsciously. Menaka (2018) states, “Books and training courses can help but the best way to understand a culture is through personal experience” (p. 57). Thus, my experience of growing up in the linguistically and culturally diverse community; the knowledge regarding the value of one’s language and culture, the knowledge about the communication in cross-cultural context I acquired from the study and my experience of teaching English, Business Communication and Managerial Communication in cross-cultural context classrooms in a school and three colleges in Butwal for more than a decade shaped and ignited my mind to think about this research study.

Rationale of the Study

Thinking and learning processes of human mind are greatly influenced by the particular culture he/she practices in his/her community and they can be improved through education (Bruner (2009). This argument makes clear that culture influences language teaching, learning and communication. The rationale of this research study is to contribute to the knowledge discourse of cross-cultural communication in English, ELT and communication classrooms by helping the English language teachers to reflect and rethink their pedagogical knowledge and skills they are applying in cross-cultural context in Nepal.

Cross-cultural communication in the ELT context is linked to the use of the English language in terms of teaching and learning effectively and also using and improving the proper non-verbal relation between the instructor and the learner for meaningful communication (Okoro & Washington, 2011). Cross-cultural context influences the meanings of the words and expressions, contexts and teachers' activities. Therefore, this research will be useful for teachers to understand what cross-cultural context is and how linguistic and cultural differences can impede meaningful learning.

While teaching English as a dominant language in the classroom, it is significant to negotiate while learning because the cultural differences of the learners, globalization, and worldwide economic and political changes have affected English language teaching and learning practices throughout the globe (Singh, et al., 2012). So, if one cannot negotiate, cross-cultural communication may not take place meaningfully, which may gear the learning down. Similarly, it is necessary to respect and preserve the cultures and languages of any nation. One of the ways to do so is by raising awareness in the citizens by educating them about the importance of languages and cultures for them and for the nation. It is essential to preserve minority languages and indigenous cultures (Singh et al., 2012). Therefore, this research can be useful for the students to be aware to preserve their indigenous languages and cultures, and to be aware of linguistic and cultural domination in ELT and communication classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

The main problem in cross-cultural communication in English, ELT and English language learning is meaning construction as same expression may give different meanings in different cultures and two-way communication is misunderstood. Consequently, learners do not understand the concepts or the ideas intended to be

delivered by the teacher. It is because, in many contexts, the sender encodes the message being influenced by his/her cultural assumptions, whereas, receiver decodes the sender's message as per his/her own cultural perspectives (Bovee, et al., 2019). So, this situation results cross-cultural communication into cross-cultural miscommunication. Why do students misinterpret of the concept in cross-cultural context in ELT classrooms? Why do not they construct meaning for correct concept or for conceptual clarity? In this context, Jhabarmal (2014) states, "The cultural difference lowers the precision level of conveying a message" (p. 215). As a result, students feel difficult in conceptualizing the idea.

ELT classrooms of Nepal are multilingual and multicultural, and linguistic and cultural dominations prevail in these classrooms. In English classrooms, English dominates Nepali language and other mother tongues, and Nepali influences other mother tongues as well. Although Nepal was not colonized formally, the dominance of English greatly prevails in the classrooms of Nepal as the medium of education (Poudel et al., 2022). There are linguistic and cultural hierarchies in the classroom. This effect of the discourse of language creates social hierarchy and impedes for meaningful learning in cross-cultural context. How do students feel in the classroom when they are from linguistically and culturally minority group? Are they aware for the linguistic and cultural domination in the class? Foucault believes that meaning and reality are created through discourse, and the discourse, power, culture and language are inter-connected (Pitsoe & Letseka, 2013). English as a dominant language and also as a culture has dominated over other languages and cultures. Students from linguistically and culturally majority groups influence over the minority groups in different ways. Do they feel the ownership of learning environment in the cross-cultural classroom?

There is the influence of globalization on culture. Likewise, globalization and culture both have the influence on language. However, their impacts on language practices have not been adequately discussed (Singh et al., 2012). Culture helps to determine how people encode messages and different cultural contexts are responsible for interpreting the messages during communication. The growth of technology has facilitated the social contacts and the mobility of the people. Concurrently, while communicating in English, the possibilities of occurring misinterpretation and misunderstanding in communication are increasing (Jhabarmal, 2014). It is because of the dominant influence of the cross-cultural aspects in ELT and communication.

Although multiculturalism has been a global concern for the world understanding, fraternity and social interaction, it is not addressed adequately in the educational policy of Nepal (Subedi, 2010). Students feel the cultural shock in the class. Teachers lack adequate pedagogical knowledge and skill to teach in cross-cultural ELT classroom. Thapa (2018) states, “In addition, the fear of facing cultural inharmony and cultural shock, teachers did not intend to bring cross-cultural context in English language classroom” (p. 134). How do ELT teachers handle the issues regarding the linguistic and cultural influence among the students? If teachers practice communication meaningfully in the cross-cultural context, then learning and communication can become meaningful in multi-cultural ELT classrooms of Nepal.

These discussions show problems such as misinterpretation, miscommunication, problem in conceptual clarity, linguistic and cultural domination, cultural shock, cultural inharmony, lack of ownership of learning environment in the class, differences in the consciousness in learning, learning differences, negative effect in the behavioral traits, etc. are like to encounter in cross-cultural communication context classrooms due to linguistic and cultural differences of the learners. However,

these issues are less explored in English language and communication classrooms in the context of Nepal.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to explore the English language teachers' cross-cultural communication practices in English; issues they encounter in their practices, and the ways they resolve the issues of cross-cultural communication in the classrooms.

Research Questions

To address the purpose of my study, I proposed the following research questions:

How do English language teachers' cross-cultural communication practices enhance meaningful learning and communication in multilingual and multi-cultural classrooms?

- a. What are the cross-cultural communication practices the teachers applied in classrooms?
- b. What are the issues they encounter in their practices?
- c. How do they address the issues related to cross-cultural communication in the classrooms?

Delimitations of the Research

This research focused on the teachers' experiences of teaching English and communication in cross-cultural communication context. Cross-cultural communication involves multiple layers of study. However, this study was delimited to the practices of cross-cultural communication in English language and communication teaching classroom. Furthermore, I explored the situations that created communication misunderstanding and misinterpretation in cross-cultural

context. Likewise, I excavated the issues associated with cross-cultural communication in English language and communication teaching and learning classrooms, and the ways the teachers addressed them. Moreover, this study examined the linguistic and cultural domination existed in the classroom and the effect of such domination in the learning development of the students.

Structure of the Dissertation

This research study has been organized in seven chapters. The first chapter is about my prelude to the cross-cultural context and developing the research agenda. In the second chapter, I have reviewed the literature and clarified the adopted theories and concept to proceed with the research work. In the third chapter, I have discussed research methodology of this research study. I have explained why I chose an ethnographic research and the ways I carried the research process. In the fourth chapter, I have attempted to replicate how the class I observed was a cross-cultural communication context classroom and how the teacher applied the CCC practices in the classroom. In the fifth chapter, I have attempted to address how different mother tongues and cultures created miscommunication, caused learning differences and affected meaningful learning. In the sixth chapter, I have attempted to explore the issues concerned with the cross-cultural communication, and the ways for addressing and resolving them. In chapter seven, I have summarized the research insights, my reflection during my research journey and concluding remarks. At the end, I have listed the references of the books, articles, journals, etc. of various researchers and scholars I used in this research study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter illustrates the relevant literature exploring cross-cultural communication practices in English, ELT and communication classrooms. I reviewed the relevant literature concerned with the communicating through English in cross-cultural context. This chapter discusses the conceptual clarity of cross-cultural communication, theories supported to the research study, previous studies carried out in the area of cross-cultural communication context in ELT and policy of the Government of Nepal related to the multilingual and multicultural education in Nepal.

Role of Culture in Communication

Culture refers to human activities and human experiences on all aspects of life including behaviors of human beings, a group of people and a nation. Culture can be understood in terms of the practices such as arts of description, communication and representation. These practices exist in aesthetic forms and are relatively autonomy from the effect of economic, social and political activities. Culture is one's belongings, possessions and identity. It gives the notion of 'us' and 'them' and creates some degree of dislikes or prejudices against the people from other cultures or countries (Said, 1994). Culture is in flux and it does not survive in the same form in which the invading culture meets it (Lindfors, 1997) and in course of time it becomes bolder and less conventional despite it narrows itself down and simplify itself when time passes (Powys, 1994). Thus, culture is the way of life of the people of a particular place or a nation as a whole.

Cross-cultural communication refers to the communication that takes place among the people who are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Lesikar et

al. (2013) define, “Cross-cultural communication as the understanding of cultural differences and overcoming language problems” (p. 554). We belong to several cultural backgrounds so as to say that the culture we belong to influences our assumptions while communicating in cross-cultural context. As a result, meaning of the same expression of a particular language is encoded and decoded differently during the communication process.

Cross-cultural communication is not merely the exchange of the information among the people of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, but it is largely associated the cultural identity of the people. He/she may be occupied with the notion that he/she is only learning language and culture of the other people and his/her behavior is affected only by his/her mother tongue and indigenous culture. But, in the long run, individual’s way of thinking and behaving also begins to change unconsciously due to the practice of cross-cultural communication. As a result, it affects to his/her culture and cultural identity, and in the use of his/her mother tongue. So, it is important to know that learning other language and the penetration of the culture related to that language occur simultaneously (Meng, 2020).

When we communicate cross-culturally, we are likely to encounter cultural differences in terms of the connotative and denotative meanings of the words. To be specific, failing to understand the connotative meaning of the word in cross-cultural context affects our ability to communicate effectively. It is because connotative meaning of a word is influenced by cultural context and denotative meaning of a word is the standard meaning of a particular language. These factors are the main causes for blunders in speech that often lead to misunderstandings, absurd consequences, embarrassment and breakdown of communication (Smith, 1981). Thus, it is necessary for both sender and receiver of the message to have cultural understanding of each

other in advance to understand the particular language and for the meaningful communication.

Cross-cultural Communication Awareness

Mastery over the linguistic features of a language only is not sufficient for the learners to be competent in the language. If students lack sufficient cultural content, their communication in cross-cultural context may result into miscommunication. For this, students' cross-cultural communication competence needs to be fostered by incorporating the features and complexities of inter-cultural consciousness in the curriculum (Davitishvili, 2017). But academic institutions, while teaching cross-cultural communication, are still focused in teaching the interrelationship of language and some aspects of their respective cultures mostly rather than focusing on cross-cultural study in ELT. This practice can bring failure in exchange the correct information between the sender and the receiver (Aliakbari, 2003).

Due to the effect of globalization, in one hand people have become more conscious for the value of their indigenous cultures and mother tongues, and on the other hand it has also affected in the position of English. It has been increasingly used as a second or third or additional language or the language for the global communication, and this has caused to change in the language education policy prioritizing for the linguistic minorities and indigenous cultures in many countries (Singh et al., 2012).

As English has been the dominant global language, the development of English language is not limited only in the hands of native speakers because the position of English language has changed into an additional language to be used in cross-cultural communication context (Davitishvili, 2017). Therefore, there is the need of making

teachers and learners to be aware of the effect of cultural differences in English and communication teaching and learning multicultural classrooms.

In the context of Nepal, one study claims that due to the teachers' lack of awareness of different cultures and cultural contexts, teachers are unable to contextualize in their teaching although contextualization is an inevitable pedagogy to bring cross-cultural context in ELT classroom (Thapa, 2018). As a result, English teaching, communication and shared learning have been ineffective in many contexts in multi-cultural English and communication classes.

Communication Theory of Learning

It is important to know how the language and culture are interrelated. Language is used to record the culture of the time. It requires to understand language and culture of the people during cross-cultural communication. In this context, Hall (1976) argues, "Two things get in the way understanding: the linearity of language and the deep biases and built-in blinders that every culture provides" (p. 69). While using language, speaker's language ability merely does not come. At the same time, his/her linguistic and socio-cultural aspect also function indirectly in meaning making process. Students have the deep psychological effect of their socio-cultural milieu in presenting their overall communication (Hall, 1959), and he claims, "Culture is communication" (p. 117).

While communicating in the cross-cultural context, problem occurs in decoding and encoding the message. When sender and receiver fail to understand each other's cultural context and linguistic background, it causes misinterpretation of the message and it brings the miss-communication. It creates problems in the conceptual clarity. It affects in the interaction and shared learning of the students. As a result, language learning and communication becomes ineffective. Context affects

the communication. Different people from different cultures communicate in different ways. It is because cultural differences cause different contexts, and the meaning is contextual based on the culture of the people. Diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds pass on dissimilarities in meaning, concept, cultural norms and values; so, it demands comprehending the cultural context and the structure of the society of the people involving in the cross-cultural communication (Ali et al., 2015).

Language is the medium of communication whereas the communication is the exchange of the information, ideas and facts between the sender and the receiver. If both the sender and the receiver are not aware of the cultural and context differences, it creates problem in understanding the meaning. ELT teachers teaching in cross-cultural context require to be aware of these issues. Otherwise, communication in the classroom takes the form of miscommunication. During communication, non-verbal categories need to be observed significantly to understand the real meaning of the communication. Hall (1990) argues, “All of us are sensitive to subtle changes in the demeanor of the other person as he responds to what we are saying or doing” (p. 5). The message received from the non-verbal communication is more powerful and accurate than the message received merely from the uttered expressions.

Communication can take place both explicitly and implicitly. Edward T. Hall in his book, *Beyond Culture (1976)* discusses about high-context culture and low-context culture. He views the communication style of the people of high-context culture is different from the people of low-context culture. The people who belong to high-context culture tend to communicate implicitly and indirectly. On the other hand, the people of low-context culture tend to communicate explicitly and directly. In the same way, social hierarchy is higher in the people of high-context culture where as it is less in the people of low-context culture (Bai, 2016).

Various factors like ethnocentrism, stereotyping, communication style, decoding the message differently, differences in perception and cultural behavior, lack of understanding and addressing cultural sensitivity and diversity, etc. are the barriers for the effective communication in cross-cultural context (Hurn & Tomalin, 2013). Hence, ELT teachers and communication practitioners require to be culturally and linguistically professional and well trained to apply teaching pedagogies as per the context while teaching in the English and communication classrooms to minimize these barriers of cross-cultural communication. And this paves the way for the effective language learning and communication in English.

Hall's communication theory enabled me to understand the culture in terms of communication and the ways communication affected between the teacher and the students, and among the students in understanding the meaning and the concept of the words and utterances they used while communicating in cross-cultural context classroom.

Sociocultural Theory of Learning

The sociocultural theory believes that learning and mental development occur from the social and cultural interaction. It views that people create their own understanding and reality via the experiences and reflections of their experiences of the phenomena. If students interact in their common language connecting to their cultures, learning will be more effective. Shared learning is very important. Vygotskian perspective believes in shared learning and interaction for meaningful learning. Vygotsky (1979) claims "Learning is considered a purely external process ..." (p. 79). No shared learning or interactive learning is a problem. Learning means understanding the reality or truth. Effective learning occurs when the learners construct the knowledge by experiencing the things i.e. it does not occur only through teacher's

lectures in the class. Effective learning requires the adequate engagement of the learners in teaching and learning process (Adom et al., 2016).

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory views that children learn through social interaction. They do not learn language being separated from the social environment but they learn language due to the exposure of the words and sentences spoken by the people in their surrounding (Uwen et al., 2020). It makes us clear that the student's language learning is influenced by the linguistic, social and cultural context in which they live in. Thus sociocultural theory believes that the interactions and experiences of the learners are required to create the knowledge and to understand the reality of the phenomena.

Hall's Communication theory and Vygotsky's socio-cultural learning theory supported as theoretical framework for inferring the meaning for the research on the practices of cross-cultural communication in English. Hence, basing on the philosophical concepts of these theories, I analyzed the text data to excavate the insights or meanings for this research.

Policy Associated with Multilingual and Multicultural Education in Nepal

Nepal is a multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious, multicultural and geographically diversified country (The Constitution of Nepal, 2015). According to National Census of 2011, it has 26.5 million population comprising 126 castes or ethnic communities and 123 languages are spoken. Although equity in education is much discussed focusing on education for all and although Nepal has achieved some significant achievement in the education sector over the last decade, these achievements have not yet been celebrated by all equally. Giri (2010) states, "Languages have always been of critical importance in multilingual Nepal" (p. 87).

In regard of mother tongue education policy of Nepal, part 3 and article 18 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 guaranteed the right to conduct primary level schools and to provide education in the mother tongue. Similarly, part 3 and article 17 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 provisioned right to acquire education in the mother tongue for every community or societal people (Regmi, 2021). In part 3 and article 31 of the Constitution of Nepal 2015 has provisioned right to educate the children in their mother tongue by running schools up to secondary level. Likewise, part 3, article 32 has conferred right to language and culture to all the citizens of Nepal. Each citizen and every community living in Nepal has the right to preserve and promote their languages, cultures and heritages.

Education is the key for the development of the nation as it serves as the most important infrastructure to develop all other infrastructures of the development. The National Education Policy 2019 has clearly addressed the provision of educating the children in the mother tongues as provisioned in the fundamental right namely right to education in article 31 of the Constitution of Nepal 2015. The National Education Policy 2019 has adopted the policy of managing multilingual education based on the mother tongues, and Nepali and English as the medium of education considering the linguistic differences of Nepal, children's interest and need. Local government of Nepal has been conferred the right to formulate and implement policy, bylaws and planning, and also to supervise and evaluate for preliminary child development education, basic education and secondary level education. Local government can decide on the matter of giving approval to run schools to educate in mother tongues, and to instruct and supervise such schools (Local Government Operation Act, 2017).

As the English only policy resulted English only medium of education in the USA, Nepali only language of the nation policy seems to have caused Nepali as

medium of education historically. However, there is a paradigm shift in the language policy in education i.e. Nepali medium of education to multilingual schooling in education in Nepal (Weinberg, 2013). Despite there are many significant development or progress in multilingual education, it has not been inclusive in a full extent. Therefore, formulating policy is alright but it is more important to implement effectively so that all the children will be able to use their mother tongues equally in schooling or education, and also respect and preservation of all the language will be promoted.

There are some challenges for maintaining effective multilingual policies in Nepal as different local and other agencies are not in the favor of implementing multilingualism and multiculturalism. Moreover, there is the greater effect of transnational and neoliberalism which have influenced the forms and outcomes of multilingual education policy implementation (Davis et al., 2012). It is very important to inform how local languages are important. For this, those people who have played very active and positive role should be invited in the interaction and discussion to make them aware that local languages are also important as English language or other majority group's language. In addition, role of such active people, role of teachers, parents and students are often ignored while formulating language policy (Phyak, 2013). Therefore, these stakeholders should be involved in formulating language policy and implementing the process.

Impact of Cross-cultural Communication in Teachers' and Learners' Discourse

A learner can be said to be competent in a language when he/she acquires both linguistic competence and be familiar with the cultural aspects of the culture being associated to that language. Otherwise, communication misunderstanding may occur between the sender and the receiver of the message. For encoding and decoding the

message between the teacher and the students mostly language skills are emphasized. But, only doing so, it is not adequate for effective communication. Moreover, there is prevailing the trend of focusing these skills only while teaching and learning about language and culture. However, it is quite necessary to understand the variations between diverse cultures in detail and its impacts in communication (Thomas, 1994).

While teaching English language as an additional language, a teacher needs to be careful whether students are able to communicate understanding their social context. For instance, a student if says to his/her teacher, "Hey you, come here" (Davitishvili, 2017, p.555). This expression can be considered correct regarding semantic and linguistic aspects of the language, but, it may not be considered correct from social and cultural perspective. Hence, social and cultural context affect in the communication process. Therefore, these contexts need to be addressed and resolved in ELT classroom.

While communicating in diverse cultural context, miscommunication and misperception between the sender and receiver of the message may become high. For instance, when a British employer asked an American employee whether 11:00 AM was appropriate time for him to take lunch every day. The American replied, "Yeah that would be great!" The British was annoyed when he heard the American using the word *yeah* or for not using the word *yes*. The British considered him impolite and discourteous and questioned for his attitude (Rani, 2013, p. 32). The employee was bewildered for not being able to know what wrong had gone. Here both the sender and the receiver of the message do not seem to be fully aware for the impact in the discourse of communication in cross-cultural context.

Practices of Cross-cultural Communication in ELT Classroom

The particular culture which we practice or belong to influences our communication greatly. Bovee et al. (2019) argue, “The interaction of culture and communication is so pervasive that separating the two is virtually impossible” (p. 75). When there are cultural differences the meaning of non-verbal communication is also understood differently. In this context, it is imperative to understand the communication in terms of high-context and low context culture. In this context, Ladha et al. (2018) puts, “Communication styles differ greatly among cultures” (p. 67). Thus it is important to inquire how effective communication or meaningful learning is affected due to cultural differences of the sender and receiver of the message i.e. between the teacher and the students in the context of English language teaching and learning.

Area of cross-cultural communication is broad as it affects the communication in different disciplines like psychology, sociology, anthropology, business, management and so on. Thus it needs to be address and discussed by the communication experts and linguists. However, teaching of cross-cultural communication is mostly confined just showing the relationship of language and cultures in educational institutions rather than focusing on cross-cultural study in ELT. One research explored that acquiring cultural proficiency is very necessary for the effective communication in cross-cultural context and it is possible by arousing the interest of the students to study the indigenous cultures and their differences blending language and cultures while teaching language to the students (Kulinich et al., 2019).

Language development cannot be viewed only from the perspective of evaluating language skills. Meaningful learning, particularly, in cross-cultural communication context requires a combination of understandable verbal and nonverbal

categories, cultural behaviors and cultures. In today's context, emerging multicultural language learning environment has come to replace the mono-cultural language learning environment in ELT classroom. In this point, one empirical research study revealed that need of English language teaching has been shifted to two dimensions i.e. need for teaching English as a medium of global communication and encompassing ethnical cultural understandings in ELT classroom (Davidovitch & Khyzhniak, 2018). The need for cross-cultural communication skills arises whenever people from different languages and cultures come in to contact.

Ethnocentrism and stereotyping are the major challenges in practicing communication effectively in cross-cultural communication situation. When a teacher sees the things being ethnocentric, he/she begins judging from his own perspectives and cultures. Ethnocentrism occurs when someone judges other people from the perspective of his/her cultural norms, values, standards and behaviors. Stereotype is the rigid mindset and over generalization of the ideas and causes to be away from the truth or reality (Bovee et al., 2019). When a teacher has a stereotype mindset, he often over generalizes the things and conveys wrong message and students also decode wrongly. Therefore, a significant discussion to overcome the problems in cross-cultural communication is quite necessary.

Despite English is widely used in schools and the universities, it is more regarded as a means to facilitate the targeted knowledge and skills rather than English as subject and almost all the countries of the world have included English language in their educational policies (Brown, 2018). Thus, a more recent growing phenomenon is the teaching of other subjects in English i.e. English has been simply a medium of instruction. English has been pervasive in every aspect of our life from daily activity to a business purpose as well. Thus, practice of communicating using English language as

a medium of communication in cross-cultural communication situations has been very significant.

In the context of Nepal also, there is a great effect of English as a language and as a means of acquiring targeted knowledge and skills in the language policies and education system of Nepal (Duwadi, 2018). A language teacher is required to avoid misunderstanding sometimes by using or letting to use mother tongues of the students and sometimes by using non-verbal communication. Thus the speakers and the listeners are required to contribute to overcome misunderstandings by sharing each other's cultures and by cooperating with each other (Aliakbari, 2003). Culture influences everything about communication including language, non-verbal signals and word meaning.

One research study claimed that university students used their mother tongues to understand the concept, new vocabularies and to refer to any technical issues. Similarly, they also used mother tongues automatically and in spontaneous way to correct their friends' mistakes. Mother tongues were useful for them to minimize their misconception and miscommunication. They also used their mother tongues while discussing with each other in the group. In the same way, use of mother tongues also helped teachers to clarify the concepts, unfamiliar vocabularies and to find out to what extent the students comprehend the taught subject matters, and also to keep the classroom environment intact. Hence, the study revealed that it is beneficial to use mother tongues in English and communication classrooms (Hawa et al., 2021).

However, in English classroom, students are often discouraged to use their mother tongue or first language. However, study has shown that ELT teachers themselves use their first language mostly Nepali and students also feel comfort when teachers use students' first language in the classroom. In other words, there is

frequently code switching in the class. They prefer to use their mother tongue or first language because both the students and teachers feel that doing so is helpful for learning language in different ways such as it helps to comprehend the content, lexis, syntax and semantic aspect of the second language. Although the learners like their instructors using their mother tongue or first language while teaching English, its overuse also causes decreasing in the competence of English that requires to deliver the knowledge in English (Sah, 2017).

Nepali and English languages are widely used as medium of education and for official documentations. So, the influences of English and Nepali have caused the people to abandon their languages and cultures and to adopt the culture either guided by English language or by Nepali language. In other words, English language and also Nepali language have affected local languages and cultures greatly. As a result, this has created disruption in the people who learn English and Nepali as their second or third language and has replaced them socially, emotionally and psychologically (Giri, 2010).

Another research study, carried out in the context of Nepal, argues that cultural hesitation of the students, their shyness to express their cultures, feeling cultural shock by the learners, teachers' lack of cross-cultural competent, contextual knowledge and strategies are the challenges in bringing cross-cultural context in the classroom. To some extent, when teachers brought cross-cultural context in the classroom, learners showed discomfort due the feeling of cultural shock and shocking features of their cultures (Thapa 2018).

These literatures show that the issues of cross-cultural communication have been discussed more in a cultural context. However, in the context of discourse of language, issues of cross-cultural communication in ELT and communication

classrooms have not been adequately researched yet in Nepal. So, this justifies the research questions of my study that are the foundations to meet the purpose of this research.

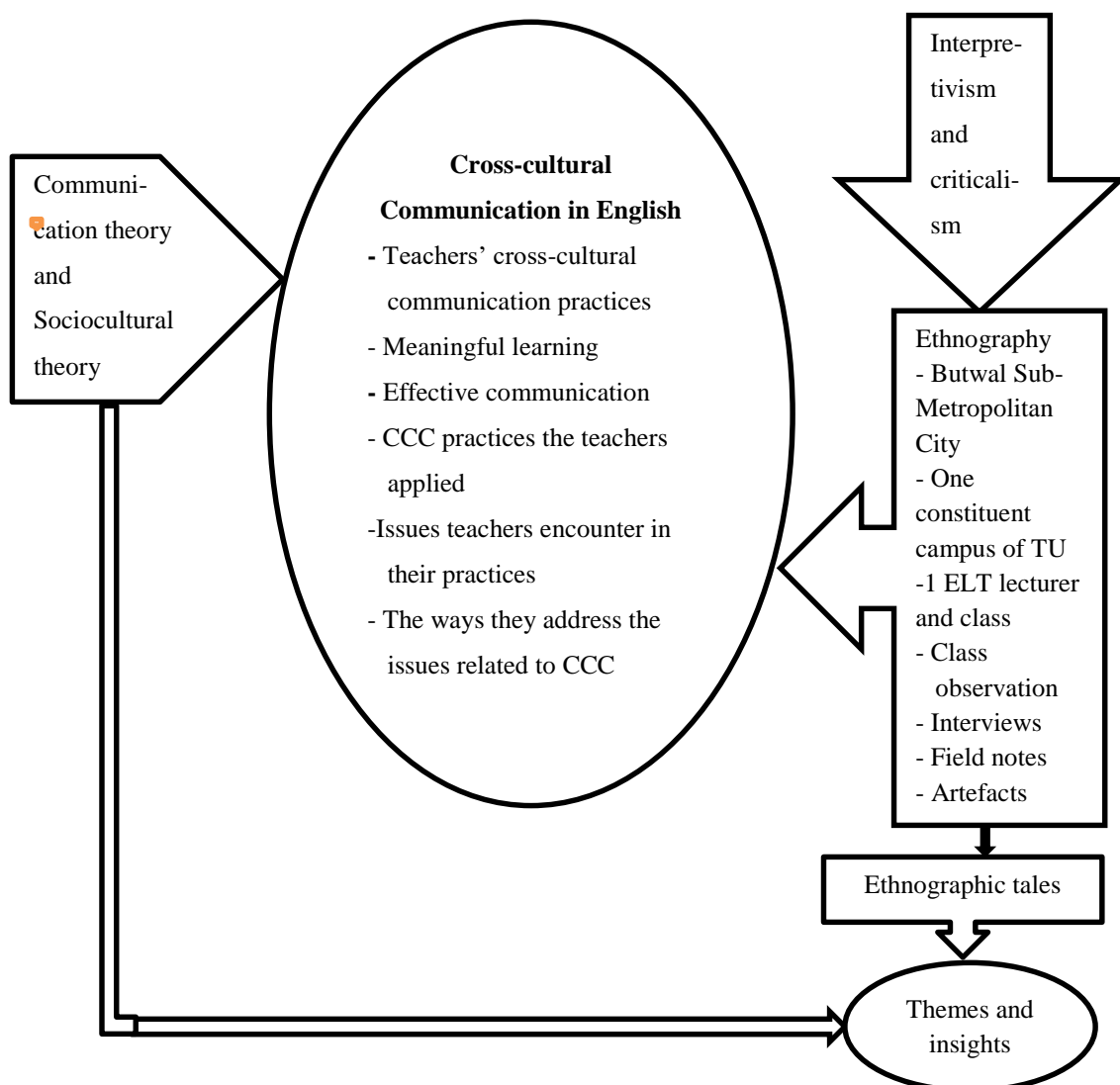
Research Gap

I experienced the multilingual and cross-cultural communication context in English language and communication teaching classrooms. I taught the learners for whom English was a second or third language. There were the learners who first learnt their mother tongue, and they learnt Nepali, and then they learnt English i.e. they learnt English as a third language after their mother tongue and Nepali. And they felt more difficult in learning English than the learners who learnt English as a second language. These students were from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Their mother tongues and cultures influenced their learning English, communication and learning process. Although the mother tongue of most of the students in my class was Nepali, there were some students who spoke Nepali as the second language also.

When I searched literatures concerned with cross-cultural communication in ELT, I found exploring about the importance of culture and cross-cultural communication in ELT; problems in cross-cultural communication context; blending English teaching with cultural studies, and cross-cultural communication in global context. However, in the context of Nepal, the issues of cross-cultural communication in English language and communication teaching classrooms have often been ignored and I have attempted to make up this gap in this research. I tried to fill up the gap on the ways English language teachers practice cross-cultural communications in English and address the issues related to cross-cultural communications in a multilingual English language and communication teaching classroom.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework illustrates how the researcher digs out the research agenda to infer the themes and insights. It clarifies the way the researcher undertakes the research inquiry. In other words, conceptual framework is the logical pathway to advance and accomplish the research work (Adom et al., 2018). This ethnographic research was guided by the paradigm of interpretivism and criticalism. I collected the data focusing on my research questions based on the ethnographic research methodology. I analyzed data mainly from the perspectives of Hall's communication theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory to infer the themes and insights. The following figure shows the conceptual framework of this study.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the research methodology that I used to carry out this research. It discusses the philosophical considerations viz. ontology, epistemology and axiology. Then I have discussed research paradigms in which my research is based on. And then, it discusses ethnography inquiry as the research methodology that I applied in this research. After this, it includes about the research site and participants. Likewise, it also illustrates the data collection methods and meaning generating strategies. And, finally, this chapter presents the quality standard and ethical considerations I maintained in this research study.

Philosophical Assumptions

Philosophical considerations supported my research design and entire procedure of methodology. I used a multi-paradigmatic approach namely the paradigm of interpretivism and criticalism. Based on these paradigms, I concentrated on ontology (nature of reality), epistemology (theory of knowledge) and axiology (theory of value) as my philosophical considerations.

Ontology

The ontological assumption of this research is that the nature of reality is socially constructed, multiple, holistic and contextual. Likewise, the ontology of my research is influenced and guided by social context and the experiences of the participants in understanding the truth or reality, and the realities are multiple and subjective, and the same is believed in interpretive inquiry (Darby, et al., 2019). Therefore, I delved into the teacher's experiences of teaching in cross-cultural context, social and cultural contexts through interview and observation in an emergent

way immersing in them to carry out my study ahead. I began researching on cross-cultural communication practices in English language and communication teaching classroom, how students passed on their cultures with each other and how it affected in understanding the meanings, learning English and communicating in cross cultural communication situations. I engaged with my teacher participant and also with the students in deep interaction to reach close to the reality to a maximum extent.

Two theories of my research supported the idea that there is no single truth or there are multiple realities. Hall's communication theory suggests that meaning and concept are culturally contextual. Likewise, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory suggests that truth or reality are created through the social interaction in the environment. I proceeded my research work keeping this mindset. Scotland (2012) states, "However, the critical paradigm takes the view that language contains power relations; so, it is used to empower or weaken" (p. 13). The influence and supremacy of English language persist even today. English is not merely a language. It is also a culture, and the disparity and injustice can be observed while talking about English and other languages (Phillipson, 2012). So, I delved into how the language of the majority group has influenced or dominated over the minority group and created hierarchy in terms of language and culture and affected learning.

Epistemology

In my research, knowledge has been generated basing on the inter-subjective knowledge construction as believed in the epistemology of interpretivism because this paradigm helped me to understand other cultures from the inside through a prolonged process of interaction immersing within the culture that is being studied (Taylor & Medina, 2011). I believed in the notion that each individual has different perspective, experience and context to perceive the reality. In other words, every individual

perceive the reality in his/her own way. As a result, epistemology differs from participant to participant. So, I was careful of such differences of the perceived realities or subjective insights of my research participants. Thus, I engaged in the field inter-subjectively i.e. I focused on constructing knowledge inter-subjectively. I was conscious for the idea that knowledge is subjective and personal when my research participants' cultural, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds are different. The process of carrying out interpretive research aims to get the truth or reality of the research agenda in the social and cultural context of the participant collecting quality information without limiting to the time for gathering the required text or vignette (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). I spent two months in the field to collect the data for this research.

The epistemology of criticalism believes in the idea that knowledge construction is subjective basing on the real world phenomena linking with societal ideology. In other words, knowledge is socially generated and influenced by power relations in the society (Scotland, 2012). Foucault takes language as a power and is very important to create, exercise and shift power being connected to culture, ideology and hierarchy (Pitsoe & Letseka, 2013). Therefore, I delved into discovering how reality is influenced by the socio-cultural and linguistic differences, linguistic and cultural hierarchy, and societal ideology.

Axiology

I firmly believed that my research participants are influenced by their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and these back grounds are different from one participant to another. In addition, I, myself, also have the influence of my cultural and linguistic background. I valued the shared reality of the participants as qualitative research is value laden. My participants' views, understanding and perceptions are the value of

my research. The meanings, themes and insights of the research are affected by the researcher's and participants' personal experiences, perceptions, religions, cultures, languages, values and beliefs (Maarouf, 2019).

It is considered very good to respect other people's languages and cultures. The notion of linguistic imperialism focuses in respecting linguistic differences, the diverse cultures, mutual understanding and tolerance (Aliakbari, 2003). I considered valuing the participants' cultural and linguistic values when I engaged in the research field.

Discourse of language is influenced by language variations and role of socio-cultural context. It is regarded as a form of social action between the speakers and their audiences. Moreover, it plays an important part to widen people's understanding about the role of language and culture in communication and human life (House, 2016). I was aware for the situation that my research participants are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. I had prolonged engagement with my participants. Hence, I generated the meanings, themes and insights of my research valuing my participants' linguistic and cultural differences; and valuing teachers' experiences of teaching English and students' experiences of learning English in cross-cultural context classrooms, and the ways their communication is affected due to their linguistic and cultural differences.

Research Paradigms: Interpretivism and Criticalism

Research paradigms helped me to vision my engagement in the search process. The belief systems of the paradigms served as the framework of the research and these philosophical perspectives guided me to adopt appropriate approaches for this research. I have unpacked my strategies how interpretive paradigm and paradigm of criticalism facilitated my research.

Interpretivism

My research is guided by interpretive paradigm. It enabled me to engage in teaching English and communication in cross-cultural context. It helped me to understand the context based realities of the communication practices in the classroom. This paradigm enabled me to understand the culture inside campus in English and communication teaching classroom from the participants' viewpoint.

From the perspective of interpretivism, I, firmly, viewed that it is essential to understand the behavior and culture of the participants from their perspective without dominating them. For this, it is very important to choose appropriate interpretive methods to collect the data. Interpretivism guided me to understand on how and what my participants have experienced teaching in the multicultural classroom (Taylor & Medina, 2011). Therefore, I have focused in inter-subjectivity i.e. in this study, knowledge has been generated through the inter-relationship of the researcher and the participants. I began researching with individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them as I believe that knowledge is contextual. Context differs from culture to culture and meaning of the language is contextual. This also causes perceiving the concept of the words and utterances differently.

I delved into the participants' practices of teaching and learning in cross cultural context, social and cultural contexts through observation and interviews in emergent way immersing in them to carry out my study ahead. I have focused to underpin the subjective experience of my participants (Cohen, et al., 2007). I began researching in English language and communication teaching classroom focusing on how students shared their culture with each other and how it affected in understanding the meanings and concepts in cross cultural communication situations. Reality is

guided by human experiences and social contexts. Hence, I dug out the reality based on socially constructed, multiple and holistic thinking (Darby, et al., 2019).

To construct knowledge inter-subjectively, I explored the practices of cross-culture communication through prolonged process of interaction immersing within the cultures of the teacher and the students reflected during teaching, learning and interaction in the classroom (Taylor & Medina; 2011). Interpretivism believes that reality is subjective and differs from person to person. Scotland (2012) states, “Thus, reality is constructed through the interaction between language and aspects of an independent world” (p. 11). I engaged with my participants in deep interaction to reach close to the reality to a maximum extent.

As an ethnographic researcher basing on interpretive research paradigm, I concentrated on reflecting emergent, prolonged engagement and reflective practices to interpret the meanings and infer the insights of my research.

Criticalism

Criticalism enabled me to question the existing practices concerned with culture and language. At the same time, critical paradigm enabled me to expose the injustices faced by the students who were from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

It helped to delve into the domination of students from marginalized and deprived communities in the process of communication and learning language. Lack of inclusive practices, inequity, discrimination, domination, violence, etc. can be observed in the multi-cultural classroom. I, as a critical researcher, challenged and questioned the existing domination, power of language, power of culture, power of knowledge and power structure inside the classroom. I tried to be a change or transformative agents of class room practices in cross-cultural communication

context. Criticalism helped to generate emancipatory consciousness making the research a powerful mode to question and challenge the prevailing domination and prejudices advocating in the support of dominated and oppressed group in terms of language, culture, race and gender (Rai, 2015). I explored the issues of criticalism such as cultural domination, ethnocentrism and stereotyping.

As a critical ethnographic researcher, I probed and criticized the existing belief system regarding the language, culture and socio-economic milieu to bring consciousness to the students of English language and communication teaching classroom studying the impacts of cultural and linguistic differences of them (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). I delved into how learners become the victims of domination, and how language and culture affect their learning and effective communication in multi-cultural English Language and communication classroom. Undoubtedly, English language classrooms of Nepal have been dominated by English. In addition, minority native languages are also dominated by the languages of majority students. I explored how language influences power relationships among the students, themselves, as the paradigm of criticalism supports the idea that language possess power and it can be used to empower or weaken the people (Scotland, 2012). As a critical researcher, I examined how teachers facilitate English language learning and communication in English to the students in cross-cultural context and explored whether students feel the ownership of the learning environment. I also examined whether emancipatory learning environments to pave the way for developing critical conscience in cross-cultural classroom have been practiced or not. My observation in this research is to explore the reality critically on how mother tongues and local cultures affect language and communication teaching of the teachers, English language learning of the students, and communication in English in the multi-cultural classroom.

Ethnographic Inquiry as the Research Methodology

As an ethnographic researcher, I focused to infer holistic insights into the views, perspectives, experiences and practices of the participants concerned with the English language and communication teaching, and communicating in English in cross-cultural context. Ethnographic research asserts that language, communication and culture are interrelated, and language use is greatly influenced by the socio-cultural context (Blommaert & Jie, 2010). I have used ethnography as a method for gathering information in emergent way (Fife, 2005). I focused to create natural setting to collect information from the participants. I have attempted for holistic knowing and in-depth understanding the experiences of the teacher on how he practiced communication in cross-cultural context. I have maintained enhanced ethnographic writing style (Humphreys & Watson, 2009).

Based on the ideas of ethnography as a research method, I made fieldwork and observed my participant's teaching in the classroom, and conducted open ended and in-depth interviews as, in this context, Hine (2001) claims, "face-to-face interaction as an intrinsic part of ethnography" and "being physically present forces the ethnographer to be a participant in events and interactions" (p. 48) to generate the information or vignette to address the designed research questions and achieve the purposes of this research study.

Ethnography has facilitated me to understand the culture of communication among students from the multiple ethnic groups. I adopted participant observation technique as Fetterman (2010) claims, applying "participant observation" technique helps the ethnographer to immerse in the participants' culture and participate "in the lives of the people" (p. 37) for effective observation and to collect reliable data. It helped me to draw on how the teacher engaged in communication in multicultural

classroom contexts in the process of teaching and learning practices. It supported me to create thick description of the phenomena of cross-cultural communication practices in the class.

Selection of the Research Site and Participants

The research site for this research study was one constituent campus of Tribhuvan University located in Butwal Sub-Metropolitan City, Rupandehi District, Lumbini Province, Nepal. I purposefully selected one campus in which there were students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds such as Brahman, Chhetri Awadhi, Maithili, Magar, Newar and Gurung. I selected one English language lecturer teaching Business Communication at Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree as the research participant and one class because a qualitative researcher does not much focus over the number of research participants to interview but rather the quality of the interview and observation is more important (O'Reilly, 2005). I purposively selected my research participant who had been teaching English and Business Communication in cross-cultural communication context classrooms for more than a decade. There were 33 students in the class and I also used them as the student participants during the class observation. I collected the required data from the lecturer and the students of the observed class.

Data Collection Methods

This research study followed subjective interpretation of the phenomena gathering the vignette related to the teacher's practices of teaching English in multi-cultural classroom immersing in the social and cultural context of teaching. I used observation and interview methods, and also used the field notes and artifacts to collect the information as an ethnographic researcher usually does.

Observations

Observation is very useful to record non-verbal behavior and communication in natural setting. Observation is regarded one of the most useful research tools and I used observation method in my research.

I used semi-structured observations because I collected some information from the class observation as I planned and some other information I also got without planning. I collected the information in an emergent way during the observation. I had the mindset that the class observation would not go exactly as planned and I would not find only the information I needed. I found some other information which I had not planned actually. Although I had already set my research questions and problem statement, I had also the mindset that I might find different classroom context, interactions, information, experiences, etc. beyond my plan. And, during the class observation, I also found these things different from my expectations to some extent. Cohen, et al. (2007) state, “The semi-structured and unstructured observations will review observational data before suggesting an explanation for the phenomena being observed” (p. 397). During observation of my research participant and his class, I interacted with the teacher and the students being focused with my research agenda to obtain the quality data. While observing the class, I recorded my observation in the gadget, wrote in the word form in the diary, took photos, and videos when needed. Then, I prepared the reflections of my field visit in more detailed by typing in my laptop. I engaged in the field for the observation for two months i.e. until I felt the data have been saturated.

Interviews

Although main method of ethnography is participant observation, ethnographers conduct interviews as well (O’Reilly, 2005). Before the interview, I

built a good rapport with my participant. I met him a number of time at his campus and outside the campus before I started the first interview with him. I took the interviews based on the open-ended interview guidelines. My interviews were followed by the class observations. I took interviews of my research participant in the campus premise and outside the campus. I recorded the interviews of my research participant and transcribed them in word form. I conducted several open ended in-depth interviews to collect adequate information. When I felt I got the adequate data for my research, then I stopped the interview.

Field Notes

I engaged in the field for two months. I observed the class and interviewed the research participant. I went to the field carrying a diary, pen, laptop, interview guidelines, recording and photograph taking device in the class. I used mobile phone as the video and audio recorder for the class observation and the interview (Adhikari, 2018). When I found something very useful information that could be used as the research text during sharing and interaction between the teacher and the students in the class, I recorded the audio and video both. I also took the photographs of the teacher and students during the class observation.

As an ethnographic researcher, I kept in the mind that note-taking process as a part of the observation process. I recorded the data during the class observations and interviews. I jotted down the classroom activities in words, points, sentences and in symbols. I wrote the direct quotes of the teacher and the students listening to their interactions and sharing. I also wrote the impressions and feeling that I had for the teacher and the students during the observations (Madden, 2010). I also jotted down the moods, behavioral aspects and use of non-verbal communication of the teacher and the students. I also recorded videos and audios of the class observation. It helped

me to remember the field data while writing the reflection. Later, I filtered the required information for proceeding the research project. I studied words, points and sentences written in the diary before I wrote the reflection of the class observation. While writing the reflection, I also watched and listened to the videos and audios which I had recorded during the observation. I also used my memory while writing the reflection of the field visit.

I took the open-ended interviews based on my interview guidelines. I took the interviews after the class observation i.e. interviews were followed by the class observation. I interviewed the research participant in the campus premise and also outside campus. I recorded the interviews using the recording application of my mobile phone. I also recorded the videos of the interviews. I took the interview in Nepali and later I transcribed them in English. I was very conscious to the time, mood and context of my teacher participant and the students during the class observations and interviews.

Artefacts

I used the artefacts that were available in the field such as students' profile, teacher's profile, text book, slides used by the teacher while teaching and the slides used by the students while delivering their presentation. I took photographs, recorded the interviews, and prepared field notes to get rich pictures of the environment in which I did my field work. These artifacts helped me to get information, to remember the details of the environment and also to trigger to my memory related to the field visit (Blommaert & Jie, 2010). In this connection, Saldana (2016) states, "Each artifact has a history of how it got there and a reason or meaning for its presence" (p.61) and serves as the data to the qualitative researcher. Thus, they helped me to focus and reconstruct on the temporality, space and sociality i.e. context of the research as whole.

Process of Meaning Making

Working with the Field Text

I transcribed the recorded data, prepared the vignette. Then I coded and categorized, and then I inferred the theme. And then I analyzed and interpreted the coded and categorized data to infer the major meanings or themes of the research using thick description, narration and reflective techniques. I analyzed the vignette from the perspectives of communication theory of learning and sociocultural theory of learning as fitted for the theme.

I used both inductive and deductive analysis. Inductive analysis and holistic thinking have been used to infer the new themes and insights from the text/data. And, I used deductive analysis to infer the themes and insights from the data that are supported by the theories and literatures. Analytical approaches to data in this research have ranged from syntactic analysis to semantic analysis to text analysis to non-verbal communication analysis, and the analysis of the practices of cross-cultural communication in English language and communication teaching classroom as a whole.

Crafting Ethnographic Account

I crafted ethnographic account by following the ideas of the enhanced ethnographic writing style as Humphreys and Watson (2009) state that it “uses the presentational techniques of the novelist: descriptive scene setting; use of dialogue; author as a character in the narrative; inclusion of emotional responses by author and subjects; attention to the perspectives and stories of subjects” (p. 43). I took the participants as other characters in the narrative. I also quoted participants directly using their juicy statements and significant statements. I have been conscious to mention the narration of the participants’ own stories that are relevant to my research

agenda. Field notes, recordings, artefacts and my memory served as the data to create the ethnographic account.

Maintaining Quality Standards

Quality standards of my research are guided by the paradigm of interpretivism and criticalism.

Quality Standards of Interpretivism

I maintained ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’, and ‘confirmability’ as the trustworthiness criteria of interpretivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 237-243).

Credibility

I maintained the credibility applying the notion of prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field, and by checking my interpretations of the phenomenon with the information shared by the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). For this, I spent adequate time in the field with my research participants and engaged in the observations and interviews. I spent prolonged period of time for deeper understanding of my participants. I also applied the notion of thick description to collect quality or rich data. I also maintained negative case analysis or dialectical logic while having thick description to confirm and disconfirm the information (Shenton, 2004). I used rigorous techniques and methods of collecting high-quality data.

Transferability

I was very careful to what extent the research findings and applied research process, theoretical perspectives, research methods, techniques, etc. are applicable to the similar context. I maintained transferability through sufficient thick description of the phenomena, by providing rich details of pedagogical context, events, etc. so that

future researcher can use some aspect of my research design to investigate similar research agenda.

Dependability

I engaged in open-ended or emergent inquiry process in my research to maintain dependability. I valued emergent information, methods, research process, participants, etc. in the field for comprehensive or deeper understanding of the phenomena. For this, I became open-minded in the interview process and observation process to maintain “the stability of the data over time” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 242)) to maintain dependability.

Confirmability

I maintained confirmability by collecting data from the participants’ interview and class observation process. By doing so, I confirmed the information which I got from the participants by “assuring that data interpretations, and outcomes of inquiries are rooted in contexts” and the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 243). I took notes in the dairy during my field visit. I recorded the information and transcribed later without exploiting the real information I obtained from the participants.

Quality Standards of Criticalism

As my research is also based on the paradigm of criticalism, I also adopted the criteria viz. authenticity, critical reflexivity and pedagogical thoughtfulness in my research.

Authenticity.

I maintained the authenticity by providing enough information to the readers to convince them with my research text and findings and also to convince the readers that the information is told seriously and honestly. To achieve the authenticity, I maintained sufficient narrative coherence of the information (Webster & Mertova,

2007). Authenticity involves the ideas of fairness, educative, catalytic and tactical. I maintained fairness by valuing different participants equally no matter of their gender, culture, language, etc. Similarly, to maintain educative, I have been careful whether my research findings educate others. For example; I have attempted to educate teachers on how the students of the one linguistic and cultural group are dominated by another linguistic and cultural group, and how this domination affects their learning. To maintain catalytic, I focused on how research participants can be benefitted being aware about the difficulties and challenges concerned to the linguistic and cultural differences to the extent to which action is stimulated. In addition, to maintain tactical, I endeavored to excavate the discrimination and domination based on linguistic and cultural differences (Taylor & Medina; 2011). My research findings can also be helpful for making participants and students aware for such discrimination and domination, and can empower them to improve their linguistic and cultural situation. I valued more catalytic and tactical as they guide more for criticalism.

Critical Reflexivity

During the research work, I looked back to the self in regard of the information I obtained from the participants, my understanding, research process, methods, etc. May & Perry (2014) state, “Reflexivity involves turning back on oneself in order that processes of knowledge production become the subject of investigation” (p. 109). I have been careful how my previous realization and understanding changed in course of doing research. I read and wrote my data, thought and rethought over the data, envisioned and created to maintain reflexivity in my research.

Pedagogical Thoughtfulness

Pedagogical thoughtfulness is considered to be maintained in the research when the study serves the teachers or targeted research participants to engage in

reflecting on their pedagogical perspectives (Yusuf, et al., 2017). I maintained pedagogical thoughtfulness by creating the vignette and research text that can help to reflect and rethink about teacher participant and other English language and communication teachers' pedagogical practices or to modify their practices or to think about the alternate pedagogical practices.

Ethical Considerations

Ethic in research supports to enhance quality data. It promotes collaborative work, trust and mutual respect and builds public support. I maintained the ethical issues viz. informed consent, privacy, no harm, no exploitation, and being aware of the consequences for future research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Getting Informed Consent

I informed the possible benefit of the research to the participants, students of the class and the campus authority such as the program coordinator and campus chief. I provided complete information of the research and research procedure to the participants. I took consent from the teacher participant and the student participants. I had informed my participants that they could decide themselves to be the participants and could withdraw from being the research participants at any time as per their convenient (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). I met the teacher participant, program coordinator and the campus chief a number of time to allow me to do my field work for the research. I also informed necessary details of the purpose and plan of my study. I started my field work after they were ready to allow me to enter in the research site and I submitted the request for permission letter to the campus authority. I also took the consent of the participants to record their observations and interviews, and take photographs (Fetterman, 2010).

Privacy and Confidentiality

I replaced the original names of the participants by pseudo names to safe guard their privacy and confidentiality. I maintained the confidentiality by respecting the privacy of my participants. I did not attribute any words or any actions about my participants without their prior permission (O'Reilly, 2005).

No Harm & Exploitation, and Consequences for the Future Research

I did not harm and exploit my participants. I remained very sensitive to the time of my participants and the information provided by the participants. In addition, I gave my effort to avoid the stressful situation and anxiety of participants. I have used unbiased language in terms of cultures, religions, festivals, ethnic group, gender, race, age, etc. Regarding consequences for future research, I did not spoil the field for other researchers to conduct research in the future (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Trust and Honesty

As an ethnographic researcher, I became candid about my research work to maintain trust and honest with my participant. I provided the required information about my emergent plan and rigorous research study to the extent of the type of my participants, their interest and request. I built trust with my participants by communicating orally, through non-verbal communication like open physical posture, handshakes, etc. I respected my participants' conversations and views. I maintained appropriate behavior to establish good relationship and build good trust between the researcher and the participants (Fetterman, 2010).

CHAPTER IV
LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DISCOURSE IN CROSS-CULTURAL
CONTEXT

Classrooms of Nepal are often multilingual and multicultural. There are found diversities in terms of linguistic, cultural and socio-economic differences. Hall (1959) claims, “Culture is not one thing but a complex series of activities interrelated in many ways” (p. 80) with an individual and the society he/she lives in. In the same vein, Solodka et al., (2021) state, “Cultural contexts are the means of communication. They represent the content of the interaction, disclose the mechanism of learners’ development insight across cultures and languages” (p. 83).

This chapter reflects the short profile of the participants and description of the classroom. It replicates cross-cultural context in the classroom. Similarly, it explores the values of mother tongues and home cultures. Likewise, it discusses to what extent the students were aware of their mother tongues and indigenous cultures and their effects in learning language and handling communication effectively. It examines the mindset of the students towards their mother tongues and indigenous cultures. It delves into the mindset of the teacher for teaching and the mindset of the students for learning English language and practicing classroom communication in cross-cultural context. Moreover, this chapter discusses about the pedagogies used while teaching English language and communication in the classroom. Over all, this chapter reviews language and communication discourse in English language and communication classroom in the cross-cultural context.

Multilingual and Cross-cultural Context

Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and geographically diverse country. Diversities are found in terms of languages, cultures, ethnicities, geography, socio-economic and cultural aspects. Culture pervades in every aspect of the people. There is no any way out that people function without being influenced by the culture. It touches every span of life of the people. Culture deeply penetrates in the way we behave, we think, we plan, we organize, we overcome the problems and we do various activities in our milieu. It has deeply penetrated in the way we use language, we express the ideas and we understand the language (Hall, 1976).

Replica of the Cross-cultural Context in the Class

Reflections of diverse linguistic and cultural differences were obvious in the classrooms. My research participant, Ravi (pseudo name) had already taught in the cross-cultural context communication classroom for more than 10 years. And he said, “Cross cultural communication means the effect in the students’ communication due to their cultural backgrounds”. Ravi’s class was a multicultural class where students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds were involved. I observed Ravi’s class and it was the multi-cultural classroom. There were Brahman, Chhetri, Awadhi, Maithili, Newar, Magar, Gurung students in the class. For example; Puspanjali (pseudo name) was an Awadhi, Chandreshwar (pseudo name) was a Mailthili, Yamkala (pseudoname) was a Magar, Sonam (pseudo name) was a Gurung. Hiranman (pseudo name) was a Newar, Manushi (pseudo name), Padma (pseudo name) and Madhav (pseudo name) were Brahmans, Hema (pseudo name) was a Chhetri and so on. They had their own mother tongues and unique cultures. They were also from different socio-economic backgrounds. They had linguistically and culturally different sentiments. The majority of the students were from Brahman and Chhetri cultures and all other students were

linguistically and culturally in minority. Ravi agreed that students' English learning and communication was influenced by their ethnicity, values, assumptions, family practices, rituals, students' own traditions. It is because in cross-cultural context classroom, teachers and students both need to be aware and familiar with the effect in meaning making and learning process. Culture plays the pivot role in language learning and communication in cross-cultural context. Linguistic and cultural differences influence in different ways from meaning making process to learning development. Therefore, the students are required to develop their mindset accordingly to make their learning effective in the multicultural classroom (Khanal, 2019). For example; linguistically and culturally minority students have less participation in the class. Ravi shared:

I have found that the students from marginalized communities have less class attendance/presence. They remain absent even for small cause. Next thing, these students seem to be a bit more active during the exam time only. They are often passive and absent in the classes of the beginning of the semester and last days of the semester. They are passive when there is no exam. They often do not attend the class of the last days of the semester.

Cultural activities, language, religious norms and social status of the students have the effect on their values, attitudes and behavior. And this was also reflected in their overall class room activities like participation and interaction (Dehghani et. al, 2011). Linguistically and culturally minority students were not interactive sufficiently in the learning process. I found Brahman and Chhetri students more interactive than Awadhi, Maithili and Magar students. Ravi said:

Again another thing is that the students from Tharu and Awadhi culture do not have the required level of confidence. Due to this, they cannot express what

they want to express and they feel hesitation to ask the question and query when they face the problem in learning. Unlike from these culturally minority students, Brahman and Chhetri students ask the queries and questions when they need. They even confirm the answer asking the question and query again and again for the answer they have already known and addressed by the teacher.

So, the Tharu, Awadhi, Chaudahry, Maithili, Newari, Magar students wanted to avoid the discussion in the class. In the cross-cultural communication context class, there is the pitfall of being the lack of effective interaction between the teacher and the students, and among the students. Therefore, it requires to focus on the interactive discussion and sharing between the teacher and the students for the effective language learning (Stritikus & Varghese, 2010). Therefore, the instructor needs to assist the students to engage in the interaction.

Sociocultural consciousness and also socio-economic backgrounds of the students affected in the classroom participation and the degree of learning. It affected explicitly and implicitly both. Culturally majority and also economically sound students often showed their gut to participate in the classroom activities more courageously than the culturally minority and economically back warded students. In this context, Ravi expressed:

I have found that students from Brahman and Chhetri community are from educated family and their culture is more dominating than the other culture in the classroom and also in Nepal. These students' family's economic condition is comparatively better and socio-cultural consciousness is also higher than in the average of the other communities. I feel, because of this, Brahman and

Chhetri students are more advanced and faster in learning. As a result, their understanding capacity is better than the others.

It was the multi-cultural class. The multicultural students have linguistic differences and they needed to share their culture through such linguistics differences for meaningful learning (Banks, 2014). Socio-economic and cultural background of the students affect in deciding the educational institutions. The standard and quality of the schools and colleges where students from lower socio-economic background admit and study is different from higher socio-economic background students. Thus, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds tend to create education inequality and ultimately education inequality again creates socio-economic and cultural inequalities. This has been a problem in the education system (Persell, 2010). In the class, mostly the students who did not have sound economic background completed their schooling from the government schools whereas who had comparatively better socio-economic background studied in private boarding schools. Likewise, the students who belonged to culturally minority group were mostly studied in government schools. The effect of their schooling and cultural values had the direct effect in their learning activities and behavior. Ravi said:

For example; students of Awadhi culture are a bit introvert especially girl students because in Awadhi community girls are not allowed to speak more. My Awadhi student, Puspanajli, has also shared this with me. This has made her learning style introvert. She feels hesitation to interact with her friends and teachers. She also feels hesitation to ask her difficulties in the class. When teacher ask again and again, then only it is known about her difficulties.

This was because of the effect of her culture and socio-economic background. It was also found that schooling time also varied for the students of diverse cultural

background. Mostly minority cultural students were found starting schooling later than the culturally majority one. Ravi said, “I have also seen that children of Awadhi community, Tharu community, Maithili community, Magar community, etc. starting school in late age where as Brahman children are mostly sent to school in early age”.

The students from minority culture could not express their problems to the teachers due to the effect of their home culture. As a result they were absent for the small reason. One day teacher had assigned the task of presentation but Puspanajli was absent without any information. When the teacher inquired for the reason for being absent, he came to know that she was absent because she could not prepare for her presentation. In this context, Ravi shared:

I had assigned the task of the presentation in the class to my students. But one Awadhi student was absent in the first presentation. Next day, I asked why she was absent on the day of presentation. She did not reply anything. When I asked for the reason again and again, she, hesitantly, replied I could not prepare my presentation. Then I said you could request me to postpone the time for another day instead of being absent. You could deliver your presentation next day.

This problem was commonly found in these students. These students neither could complete their assignment in time nor could they express their problems. Ravi said, “I think one of the reasons for this may be due to the effect of culture and their cultural habit of being introvert and less interactive”. Cultural differences of the students could be noticed in their behavior and classroom activities. For example, I found the students mindset being influenced by their cultural values even in choosing the seats and benches in the classroom. Their culture had the effect in feeling and having high self-esteem and low self-esteem. Comparatively linguistically and

culturally majority students had the high self-esteem and minority had low self-esteem. As a result, mostly Brahman and Chhetri students were sitting on the front benches rather than the students from other minority cultures. Ravi said:

I also see the effect in class room management. For example; Brahman and Chhetri students mostly sit on the front benches whereas Maithili students, Awadhi students, Tharu students, Magar students mostly sit on the back benches.

They did so because they had the trait of insufficient self-esteem to sit on the front seats. I found Puspanajali, Yamkala and Chandreshwar had lower self-esteem than Manushi, Padma, Madhav and Bibek. In other words, culturally majority students had the high self-esteem and minority had the low self-esteem.

In cross-cultural context, people of different communities live in the same society. But the way of living of the one cultural community is unique from another cultural group. And multiculturalism focuses on valuing the cultural and language of the people. It suggests to expose all the local cultures and languages, and create the environment to foster the relations of the people by letting to discuss and interact their cultural values, norms and language with each other (Hurn & Tomalin, 2013). In the context of Nepali, two languages viz. Nepali and English are dominantly used as the medium of education. As a result, there is the situation in which students who achieved their previous degree from Nepali medium of education and English medium of education reading together in the same class. Students from Nepali medium of education have very low proficiency of English and it causes low academic achievement and performance due to the medium of education in comparison to the students who are from English medium of education (Linn et. al,

2021). Thus, communicating through English in cross-cultural context is different from the communication in monolingual and mono-cultural context.

Preference to Use Mother Tongue

Effective communication can take place during the communication when there is the exchange of correct meaning between the speaker and the listeners. Use of mother tongue can become useful for the effective meaning construction and conceptual clarity in cross-cultural context classroom. Students can learn more actively when they are allowed to share their cultural information and use their mother tongues. This helps them to exchange meaning more correctly and in more understandable way. Thus, it is very important to discuss on different aspects and differences within the national languages and cultures while implementing multicultural education (Banks, 2014). By using mother tongues of the learners and through their cultural sharing in the class equal learning opportunities can be enhanced in the multilingual English language classroom. In this context, Ravi revealed:

When I use my mother tongue Nepali, the students with Nepali mother tongue look at me and become happy. But I cannot speak other students' mother nicely. Some students also request me to use Nepali language a bit in the class. And when I repeat the same information in English they understand easily. It would be better if I could use the mother tongues of other students in the class as well. I feel, other students have understood less than the students with Nepali mother tongue.

I found the great role of mother tongue in meaning construction and in understanding the concept. When Ravi said in Nepali, students felt comfort in meaning construction and their understanding. Use of mother tongue in English and communication classroom facilitates the students to comprehend the concept more

easily. Likewise, it paves the way for developing their cognitive and intellectual ability faster and more efficiently (Hawa et al., 2021). One of the students, Madhav said, “When the teacher explains in Nepali, I understand the concept easily and I can also remember for a long time”. Consequently, the use of the mother tongue of the students simply did not only help to understand the concept, it was helped them to remember for long time. Ravi’s mother tongue was Nepali. He occasionally shifted his medium of teaching from English to Nepali. Hence, in his class, the students with Nepali mother tongue were more benefitted in decoding, interpreting and understanding the meaning and concept than the other students. As a result meaning construction process of the students with Nepali mother tongue was faster than the students having other mother tongues.

I found students often engaged communicating in Nepali in the class. Although they delivered their presentation in English, they used the mother tongue, Nepali while discussing the answer in the group. Thus, it can be concluded that mother tongue facilitates learning in positive way in the multi-cultural classroom. Ravi also occasionally shifted his medium into Nepali from English and students had the positive response when he used his mother tongue, Nepali. However, Ravi didn’t use the mother tongues of the other students except using some of the words of Awadhi, Maithili and Newari. He revealed in an interview that he was not familiar with students’ mother tongues and his mother tongue was Nepali. Students preferred teacher delivering the lecture shifting the medium from English to Nepali or if possible to their mother tongues. In one class, at the last stage of her presentation Sonam asked the teacher to give her permission to speak in Nepali. She said, “Sir, can I speak in Nepali?” She felt more comfortable when she got chance to speak in Nepali.

Students used mother tongues for the reason that they had low English proficiency. They often thought the idea in their mother tongues and translated into English. They also translated English terminology into their mother tongue to understand the meaning. Moreover, they preferred to use their mother tongues because they wanted to complete the task taking less time. This affects in all the aspects of second language learning. In English classroom and in the classroom English as the medium of education, the students who had the low English proficiency had the positive perception in the use of the mother tongue to understand the teachers' instructions and learning materials, to comprehend new words and the concept in comparison to the students having sound English proficiency (Hawa et al., 2021). Thus, the use of mother tongues and cultural sharing contribute in the effective learning by constructing meaning appropriately during teaching and learning process.

Awareness of Language, Culture and Communication

Learner's mind is occupied with the past experiences and information of what they learn and experience including the language and culture before they attend the class and they often need to adapt when they are exposed to cross-cultural communication context. Being aware of the differences in the mother tongues and cultures help the learners to adapt with the new learning environment. Being aware is necessary because, in one hand, it helps to understand the values of their language and cultures and on the other hand, it enables them to maintain harmony, understand cultural empathy with the people of other languages and cultures. This is also needed to communicate efficiently (Drobot, 2021).

Fostering Values of Home Culture in English Language Class

Due to the feeling of linguistic and cultural domination by the linguistically and culturally majority students, they felt hesitation to use their language and share their

cultures with other students. Linguistically and culturally minority students also had the mindset that their local language and culture were backward and uncivilized type. As a result, they used either Nepali or English language and practiced the culture of the majority group or the hybrid culture. This also made them escape from practicing their cultural values and using their mother tongues and they did not want to show their linguistic and cultural identity (Khatri, 2013). This mindset was developed in them due to their continuous exposure to the language and culture of the majority group.

Multiculturalism focuses to foster the values of home culture in the cross-cultural class room. Therefore, the teacher should be careful to teach English and also to motivate them to use their language and cultures in his/her class so that students do not feel humiliated but rather it helps to develop the sense in them that one's language and culture are the identity, should be used and preserved no matter whether it is minority or majority. Culture is the identity of the people and it pervades in every aspect of life in different ways. Language and culture are interrelated. Every culture is unique in itself and reflects the way of life of the people of that community. While raising awareness of cross-cultural context, analyzing the variations and identical features of the two or more than two cultures is very necessary. Moreover, self-analysis and self-awareness to one's language and culture are required. This also creates the need that an instructor needs to be conscious to make the students understand the cultural sensitivity and understanding. Students should be developed the insight of following and protecting their culture and respect the other people's language and culture at the same time. In the same way, they should be made aware to develop the language ability of local language and target language (Xu, 2016).

In the context of the cross-cultural English classrooms of Nepal, English has dominated Nepali language. Similarly, English and Nepali language dominate the other local languages. This has made the decline of the Nepali language mostly in the urban areas as the medium of education and the decline local languages from the community. Hence, it is necessary to impart the awareness of the protection of local language and local culture and cross-cultural context in English language class room (Ali et al., 2015). Therefore, teacher should not only rely on the contents of the textbooks. But rather he/she should himself be aware of the way language is affected when his/her students learn English as second or third language. Students' linguistic, ethnic and cultural background play very important role in business communication. I experienced that these backgrounds of the students directly affect in their learning style, communication style, and way of communication, in message delivery and in business communication skills. Ravi expressed:

When I asked with Puspanjali time and again to find out the reasons for being less interactive in the class, Puspanjali revealed that this is because her culture is not able to dominate other cultures and she feels alone in the class. Instead she has been dominated as she belong to linguistically and culturally minority group.

Although, students were not much focused to their mother tongues and protect their unique cultures, they had the sense that their culture should be valued. Moreover, they did not like to be dominated by the linguistically and culturally majority group. I found that not only culturally majority students but also linguistically and culturally minority students were aware of the value of their mother tongue and cultures.

Due to the linguistic and cultural domination they could not express any word in their mother tongues because when they spoke one or two words in their mother

tongues, culturally and linguistically majority students laughed at them so wildly. Then they felt they were being teased by the culturally and linguistically majority students. Consequently, neither they could use their language in the class nor the teacher knew and used their mother tongues in the class. These culturally and linguistically minority students were not able to take the help of their mother tongues to understand the concept taught in English and also English language as a whole. There was the tendency that the students having Nepali mother tongue dominated, teased and humiliated the students having other mother tongues viz. Awadhi, Maithili, Magar, Newar, etc. Ravi's mother tongue was Nepali. As a result, Brahman and Chhetri students were getting chance to get the benefit of using their mother tongue in the class. Ravi expressed:

They are able to take the help of their mother tongue, Nepali, to learn English. My mother tongue is also Nepali and time and again I also use Nepali in my class. I do not know other tongues of these students and I do not use their mother tongues. So, linguistically and culturally minority students are not able to take the benefit of their mother tongues in learning English and in understanding the concept taught in English using their mother tongues.

However, there were also the students who were not much conscious about the value of their mother tongue and culture. In this context, I interacted with Sonam and she said "Although I am familiar with my mother tongue and culture, I am not quite aware about the mother tongue and Gurung culture". It was because she almost learnt Gurung and Nepali language simultaneously and regarding the culture she also follows some cultural aspects of Buddhism and some aspect of Hinduism. She told that she could speak Gurung fluently in the past as her first language. Later, she was

exposed more to Nepali. So, these days, she speaks Gurung less due to lack of Gurung speaking people.

Students mostly focused to learn Nepali and English languages in the classroom. During the class, I found students discussed in Nepali although medium of education was English. They wrote answer English and shared the answer in English only. Otherwise, they used Nepali language to discuss about the topic in the class. I found linguistically and culturally minority students were also discussing and interacting in Nepali. Although these students shared that they value their mother tongue, they did not practice in the class.

Although Nepal is a diversely multilingual country, government offices and agencies, journalism, publishing and broadcasting houses, corporate houses, educational institutions primarily use Nepali and English languages. As a result, these languages are in the main stream in every sphere of the nation whereas indigenous languages are in the backdrop (Poudel et al., 2022). Although students had their own mother tongues and they were learning English as a second or third language, there were the students who were not proficient in their own mother tongues. There were the culturally minority students who even could not get chance to learn their mother tongues completely. They were not competent in their mother tongues and they did not have active knowledge about their mother tongue either.

Similarly, regarding the culture, they were mostly influenced by the Brahman and Chhetri culture or they had practiced hybrid culture. When I asked Sonam how she practices her culture. Sonam said:

I mostly practice my culture while celebrating the Gurung festivals and having the rituals such as marriage. In other time I practice hybrid culture i.e. I follow some aspects of Buddhism and some aspects of Hinduism. Regarding

my language that is Gurung language, I mostly used to use when I was a child but the use of Gurung language slowly decreased when I started my school. These days I mostly spend my time with the friends of other linguistic and cultural background. So, I mostly use Nepali to communicate with them and I use English as the medium of education. However, when family members gather at home I still get the exposure of Gurung language.

Sonam was not so worried for not using her mother tongue and practicing the uniqueness of her culture. It shows that such local languages and cultures are declining gradually. Due to the tendency of giving priority of English language as the medium of education, learners focus to use English largely. Language and culture always move on at the same time. As a result, learners are largely influenced by the English culture rather than their own indigenous language and culture. In fact, in many cases the students lack the knowledge of their mother tongues and the indigenous cultures. This may affect in their identity in the long run (Meng, 2020). Sonam revealed that she did not use her mother tongue and her indigenous Gurung culture as she used and practiced during her childhood. Instead, later she began using Nepali and English language, and hybrid culture. Ravi said, “Similarly, there is not solid and effective policy to promote their local languages and cultures”. In one hand, people of these communities are not too much conscious to preserve their languages and originality of their cultures. On the other hand, language and cultural policies of the government have not been seen effective for the promotion and protection of the local languages and cultures.

Awareness for the Effective Communication

Mother tongues and cultures facilitates the learners in learning and also interferes in some aspects of the language learning. Teachers and the students face the

miss-communication and misunderstanding in cross-cultural context. When the sender and the receiver are not aware of each other's culture in advance, it creates difficulties in meaning making process. For the effective communication, it is essential to handle the cross-cultural context in the class room using cultural contents and culture related pedagogies. In this context, Solodka et al. (2021) view, "The concept of cultural context brings clarity to the understanding of the implementation of the cross-cultural interaction" (p. 83). Cross-cultural context enables the students to be aware about the effect of interaction in the cross-cultural setting. Culture affects in learning language and learning as a whole, Ravi said, "I encourage them to share their festivals and cultural ideas as whole". Therefore, a teacher should create the environment and facilitate students to share their cultural ideas and practices in the language and communication classroom.

In Ravi's class, occasionally students were given the chance to share about their local languages and cultures. When the students discussed and shared their cultures, rituals, festivals in the group and delivered the presentation about cultures and festivals, it had the positive effect in them. Even minority students were more interactive and psychologically they had the pleasant mood. Ravi expressed:

When the students were told to share their cultures through peer work, group work and individual presentation, I found they participated actively and became more interactive. Even culturally minority students also participated and involved in the group interactions. They communicated about their cultures and festivals in English.

During sharing, they worked in the group work and shared the culture individually as well. This made the linguistically and culturally minority students participate in the classroom activities and interact with each other. Otherwise, they sat

at the back benches and when teacher asked whether they understood or not they only nodded head even though when they did not understand the taught subject matters. They did not share anything in the class before. This developed the feeling that we should participate, interact and go ahead in the learning process and study. They felt that culture may differ from each other but each culture is unique and we should also share our cultural information. And they felt ownership of learning environment and encouraged in learning in the classroom.

Ownership of Learning Environment

When the students were involved in sharing the information about their culture, festival, languages, etc. they did not become only interactive and participatory, but they also felt the ownership of learning environment. They get motivated in learning when they feel the ownership of the learning environment. Motivation is a goal directed encouraging behavior of an individual. Cevallos and Villafuerte (2022) claim, “Motivation is considered the key to English language learning and one of the most critical factors affecting language learners’ success” (p. 187). To make teaching and learning process in the language class room, learners should feel the ownership of the learning environment. They should feel that the class also belongs to them and they have the affinity towards the class. Therefore, teacher requires to play the pivot role to foster the feeling of the ownership of the learning environment in the classroom by making them participate actively either by encouraging them by applying different strategies. This helps the learners to motivate for the active participation in the learning process. Students had the feeling inferior themselves due to the domination of the culturally majority students and they remained back in the classroom communication. In the class, although Ravi was not much focused to create learning environment, he attempted to develop the sense of

affinity and learning environment in the class to some extent. For example; he applied some techniques that encouraged and motivated his students to involve in learning process. Ravi in the interview expressed:

I encourage and sometimes force to participate in the class room activities. I follow them for their active participation and the interaction in the classroom. When I conduct the activities like discussing question and answer, presentation, team work activities, etc. in my class, I provide the opportunities to minority students mostly to participate in these activities.

Although Ravi did so unknowingly, it helped to create the learning environment in his class. When Ravi conducted such learning activities in the class, I found they were becoming slightly more active as well. However, this problem prevailed in his class. Ravi told his students to share their linguistic and cultural information in the class. Ravi said:

I frequently ask the students whether their cultures are helping in their learning or not. Likewise, I tell them to share how their mother tongues and cultures are being supportive in facilitating their learning and creating difficulties in learning. I also ask the where their cultures support and create difficulties in learning.

When Ravi told to do so, mostly, Brahman and Chhetri students were ready to participate in the sharing. As a result, Ravi had to force to some students to participate in the sharing and the interaction. When Ravi applied this strategy, linguistically and culturally minority students' confident level and class room participation increased in the class. They involved in the interactions, discussion and sharing about their cultures in cross-cultural context English language teaching class.

Ravi attempted to encourage the minority students to participate actively in the cross-cultural language learning and communication context classroom. Ravi shared:

During my teaching, I ask the question to the introvert students calling their names. Although they do not seem to be interested, I tell them to say just what they know. I do so particularly for the Awadhi student, Magar student and other less interactive students.

This is how Ravi motivated the students from the minority communities to construct the meaning correctly and make communication effective in his class. It was because students from minority cultures and linguistic differences were less active than the Brahman and Chhetri students in the class. Linguistically and culturally minority students were motivated in the class to encourage them in engaging in the interaction, class room activities and in the learning process. However, the degree of motivation was not sufficient for the effective English learning and communicating by using English language. Teacher should help the learners to develop the interpretative analytical skill. Solodka et al., 2021) claims, “Interpretative analysis focuses on the formation of understanding the context” (p. 89). When they understand context of the communication in cross-cultural situation, they can become more interactive and this ultimately paves the way for feeling the ownership of the learning environment.

Classroom Pedagogy and Communication

Education in multi-cultural context has been the buzz word in today’s context in Nepal because English language classrooms of Nepal are multicultural classrooms. In such situation, English language teachers should consider cultural aspects carefully in the educational process as learners are also aware of cultural differences and their heritages, and they have also been supportive of cultural diversity (Astaniina & Kuznetsov, 2020). Multi-cultural English language class room should be handled

applying relevant techniques and pedagogies. In cross-cultural communication, language is very important learning tool. And if it is not used properly, it creates misunderstanding and miss-interpretation in meaning making process. There was the negative effect of the prevailing cultural domination, cultural conflict, ethnocentrism and stereotyping in the class. Hence, teacher needed to apply the relevant techniques and pedagogies to make teaching and learning process meaningful in cross-cultural communication context.

Communication in the Classroom

Two way communication is very important for the effective learning. Mostly, extrovert students participated in the two way communication. But the introvert students mostly listened to the teacher being silent in the class room. Learners' mother tongue affect their English language learning both negatively and positively. In some cases, their mother tongues help to learn second language and in some other cases, it interferes in learning second language. For example, some of the ideas of mother tongue are used in learning second language. Mother tongue also becomes helpful for the conceptual clarity. Conversely, mother tongues also interfere in learning second language e.g. in pronunciation and accent. Learners tend to be interested to learn the second language if there is positive transfer and want to neglect in learning second language. In other words, there is both positive transfer and negative transfer of the mother tongues in second language acquisition (Delibio et al., 2018).

Students from Awadhi culture, Magar culture, Gurung culture, etc. could not ask the questions to the teacher when they faced the problems or difficulties in understanding. They did not seem to be interested to be interactive in the class. As a result, they often lagged behind in the classroom participation, interaction and the

presentation. Ravi attempted to make them interactive making group leader and asking the question in between of his teaching. Ravi said:

I divided the students into different groups. I made them the group leader. But still they remain passive and feel hesitation to participate and interact actively in their group. On the other hand, Brahman and Chhetri students actively participate and interact in the group. When I try to make them active by asking question or telling them to share on the certain topic standing in the class, they feel hesitation and shy. They even pretend to escape from the active participation and the interaction in the class.

These introvert students were mostly either from culturally minority group or they were female students rather than the culturally majority and male students. When students were instructed to share their culture in the class room, it helped to improve their learning performance and fluency of speaking a bit. Due to interaction through cultural sharing, culturally minority students also became alert in the class room participation and activities. Ravi expressed:

Before they were given the task of sharing their culture, values, festivals, etc., most of them sat on the bench looking down and they seemed a bit indifferent in involving in learning process. Before this they had very poor confident level and used to seem being afraid to look at the teacher thinking that teacher may ask the questions to them. But now, I have found their confident level also has improved and they have begun to participate in face to face communication to an extent.

Teacher mostly used English language as the medium of communication. In addition, he also used Nepali because his mother tongue was Nepali. Use of mother tongue in the class became beneficial for the conceptual clarity. Although students

had different mother tongues, they could understand Nepali as well. Ravi also used some of the words and utterances of the students' mother tongues such as Awadhi language. When he did so, it impacted the students in positive way. Ravi expressed:

Although I am not competent in the mother tongues of all the students, I use certain words of the mother tongues of minority students. They also become happy thinking that the teacher also respects our mother tongues. Some of my students requested me to use Nepali and to say some ideas/topic in Nepali rather than using English only. When I use Nepali, the students from other communities like Awadhi, Maithili for whom Nepali is the second language also become happy as they understand the concept easily.

When Ravi used Nepali and other mother tongues in between of his teaching, students became more alert and attentive to listen and understand. But the mother tongues interfered in the pronunciation and the fluency of the learners. In general, students were benefitted in different ways in the learning process by the use of mother tongues. Therefore, if it possible it is good to use students' mother tongues for the better understanding of the concept and to enable them in effective meaning making process. The traditional concept of the teachers and tendency of educational institutions of not using any words of other languages except English in English language and Business Communication classes should be removed.

Moreover, although the students were taught in English, students at first made an image and mental picture in Nepali or in their mother tongues. And then only they translate into English. So, whether teacher used mother tongues or not, they used mother tongue for the intrapersonal communication before they used English for the interpersonal communication. Ravi shared:

Teaching by using mother tongues of the students helps the students to create an image and mental picture of the taught concept in their mind. Regarding this, I have a very good experience. If a teacher needs to clarify the concept clearly, a teacher should explain the concept in students' mother tongues also. So, I say it is necessary to explain the concept of the contents in their mother tongues for making learning effective. But the problem is that teacher may not know the students' mother tongues.

Students also shared how they undergo intrapersonal communication before they express something in English and understand the concept taught in English. When the teacher gave any group task in the class, students discussed in Nepali. And then only they wrote and shared the answer in English. One of the students, Hema said:

My mother tongue is Nepali and I am very used to in speaking Nepali and it influences my English. I feel difficult to translate Nepali into English.

Likewise, when I need to understand or interpret any meaning or concept, I go on intra communication in Nepali in my mind.

Teacher attempted to practice two way communication by assigning the topic for the students representing the students from all the linguistic and cultural backgrounds. First students shared on the given topic in the class. After this, teacher gave comments and feedback. And then he shared his ideas on the topic. Although, he used lecture method, he also asked the question to the students in between of his lecture to make his class interactive and participatory.

Using Contextualization

Teacher applied the cultural sharing practices occasionally in the class. This practice was helpful to foster the good relationships and understanding among the

students. Ravi instructed to share the information about students' mother tongue and culture in the class when he facilitated on the culture and festival related topic. Ravi expressed:

I give the presentation task to the students related to cultural sharing. I tell the students to share about their own festivals and cultures through their presentation. For example, there is one topic about the festivals in the text. Puspanjali, an Awadhi student, shared about her festival, Satwa. Chandreshwar, a Maithili students shared about his festival, Chhat. Kriti, a Brahman student, shared about her festival Dashain. Sonam shared about her festival, Tamu Lhosar. Hiranman shared about the features of Newari culture, language, customs, ceremonies, food, etc. They enjoyed, felt comfort and seemed to be interested when they shared about their festival in the class.

Thus, occasionally, Ravi practiced cultural sharing strategy in the class and used cultural information as the content of the language learning and communication. Idea of multicultural focuses on sharing the cultures of the students in the cross-cultural situation through contextualization method to make learning effective for the students from diverse cultures (Banks, 2014).

Although Ravi was not very familiar about the contextualization in teaching, I found using contextualization in his class. There was a topic on festivals that he had to teach in the class. He assigned the task to the students of different cultural backgrounds to share about their culture and festivals. Puspajali shared about Awadhi culture and the festival celebrated in her community. Likewise, Chandreshwar shared on Maithili culture and festivals celebrated in Maithili culture. Yamkala shared Magar culture and her festival and Sonam shared Gurung culture and her festivals. Hiranman shared about Newari culture. Kriti shared on Brahman culture and her festivals. In this

context, Talukdar (2019) claims, a teacher should be careful in making the students “engaged in thinking of the surrounding in which they are being reared” (p. 5).

Contextualization is very important in the class where students are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Ravi created the environment of cultural sharing practices in the classroom. Ravi said:

As students have their own cultures, they also have their own festivals. For example; Brahmans celebrate Dashain, Tihar, etc. Gurung students celebrate Lhosar, Newar students celebrate Gaijatar. In my class, there are Newari student, Gurung student, Magar student, Brahman student, Awadhi student. During their festival time, I tell them to share about their festival in the class as it becomes contextual. For example; when Lhosar was nearer to come, I told Gurung student, to share about her culture. Likewise, when there was Chat Parva, I instructed Maithili student to share his culture.

However, application of contextualization in the class room was not sufficient.

Contextualizing in teaching in the classroom, helps to foster participatory and interactive learning and also develops their critical thinking skills as they begin questioning over devaluating local languages, cultures and diversities (Talukdar, 2019). Moreover, cultural content was not used adequately in the class. But it was used to some extent. There was a topic about the festivals in the text book and Ravi gave the presentation task to the students representing from all the diverse cultures in the class. They prepared the presentation about their concerned cultures and festivals and shared in the class. Ravi informed that he had used culture as the content during his teaching in the past also. Ravi expressed:

When students shared about their festivals as part of their culture, it helped them to enhance their knowledge and information of different cultures. It also

indirectly helped them to be close each other. So, I felt, their English learning being more effective.

Thus, they communicated in cross-cultural context sharing each other's culture. And it also served them as the content of communication. While communicating, they used culture as the content and English as the medium. Moreover, students from minority group also felt that respect is given to their cultural norms and values in the class. They also felt that their culture is unique in itself and it was their identity. Hence, it is good to use cultural content in language class room and culture as the content to communicate, and contextualizing in teaching in cross-cultural communication class.

Monolingual Practices in Multilingual Classroom

Monolingual practices dominated the classroom teaching and learning. Institution and curriculum had clearly stated English as the medium of education for the BBA degree. As a result, students had to submit their assignment writing in English. Similarly, in the exams, they were only allowed to write in English. However, the use of Nepali for the discussion and interaction in the class was very common. Koirala (2010) argues, "We are the flag holders of a language but the ignorers of the classroom setting and the teacher composition of the country" (p. 32). When the teacher asked the question to the students, some of the students intended to say the answer in Nepali. For example; in one class, students were given the class task and they had to share the answer. One of the students named, Pradeep asked for the permission to express the answer in Nepali language. But he was not allowed to do so.

But the culturally minority students felt hesitation to share the information about their mother tongues, words of their language and cultures. Once, Sonam delivered the presentation sharing about her culture in the class. She spoke English

very fast and her tone was also different. It was not very natural speed of speaking. I guessed it may be due to the effect of her mother tongue. So, I requested Sonam to share about her mother tongue. But she felt hesitation to share about her mother tongue. She said, “There is the effect of her mother tongue in her English speaking pace as her mother tongue is spoken very fast”. Minority students felt hesitation to share. And also they could not share openly about their language and culture thinking that other friends tease, insult and laugh at them, and also affect in their class room status when they share.

Hence, teacher requires to identify the problems of the students concerned with their effective learning and should facilitate them to minimize the problems. I found students were facing different problems like being less interactive, not completing the task in time, remaining back instead of participating, discussing and interacting; no availability of the device or gadgets like lap top with the students. So, the teacher needed to coordinate with the students to overcome these problems. Ravi shared:

I identify the students' problems by giving some task to the students like peer work, group work, presentation, field visit, etc. I tell them to present over the topic in the class room. I send them for the field visit. I also use lecture method. But through lecture method, we cannot identify the students' problems. While they participate in peer work, group work, presentation, field visit, etc., their real problems can be identified.

Although Ravi and the students had not received significant support from the institution to solve these problems, he had attempted to facilitate to solve these problems. Institution can support through teachers and by counselling with their parents. Institution is has not provided the help like the availability of the material,

lack of required facilities for the students to make their learning effective. Ravi further remarked:

I coordinate and support to the students to minimize these problems. I coordinate with the students by encouraging and motivating to participate in the classroom activities. I support the students providing my lap top during the presentation. I instruct the students to do peer work, group work, group discussion, interaction, presentation, field visit, writing reports, writing assignments, etc. I feel institutions should also support to minimize these problems.

Although Ravi did not receive any trainings to teach in cross-cultural context class room, he used some techniques and strategies from his experience of teaching in multicultural class. Hence, Ravi practiced teaching in cross-cultural context by instructing the students to share their cultural ideas with each other in the class.

It is also believed that no particular method is a universal method. Every method fits into certain context. The method which is considered very effective and relevant may be ineffective and irrelevant in another context. Therefore, any method and approach are relational and should be applied contextually. However, some methods may be relevant in many context and some may be relevant in a few context of teaching. Hence, more and more teachers, and also the learners and the language instructors should work collaborate. Moreover, the students should negotiate and compromise on the content they want to learn and the ways they are interested to learn (Giri, 2015). Even today the teaching method like lecture method, communicative language teaching, etc. are dominantly in use in teaching in cross-cultural context although these methods are not only sufficient for the effective

language learning and communicating through English as a language of inter-cultural communication.

However, due to the rapid innovation and skill development in language teaching and learning area including the language learning and communication in the cross-cultural context, a teacher requires to update with the newer ideas, skills, techniques, methods and approach, and teaching pedagogy as a whole.

CHAPTER V
MOTHER TONGUE AND CULTURE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING
AND COMMUNICATION

Mother tongues and the ethnic cultures influence English language learning, communicating through English and in the learning development of the learners. In the context of Nepal, cultural and linguistic aspects of the students still are not kept in the forefront of the learning despite the classes are mostly multi-cultural class. But the fact is that every language spoken in Nepal is rooted with the features of a particular region and culture. In other words, the languages of Nepal are associated with the regional and cultural identity of the people (Khanal, 2019).

This chapter discusses the effects of mother tongues and indigenous cultures in English language and communication teaching and learning in cross-cultural classroom. It digs out the situations of occurring misinterpretation and miscommunication while practicing cross-cultural communication in English. It examines the influence of the home cultures in students' classroom activities and learning development. It excavates on how cultural differences cause learning differences in the learners. It delves into the psychological effects of the cultures in behavioral traits and learning ability of the students. Over all, this chapter explores how cultures and the mother tongues influence in English language learning and affect communicating meaningfully in English in cross-cultural context.

Misinterpretation and Miscommunication

In the context of cross-cultural communication, senders and the receivers of the message encounter the problem of meaning construction and conceptual clarity. This becomes more critical when the sender of the message and the receiver of the message

are not familiar with each other's culture in advance. Cross-cultural context affects in communication inside the country, outside the country and also inside the multi-cultural classroom. It needs to understand the differences caused by the different cultural contexts. Failing to consider the contextual differences in the communication create problem in meaningful communication in cross-cultural context (Hall, 1976).

Influence of Mother Tongue in Learning English

Mother tongue influences in learning language skills, for effective communication, academic performances and mastery over the syntax and semantic aspect of the language. It interferes in developing the proficiency of the language skills accurately. As a result, this makes the communications ineffective. This also causes the students to get less score in the test of language skills such as speaking and writing skills (Oyewole, 2017)). I found students' pronunciation and accent being influenced by their mother tongues. I also found linguistic differences of the students have the direct impact in their language learning and communication skills. Ravi expressed:

The effect of the mother tongues of my students have affected their tone and pronunciation. For example; Awadhi language has influenced Awadhi student's tone and pronunciation and Tharu language has influenced Tharu student's tone and pronunciation. I have also felt that these students feel difficult to learn English due to this reason.

I found Puspanjali's mother tongue and her culture had the effect in her English speaking. Her speaking was not fluent. She pronounced the word other /'ʌðə/ as /ɑ:ðər/ and the word language /'læŋgwɪdʒ/ as the /læŋgwedʒ/. She frequently pronounced the word, thirty-three /'θə:ti θri:/ as /θɑ:ti: θri:/. She often repeatedly used the same filler word, 'Aah'. Puspanajli said:

I am from Awadhi culture. My mother tongue is Awadhi and it has influenced my English. Due to the effect of my mother tongue Awadhi, my tone of speaking English is also different. It has affected in pronunciation and voice; for example; I often tend to pronounce the word because /bɪ'kɒz/ as /bi:kaz/.

There was another Gurung student named Sonam. Her English speaking and accent was also influenced by her mother tongue and culture. During her presentation, she frequently pronounced the word hour /aʊə/ in the UK and /aʊr/ in the US as /haʊ:r/. She also spoke a bit unnaturally fast. When teacher asked why she pronounced the word 'hour' as /haʊ:r/ instead of /aʊə/ or /aʊr/, she replied that it was due to the effect of her mother tongue, Gurung language. In this context, Sriprabha (2015) claims, "When we begin speaking in the second language (i.e. English), we initially use sounds from our mother tongue. Thus, everyone has mother tongue influence (MTI)" (p. 296). Ravi said:

I have experienced that the linguistic differences/backgrounds of the students have the direct impact in their language learning and communication skill. I have seen that English language learning of the students having Nepali mother tongue and the students having Awadhi mother are different in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, etc. For example; there is Awadhi student in my class. Her name is Puspanajali. She frequently pronounces the word 'language' as /læŋwedʒ/. I taught her many times saying it is pronounced as /'læŋwidʒ/. But she pronounces as /læŋwedʒ/ due to the effect of her mother tongue.

This problem in the pronunciation was quite noticeable when Puspanajali spoke in the class. They also faced problem in grammar and meaning construction as well. Mother tongue also influences the communication style of the students.

Communication style can be understood in terms of direct, indirect, formal, informal, polite and less polite and so on. I found the communication style being different from one cultural students to another cultural student. For example; the communication style of the student Sonam was very direct. She spoke unnaturally faster. When I asked the reason for this. Sonam said:

I belong to Gurung community. My mother tongue is Gurung language. It affects in learning English language and also in learning Nepali language. It has affected my tone and pronunciation. My home environment also has affected my learning. The Gurung language that we speak and Gurung culture we follow at home shaped my mind and also affected in English learning. My mother tongue has the influence in my tone of speaking English e.g. I speak English in fast pace because my mother tongue, Gurung language is spoken in fast pace and in direct way. Similarly, Gurung language has the influence in my pronunciation of English e.g. I tend to pronounce the word hour /aʊə/ (in the UK) or /aʊr/ (in US) as /haɔ:r/.

Ravi also agreed in that mother tongue influences the learners' communication style. They tend to adopt the communication style of their mother tongues.

Communication style of Puspanjali and Hiramam was a bit less polite and informal. Likewise, Hiramam's tone of speaking was highly influenced by his mother tongue, Newari language although he did not speak Newari too much like Nepali and English. He often pronounced the sound /t/ wrongly. Ravi said:

For example; while seeing in terms of communication style of my students, I have found in my class that the use of language by the student with Awadhi mother tongue, Gurung mother tongue and Newari mother tongue is a bit straight forward and they also use English in straight forward way.

Cultural experience and exposure of language from the childhood help to be familiar to any kind of culture and language. Moreover, friend zone e.g. the language and cultures of the friends also have the effect in learning and the practice of culture. For example; Language and culture of the friends motivate in learning or in some cases may create problem in learning. Sonam got exposure of Gurung language when she was the child and it gradually decreased when she started her schooling because in school her teachers and friends used Nepali and English as the medium of education and as the medium of communication. As a result, Sonam was not very proficient in Gurung language.

Mother tongues or first languages affect in the learners' pronunciation, tone and accent. I found the same in the classroom. Awadhi students had the influence of Awadhi language; Maithili students had the influence of Maithili language and Brahman student had the influence of Nepali language in their pronunciation, tone and accent. One Brahman student, Kriti also felt that her mother has influenced her English learning in different ways. She felt in difficulties in pronouncing some of the typical words of English. Kriti expressed:

My mother tongue is Nepali and it has influenced my English learning. So, my main difficulty of learning English is in the pronunciation for being the non-native speaker of English. This difficulty I face for unusual word like 'psychology' or high level vocabulary of English rather than for the normal or very usual words like in the word 'kite'. Likewise, when I speak English sentences, I speak in the style of speaking Nepali language.

Moreover, she revealed she could not express her ideas in English as clearly as she could express in her mother tongue. Likewise, she had the difficulties in writing

skill. She also needed to undergo the intrapersonal communication in Nepali before she wrote or expressed something in English. Kriti said:

Another difficulty, I face is in grammar skill. For example; when I write a paragraph in English I face difficulty in creating appropriate sentences like maintaining complex sentences. Likewise, I have the problem of limited vocabulary of English. Another problem is that I cannot express every idea in English properly. Similarly, I face difficulty in writing in English as I often think in Nepali before I write something in English i.e. I am not habitual to think sentences in English when I write something in English. Moreover, I translate into Nepali when I need to understand the meaning of the English words or ideas written in English. Likewise, translating Nepali into English is still a problem for me. I begin learning English when I went to school. So, it is difficult for me to learn English or speak English like native speaker of English.

Consequently, students were habitual to learn English through grammar translation method and it has made their English learning very slow. There is the psychological effect of the mother tongue's influence in learning English. Delbio et al., (2018) claims, "Mother tongue influence is something that affects a person's thought process in a sense that he thinks in mother tongue and expresses in English or a second language" (p. 498). In the same way, Chandreshwar said that his pronunciation, accent and vocabulary level were affected by his mother tongue, Maithili. Chandreshwar learnt Nepali as his second language and English as a third language. Chandreshwar shared:

As you know my culture is Maithili, my tone is influenced by my mother tongue, Maithili language while speaking English and Nepali also. Next

problem is that poor English vocabulary and problem in pronouncing English vocabulary. I have poor English vocabulary it may be because Maithili language also has less vocabulary.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory views that the children get the exposure to learn language and to increase their vocabularies from the people in their surroundings (Uwen et al. 2020). When the learners are from diverse linguistic and cultural back grounds, it affects in encoding and decoding the message as teacher intends to convey one particular message but the students perceive the meaning differently. In this context, Puspanajli expressed:

The word in Awadhi language has one meaning and the same word in Nepali has another meaning. For example; once in the class my lecturer used the word 'Buwa' to refer 'father' in Nepali but I understood as aunty that is my father's sister because in my Awadhi language the word 'Buwa' means father's sister.

Linguistic backgrounds of the learners directly affect in the communication. If they are not aware of each other's language in advance, they may decode the message differently and misinterpretation can occur while communicating in cross-cultural context. During an interview Ravi revealed:

In one class I gave the essay writing task to my students. While telling the topic of the essay, I happened to say the essay topic in my mother tongue, Nepali. I asked them to write an essay on their 'Kala' (called for an art in Nepali). I occasionally use my mother tongue in my class. But one of the Newari students named Hiranman was just looking and not writing. So, again I told him to write. Then he told me that he did not have his wife. Then, I clarified I gave an essay writing task not about wife but an art. Then, he

surprised and said in Newari language the word 'Kala' means wife. This context hit me a lot. He understood when I said 'art' in place of Nepali word 'Kala'.

It is very crucial to understand that context differs from culture to culture and when context is different meaning of the same expression and behavior are also different. This becomes critical when both the sender and the receiver are not aware of each other's linguistic and cultural differences. Thus, students' mother tongue and culture affect in their learning English, in communication skills, in their expression, understanding, decoding and in their perception.

Influence of Home Culture in Classroom Activities and Learning

Nepal is a multilingual and multicultural country, and multilingual and multicultural contexts affect greatly in English teaching and learning in the language classroom. Therefore, if it is not handled appropriately, it affects learning English and communicating using English due to the occurrence of misinterpretation, miscommunications, and misunderstanding. Culture is associated to meaning construction. In this point, Ravi shared his understanding about culture as "It refers to the ways students construct meanings for the contents, we, teachers, teach to them being influenced by their ethnicity, values, assumptions, family practices, rituals, students' own traditions". In the class both the teacher and the students had the misunderstanding, misinterpretation and miss-communication. Ravi said, "I see the influence of students' cultures in meaning making process and behavior of the students. Their cultures also influence in their study and in decoding the message". In a meaningful communication correct encoding and decoding are necessary.

Mother tongue and culture influence the communication style of the people. In the class room, students of diverse linguistic and cultural background had the different

communication style. They showed it when they communicated in English. This caused the misunderstanding and miscommunication among the teacher and the students. Ravi expressed:

In the beginning, I had the misunderstanding with one of my Awadhi students thinking that she was very insincere, rude and impolite. For example; she spoke directly and she was very straight forward. She also used less respectful words e.g. she used 'Usko' or 'Unko' (meaning-his/her and less respectful word in Nepali language) instead of 'Uhako' (meaning-his/her and more respectful word in Nepali language). While communicating in Nepali, she has the habit of using the Nepali word 'Usko' while referring to the seniors like teachers, parents, etc. Later, I came to know that she was not impolite but it was due to the effect of her mother tongue and culture in her way of speaking and behavior. I came to know that in her mother tongue mostly less polite or impolite words are used.

In the cross-cultural context misunderstanding also occurs due to cultural conflict. Ravi shared he experienced misunderstanding due to cultural conflict due to the issue of the seat as both Magar student and Brahman student wanted to sit on the same bench. Moreover, they wanted to sit together on the bench with the students who belonged to their culture only. And another issue was the issue of cake cutting in the campus anniversary. One student from culturally minority group insisted to cut the cake whereas another student from culturally majority group did not agree to cut the cake claiming it was not the part of Nepalese culture. Ravi said:

I have experienced such misunderstanding between the students of culturally minority and culturally majority students. Students perceive the meaning and the concept differently. I think, this misunderstanding is due to the linguistic

and cultural differences of the students and classroom communication in the cross-cultural communication context.

Culture is a deeply rooted phenomenon that pervades in every one's way of life. So, it cannot be escaped even in the language learning process, class room participation and interaction. Oyewole (2017) states, "Language is a socio cultural phenomena on which has the characteristic role of communication as well as being an index of group's identity" (p. 55). Sonam also shared her experience how her academic progress and English learning were affected by her culture. Her mother tongue was Gurung language. She learnt Nepali from her childhood. But she told that there are many Gurung people who even cannot speak Nepali. She said, "Gurung people who belong to the rural community only speak Gurung language and they even cannot speak Nepali". She said, "It certainly affects in the learning process as medium of education is Nepali and English".

Home culture of the students had the effect in the active participation and interaction. When Ravi told to read the passage loudly in the class, mostly Brahman and Chhetri students read loudly. But minority students were mostly read silently. For example; Rajan and Kriti from Brahman community read loudly whereas students from other community such as Puspanali from Awadhi community, Yamkala from Magar community, Hiranman from Newar community and Chandreshwar from Maithali community read silently. Similarly, Brahmin and Chhetri students were found more forward in replying the answer. For example; Brahman students named Rajan and Kriti, and Chhetri student, Hema replied all the answers correctly. Whereas Puspanjali (Awadhi), Chandreshwar (Maithali) and Yamkala (Magar) were struggling to find out the correct answer. Therefore, cultural dimension should be incorporated in language classroom. There are different parts of cultural dimension such as non-verbal

categories, proxemics, etc. People created the cultural dimension and in course of time they seem to be guided by these dimensions in terms of communication. Although the men produces the culture, ultimately, the cultural environment itself begins to influence them i.e. men and the culture associate in such a way that their impact is seen in both (Hall, 1990). Therefore, it is natural to have the influence of students' home culture in their overall activities including classroom activities.

Learning Differences

Culture creates the context and it requires to understand the communication context of the learners. Culture affects students' conceptual understanding and learning. Culture has the significant function in facilitating language teaching and learning. And it is more important while teaching and learning language in cross-cultural context. Therefore, the mindset of the learners should be shaped from the cultural perspectives (Amirovich et al., 2021). Culture shapes the mindset of the learners in such a way, differences in perception occurs over the same expressions and the issues. It also matters whose cultures and mother tongues are dominantly used in addition to English in the classroom during the teaching and learning process and communicating in English.

Individual Differences in Understanding the Concept

I found learning differences in the students due to their linguistic and cultural differences. I saw students who were from linguistically and culturally majority group could understand fast and were more interactive whereas linguistically and culturally minority students often learnt the concept rather slowly. I found the decoding of linguistically and culturally minority students poorer than the other students. It was because until and unless teacher forced they do not move ahead as mostly they were of introvert nature. In this context Ravi shared:

In my teaching experience, I have found that Brahman and Chhetri students constructing meaning fast whereas the students from other ethnicity like Awadhi, Tharu, Chaudhary constructing meaning rather slowly. I feel this is because there is cultural differences between us and them.

I felt their cultural backgrounds shaped their learning style. When the teacher assigned them the task of presentation, linguistically and culturally minority students did not prepare the presentation timely. Moreover, they tried to escape from their homework and assignment very often showing some pretension. I saw the problems in their active participation and classroom interaction. They either had less participation and less interaction or they escaped from the participation and interaction.

Multiculturalism views that the people of diverse cultural communities should be facilitated to create the environment for them to live in an independent way.

Moreover, they should be allowed to discuss and protect their languages and cultures so that they can create their own linguistic and cultural identity (Hurn & Tomalin, 2013).

Linguistic and cultural differences of the learners cause differences in understanding, conceptual clarity and language learning. The students from marginalized communities had less class attendance. They remained absent even for small cause. Ravi expressed:

Tharu, Awadhi, Chaudahry, Maithili, Newari, Magar students often remain passive and absent in the classes of the beginning of the semester and last days of the semester. They are passive when there is no exam. They often do not attend the class of the last days of the semester. These students seemed to be a bit more active during the exam time only. Unlike from these culturally minority students, Brahman and Chhetri students ask the queries and

questions when they need. They even confirm the answer asking the question and query again and again for the answer they have already known and addressed by the teacher.

As a result, these students used to escape from the classroom participation and were not able to progress in the study like Brahman and Chhetri students as a whole. Brahman and Chhetri students were more confident than Awadhi student, Tharu student, Magar student and Maithili student. Students who had the higher degree of confident level were ahead in learning in comparison to the students with the lesser degree of confident level. Ravi expressed:

The students from Tharu and Awadhi culture do not have not required level of confidence. Due to this, they cannot express what they want to express and they feel hesitation to ask the question and query when they face the problem in learning. So, the Tharu, Awadhi, Chaudahry, Maithili, Newari, Magar students want to avoid the discussion in the class.

Technological skill is one of the skills of communication. I found the students of minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds also lagging behind in technological development skill. Ravi expressed:

Brahman and Chhetri students are more advanced in the technological skill than these students. Unlike from minority ethnic and cultural background students, Brahman and Chhetri culture students get more freedom to go out, meet friends and people. As a result, they get more exposure to interact and learn by meeting the friends and joining IT classes. So, they tend to use technological gadgets like mobile, computer, etc. more adequately than the culturally minority students.

In learning process, culturally minority students feel more difficult than the majority one. I found Puspanjali, Yamakala, Hiranman were slow in learning process where as Madhav, Rajan, Padma and Lalita could learn faster. It was also due to the differences in technological advancement of the students. Ravi said:

I have found that Tharu students, Awadhi students, etc. face more problem than the Brahman and Chhetri students when I give them the task of presentation using PowerPoint slides. For example; I have received the assignment of Awadhi student, Puspanjali from her friend's email. When I asked why she did not send assignment from her own email, she replied that she does not have her own email address. Then, I further said, "Why don't you use?" She replied that long ago once one of her friends created her email address but she has not activated since then because she does not have the mobile that is compatible for using her email and also she does not have computer at home. Puspanjali also told use of mobile for the girl is not allowed at her home.

It was because there was the mindset of her family that it did not do well for the daughters. And this tendency has affected in their technological development skill and communication skill.

I found learning differences in the students in so many respects in cross-cultural context communication classroom. Ravi revealed that one of the problems he faced in his class was the different understanding level of the students who were from different linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Ravi said:

One of the problems I face in the classroom is that the students do not have the same level of understanding. For example, Brahman and Chhetri students

understand very quickly whereas Magar student, Awadhi student, Maithili students, Gurung students understand rather slowly.

I observed the learning differences in terms of students' vocabulary ability. Comparatively, Brahman and Chhetri students were better than the students from other community like Maithili, Awadhi and Magar community. When teacher gave vocabulary matching exercise in the class, Brahman students could match more correctly than the students of other communities. Some of the Brahman students matched all the words correctly. For example; Bhagawati could match all the words correctly. No any other students except from Brahman community could match all the words correctly in the class.

It was discovered that Brahman and Chhetri students were better in communication skill in comparison to Magar and Awadhi students. It was because English for the Brahman student was the second language whereas for Magar and Awadhi student English was the third language. Magar student learnt English after they learnt Magar language and Nepali language. And Awadhi student got chance to learn English after they were exposed to Awadhi and Nepali language.

Association of Culture with Learning Ability

Learning ability of the students from high-context culture and low-context culture in the context of Nepal is found different. According to Edward T. Hall, communication style differs from high-context culture to lo-context culture. In high-context culture, the communication implicit. Verbal codes are not only focused. Along with it, communication through non-verbal means are also considered seriously. Communicators also focus to the relationship and information exchange among them. Collectivism is considered very important. Communication tends to be more formal. On the other hand, in low-context culture, communication is explicit. What

information is said or exchanged is more important than the how it is said exchanged and in which environment it is exchanged. Communication is not as formal as in high-context culture (Bai, 2016). During the class observation, I found class room communication being affected by two cultures viz. high-context culture (Brahman & Chhetri culture) and low-context culture (Awadhi culture, Gurung culture, etc.). In this context, Ravi expressed:

Mother tongue influences in language learning, in understanding, in perception and in communication style. For example; while seeing in terms of communication style of my students, I have found in my class that the use of language by the student with Awadhi mother tongue and Newari mother tongue is a bit straight forward and they also use English in straight forward way.

The communication style of Puspanjali and Sonam was very direct. They even did not use respectful words properly while communicating with their teachers and friends. But, as per my understanding, they did not do it intentionally rather it was the effect of their mother tongues and cultures in their communication style. Ravi expressed:

Newari and Gurung students' use of language is very straight forward. They reply the answer directly and straight forward way if they know, otherwise, they remain silent and introvert. But, Brahman and Chhetri students reply the answer bringing the context or the background and tell the answer indirectly even though they do not know the actual answer.

Thus, it is obvious that there are differences in the communication style of the students due to their cultural differences.

Psychological Effects in Traits and Learning

In the cross-cultural context communication classrooms, psychological effects in learners' learning and personality traits cause due to their feeling of cultural domination, cultural shock, linguistic domination, and their insufficient cultural information, mother tongues' interfere in learning language and so on. In such situation, teacher's role regarding the methods applied in the class and the ways teacher motivates during the learning process to create a conducive language learning environment become very significant and if they lack it the psychological effect becomes more adverse (Mao, 2022).

Byproduct of Home Culture and Aspiration of Likeliness

Culture and language of the students influence them in a number ways. In the classroom, I found the reproduction of culture and the aspirations of the likeliness. Culture also influences the personality trait of the students. In the class, one Awadhi student, Puspanjali, shared her experiences on how her mother tongue and culture affected her English and communication. She admitted that she was introvert because of the effect of her culture. She said, "Yes, we are not given enough freedom at our home and society. Even we are told to speak less than the sons".

During the presentation, Puspanajli seemed to be nervous. She was feeling shy. She also agreed that she was feeling shy while standing in front of the class and spoke. She frequently stopped speaking and just stood stand still. Teacher encouraged her very often to go on speaking. She did not maintain eye contact. She was shaking her body frequently. Her nervous and fearful facial expressions could siganl to understand that she was not getting proper recognition in her family although she was sent for higher study.

Culturally minority and back warded students' families also preferred the girls to be less interactive. One of the reasons for the girl student being less interactive and introvert is that their family members did not allow them to speak more at home. So, as the byproduct of their home culture, they are introvert, less active and less interactive in the class. Students' culture, mother tongue, ethnic background and family backgrounds are deeply rooted in their learning English, classroom interaction, interaction outside classroom, classroom participation, technological interaction and business communication skills. Ravi expressed:

From my experience of more than a decade, I can claim that in cross-cultural communication context, there is the great hand of culture, mother tongue, ethnic background and family backgrounds of Tharu child, Awadhi child, Magar child, Newar child, Gurung child and say other children of back warded ethnicity and community to impede or influence their classroom interaction, interaction outside classroom, classroom participation, technological interaction, business communication skills and learning English.

Cultural shock often impedes the learners psychologically as they feel being isolated in the class. In the class, I found the linguistically and culturally minority had the psychological effect in their learning progress. Being in the minority had made feel the minority students lonely. Moreover, the cultural domination prevailing both explicitly and implicitly had also affected them in their classroom activities, classroom participation an interaction. Hall's discussion on cross-cultural context proposes that it is very significant to understand the psychology in terms of cross-cultural understanding. It can be done by studying the psychological effects of the cultural differences and context differences in the unconscious mind of the people involving in the communication in the cross-cultural context and also by understanding socio-

cognitive aspects in cross-cultural context. In this connection, Hall advises to understand culture going beyond the cultural differences (Shaules, 2019). I found students had the effect of cultural shock in the class. It could be noticed through the classroom activities, participation and interaction of Puspanajali, Chandreshwar and Yamkala in the classroom. Ravi said:

They have the feeling that they are almost alone in the class. I often see they feel difficulties in adjusting with the classroom culture and with other friends in the class due to the effect of their mother tongue in speaking Nepali and English language, and due to their cultural behavior.

Cultural and linguistic domination prevailed in the class and it affected their English language learning and communication. Culturally minority students felt being dominated in the class. But, they did not like to share their all the feelings openly related to this matter. Unlike from Brahman students, they hid and suppressed their feelings. Ravi said:

When I ask Puspanajli to come in front of the class to share her feelings or say something, she feels hesitation and lacks the courage to share. During my class, when I look at her, she often bows her head down thinking that I am going to ask the question and she has to reply, and if she bows her head and doesn't look towards me, I may ask the question to another student. When I interacted with her time and again to find out the reasons for this, she revealed that this is because of her culture and she also feels alone in the class.

Cultural and linguistic dominations cause the learners to feel inferior and they tend to have low self-respect. Ultimately, their learning development is also affected negatively.

When I interacted with the students in the class, they shared on how gender discrimination remained at home and how it impeded their learning. They expressed that their families gave priority to the sons. In this context, an Awadhi student, Puspanajli said:

In my culture the main priority is given to the son. For example, Chhat is the festival that especially gives priority to the sons. Mother practices fasting and prays for the betterment of her son and his long life. There is no any such festival that gives especial priority to the girls in my community.

Sons were given more freedom than the daughters in every aspect. This tendency of the family culture had the adverse effect in the female students' over all learning and personality development. Parents also felt very important to provide higher education for the sons than the daughters. Puspanjali further revealed, "In my culture and in my community, during mensuration, girls are not allowed to go to the kitchen and the temple for 7 days. We are too traditional to change ourselves and also to adopt the changes".

Gender discrimination was not only limited to the culturally minority community but it also prevailed in the majority community. I found the gender discrimination in Brahman community as well. One Brahman student, Kriti revealed:

There is discrimination between the boys and the girls in my community. For example, Chhaiti is celebrated as the birth celebration when the baby boy is born in the family but this is not celebrated when baby girl is born. There is the culture in our community that women practice fasting for the betterment of their husbands but the men do not.

However, this discrimination was not equally practiced in all the cultures. For example, in Gurung culture, the case of gender discrimination was a bit different. One

Gurung student, Sonam said:

Our cultural beliefs and values are different from other communities. In our community, girls are valued than the boys as girls are the first priority. There are not tight rules for the girls like in some other cultures e.g. like in Awadhi culture. For example, during the mensuration period, we are not restricted to go to the kitchen.

This restriction is practiced in Awadhi culture and Brahman culture.

Consequently, this was one of the reasons for these students' absenteeism in the class.

Moreover, in Awadhi culture there was high discrimination between the sons and daughter in terms of education. But in Brahman community this tendency was comparatively very less. Over all, gender discrimination was the cultural barrier in class room participation and in the learning process both directly and indirectly.

Effect in the Behavioral Traits

Behavior can be understood as the overall activities that an individual performs and culture affects in shaping the behavior of an individual in different ways. Hall (1959) claims culture as, "... the way of life of people, for the sum of their learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things" (p. 42). There are overt and covert behaviors. Overt behavior is the observable behavior. The way students speak, sit in the class, and their other visible activities are examples of overt behavior. On the other hand, thinking, reasoning, critical thinking skills, cognitive ability, etc. are the examples of covert behavior. Culture influences both the behaviors of the people. So, students' culture and mother tongues influence and shape their behaviors psychologically no matter whether they notice and feel that their behaviors are influenced by their culture or not. Language and culture play very important role in

the perception of the students. It affects in the way they select and organize the information; they understand the certain phenomenon implicitly. Language development, learning process and perception are closely associated and they all reflect through the behavior (Vygotsky, 1979). Hence, culture and language of the students affect in their behavioral patterns.

I found the behavior of the students different when they are linguistically and culturally different. In the class, I found linguistically and culturally majority students being extrovert in the class whereas minority students were mostly introvert. In this context, Ravi expressed:

There is one student named Puspanjali in my class. I have told her to deliver the presentation in the class again and again. But she often feels hesitation when I give her the task of the presentation. She has weaker performance than the other students. When I asked the reason for this, I came to know that psychologically she herself feels weak. She replied that I belong to Awadhi community and in my community there are restrictions for the girl child in so many respects. So, I feel, it does not matter a lot even though I do not read nicely.

I found Puspanjali to have the introvert personality trait. She was often silent in the class room. Moreover, students from the culturally minority and marginalized community like Awadhi, Maithili and Magar community did not want to interact openly in the class. Ravi further expressed:

I have also felt that culturally minority students do not share their feelings openly related to this matter. Unlike from Brahman students, they hide and suppress their feelings, and feel hesitation to share what they actually want to share. When I ask these students to share their feelings and queries, they feel

hesitation. For example; when I told Puspanajali to come in front of the class to share her feelings or something, she felt hesitation and lacked the courage to share.

When the teacher asked the open questions and looked at these students, they bowed their heads to be away from the sight of the teacher so that they did not have to reply the answer or they did not have to speak. They tended to escape from the classroom participation. When teacher asked the question individually, they felt shy. It could be observed clearly that they were not psychologically strong to interact and participate in the class. Ravi said:

Culturally minority students interact less in the class and are of introvert nature whereas Brahman students with Nepali mother tongue are more interactive and of extrovert nature. Brahman students even follow me after the class is over to ask the questions.

They were of introvert nature because they felt domination so far in the class as the majority of the students in the class were from Brahman and Chhetri community. This is how culture and language affect in students' behavior. The prevailing linguistic and cultural domination affected the learning psychologically. Ravi said:

I have found students from Brahman and Chhetri culture mostly overtaking to the students of culturally minority group in the class. Moreover, culturally minority students like Awadhi student, Magar student, Maithili student, Newar student, etc. feel hesitation and lag behind to share their ideas and feeling before the culturally majority students namely Brahman and Chhetri students.

Students of diverse cultural backgrounds showed different behaviors and moods. Puspanajli and Yamkala were silent very often whereas Brahman students

sitting adjacent to them were interactive when teacher asked the questions. Likewise, Hiranman and Chandreshwar were silent whereas Brahman students sitting adjacent to them were interactive. Hema was a Chhetri and an extrovert student. Hema shared:

I belong to Chhetri community. Brahmin culture and Chhetri culture are quite similar. But there is less restriction in Chhetri culture. My culture is more flexible. As a result, it has been easier for me to get dissolve myself in every kind of situation and environment. I am friendly with my friends and teachers. While taking certain decision in my family, each member has the equal right to put their opinions. It has improved my leadership skill, communication skills, and business skills and so on.

Moreover, the students who were from linguistically and culturally minority group were not confident enough whereas the confident level of linguistically and culturally majority students was intact. I also found the confident level was also affected due to the difference in the genders. Mostly, male students were more confident than the female students in participating in the interaction, sharing the ideas, delivering the presentations, and, in overall, classroom communication. Regarding the confident level, I also observed that the female students from linguistically and culturally minority group were less confident than the majority group. For example; I saw lack of confident level in Puspanjali, Yamkala, Chandreshwar and Hiranman. These students were from the culturally minority group in the class. On the other hand, Manushi, Padma, Hema, Madhav and Rajan were confident enough.

Language and culture of the learners influence their behavioral traits through the process of internalization. This process occurs in a learner through the series of changes which he/she experiences in the social environment. The process of reconstructing the behavioral traits begins internally in the learners due to prolonged

engagement in the certain linguistic and cultural environment, the activities practiced and experienced externally. This also causes changing interpersonal activities such as intrapersonal communication, perception and way of thinking. And these internal thinking again begins reflecting in the external activities. Both interpersonal activities and the intrapersonal activities are the behaviors. This is highly a psychological process in shaping and changing the behavioral traits of the learners (Vygotsky, 1979).

Consciousness in Learning

Learning mother tongue is a natural process where as learning second language is a psychological process. I found students from different cultures had the different mindset of learning consciousness. Culture is inseparable from the people. It is not merely an abstract entity that are forced and applied in the mankind and otherwise it is separate from them. But instead, man himself/herself is the culture and cultural aspects tends to understand subjectively (Hall, 1959). This shows culture of the people affect them knowingly and unknowingly.

A child begins learning his first language from his birth from the members of the family and his social milieu. A learner acquires the first language naturally and learning language this way is always the best way but learning second language is a psychological process as Delbio et al., (2018) states, “Second language acquisition is a psychological process” (p. 497).

Students need to prepare to learn second language contextually, culturally and emotionally. Second language learners tend to think in their mother tongue first and then they translate into second language to speak or write. Socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of the students affect in their learning consciousness in such a way that to which class of socio-economic background they are related. This makes

them to prepare less or more for schooling and to perform in the class. Their financial condition also play the deciding factor in their class attendance, participation and in the interaction (Persell, 2010). Consciousness in learning varied between the linguistically and culturally majority and minority students. Ravi expressed:

I find the feeling in the Brahman student that I should do well in the study because I belong to Brahman community. Similarly, Chhetri students feel that I should do well because I am from Chhetri community. On the other hand, I find the feeling in Tharu and Chaudhary students that it does not matter much if we are weak in study because we are from Tharu and Chaudhary community.

They take it normally if they are weak in study due to their cultural mindset.

Therefore, teachers who teach English language as a second language and also an additional language need to help their learners shape students' mindset being protective of their native culture, and, at the same time, focusing in the study and arousing the awareness of learning progress in them. In other words, English language teacher is required to be culture preserver. They should be able to make the balance in teaching and being sensitive towards the aspects of the native cultures of the students while dealing with English language (Astania & Kuznetsov, 2020). Thus, in multicultural classrooms, students are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and these backgrounds create the different extent of consciousness in them regarding their mindset and degree of learning process and learning development.

Likewise, the students of diverse cultural backgrounds had the different perceptions over the same issue. The same festival is celebrated differently by the different cultural people. In the same way, over the same festival, different students had different perceptions. Their perception, understanding and the concept were found

different from one student to another student in terms of the festival celebrated being influenced by their cultural mindset. Some students understood the exact message and concept that teacher intended to convey but some other students understood differently. They perceived the message being influenced by the footprint of their cultural differences. For example; they understood and perceived the same festival in their own way based on their rituals and family culture and system. In this context, Ravi shared his experience as:

Once, I was sharing my lecture on the festival, 'Holi'. I found that their understanding towards Holi was different from each other. Some students celebrate Holi as the festival of colors. They viewed Holi should be celebrated offering colors to each other, singing, shouting and dancing visiting the door to door of the friends and relatives. But, some other students told that they don't celebrate this way. They sit at home, prepare delicious food and celebrate eating, singing and dancing together with the relatives and the members of the family inside home. One student debated with me regarding Holi is good or bad. He told it is bad festival because it pollutes societal environment.

Thus, students from one culture perceived Holi as the constructive festival and viewed it was good to celebrate whereas some other students from next culture perceived it as the destructive festival and viewed it was not a good festival. This is how their conceptual consciousness was affected by their own cultural mindset and ethos.

Differences in the consciousness level in the communication of the students can also be observed when the students from diverse cultural backgrounds are kept together in the class and taught. Hall (1990) claims, "In *The Silent Language*, I

suggested that communication occurs simultaneously on different levels of consciousness, ranging from full awareness to out-of-awareness” (p. 5). Different factors influence the perception of an individual, and cultural is one of the factors that influences the perception and understanding of the students. Hence, culture merely does not influence in learning students’ second language, it also affects for being conscious in learning and in perception and the overall understanding.

CHAPTER VI

ISSUES OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Teachers can encounter different issues related to cross-cultural communication while teaching English language and communication, and learners also faces different issues in different contexts while learning English language and engaging in communication process in cross-cultural context classrooms. In the context of Nepal, issues related to cross-cultural communication in English language and communication teaching classrooms are not adequately discussed and addressed. These issues impede for meaningful learning and communication in multilingual and multicultural classrooms. Thus, these issues require to discuss and resolve properly to enhance meaningful learning and communication in multi-lingual and multi-cultural classrooms.

This chapter discusses various issues of cross-cultural communication of the cross-cultural context class room. It examines the issues of cross-cultural communication such as ethnocentrism, stereotyping, cultural domination, cultural conflict, etc. Likewise, it digs out the issues related to non-verbal communication of the students in meaning construction. Similarly, it excavates the lack of appropriate communication etiquette in the learners. Moreover, it discusses the ways for resolving the issues in English language and communication teaching cross-cultural context classroom. Over all, this chapter explores the issues of cross-cultural communication, and the ways for resolving them to enhance meaningful learning and effective communication in the multilingual and multi-cultural classroom.

Cultural Alterity in the Class

Cultural alterity occurs among the people due to the feeling of ethnocentrism and stereotyping which are the problems often tend to experience in cross-cultural communication context. Akhmadieva et al. (2019) states, "... they (ethnocentric people) do not consider the cultures of all people equally important and equal" (p. 22). I found these problems in the students. It affects in English learning of the culturally minority students. Monoculture people are not sensitive to the culture of other people. Ethnocentrism reflects in their behavior and do not have the sense of respecting the culture of other people. They judge everything from their perspective. Because of this, they cannot communicate in effective way. They are not conscious over the possible cultural conflict and misunderstanding. Consequently, the cross-cultural communications becomes the miss-communications (Hurn and Tomalin, 2013). Ultimately, it affects in the whole learning process in cross-cultural communication context.

Whose Culture Is Better?

People having the feeling of ethnocentrism think that cultural behavior performed in their culture as correct. They feel their perspectives are right and the people belonging to their culture are in group and people following other culture as the out group. They are supportive to the in group people and show malevolent behavior to out group people (Akhmadieva et al., 2019). I found these tendencies affected in students learning. In this context, Ravi shared:

In my class, I see, students feel pride of their culture. When I told them to share about the information of their mother tongue and culture, almost all the students presented in such a way that their culture was better than the others. I also saw that although the culturally minority students such as Magar,

Awadhi, Maithili students also shared about their language and culture, they were more hesitant than the Brahman and Chhetri students.

Hence, the feeling of ethnocentrism and stereotyping were in the students.

This feeling was more in the linguistically and culturally majority students than the minority one. However, due to this problem, learning of culturally minority students was mostly affected. Ravi stated:

Magar, Awadhi, Maithili students have the mindset that if I speak, my classmates may laugh at me, they tease me or insult me. They feel inferior, lacks the self-respect, feel fear and does not participate in the class room activities. When they have fear in the mind for these things, it certainly hampers in their learning.

These students feel that they are from backward culture. In case, they participate in the class, they cannot show his confident level appropriately. Likewise, more fearful and less confident students frequently remain absent on the day they need to perform certain task or activities. So, it certainly affects the minority students negatively in learning. Therefore, teacher should be very careful to manage the class accordingly to make their learning effective.

Ethnocentrism and stereotype prevailed in the class and it also affected the linguistically and culturally minority students in their learning process. When ethnically majority people develop the mindset of judging ethnically minority people's culture as inferior and begin taking one's cultural norms, customs and values are better than the others, it brings the feeling in the ethnic people that they are not secure and also feel uncertainty. As a result, this also causes the problem of stereotype (Hurn & Tomalin, 2013). In the class I found prevailing ethnocentrism and stereotyping in the

students' mindset although they were not familiar actually about the ethnocentrism and stereotyping. Ravi shared:

Students of minority culture remain isolate and they are afraid of involving in the interaction. Like one cultural group forces to other group to follow and implement with own cultural norms rather than following others. Students from the same culture want to sit together. Like Brahman students often sit together on the same bench with their Brahman friends only. Culturally majority students have the tendency of isolating the minority students from their group.

In the class, the feeling of the ethnocentrism could be noticed in the behavior and the activities of the students. This feeling was obvious in both culturally majority and minority students. But it was higher in the majority group. There were challenges like cultural domination and ethnocentrism. In some cases, these challenges could not be noticed on the surface level, but up on deep observation, these issues could be sensed among the students and actually prevailed in the class. I also observed this when the teacher divided the students in the group for group work. During group division students wanted to form the group comprising the members of their own linguistic and cultural community. Ravi further stated:

One day, I was sitting in the office, one student came in the office. He complained that another student sat on his seat on the bench. Then, I went to the class and asked about the matter. Then, he replied showing towards the bench that this is my seat and I always sit here. Another replied, we can also change the seats. I sit here today and he can sit on another bench. When I inquired the reason for such conflict, I knew that on that seat a Brahman student used to sit. But the very day there was a Magar student sitting. And

also another Brahman student was not interested to sit with that Magar student. He wanted another Brahman student sitting beside him instead of Magar student. Similarly, Magar student did not want to leave that seat.

The feeling of ethnocentrism and stereotyping in students mind schema was deeply rooted. They reflected ethnocentrism and stereotyping in their behavior, activities, interaction and while responding to the teacher and their classmates. In one class, Ravi told a Newari student, Hiranman, to share the information about Newari culture. He shared the information of the food culture. He proudly told that some kind of wine is served as 'Sagun' (holy food, here as holy drink in Newari language and culture) in his cultural ceremony such as in the festival and each member tastes it as holy food. In one hand, he proudly said about this food culture. On the other hand, the students of other cultures laughed at him loudly in teasing and in insulting way. Likewise, in one occasion when a Brahman student, Kriti, showed the pictures to reflect her cultural information such as food weaning ceremony, marriage ceremony, etc. students of other cultural backgrounds laughed at this.

An individual, being a supporter of cultural relativism, can minimize his/her ethnocentric tendency as it allows him/her to interact with the people from cultures equally no matter whether these people are in group or out group, culturally majority or minority group. He/she can overcome his/her prevailing ethnocentrism valuing to culture and cultural behavior of all the people equally (Akhmadieva et al., 2019). Ravi tried to resolve the issues concerned with the ethnocentrism and stereotyping prevailing in his class. He told that he applied some techniques and strategies to resolve the issues related to ethnocentrism and stereotyping. Ravi expressed:

I gave my students the presentation topic on 'How has your culture enhanced your learning and communication skills?' representing the student from every

linguistic and cultural background. Student from each culture delivered the presentation on this topic. It took three classes. Students actively participated and interacted in sharing and knowing each other's culture. Each student proudly shared own cultural information in the class. In a way, it brought a kind of cultural awareness in them.

It is good to inquire and know about the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and address appropriately. Ravi said, "When I did so, I found, it enhanced the cultural contents of the students and became very useful for the students in meaning making process as well". Ravi conducted some interactive activities to minimize the ethnocentrism and stereotyping. It brought the culturally diverse students closer. They understood each other's culture so closely. And, I found, such group work and interaction being useful to minimize their ethnocentrism and stereotyping. Ravi said:

When I make the group, I mix the students/members from different cultural background in a group. Then I make the group leader from linguistically and culturally minority student such as from Awadhi, Maithili, Magar, Newar, Gurung, etc. instead of other culturally majority students like Brahman as most of the Brahman students are already ahead in study and in interaction in my class.

This also made linguistically and culturally minority students active in the group work and in the interaction with other students. If group members are from the same cultural group, the gap between them increases more. This reduces harmony among the different cultural groups and causes to increase in the feeling of ethnocentrism and stereotyping in them.

Challenges like ethnocentrism and stereotyping affect students' English learning negatively. However, to minimize the negative effects, it greatly depends on how teacher deals and facilitates the students while teaching English in cross-cultural class. In my understanding, one of the best ways to minimize these challenges is by raising students' awareness of cultural diversity in the class. Teacher should facilitate all the students to interact about their cultural information with one another. Teacher should facilitate the students to be familiar with the cultures of other students. When each student becomes familiar with the culture of other students, gradually they begin adapting each other's culture in the class. And, finally, this helps them to participate in the classroom activities and interact sharing each other's cultural and other course related ideas in the class.

Linguistic and Cultural Primacy

Feelings of linguistic and cultural superiority and ego were other problems in the classroom which were the outcome of the feelings of ethnocentrism and stereotyping found in majority group. These feelings were also found in the minority group. Minds of the learners who are from varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds possess positive and negative mindsets and the sentiments towards the other cultural group. In some contexts, although they seem to have complete positive mindset, there also lie the adverse mindset beneath it (Mahinda, 2014).

There were many incidents of cultural domination in the class. It prevailed in different forms like linguistically and culturally majority students dominated to the minority one. For example; while involving in the team work, mostly culturally majority students wanted to be group or team leader rather than minority one. Likewise, male dominated to the female students. And in the same way extrovert students dominated to the introvert one. Ravi said:

In the classroom interaction, I have witnessed many incidents of domination. For example; extrovert students dominate to the introvert students. Boys dominate to the girls. When I ask open questions, mostly extrovert students reply the answer. Sometimes, when I ask the questions to introvert students only, again extrovert students overtake them and reply the answer in dominating way.

Mostly, introvert students were from the culturally minority group and extrovert students were from culturally majority group. Thus, extrovert students tended to make the introvert students inferior and dominate them. Similarly, female students were also dominated by the male students as the male students had the feeling that they were superior to them. Dominating introvert students by the extrovert students was also a psychological phenomenon in the classroom. As a result, there was domination in the class both intentionally and unintentionally. Ravi shared:

There is one student named Puspanjali and she cannot show any courage to speak in the class until I ask her the question and force to speak bringing her in front of the class. Likewise, when I ask question to her, some Brahman and Chhetri students react and say, sir, she cannot tell the answer and they reply the answer before she speaks.

It was because she felt being dominated by the extrovert and culturally majority students. Linguistic and cultural domination prevailed in the class for the reason that there are only two official language viz. Nepali and English. Likewise, these two languages are the dominant mediums of education. Moreover, the policies based on the promotion of the local languages and ethnic cultures have not been effective. Ravi expressed:

Nepali and English are allowed and used as the means of communication officially and legally. In the classroom, also, they are told to do the same i.e. they are told to use either English or Nepali or both languages as the medium of education. Teachers also instruct their students either to speak Nepali or English in the class room. There is not taken any effective initiation to protect and survive their languages and cultures from the local level because local institutions have not taken effective initiations to promote, protect and survive their local languages and cultures.

Michael Foucault regards language as power. Foucault proposed that language is not simply words rather it represents knowledge and power. Language and actions are linked together (Candlin et al., 2017). Mother tongue of culturally majority students is dominantly used in the class by the teacher and the students including the linguistically and culturally minority students to communicate in various communication situations in the class. This has created and caused the influence of the linguistically and culturally majority students in the class over the minority. Hence, culturally minority group felt inferior and less capable in learning process.

Language and culture function as the power. It creates the social hierarchy. This effect can be seen in the classroom also. In the Nepalese classrooms, English and Nepali are dominantly used. In English class, English has dominated Nepali and Nepali has dominated to other mother tongues. In one hand language is the medium of education and an inevitable tool of communication, and on the other hand, it creates power and social hierarchy. In the context of Nepal, English and Nepali have established as a power in education and in other domains of our life (Giri, 2015).

Puspanjali shared:

As my culture and language are in minority and my mother tongue has not got any place in other different organizations also, I feel there is no any way out except accepting the Nepali language and the majority culture. So, I feel, I have to be assimilated and accommodated with the Brahman culture. Other culturally minority students also do not show the sufficient courage to share their exact feelings in the class or say in front of the Brahman students.

Cultural Inharmony

Cultural misunderstanding and lack of cultural negotiation also prevailed in the class. In multicultural classroom, there lies the possibilities of occurring cultural conflict when different cultural groups have their own vested interest. In language learning and communication classroom, cultural inharmony may occur when the learners of different linguistic and cultural context find the classroom environment inflexible and unsupportive to them for the learning process (Mahinda, 2014). In the class, there were different incidents of cultural conflict among the students. Ravi expressed:

A Brahman student of Bachelor level complained raising the issue of the seat in the class. He insisted that he did not want to sit with the Magar student. He said he wanted to sit with the Brahman students only.

Thus, the students, unknowingly, had the cultural and community ego mindset. There was the tendency when the student of one cultural group accepted or agreed to do a particular thing or activity, the student of another culture group did not accept and disagreed to do the same. Moreover, students who were assimilated with western culture insisted to adopt and go in the modern phase of the culture. But there were other students who felt original Nepali culture should be followed and preserved. Ravi also shared another incident of cultural conflict. It was an issue of cutting the cake in

the campus anniversary. One Newari student who had the feeling himself being very modern insisted to cut the cake to celebrate the campus anniversary and for him it was no matter it being the part of the western culture whereas Brahman students denied the idea of cutting the cake saying that it was not the part of our culture and they viewed their original Nepali culture should be followed and preserved. Ravi shared:

There was one context of cutting the cake in the campus anniversary. One Newari student argued saying we have to cut the cake in the campus anniversary including in other celebrations also no matter whether it is western culture and everybody is doing so. He insisted that this is a good culture and we should adopt it. He defended his argument saying that he belonged to very well educated and civilized family. His father is also educated and also supports this culture. Brahman students argued that we should not cut the cake in the campus anniversary and any other celebrations like birthday because this is not the part of the Nepalese culture.

Thus, culturally minority and majority students had the lack of understanding and negotiation over certain cultural issues. Culturally majority students have made their own group and sit together and also culturally minority group have also made their own group and sit together. In the class there was cultural conflict between the cultural groups i.e. in terms of minority and majority groups. Ravi said:

In my class, I have witnessed that Brahman and Chhetri tend to follow universal culture. So, they tend to say and feel that we, all, should follow the same cultural values. Whereas minority culture such as Awadhi, Maithili, Magar, Newar, Gurung etc. tend to be particularism and follow their own particular cultural values, and so they reflect their own uniqueness in their

activities as well, and they adhere their cultural norms strongly despite they belong to the minority culture.

Communicating without Using Language

During communication process, use of non-verbal cues play very important role as in some cases the real meaning can only be understood by decoding the non-verbal cues used by the sender of the message. So, in English classroom, both the parties i.e. the teacher and the students should be aware to use non-verbal categories appropriately. Otherwise, communication tends to be ineffective and unprofessional. It is required to make the receivers to understand the message accurately and also for managing the class more effectively (Muchemwa, 2013).

Non-linguistic Communication in Meaning Construction

Message received through the non-verbal communication is more realistic than the message received through the verbal communication in different contexts. In the class, I also observed the students' non-verbal communication like facial expressions, body languages, tone, etc. to get the realistic information regarding their learning, confident level, psychological mood and so on. Hall (1990) argues, "It is essential that we learn to read the silent communications as easily as the printed and spoken ones." (p. 6). If we do so then we can actually understand the audiences of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and ultimately it makes our communication meaningful. Therefore, it requires to understand mode of non-verbal communication as it allows the audiences to understand the meaning and many other aspects of the speakers. Students' differences in their understanding level could be noticed from their non-verbal communication and in this context Ravi expressed:

It is also clear from their facial expression. For example, when I share the information in the classroom, Brahman and Chhetri students smile and look at

me confidently whereas I see the wrinkles in the middle of the forehead in the Magar, Awadhi, Maithili and Gurung students indicating fear. Their eyes are also open and tensed indicating fear. I also see frown in their faces i.e. wrinkles of the brow to express displeasure and worry.

There was miss-communication due the poor non-verbal communication of the students. Students did not have the understanding regarding the proper use of non-verbal behavior. For example; Hiranman did not show appropriate non-verbal behavior throughout my observation. During his presentation, he was crossing his hands while presenting on the topic. He often kept his hands at the back. He did not maintain eye contact to the audiences. He had very low pitch and voice so that it was very difficult to understand what message he was delivering. His tone and accent of English speaking were greatly influenced by his mother tongue, Newari language. Hiranman's body language was not appropriate. He was frequently managing the sleeves of his shirt. When Pradeep was told to comment on Hiranman's presentation, Pradeep replied he could not understand what Hiranman shared. It was difficult to understand what he actually said due to his low voice, unclear sentences and accent. In fact, he lacked the proficiency in English speaking and categories of non-verbal communication. When teacher asked other students to comment over Hiranman's presentation, they also commented the same. It could be noticed easily that other students or say audiences had felt difficult in understanding the ideas shared by Hiranman due to low voice and his poor speaking ability. As a result, they were not so focused to listen to him.

Minority students were more nervous and less confident than the culturally majority students. During Puspanajli's speaking, it could easily be noticed that there was lack of confidence. Her voice was less audible. There was frequent interruption in her speaking despite the environment was okay. She was feeling shy. During her

speaking, her lack of confident could easily be observed. Her tone was influenced by her mother tongue greatly. Yamkala had the lack of communication competence and she was also feeling shy to speak as the commentator of Puspanajali. Unlike from Yamkala, Kriti commented on Puspanajali's presentation speaking more fluently and confidently. Kriti had maintained the required categories of non-verbal communication in comparison to Puspanajali and Yamkala. On the other hand, this was different in Brahman and Chhetri students. Hema's confident level was okay and her voice was audible, and also her speaking was understandable.

Another Brahman student, Kriti spoke naturally. She properly handled and maintained her confident level, facial expression, body language, eye contact and other non-verbal categories. When some confusion occurred to her, she simply smiled and continued to impart the information to the audiences. Likewise, during her presentation, Babita, a Brahman student, was speaking confidently. She was speaking clearly. Her facial expression and body language were okay. Her mother tongue was Nepali and her English speaking was greatly influenced by her mother tongue in terms of the tone and accent. Similarly, Chhetri students viz. Ganesh and Hema spoke confidently although their English speaking was influenced by his mother tongue Nepali. Over all, Brahman and Chhetri students could maintain nonverbal gestures more appropriately than the Awadhi, Magar and Newar students.

Lack of Appropriate Communication Etiquette

Maintaining appropriate communication etiquette is considered as an essential component for the effective communication. This is also an important behavioral aspect in the communication. Learners were not aware to maintain required communication etiquette during the interaction and classroom participation. In the class, I found Pradeep had the poor communication etiquette. Jamuna was frequently

twirling her hair while she was delivering her presentation. There was problem in the sitting posture of the students also. Mahendra often sat leaning at the back desk which was not usual for the sitting posture for the students in the classroom. Students even did not have the proper practice of maintaining email etiquette. Ravi opened the email sent to him by Jamuna. She had not written the subject in her email. Her language was too informal to address to the teacher.

During the teaching and learning time, students diverted their focus very often to gossiping each other. Students shouted loudly when the electricity was gone.

Likewise, when they were told to applaud the presenters with huge round of applause, they go on clapping their hands for a long time. As a result, teacher had to make them stop clapping their hands. Then the students laughed and stopped clapping.

Occasionally, students napped in the class. In one class, Madhav was napping while teacher was teaching. Gossiping, diverting the attention to other activities, sitting posture, maintaining politeness and proper degree of formality were the problems in the class regarding the communication etiquette.

Students laughed loudly again and again. For example, once, when Hiranman tried to sit on his place even without looking that there was another student sitting in the same place of the bench, other students laughed at him. Teacher had to order them to be silent in the class. Some students were not maintaining good sitting posture. For example, Pradeep was embracing Ramesh while sitting on same bench. When teacher gave suggestions to Shankar to be sincere and serious in study rather than talking and gossiping, he seemed to be angry. Regarding students' behavior, teacher had to frequently remind some students such as Rajan, Pradeep and Amrita to remain silent. But it was not necessary for Puspanajli, Yamkala and Chandreshwar to do so as they

used to remain silent. Comparatively, girls were more sincere to listen and they were more silent than the boys.

Resolving the Issues

The teacher needs to be aware on the ways for handling the issues related to cultural diversities of the learners that affect for the effective teaching and learning (Yang et. al, 2010). Otherwise, it affects in the learners' learning language, communicating effectively and learning development.

Following Own Respecting Others

One of the ways for overcoming the feeling of ethnocentrism and stereotyping is by implementing cultural sharing practices. When students are facilitated to share the information about their mother tongues and culture, values, rituals, ceremonies, etc., they understand each other's culture. It can develop the sense that one's mother tongue and culture are precious for him/her. Ravi expressed:

When students got chance to share about their festivals, they became happy and felt their cultures are respected in the class room. I found this helped them to be closer with each other despite they have diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It helped them to be more participatory and interactive in the class room.

Likewise, it is necessary to develop the objectivity mindset in students so that they can develop the habit of understanding and perceiving the issue from other students' perspective as well. This mindset also helps to understand the situation of keeping one's foot in other's shoes.

In the classroom, students had mostly subjective mindset. As a result, there was the feeling of ethnocentrism and stereotyping. Paradoxically, it was not only in the students who were linguistically and culturally in majority, even this feeling was

in the minority students. Although Hiranman was in minority in the class in terms of the culture and language, he shared his culture in such a way that it could be noticed easily that he had feeling that his culture, language, and his cultural people or group were superior to the other students' language, culture and ethnicity. During his sharing in the class, he insulted the culture of Madhav who belonged to the culture in majority in the class. Madhav belonged to Brahman culture. And, during comment and feedback session, Madhav also raised his query over it.

Different ethnic groups have their own unique cultures and values. Cultures are the identity of the people. So, each culture should be valued in the classroom and it is possible by interaction and sharing each other's culture among the students being teacher as the facilitator (Banks, 2014). I found, when Ravi applied contextualization letting their cultural practices to share in the classroom, it helped them to understand the value of the languages and cultures of the other students as whole decreasing their subjective mindset to some extent. In one hand, using culture as the content in the language can become helpful for the effective communication. On the other hand, it can foster the harmony among the students. Ravi expressed:

Sharing one's culture in the class contributed them to be introduced each other properly; to be closer each other; to maintain religious and cultural tolerance. Before this, students did not have proper understanding and knowledge of cultures of their classmates. And students used to laugh at the culturally minority students when they heard some information about the minority culture by context. But, after doing this, students no matter culturally majority or minority, they felt culture is precious for every community and each member of the community. Their cultural tolerance increased through interaction and sharing.

In this way, cultural sharing helped to increase their cultural tolerance and engaging in the interaction. In addition, the teacher should be very careful while making group of the students, while giving them the topic for the presentation or for the assignment. If the teacher cannot handle appropriately in such situation, students' distance increases and also ethnocentrism increases.

Implementing Diversity Based Practices in the Classroom

In the context of Nepal, there are certain researches are done mostly in the context of multilingual classrooms. Likewise, mostly the studies have been carried out regarding the methods and approaches to be used in teaching English. However, the study of the cultural aspects in communication are not much focused in English language teaching cross-cultural context classrooms (Ali et al., 2015). English language teaching in Nepal should be based on the real life situation of the Nepali context and class room setting taking into consideration of the people's necessity who have diverse linguistic, cultural and socio-economic back grounds.

Cultural argument and conflict prevailed due to their cultural differences in the class as they were not properly familiar with each other's languages and cultures. Ali et al. (2015) claim, "However, the teaching of culture in communication has not been paid due importance in a number of academic and language setting" (p. 1). To settle the issue, it was necessary for the students to negotiate and compromise in the class. Otherwise, teaching and learning process could not be forwarded. Ravi attempted to resolve the conflict in his own way. Ravi said:

When I counsel and suggest them saying it is not good to do so in the presence of the teacher, they negotiate and compromise. But in the class, I have observed the reflection of their feelings of cultural differences, dominating

nature, being dominated and conflict in their faces and through their activities and behavior.

The teacher requires to be conscious for the students' mother tongues and their cultures, and the effect of their mother tongues and cultures in learning and in communication while teaching English in the class. Sriprabha (2015) argues "... if you start learning the local language, you'll find yourself understanding mother tongue influence a lot more, and will be able to correct it far more easily" (p. 299). It is very good point if a teacher is familiar with the students' mother tongues and cultures to make his/her teaching learning activities more effective in the cross-cultural context classrooms.

It is necessary to consider the position of English for the town dwellers and for the people of country side. Position of English for the learners in the city area is mostly as the second language whereas for the learners in rural area is as the third or fourth language (Giri, 2015). This shows it is very important to maintain equity and equality regarding English language education in Nepal.

It is also necessary to apply contrastive analysis to find out the difficulties to learn English as a second language by the students as it examines how students feel difficult in learning certain features of the second language due to the differences between the students' first language, mother tongue and the second language, English (Thyab, 2016). Although there were the students who were learning English as their second or third language, they were not competent in their mother tongues. Ravi expressed:

For example; there are Maithili and Gurung students in my class. They can understand their mother tongues and they can speak as well. But they cannot explain everything in their languages.

During the class observation, I noticed the same. So, they cannot compare English with their language fully. They were not able to have the contrastive analysis. Because of this, they felt difficulties in English learning. Teacher needs to be careful to practice meaningful learning. Teachers and students require to carry out reflective practices. Hall (1959) claims, “We must never assume that we are fully aware of what we communicate to someone else. There exist in the world today tremendous distortions in meaning as men try to communicate with one another” (p. 52). In some cases, there are the situations of over generalization of understanding and communicating.

It is widely accepted that every method is contextual. The certain method considered as the best method by a teacher may not be the best for another teacher. Moreover, all the methods can not fit in all the contexts. Hence, the methods are relational and require to apply contextually. But the effectiveness of the method may vary from one another (Prabhu, 1990). Therefore, Kumaravadivelu (2001) rightly asserts, “All pedagogy, like all politics, is local. To ignore local exigencies is to ignore lived experiences” (p. 539). Similarly, an experienced teacher applies his own signature pedagogy and it can be more effective than other methods which are considered the best one.

Need of Trainings to Enhance Cultural Competence and Pedagogical Proficiency

Regarding my research field, there were the things to be done from the side of the campus administration. There were not conducted any program targeting the students from diverse cultural backgrounds and cross-cultural context classroom. Although, occasionally, training and seminar were held, they were not related to the diverse cultural backgrounds of the students. There was not any policy that particular students from particular culture could be engaged in specify activity.

Classroom environment needed to manage in such a way the culturally minority students do not feel any kind of domination and they completely feel the ownership of the learning environment. Teacher requires to identify the places or situations by conducting classroom researches where cultures affect and impede or create the problems in learning and communication. Students' ethnic culture and mother tongues affect in their learning, pronunciation, personality development, classroom participation and interaction. After identifying their causes of the problems, these students should be brought in the main stream of interaction for the effective communication and learning in the classroom. If we do so, these problems can be minimized or solved and learning English and communicating through English become effective in cross-cultural context. And, they will have less negative effects of their cultures in learning. For this, a teacher has to facilitate his/her teaching in cross-cultural context classroom appropriately being careful towards the issues related to students' mother tongues and cultures. English language teachers still need to be competent regarding the practices of their teaching in cross-cultural context so that they can resolve the issues arises during teaching and learning process in the classrooms.

If teacher is not equipped with physical and technical facilities to facilitate his/her students, he/she can face multiple problems. When there is no language learning lab, the adequate computers and unlimited high speed internet facilities, books, teaching and learning activities lag behind (Bista, 2011). In one hand, teaching and learning activities are challenging jobs in cross-cultural context. On the other hand, lack of resources, proper trainings and encouraging policy of the campus impede for the effective teaching and learning. Ravi and his students shared the similar situations prevailing in the classroom. Ravi shared:

Although I have got some help, institution is not able to provide the help like in the availability of the material, lack of required facilities for the students to make their learning effective. My institution has not conducted any program targeting the students from diverse cultural backgrounds and cross-cultural context classroom. Although, occasionally, training and seminar are held, they are not related to the diverse cultural back grounds of the students. There is no any such policy that particular students from particular culture should do some specify activity.

Ravi did not receive the support as he expected to minimize and overcome these problems. As a result, Ravi mostly used lecture method. Ravi also had developed some of the techniques in course of his own teaching experience and applied them to make his students interactive in the class although the campus did not organize any training concerned with the implementation of any pedagogy in the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Many educational institutions have faced the problems like unskilled and incompetent teachers, lack of professionalism, indifference in the profession and lack of dedication. Similarly, teachers are not facilitated with the necessary equipment and effective trainings. They are not properly inspired in teaching sector. They often lack the motivating factors like self-respect, incentives, etc. (Oyewole, 2017).

Teachers are needed to enhance their proficiency and skills so that they can teach effectively in the class of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Teachers are not still trained enough to understand the classroom setting of the class where the students are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They still lack the communication skills and pedagogical knowledge to facilitate the multi-cultural

classroom. They have not been connected in the cross-cultural network to pave the way for working collaboratively (Jin et al., 2016).

Nepal is a multilingual and multicultural country. Therefore, it is necessary to understand linguistic and cultural aspects of the learners during English language teaching and learning and communicating in the classroom. Teachers are required to overcome from the traditional mindset that every method fits in all classrooms. They need to understand the context of every class based on the learners' linguistic and cultural differences. They require to devise the teaching methods and techniques that benefits in their classrooms rather than applying the borrowed teaching pedagogies (Saud, 2020). Therefore, teachers and the educational institutions are needed to be equipped in such a way so that they can engage them in the research activities to innovate the teaching methods, approaches and pedagogies that best fits in their local context and in their classroom setting.

Trainings for the language teachers still only focus to train either to teach English or Nepali. The agencies which manage the trainings for the language teachers often seem to be ignoring the classroom setting of the multicultural classroom. As a result, local languages are also ignored. It is better to link the syntactic features and semantic features of the minority language such as Maithili, Tharu, etc. with English and Nepali language (Koirala, 2010). In addition to contextualizing in teaching in the multicultural classroom, it is equally important to apply other techniques, methods and approaches that fit in the class. Bista (2011) views, "Advanced program packages with student centered teaching methods, materials, trainings and structural design are recommended to improve existing trend of teaching and learning English in Nepal" (p. 8). In the context of Nepal, training policy organized by the government agencies also seem to have supported the monolingual practices in reality. Pangen (2016) claims,

“Teacher education programs in Nepal have often been criticized for not sufficiently addressing the needs of the diverse country which hosts more than 120 linguistic and cultural groups” (p. 34). Therefore, it is necessary to implement the policy of multi-lingual and multi-culturalism and organize teacher education programs and teacher trainings effectively.

CHAPTER VII
INSIGHTS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, REFLECTIONS AND
CONCLUSIONS

This chapter states the insights, draws the conclusions and mentions the implications of this research work. Insights are inferred by analyzing the data based on the research paradigms, research methodology, adopted theories, and applying inductive and deductive analysis. Insight section of the chapter summarizes the themes and insights that are discussed in Chapter IV, Chapter V and Chapter VI. Likewise, implication section includes how this research findings and insights can be useful for the education practitioners, policy makers, concerned administrators, authorities, and stakeholders. Similarly, limitations and future directions section of the chapter mentions the limitations of this research study and some of the other ways for carrying out this research. In my reflections section of the chapter, I have reflected my experience of research journey, my realization, epiphanies and overall learning. Overall, this chapter summarizes my research endeavors that sprang up in the state of bewilderment and ended in drawing insights and conclusions.

Insights

I observed the multilingual and multicultural classroom where the students were from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and the university lecturer taught in the cross-cultural communication context. The medium of the instruction in the class was English.

Learners preferred to use their mother tongues. When the teacher assigned any group task in the class, they discussed and shared the answer in Nepali. They used English while writing and delivering their presentation in the class. Even during the

presentation in the classroom, some of the learners showed their interest to share the ideas in Nepali. When they were allowed to use Nepali, they felt comfort and became happy. But mostly they were not allowed to use Nepali and also other mother tongues. The study revealed that learners, at first, thought the ideas and answers about the topics or the questions in the minds either in Nepali or in their own mother tongues before they communicated or wrote and spoke in English. Thus, mother tongues affected both intrapersonal and interpersonal communication of the learners.

Mother tongues influenced learners' pronunciation, tone and accent. I envisioned that second language learners' pronunciation, tone and accent cannot become like native speakers of English when they are taught English in the multicultural classrooms by the non-native English teachers. Therefore, it is not good to restrict the learners to use their mother tongues in multicultural classrooms. This research explored that forcing learners to learn through the use of English only cannot enhance meaningful learning in cross-cultural context. Some of the terminologies used in the learners' mother tongues are not in English. Because of this, there is no any other ways except using such terminologies in their own mother tongues although the medium of communication is English. Likewise, use of mother tongues facilitated the learners to understand the concept more clearly rather than teaching merely by using English.

Mother tongues had an important role in meaning construction and in understanding the concept during communication and learning process. Use of mother tongues affected learners' English language learning and communication both positively and negatively. It affected positively to construct the meaning and understand the concept whereas it affected negatively in terms of pronunciation and accent. When the teacher used mother tongues of the learners, weak and slow learners

were benefitted more in learning and communication process than the learners who were forward in learning and intact in study. When the teacher used mother tongues of the learners, it also became easier for him to clarify the meanings and concepts to the learners.

Learners were not aware enough regarding the values of their mother tongues and cultures, and to preserve the uniqueness of their cultures. They lacked adequate knowledge about their own mother tongues and indigenous cultures. Mostly, culturally minority students seemed not to have been aware of the value of their mother tongues and their unique cultures. Learners' use of mother tongues and practice of indigenous cultures in their everyday life was declining gradually. Some of the students from the minority linguistic and cultural group practiced the hybrid culture more instead of practicing their own indigenous cultures. Monolingual practices dominated the classroom teaching and learning whereas it was multilingual and multicultural classroom. Teacher, mostly, engaged in lecture method and mostly used English in the class. Although teacher tried to value all the cultures, his teaching was mostly guided by from the mindset of his own mother tongue and culture. It was necessary to raise the linguistic and cultural awareness in the class.

Minority students did not sufficiently feel the ownership of learning environment in the classroom. Learning process of some of the minority students was impaired because of the linguistic and cultural domination in the classroom. They felt that their mother tongues and cultures had little value in the classroom. Although teacher attempted to create the learning environment for learners in minority, it was not adequate to encourage them to participate in classroom activities and interactions as required. When teacher practiced contextualization through the cultural sharing, code switching and interactive learning, it helped to create ownership of learning

environment in the classroom. He applied the cultural sharing practices occasionally in the class and this encouraged culturally minority students to participate in the group interaction and involve in communication process more actively. Teacher attempted to make his class interactive through peer work, group work, presentation, cultural sharing, etc. However, contextualization in teaching, classroom interactions and classroom communication were not practiced adequately targeting to the linguistically and culturally in minority students, introvert students and slow learners.

Influence of students' home culture could be observed easily in their classroom activities, learning and communication. Culturally minority students had the less participation whereas culturally majority students had the active participation in the classroom activities. Mostly, minority students were silent in the class room. Some of the minority students wanted to escape from their homework and assignments often showing some pretensions. This trend was less in linguistically and culturally in majority learners than in the minority ones. Cultures of the students had the effect in their learning differences. Differences could be noticed in decoding the message, communication skills, understanding level, meaning construction, conceptual clarity, language learning, learning confidence, learning ability, consciousness in learning progress and learning development in the learners. It was because of the effect of their respective home and community cultures in them.

Cultures of the teacher and learners influenced the communication in different ways. During the communication process between teacher and students, misinterpretation and miscommunication occurred. Learners had the misinterpretation and misunderstanding while practicing communication. The problem was in encoding and decoding the message during the communication process. The main reason for this was that both the teacher and the students encoded and decoded message from the

assumptions of their own mother tongues and cultures. Culture caused differences in communication style of the learners. Communication style of the learners from the linguistically and culturally in minority group was direct and less polite. Whereas, communication style of the learners from the linguistically and culturally in majority group was indirect and comparatively more polite. Mostly, in majority learners used the language implicitly and indirectly. When these learners did not know the accurate answers of the questions, at least, they could manage to share some backgrounds or something indirectly related to the questions. Whereas, in minority learners replied the answers directly if they knew the correct answers, otherwise, they remained silent.

Linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds of the learners had the psychological effects in their traits and learning. I explored that the learners had the psychological effects of their home cultures. Their classroom activities were guided by their home and community cultural practices. Mostly, linguistically and culturally in majority students did not have the difficulties to adjust with the classroom environment as it had the dominating influence of their mother tongue and culture. Students wanted to show similar activities as allowed in their cultures. However, minority students faced the difficulties in adjusting in the class. Those students who felt being dominated learnt rather slowly and also they used to be absent in the class occasionally even for the small cause. Linguistic and cultural domination had created the barrier in learning for the minority ones. I explored that cultural backgrounds also affected their behavioral traits. Linguistically and culturally in majority students were mostly extrovert and in minority students were mostly introvert. Learners in majority were more interactive in the class. On the other hand, minority students were mostly introvert and they were less interactive in the class. Classroom interactions and classroom participations were found different in terms of linguistically and culturally

majority and minority students. Learners in minority were not psychologically very strong to interact and participate in the class. When the teacher asked the open questions and looked at the linguistically and culturally in minority students, some of them bowed their heads to be away from the sight of the teacher, classroom interactions and participations.

I explored different issues related to the cross-cultural communication such as ethnocentrism, stereotype, linguistic domination, cultural domination, cultural conflict, cultural inharmony, cultural shock, gender stereotype, lack of cultural negotiation and compromise, lack of awareness of the proper practice of nonverbal communication and communication etiquette, and inadequate knowledge about ones mother tongues and cultures. Learners of one cultural group forced to the learners of another cultural group to follow and implement their cultural values and norms instead of facilitating for the situation of following own cultures and respecting others. Cultural misunderstanding and lack of cultural negotiation among the students prevailed in the class. Learners were not conscious for applying non-verbal communication appropriately in meaning construction. Learners did not apply communication etiquette. Use of too informal words and expressions, gossiping, in appropriate sitting posture, lack of politeness and lack of maintaining formality were very common in the classroom mostly in linguistically and culturally majority students in comparison to minority ones. In addition, teacher faced problems like introvert learners' lack of interest in participating in classroom activities and cultural ego mindset of the learners. Teachers were not facilitated and equipped with the proper trainings to enhance their cultural competence and pedagogical proficiency.

It was helpful to minimize the issues related to cross-cultural communication by developing objective mindset in the learners. Cultural sharing practices were

helpful to minimize ethnocentrism and stereotype. Use of contextualization enhanced cultural tolerance. Diversity based practices and pedagogies can help to enhance meaningful learning and communication in cross-cultural context classrooms.

Implications

The insights from this study can be useful for the education practitioners in different ways. They can get the insights regarding whether their classes are cross-cultural context or not. It can help them to facilitate their teaching carefully if their learners are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It can make them rethink about their pedagogical practices they have used for long. It can inspire them to modify their teaching methods, techniques and approaches. This will certainly help them to think about the alternate pedagogical practices. It will help them to make their teaching learner-centered. It will give the insights that how knowingly or unknowingly teachers and the students reflect controversial behavior in the classroom. They will be able to understand how cultural issue is very sensitive in the classroom. They can envision that how learners' linguistic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds affect in their learning and overall development. Over all, it will be helpful for them to change their perspectives in positive way towards the students' different languages and cultures, and other people's languages and cultures as a whole. This will pave the way for them for playing the role of culture preservers making them objective regarding the language, culture, geography and ethnicity of their learners.

The findings of this research can be useful for the policy makers and the implementers. This will make them rethink once how the education policy related to multilingual and multicultural education is not implemented effectively and confined in the documents only. It will make them feel the necessity of addressing the cross-

cultural communication context classroom. It will envision the policy formulators to give due concern for being careful not to hurt the sentiment of any other language and culture while formulating language and cultural policies. They will understand that policy should clearly make the provision of respecting and protecting all the languages and cultures. Similarly, this can make them rethink over the existing curriculum i.e. they can think of incorporating culture based curriculum.

Likewise, in Nepal, in almost all the educational institutions, students are from varied linguistic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. However, they do not have effective policy and plan to address such linguistically and culturally diverse students. They have mostly practiced monolingual education system. As result, a significant number of students have not been able to come in the main stream of education. These institutions are not aware of such students and they are not equipped to practice their academic activities in cross-cultural communication context. Hence, this research will be beneficial for the concerned authorities and stakeholders of these institutions, at least, by making them conscious about the real setting of the classrooms in their institutions. This can pave the way for them for rethinking in the style of conducting their academic activities.

Limitations and Future Directions

The meanings, themes, findings and insights of this research study are based on the data analysis of the data collected from the observations of a class and the open-ended interviews of a university lecturer. It was a class of a university lecturer teaching Business Communication in English medium to the students of BBA degree. In the class, there were Brahman, Chhetri, Awadhi, Maithili, Magar, Newar and Gurung students. However, the insights of this research are not meant to represent and

generalize the whole community of Brahman or Chhetri or Awadhi or Maithili or Magar or Newar or Gurung.

In this research, the concepts of the terms ‘majority’ and ‘minority’ are not used in political context but these terms are used to refer to the number of the students of the observed class. The Brahman and Chhetri students were large in number in the class, so they are called the majority students. The number of the students from other communities namely Awadhi, Maithili, Magar, Newar, and Gurung was less than the number of the Brahman and Chhetri students, so they are called minority students.

This research study will be helpful for the future ethnographers who are interested to explore the issues and practices related to cross-cultural communication context in English and communication classroom. They can further carry out this research following different layers of study. I have analyzed the data which I collected from open-ended interviews and the class observations. I also analyzed the data I obtained from the students during the interaction in the class. There were 33 students in the classroom. They were from diverse linguistic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. In the class, five teachers were teaching different subjects. This study further can be elaborated observing the classes of remaining four teachers in the same class to obtain different data and elaborate this research study. Likewise, the locale of this research was urban setting. And, this research can be further carried out selecting the research site from a rural setting. Similar study can be conducted selecting the classes where the majority students are from the Awadhi community or Maithili community or Magar community or Gurung community or Newar community and the minority students are from Brahman and Chhetri community.

Moreover, ethnographic studies related to the language and communication are mostly carried out concerned with the teaching methods, teaching pedagogies,

contextualization and multilingual education. However, the practices and the issues of cross-cultural communication in the context of Nepal are less explored. These aspects of this research can be studied more elaborately by the ethnographers. For example; an ethnographer can study the effects of the students' linguistic and cultural background in shaping their personality and behavior. They can study the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the students from the psychological perspectives. I have attempted to link the research themes and insights with the certain aspects of communication theory and sociocultural learning theory. The future researchers can analyze the themes using other aspects of these theories as well. In addition, the data can be analyzed by adopting other theories such as Freud's psychoanalytical theory, Banks' multi-cultural theory, etc.

Reflections on the Research Journey

Bewilderment to Awakening

After I pursued my Master's Degree in English from the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, I began to teach at colleges in Butwal. Meanwhile, I got an opportunity to attend "A 30-Hour Workshop on Academic Writing for University Teachers" organized by Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED) & Regional English Language Office (RELO), U.S. Embassy, Kathmandu, from July 8 to 12, 2019. This workshop paved me the way to join Kathmandu University to pursue my MPhil degree as I came to know about Kathmandu University in the workshop and various academic programs offered in the university.

I commenced my journey of MPhil degree on February, 2020 AD. In one hand, I was so curious to attend the orientation class, and on the other hand, I was in the state of bewilderment regarding whether I could accomplish MPhil degree. I had

heard that MPhil degree is a research oriented degree and more than that pursuing this degree from KU was very challenging. But my mind was empty regarding the research knowledge. I attended the orientation class of MPhil on February 9, 2020. I introduced myself as a novice learner of the research. I came to know about the system to be followed as a student of KU, teaching pedagogy, evaluation system, and ethical issues and rules to be obeyed by the students in Kathmandu University.

After the orientation program was over, I attended my first class in the same day. The first task in the class was to think about the title of the research proposal. I listened to my professor silently but so curiously because I did not have the idea of writing the research proposal. Meanwhile, I recalled the topic that I taught at BBA and MBA classes. It was the chapter of cross-cultural communication. It was in my mind that if the communication is not handled properly in cross-cultural context, there are the chances of occurring the misinterpretation and miscommunication between the sender and the receiver. And, immediately, I remembered my experience of teaching in cross-cultural context and also the classes of Nepal are multilingual and multi-cultural. Moreover, I recalled that my dissertation of Master's degree also related to the cultural studies. In this background, I decided to set the title of my research proposal. Then, I shared my title, "Cross-cultural Communication Practices in English" to my professor. He responded positively saying that this can be a good title for the research proposal in the context of Nepal. He shared some insights and advised me to conduct the ethnography research for this title. This is how I decided the title for the research proposal. However, I was in dilemma thinking that whether I could develop the research proposal and conduct the ethnographic research under this title. Due to the research oriented academic environment and cooperative gurus of KU, I

was inspired to be optimistic for pursuing MPhil degree and carry out this research study.

My perplexity regarding the title of the research proposal increased more when I met one MPhil scholar of third semester in the KU canteen. He told me that it was very challenging job even to defend the proposal in Kathmandu University. He further remarked that most of the students change their proposals 10 times or 15 times before they defend them. When I listened to him saying so, I happened to ask my professor again about my title of the proposal. I asked him whether it was possible to defend the proposal on this topic. He replied your title is good. Do not worry much about this but keep working on it rigorously. You can defend the proposal and viva voce for the dissertation as well but what you need is a rigorous study. Gradually, I could get the sense on what research was, and I found emerging an inquisitive feeling to know about the research knowledge in me. I also got some insights on the way of publishing the research papers and I planned to publish the articles as well.

I found increasing my confident level, and at least, I began to be hopeful that I can defend my proposal. I was perpetually working on the proposal to reshape and to refine further. I underwent incorporating and addressing the comments and feedback in the proposal. Besides, I also began to work out in preparing the research papers. My gurus always inspired me to refine the proposal to defend it as far as possible soon, to write the research papers, to present the research papers in the seminars and conferences, and publish them in the journal.

While pursuing my MPhil degree, I got the exposure to write the research papers and present them in the international seminars and conferences. For this, the MPhil 2020 batch had to organize an international webinar and each MPhil scholar had to present the paper. It was “A Three-Day International Webinar on Current

Research Trends in English Language Education”. In the meantime, I was given the responsibility to manage the webinar. It was a great opportunity for me as I did not have any such experience before. I realized this as a great academic platform for me. I could do it as expected because of cooperative and supportive professors and staff of KU, and also my classmates cum MPhil scholars. I also got chance to play the role of moderator and presented my paper in the webinar. By this time, I felt academic changes occurred in me. Then, I began to engage in writing the research papers and presenting them in the seminars and conferences. In the same way, I could publish the articles in the journals as well.

Likewise, I also got the exposure of the language to be used in academic and research writing. Then, I, myself, began questioning over the language issue of my proposal. I have become able to have the educated guess whether the language is appropriate in the proposals and research papers or not. In addition, I became familiar and was enlightened with the various research issues, research agenda, pedagogies, philosophical issues and theories related to the philosophy of English language teaching and learning, and communicating using English in the global context and in the context of Nepal. In this way, I was facilitated to expand the horizon of my knowledge on research, philosophy, theories, English language and communication throughout all the semesters of MPhil degree.

Pursuit of Accomplishment

Before I defended my proposal, I had contacted at two campuses and lecturers teaching there to select as my research participant and site. I was sure that one of these two campuses would be my research site and one lecturer teaching there would be my research participant. But, later, I found, it was a tough job to find out the suitable research participant and the research site indeed. As ethnographic research

focuses on the observations and open-ended series of interviews, I had to collect the data through the class observations and the interviews. Although the lecturers to whom I contacted were ready to become research participants and for the interviews, they seemed to be reluctant to allow the class observations. However, a university lecturer became ready to cooperate with me for interviews and class observations during the whole research process.

As per the suggestion of my gurus of KU, I selected a class of a university lecturer teaching Business Communication in English in Bachelor's degree. I could convince a university lecturer to become my research participant and allow me to observe his class. It became possible after I met him again and again and I could build rapport with the lecturer, program coordinator and the students. Moreover, I could convince the lecturer because he was teaching in cross-cultural context and he was also interested in it. In addition, he had understood the value of the research. I also convinced the campus chief. I shared my research agenda and purpose of my study with them. Then, I requested to the Head of the Department of Language Education of KUSOED to write me a permission letter to start my field work. I started my field visit after I submitted the permission letter to the campus administration.

I spent two months in the field to collect the data. Sometimes, it was very difficult for me to manage the time because I had to schedule my time as per the schedule of the class of the research participant. Likewise, I was always conscious to catch the time of the participant for the interviews. Moreover, I had to utilize my evening and night time to write the reflection of the field visit. In the meanwhile, I had to allocate enough time for transcribing. I felt transcribing was a tougher job than taking the interview of the participant as I spent several hours and days to transcribe the interview data. More importantly, working out to infer the themes, searching the

related literature, linking with the theories, analyzing the data and writing dissertation were not easy jobs. In course of my field visit and writing the dissertation, I contacted and visited my supervisor several times. I showed my progress of the field visit, reflection writings of the field visit, interview recordings, interview data transcriptions and chapters of the dissertation step by step to my supervisor. I worked out over the dissertation several times incorporating the comments, feedback and suggestions of my dissertation supervisor. As a result of my enduring patience and tireless endeavors, the dissertation has come into this shape.

Now, I feel, academic changes have occurred in me. I do not know how useful as a person I have become. But I am sure, now, I can work as a more informed educator if I get opportunities and conducive environment.

Conclusions

In the context of Nepal, maintaining unity in diversity in real sense among the citizens is the need of today. It is necessary to pave the way for developing the feeling of strong nationality and bond of unity in the citizens of the country. Moreover, it seems to be quite important to consider seriously over the causes for the existing situation of the emerging hate culture in terms of languages, cultures, festivals, rituals, customs, traditions and historical values. At present, it is the dire need of handling to minimize such emerging hate culture. In case, it increases, it weakens the unity in diversity and feeling of nationality in the citizens. Thus, this has been an important phenomenon to consider in the English language and communication teaching classrooms of Nepal. It is because language and culture are interwoven in so many ways and have the deep rooted effect in thinking and doing of the people.

Although Brahman and Chhetri students' mother tongue, Nepali and their culture were dominating mother tongues and cultures of Awadhi, Maithili, Magar,

Newar and Gurung students in the classroom, this situation of domination may vary in other classes and in other localities. It means to say that linguistically and culturally majority people may tend to dominate over the minority people no matter whether they are from Brahman culture and mother tongue, Nepali or they are from other cultures and mother tongues. For example, if, in the class, majority students are of Newari culture or Maithili culture, even these cultural students may dominate to the minority Brahman and Chhetri students as well. Majority of the people of the community where my research field is located are Brahmans and Chhetris. Regarding the ethnicity and the community, it is common to be Brahman and Chhetri students in the majority in the class in the locality of my research site. If we observe the class where mostly Newari or Maithili students study, the situation might be different. My next understanding is that it is also necessary to conduct the negative case analysis in some contexts of the cross-cultural classrooms in terms of cultural and linguistic domination. I explored that ethnocentrism and stereotyping were not only in the majority group. I found these problems in the minority students as well. But the degree of having these problems in the linguistically and culturally majority students was higher than the minority ones. Minority students had these problems due to cultural ego in them. Moreover, some of the minority students also involved in the cultural conflict whereas the general understanding is that these problems are mostly caused by the majority group. It seemed that hidden causes for the cultural conflict in the case of minority students were the cultural domination and feeling of inferiority.

Classroom is a prominent platform for the students to learn new ideas and concepts. It is the main place where students' minds can be shaped, changed and assimilated through sharing and interactions. But, the students do not enter the class with the empty mind. In other words, before they enter the class, they are preoccupied

with different ideas and knowledge about the subjects, languages, customs, traditions and cultures. They have their own values, assumptions, aspirations, interest, needs and life goal. Therefore, it is always good for an English language and communication teacher to play the role of the facilitator for all the students. Mother tongues and cultures of the students affect in their meaningful language learning and effective communication. It can be possible for the meaningful language learning and effective communication when the learners feel the ownership of learning environment in the class. In the cross-cultural context classroom, it is necessary to respect the mother tongues and cultures of the learners. It can be done by contextualization in teaching, practicing cultural sharing activities in the classrooms and creating the environment of engaging the students in interactions and classroom participations. It is always good in the side of the teacher to have the knowledge about more and more mother tongues and cultures of the students. Applying diversity-based practices can enhance meaningful teaching, learning and communication in the cross-cultural communication classrooms. When teacher had the code switching in the classroom by using mother tongue of the students, it had the positive effect in students' learning language and communication. It did not only have the positive effect in learning and communication but it also built the good rapport between the teachers and the students.

There is no any best method that can be taken for granted for effective teaching and learning. It is better to develop teachers' own signature pedagogy that fits as per the context and apply it in English language and communication teaching cross-cultural context classrooms than using the imported teaching methods. In other words, it is not a good idea to stick always over the particular teaching methods and pedagogies. It requires to update knowledge, skills and pedagogies timely. If so, then,

it becomes easier to handle any existing and emerging issues related to language, communication and culture.

When the educational institutions and administrations of the campuses design their internal policies to boost the teachers' morale and self-respect, teachers motivate to become professional and make their teaching effective. Moreover, good coordination among the administrative body, teachers, students, parents and the fair language and culture preserving activists foster meaningful learning and communication and minimizes misunderstandings in terms of languages and cultures in the classroom. And, ultimately, it helps to maintain mutual understanding and harmony among the societal people of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

There is the great hand of the policy makers to facilitate for addressing the issues related to English language teaching, practices of cross-cultural communication in English and effective learning development of the students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is always good to prepare the policies that are relevant in the context of Nepal. At the same time, it is quite important to consider the implementation aspects of the language policy, cultural policy, curriculum and overall education policies when the policy makers formulate and bring forth the policies.

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