

THE PREPAREDNESS OF PRIMARY-LEVEL TEACHERS IN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS FOR ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertations of *Krishna Bahadur Bohora* for the degree *Master of Philosophy in English Language Education* presented on *1 December 2024*, entitled *The Preparedness of Primary-level Teachers in Public Schools for English Medium Instruction*.

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This dissertation investigates the perceptions and preparedness of primary-level public school teachers in Nepal regarding English Medium Instruction (EMI). With the national policy shift towards EMI, this study explores teachers' complexities and challenges in adopting this instructional approach. The research aims to comprehensively understand teachers' perspectives on EMI, focusing on their readiness and the practical implications of implementing EMI in public schools. By exploring the lived experiences of these educators, the study sheds light on the gap between policy directives and classroom realities.

Using a qualitative narrative inquiry methodology, the research gathers detailed personal narratives from primary-level teachers in 2 public schools. These narratives reveal teachers' diverse experiences and challenges, such as language proficiency issues, lack of resources, and inadequate training. The findings indicate that while teachers recognise the potential benefits of EMI for improving students' English proficiency, they also express concerns about their readiness and feasibility of effectively teaching subjects in English.

The study underscores the crucial role of providing comprehensive support and training to teachers for the successful implementation of EMI. It highlights the necessity for a robust policy framework that considers the local context and teachers-existing capabilities. The research proposes that teacher training programs should concentrate on language proficiency and pedagogical strategies tailored to EMI. Moreover, it accentuates the significance of ongoing professional development and

resource allocation in bolstering teachers' confidence and competence in using English as a medium of instruction.

This dissertation significantly contributes to the expanding knowledge of EMI in Nepal and provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders involved in educational reform. The study advocates for a more inclusive and supportive approach to EMI implementation, ensuring that teachers are adequately prepared to face the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities presented by this instructional change. The recommendations are intended to guide future strategies and policies, ultimately fostering a positive transformation in the quality of English-language education in Nepali public schools.

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1 December 2024

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शोध सार

अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर डिग्रीको लागि कृष्ण बहादुर बोहोराको शोध प्रबन्धको शिर्षक "अङ्ग्रेजी माध्यम शिक्षणको निम्ति सार्वजनिक विद्यालयहरूका प्राथमिक तहका शिक्षकहरूको तयारी" १६ मङ्सिर २०८१ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

.....

प्रा. हेमराज काफ्ले, पीएचडी

शोध निर्देशक

यस शोधपत्रले नेपालका प्राथमिक तहमा अध्यापनरत सार्वजनिक विद्यालयका शिक्षकहरूको अंग्रेजी माध्यम शिक्षण (EMI) सम्बन्धी धारणा र तयारी सम्बन्धमा अनुसन्धान गर्दछ। राष्ट्रिय नीति EMI तर्फ मोडिइरहेको परिप्रेक्ष्यमा, यस अध्ययनले शिक्षकहरूले अंग्रेजी माध्यम शिक्षण अपनाउदा आइपर्ने जटिलता र चुनौतीहरूको सम्बन्धमा अनुसन्धान गर्दछ। यसले शिक्षकहरूको EMI सम्बन्धी दृष्टिकोणलाई विस्तृत रूपमा बुझ्ने लक्ष्य राखेको छ, EMI को निम्ति उनीहरूको तयारी र सार्वजनिक विद्यालयहरूमा EMI लागू गर्दा यसबाट पर्ने प्रभावहरूलाई पनि यस अध्ययनले समेटेको छ। शिक्षकहरूको प्रत्यक्ष अनुभवहरूको खोज गर्दै यस अध्ययनले नीति निर्देशन र कक्षाकोठाको वास्तविकता बिचको खाडलको बारेमा प्रकाश पार्छ।

संकथन (Narrative Inquiry) पद्धतिको प्रयोग गरिएको यस शोधपत्रमा २ सार्वजनिक विद्यालयका ४ जना प्राथमिक तहका शिक्षकहरूका विस्तृत व्यक्तिगत अनुभवका कथाहरू सङ्कलन गरिएको छ। यी कथाहरूले शिक्षकहरूको विविध अनुभव र चुनौतीहरू, जस्तै भाषागत समस्याहरू, स्रोतहरूको अभाव र अपर्याप्त तालिमजस्ता विषयलाई समेटेको छ। शिक्षकहरूले विद्यार्थीहरूको अंग्रेजी दक्षता सुधारका निम्ति EMI का सम्भावित फाइदाहरू पहिचान गरेका छन् भने, अन्य विषयहरू अङ्ग्रेजीमा प्रभावकारी रूपमा पढाउने आफ्नो तयारी र सहजताका बारेमा चिन्ता पनि व्यक्त गरेका छन्।

यस अध्ययनले EMI को सफल कार्यान्वयनको लागि शिक्षकहरूलाई व्यापक सहयोग र तालिम प्रदान गर्नुपर्ने कुरालाई जोड दिएको छ। यसले स्थानीय सन्दर्भ र विद्यमान क्षमताहरूलाई विचार गर्ने बलियो नीतिगत ढाँचाको आवश्यकतामाथि प्रकाश पार्छ। यस शोधले EMI लाई केन्द्रमा राखेर शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रमहरू गर्नुपर्ने र तिनको विषयवस्तु भाषागत निपुणता र शैक्षिक रणनीतिहरूमा केन्द्रित हुनुपर्छ भन्ने देखाएको छ। यसबाहेक, यसले अङ्ग्रेजीलाई शिक्षणको माध्यमको रूपमा प्रयोग गर्ने शिक्षकहरूको

आत्मविश्वास र क्षमतालाई बलियो बनाउन निरन्तर पेशागत विकास र स्रोत विनियोजनको महत्त्वलाई जोड दिन्छ।

यस शोधपत्रले नेपालमा EMI को ज्ञान विस्तार गर्ने कार्यमा उल्लेखनीय योगदान पुऱ्याउँछ र शैक्षिक सुधारमा संलग्न नीति निर्माताहरू, शिक्षकहरू र सरोकारवालाहरूका लागि बहुमूल्य अन्तर्दृष्टि प्रदान गर्दछ। यस अध्ययनले EMI कार्यान्वयनको लागि थप समावेशी र सहयोगी दृष्टिकोणको वकालत गर्दछ, फलस्वरूप शिक्षकहरू चुनौतीहरूको सामना गर्न र यस नीतिगत परिवर्तनले प्रस्तुत गर्ने अवसरहरूको फाइदा लिन पर्याप्त रूपमा तयार हुन्छन्। यसका सुझावहरूले भविष्यका रणनीतिहरू र नीतिहरूलाई मार्गदर्शन गर्नुका साथै, यसले नेपालका सार्वजनिक विद्यालयहरूमा अंग्रेजी-भाषा शिक्षाको गुणस्तरमा सकारात्मक रूपान्तरणलाई प्रोत्साहन दिन्छ।

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कृष्ण बहादुर बोहोरा
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

१६ मङ्सिर २०८१

*This Master of Philosophy in English Language Education dissertation
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my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

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DECLARATION

I declare hereby that this dissertation has not been submitted or published as part of any other degree candidacy.

.....

1 December 2024

Krishna Bahadur Bohora

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DEDICATION

To my parents,
whose dream of literacy
for their son-fueled
my journey.

To my wife,
children, and mother-in-law,
whose unwavering support made
this is possible.

To the dedicated Nepali teachers
who inspire me with their
commitment to education and English
medium instruction.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BS	Bikram Sambat (Nepali calendar system)
CBI	Content-Based Instruction
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CSN	Collaborative Schools Network
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMI	English Medium Instruction
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
I.A.	Intermediate of Arts (a pre-university qualification in Nepal)
LiE	Language in Education
LKG	Lower Kindergarten
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Nepal)
SLC	School Leaving Certificate (Nepal's national examination)
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan (Nepal)
UKG	Upper Kindergarten

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The language we use in classrooms is not just about words; it is a bridge connecting teachers and students. It shapes the entire teaching and learning experience. Lately, there has been quite a discussion in the Nepali education system about using English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). There is a growing movement among language experts and educators to place a higher value on the mother tongue. Conversely, the ever-increasing desire for English proficiency has led policymakers to consider making EMI an option in the school curriculum. Our language is being pulled in two directions, with the timeless roots on one side and the undeniable global attraction of English on the other, resembling a tug of war. In this chapter, I lay the foundation for my study by painting the background, offering a glimpse into my journey, outlining the reasons behind my research, posing key research questions, and delving into the challenges and importance that emphasize the significance of this study.

Setting the Scene: Context and Motivation

English has always intrigued me. It was a subject and a whole world waiting to be explored. In the beginning, though, I did not grasp that those English textbooks and classes were meant for learning the language itself. My teacher had this unique way of making it more familiar by translating every English word into Nepali, even the names like “Ram” and “Sita.” We diligently noted these translations, turning our exercise books into a dictionary. “Ram” became “the name of a boy,” and “Sita” became “the name of a girl.” I could not help but wonder how our teacher memorized so much.

Then, everything shifted when my father brought home a radio. That simple device opened a new way to look at my English teacher and the language. “This is Radio Nepal, the news read by ...”¹ the news reader’s bold and enchanting voice would captivate me. I used to sit close to the radio, eagerly tuning in to the news, even though my understanding was limited to just a handful of words like “English,” “the,” and “king.” Unlike my teachers, the newsreader never translated the news into Nepali.

¹ This is how the news reader would begin the English news.

I realized that English was indeed a distinct language, like other languages like Rai and Limbu. This discovery fueled my ambition to become an English newsreader. However, my journey faced challenges. None of my teachers, from primary to secondary school, spoke in the seamless manner of those newsreaders. At the primary level, each word in a sentence was translated, while teachers read a sentence in English in high school and then provided a translation in Nepali. By the end of the SLC examination, my English language proficiency was dismal; I could barely introduce myself in English.

College marked a significant shift for me, as my primary English teacher decided to conduct the entire class in English. Initially, I felt like navigating a foreign land without a map, struggling to comprehend the lessons. It took over six months to truly grasp what he was teaching. To cope with the challenge, I developed a ritual of memorizing sentences from class and practicing them on my way back to my rented room. This routine became my secret weapon for mastering pronunciation and retaining the contents of respective lessons. I gradually overcame the language barrier through dedication and persistence and thrived in my studies.

Following a year of perseverance, my listening, reading, and writing skills had improved sufficiently to comprehend English textbooks, newspapers, and news broadcasts on radio and television. I gained the ability to deliver brief lectures or speeches in English. This experience led me to realize that instructors should use the target language to teach English effectively, facilitating their students' learning process. This led me to conclude that teachers should use target language to teach English, facilitating their students' learning process.

My Learning as a Teacher

After earning my I.A. certificate in 2000 AD, I embarked on my teaching journey with primary-level students in a private school in Urlabari, Morang. Opting for English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI), I taught subjects like Mathematics, Social Studies, and English without uttering a single word of Nepali. However, the outcome of the first terminal examination was disheartening – none of the students I taught had achieved satisfactory marks. Curious about the reasons behind this setback, I approached my students. It turned out that my use of exclusively English, combined with a fast-paced teaching style, left them bewildered. These young learners had not been exposed to English as the medium of instruction before, and my attempt to emulate my college English teacher's accent and pace proved incomprehensible.

Realising the need for a change, I adjusted my teaching method. I started checking their understanding regularly and ensured a more interactive approach. The result was improved exam scores and a noticeable improvement in their fluency. This experience taught me that effective teaching involves adapting to students' needs and understanding, especially when introducing a new language medium.

After completing my bachelor's degree and three years teaching at a primary school, I pursued a master's degree in 2003 and moved to Kathmandu. While studying, I also taught at various private schools. Over 12 years, I taught in different schools in Morang, Kirtipur, and Lalitpur. Through these experiences, I concluded that English Medium Instruction (EMI) significantly enhances students' English proficiency. However, I must admit that my realization was primarily drawn from my teaching experiences in private schools. In these institutions, teachers were selected based on their language proficiency. This raises an important question: What about community schoolteachers? Can they effectively embrace EMI? According to Sah and Li's 2018 research, EMI has proven to be challenging for subject area teachers, posing a burden on their educational practices. This realization prompts a critical reflection on the broader application of EMI, especially in public schools.

My Learning as a Teacher Educator

After spending 12 years teaching, I took on a new role in 2012 by joining a teacher training organization. During this time, I had the opportunity to collaborate with Christine Stone, a trailblazer in teacher training in Nepal. I had the chance to observe and assist her during training sessions held in various locations, including the British Council. What surprised me was Christine's approach to training, especially when working with primary-level teachers. Despite her basic proficiency in Nepali, she chose to use it as the medium of instruction during these sessions. This went against my belief that teachers instructing in English should have a strong command of the language at any level. I found this intriguing because, as an English language teacher educator, I expected her to use English predominantly. However, she seldom used Nepali when training Lower Secondary and Secondary teachers.

Through my observations of the training sessions and actual classes, I discovered that many permanent primary-level teachers struggled with their English proficiency. Their ability to use English in the classroom was limited to essential phrases, such as "good morning/afternoon," "come here," "stand up," "sit down," etc. This realization challenged my assumptions about the prerequisites for effective

English language teaching, prompting me to reconsider the dynamics of language proficiency in the teaching profession. After a few months, I took on the responsibility of training English language teachers as an English Language Teacher Trainer. My journey involved visiting various districts and conducting training sessions for hundreds of teachers, ranging from primary to secondary levels, in both private and public schools.

I began my training sessions with English as the primary medium of communication and instruction. However, I soon realized the need to be flexible. In many cases, especially while working with primary-level teachers, I found allowing Nepali to use code-switching was necessary. Recognizing these teachers' challenges regarding English proficiency, I incorporated a language-learning component into all training sessions. During the first half of the training, I taught English to teachers, and in the second half, I focused on training them to teach the English language effectively. This dual approach proved effective. As a result, teachers gained confidence, and there was a noticeable improvement in their ability to use English Medium Instruction (EMI) while teaching the English language in primary classes. It was gratifying to see the positive impact of this approach on teachers and, ultimately, on the quality of English language education in primary school classrooms.

During a follow-up visit for training, I had the chance to observe lessons and engage in conversations with English language teachers and educators from other subjects. Through these interactions, I discovered that some schools had adopted English Medium Instruction (EMI) for subjects like Science, Math, and Social Studies. It became evident that many teachers struggled with learning English, let alone incorporating it as the medium of instruction. An incident during a visit to Lamjung Secondary School on November 15, 2017, showed these teachers' challenges. The school, situated in the picturesque village of Gaunsahar, offered a breathtaking view of the entire Annapurna Range. I was initially filled with joy in witnessing a teacher implement the knowledge and skills acquired from our training. However, my enthusiasm was short-lived when I encountered another teacher in the staff room.

Despite our past interactions, this teacher was deeply absorbed in a bilingual (English to Nepali) dictionary, flipping through pages and taking notes. His lack of acknowledgement raised my curiosity, prompting me to interrupt and inquire about his activity. Hesitantly, he shared, *"I am looking for the meanings of words in the*

dictionary.” Glancing at his notebook, I quickly realised that the words should not be too challenging for a teacher with a good command of English. He explained, *“I teach Social Studies in the primary grades. The school has decided to adopt English Medium Instruction for Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, and we are compelled to teach these subjects in English. My English, however, is not strong, so I am trying to understand the text.”* Intrigued, I asked if the dictionary was helping him. He shook his head in disagreement, revealing that the school’s enrollment in lower grades was declining due to a new private English Medium School nearby. To counter this, the school leadership implemented EMI to attract students back.

As he continued, it became apparent that the challenge was not only in the decision to adopt EMI but also in the teachers’ ability to teach these subjects effectively in English. Upon scanning the textbook, I noted that it contained high-level vocabulary and sentence structures, making it challenging for a teacher with limited English proficiency to comprehend, let alone convey to their students. The situation underscored the importance of providing adequate support and resources for teachers to navigate the complexities of English Medium Instruction.

After the brief conversation with the teacher, a flurry of questions flooded my mind: “Why are public schools pressuring their teachers to instruct in English when they are not adequately prepared? How do the teachers themselves perceive English Medium Instruction (EMI)?” These questions persisted, prompting me to formulate the research topic: “The Preparedness of Primary Level Teachers in Public Schools for EMI.”

Rationale

The medium of instruction is pivotal in facilitating teacher-student communication within the classroom, serving as the language through which teaching and learning occur. The school chooses this language and uses it primarily during the instructional process. The debate surrounding the medium of instruction has been a longstanding debate in school-level education. However, the National Curriculum Framework and School Level Curriculum of Nepal have addressed this issue, allowing schools to choose Mother Tongue, Local Language, Nepali, or English as the medium of instruction (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology [MoEST], 2019a).

Many public schools in Nepal have been motivated to adopt English as a medium of instruction, primarily to attract students (Khatri, 2016). However, this

abrupt shift, often undertaken without adequate preparation, presents numerous challenges. The lack of assessment of teachers' readiness to transition to English Medium Instruction (EMI) makes its implementation difficult. It raises concerns among parents regarding teachers' knowledge, skills, and proficiency in English (Paudel, 2021). This highlights the importance of careful planning and preparation when introducing changes in the medium of instruction to ensure the successful adaptation of both teachers and students.

Exploring teachers' preparedness to implement English Medium Instruction (EMI) in their classrooms requires an in-depth investigation from a critical constructivist perspective (Bentley, 2003). From this perspective, teachers are seen as lower-level implementers of curriculum and policies and as active participants and contributors to the educational process. This approach adds depth to understanding teachers' challenges and opportunities in adopting EMI. Furthermore, it contributes to the expanding body of knowledge on EMI in the context of Nepal.

Given the focus of this study on primary-level teachers and their readiness to embrace EMI in primary schools, it becomes essential to delve into their perspectives on this matter. By understanding their viewpoints, we can gain valuable insights into the nuances of EMI implementation at the primary level, paving the way for informed strategies and support mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction in these schools.

Statement of Problem

Adopting English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Nepal has become a crucial consideration for public schools, particularly in competing with private schools. In this landscape, English proficiency has emerged as a marker of school quality within the Nepali education system, underscoring the significance of EMI as a form of quality assurance for schools (Poudel & Choi, 2021). Despite the provision for EMI in national policy documents, such as the Education Act and National Curriculum Framework, the implementation of these policies in Nepal appears rushed, lacking proper training and preparation (Karki, 2018). This aligns with my experiences in various public schools across Nepal's districts.

Ojha's findings (2018) echo the observation that introducing English medium instruction in Nepali public schools often occurred without adequate planning and preparation. This phenomenon is not unique to Nepal; similar situations can be observed globally in non-English environments. In many cases, the instructional

quality of teachers with rudimentary and limited language proficiency is compromised, leading to challenges in effective teaching and learning (Altbach & Wit, 2019). This underscores the importance of addressing the implementation of EMI with careful planning, adequate training, and comprehensive preparation to ensure its success and positive impact on educational quality.

Despite the government's launch of English Medium Instruction (EMI), there remains a critical gap in understanding the readiness of teachers who have been in the profession for an extended period. Key questions arise: Are these teachers prepared to adopt the EMI system? Have they received adequate training and guidance from school leadership? What are their perceptions and actual practices regarding EMI? These aspects are yet to be thoroughly explored.

The current research has identified a lack of teachers' preparedness to adopt EMI (Karki, 2018; Ojha, 2018; Altbach & Wit, 2019). However, there is a need to delve deeper into how teachers perceive their preparedness and the implications of policy formulation on their daily teaching practices. Understanding teachers' sentiments, challenges, and experiences in EMI is crucial for developing targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance their effectiveness in delivering quality education within this evolving instructional framework. Therefore, further exploring teachers' perceptions and practices is imperative to inform more nuanced strategies for successful EMI implementation.

Purpose of Research

My research study aims to delve into public school teachers' perspectives regarding English Medium Instruction (EMI) and assess their readiness and preparedness to embrace this instructional approach. Through this exploration, I aim to gain valuable insights into community school teachers' thoughts, challenges, and experiences as they navigate the complexities of EMI. Understanding their perspectives will help them better understand the dynamics surrounding EMI implementation in public schools, thereby informing strategies and interventions to enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction in this educational context.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of public school teachers in adopting EMI?
2. How do teachers narrate their preparedness for adopting EMI?

Significance of study

This study is significant because it explores participants' perceptions and emotions in the context of national and international perspectives and practices of English Medium Instruction (EMI). The research aims to understand the participants' subjective experiences and analyze existing national policies and their implementation status. The findings will provide implications and recommendations valuable for teachers, readers, and implementers involved in the EMI framework.

By offering participants the opportunity to reflect on their past and present experiences with EMI, the research contributes to professional development and self-awareness among teachers. This reflective process enables teachers to analyze their daily work experiences, fostering creativity and critical thinking. The study becomes a platform for teachers to examine their teaching practices within the EMI context critically.

Furthermore, the research adds value to the growing knowledge base of EMI in Nepal. By shedding light on practical challenges, successes, and areas for improvement in EMI implementation, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on language instruction methodologies in Nepali public schools. Ultimately, the insights generated from this research are anticipated to inform policies and practices that can enhance the effectiveness of EMI, benefitting both educators and students in the Nepali educational landscape.

Delimitation of the Study

The research is confined to public schools implementing English Medium Instruction (EMI) for subjects other than English. It does not extend to other types of schools or institutions. The study focuses solely on the English language about EMI. The analysis did not include other subject areas not taught in English. The research is limited to investigating teachers' preparedness and experiences related to EMI. It explores aspects of broader school management, policies, and community involvement.

Structure of the Study

This research journey comprises six chapters, each serving a unique purpose. The opening chapter sets the stage with an exploration of the study's context, its underlying reasons, the problem at hand, the research's purpose, the questions guiding our exploration, the significance of our journey, and the specific boundaries we have set. The second chapter contains a thematic exploration of existing literature, drawing

from theoretical insights and real-world experiences, examining policies, and identifying gaps waiting to be filled. The third chapter unveils the mechanics behind our quest for knowledge. It begins with the research paradigm guiding our approach and then transitions into a detailed discussion of our chosen methodology. This includes the blueprint for my research design, its on-the-ground implementation, and the ethical considerations and quality standards that guide our every step.

Chapters four and five analyze and interpret the gathered data. It shifts focus through intricacies, seeking patterns, and giving voice to the stories embedded in numbers and narrative. The final chapter is a moment of reflection and synthesis. It discusses findings, draws meaningful conclusions from my exploration, and illuminates the pathways leading to broader implications. This concluding chapter marks the end of the journey, but it is also a new beginning, as it shares the insights gained and contemplates the ripple effects of our research on the broader world.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduces a study on teachers' readiness for English as the medium of instruction (EMI) in selected Public Schools in Nepal. The researcher's experiences as a student and teacher highlight the challenges and potential of EMI. The research aims to understand teachers' perspectives and preparedness for EMI, addressing a gap in how this policy is implemented. By examining teachers' experiences, the study hopes to improve the effectiveness of EMI and contribute to knowledge on this topic in Nepal.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines thematic, theoretical, policy, and empirical dimensions within the literature review. Serving as a crucial component of the research, it establishes the foundational framework for the study. According to Cohen et al. (2018), the literature review significantly confers legitimacy and credibility to the research by showcasing the researcher's comprehension of pertinent issues related to theory, concepts, and methodologies. It systematically analyses and synthesizes existing studies in a specific field (Aveyard et al., 2021). This chapter, therefore, represents a meticulous exploration, delving into the existing body of knowledge to form a robust basis for the subsequent stages of research.

The thematic review within this chapter explores the overarching theme of English Medium Instruction (EMI), encompassing its definition, applications, and implications. It is a broad exploration, providing a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Moving to the theoretical review, the focus is on the guiding theory for this study: Critical Constructivism. This theoretical framework unravels the social and political consequences of solidifying and decontextualizing knowledge. It becomes the theoretical lens through which the study is approached, offering a cohesive foundation.

Shifting to the policy review, the chapter systematically examines the national policies governing EMI. This is followed by the empirical review, which meticulously explores and discusses existing research in Nepal and internationally concerning English Medium Instruction. This comprehensive review helps synthesize the collective insights from previous research, facilitating the identification of existing gaps in the literature. This chapter serves as a linchpin, bringing together the thematic, theoretical, policy, and empirical dimensions to construct a robust understanding of the landscape surrounding English Medium Instruction. Additionally, it sets the stage for presenting the conceptual framework that guides the study forward.

English as a Medium of Instruction

This part is the focus of my research. I am curious about the thoughts and emotions of primary school teachers as they embrace English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in primary public schools. In essence, EMI is the central theme of this study. English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) involves facilitating the teaching and learning of academic subjects in schools and tertiary education institutions, mainly where most of the population is non-English speaking (Dearden, 2015). In today's world, English has become essential for various aspects, such as business, travel, education, and industries. There is a significant demand for individuals proficient in English across many industries. Consequently, education systems worldwide, including countries like Nepal, are incorporating English as a compulsory subject at the school level to meet this demand (MoEST, 2019b).

Recognizing the importance of enhancing teachers' professional skills, the government actively invests in teachers' professional development (Asian Development Bank, 2017). Viewing investment in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) as an economic investment for a brighter future reflects a commitment to fostering educational growth (Saud, 2020). Notably, Richards and Pun (2022) have compiled lists of various instructional methods, such as English/ for Specific Purposes (ESP), Content-Based Instruction (CBI), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), EMI, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and Immersion Education, showcasing the widespread interest of individuals, educational institutions, and the government in EMI globally. Despite its roots not being recent, the growing prevalence of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) can be linked back to the Bologna Declaration signed in 1999 (Richards & Pun, 2022). Since then, its expansion has persisted, a trend highlighted by Kuteeva's observations in 2020, underscoring its ongoing evolution as an educational phenomenon.

While EMI has traditionally been associated with tertiary education, it is also gaining popularity at school. The adoption of EMI in secondary education is particularly notable in post-colonial countries. Although Nepal is not classified as such, the significant influence of the Indian education system plays a substantial role in shaping educational practices in the region. The demand for EMI in Nepal is not solely due to the influence of the Indian education system but also to the needs of stakeholders, including parents, industries, job markets, foreign employment, and education (Karki, 2018; Ojha, 2018; Sah & Li, 2018; Sahan, 2021; Sah, 2022b). The

adoption of EMI, especially in low- and middle-income countries, is rooted in the belief that instructing all academic subjects in English from an early stage contributes to developing English language proficiency (Dearden, 2015). Consequently, it is considered fundamental linguistic and cultural capital necessary for individuals to thrive in the global economy (Dearden, 2015).

However, recent research reveals additional complexities. Studies show that EMI policies often neglect the broader ideological and cultural implications. For example, research on EMI policy suggests that studies should collect and analyze data and engage teachers to critically examine the language ideologies embedded in EMI policies (Ghimire & Pandeya, 2020). This engagement fosters critical awareness and allows teachers to understand and challenge the potential negative impacts of EMI on students' learning experiences and identities. Similarly, research into the professional development of teachers in Nepal indicates that teacher training is crucial in equipping educators with the knowledge and skills to address the specific learning needs in EMI classrooms (Ghimire, 2020). Nevertheless, despite this need, many teachers in Nepal lack familiarity with multiliteracies pedagogy, which could significantly enhance their teaching practices in EMI contexts (Ghimire & Pandeya, 2020).

Moreover, the growing adoption of EMI in Nepal has led to complex teacher identities. While teachers are often admired for their proficiency in implementing EMI, many reports feel unsupported due to inadequate training and resources (Ghimire, 2024). Teachers' ability compounds this complexity to resist a strict monolingual EMI ideology by creating translanguaging classroom spaces. By drawing on students' home languages, teachers enable more inclusive participation in classroom activities, counteracting the "English-only" approach to meet students' diverse linguistic needs better (Phyak et al., 2022).

Thus, while EMI implementation is a key factor in educational development, it brings forth a multifaceted set of challenges and opportunities that require careful consideration of teacher development, policy, and students' linguistic realities.

Critical Constructivism Theory

I have used critical constructivism theory to analyze my findings, aiming to delve into the dynamics of teaching and learning in the classroom and focusing on the sociological aspects perceived and experienced by practicing teachers.

Constructivism, as a foundational theory, posits that knowledge is constructed and

emphasizes the relativity of reality. Schubert (1986) notes that constructivism is highly relevant to educators, representing a philosophical branch that underpins educational practices. However, Bentley et al. (2007) point out that constructivism has become stagnant and transformed into an educational goal imposed by politicians and authorities.

In contrast, Critical Constructivism extends beyond the mere construction of knowledge, actively seeking to uncover the social and political implications of solidifying and decontextualizing knowledge (Bentley, 2003). This broader perspective on constructivism emphasizes understanding the nature of knowledge and encourages critical reflection (Bentley et al., 2007). The adoption of Critical Constructivism in this study aims to explore teachers' perspectives on policy formation and implementation, acknowledging them as pivotal actors in the educational field whose needs and viewpoints should be addressed by policies.

Traditionally, policymakers formulate policies and impose on practitioners, sidelining local actors like teachers to the role of implementers rather than active participants in policy creation (Bianco, 2010). The ideological and implementational spaces concept underscores the importance of recognizing "the role of the teacher as policymaker" (Hornberger, 2005). Desautels et al. (1998) argue that critical-constructivist pedagogy, to promote pluralistic epistemological democracy indeed, must involve teachers in various knowledge games, allowing them to voice in the policymaking process. Policies imposed without considering teachers' voices can hinder the realization of pluralistic epistemological democracy, reducing teachers to mere actors who are not actively engaged in the knowledge construction process (Knowles & Lovern, 2015; Jónsdóttir & Gunnarsdóttir, 2017).

In addressing the issue of teachers' preparation, Desautels et al. (1998) emphasize that teacher education and training programs should focus on emancipating teachers' thinking, preparing them not just as implementers and implementers but as active contributors to the educational process. Scholars such as Giroux (2020) argue that empowering teachers through participatory roles in policy discussions fosters ownership and commitment, contributing to the success of educational reforms. Therefore, within the Critical Constructivism framework, this study recognizes the need for teacher education and training programs to focus on emancipating teachers' thinking, preparing them not just as implementers but as active contributors to the transformative educational process (Desautels et al., 1998; Giroux, 2020).

Empirical Review

Teaching subjects other than English in the English medium is called EMI or English Medium Instruction. This practice is observed worldwide, and each country's EMI approach is unique (Dearden, 2015). In Nepal, EMI is embraced as a diverse language experience within Nepali schools (Paudel, 2021). Each educational setting has its terms and expressions for discussing education matters. Various factors influence education quality, with EMI considered a crucial element for achieving quality education in Nepal.

Looking back at Nepal's educational history, there has been a strong inclination towards mother tongue education driven by nationalist sentiments. The report of the National Education Commission (1992) stated that:

The quality of education can be enhanced only by effectively teaching English as a subject, using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction at the primary level, and using Nepali as the medium of instruction at the secondary level and above (p. 219).

In Paudel's exploration in 2021, the perspectives of parents regarding EMI are diverse, with some supporting it and others opposing it. Supporters appreciate the interconnectedness and additional advantages it brings. On the contrary, some argue that giving precedence to the mother tongue is crucial over EMI. This has sparked a nuanced and ongoing debate about whether the focus should be on teaching content or language, and finding a consensus seems not straightforward.

To further clarify the distinction between EMI and English subject courses, Richards and Pun (2022) highlight that English serves as the medium for teaching and learning in the context of EMI. This underscores the centrality of the English language in the instructional process, emphasizing its role beyond being just a subject. Their competence and preparedness heavily influence teachers' confidence in embracing English Medium Instruction (EMI), although it may not necessarily correlate directly with their teaching efficiency. According to Ryan's 2018 research, which involved email interviews with tertiary-level teachers in Asian countries, even those who have completed advanced studies in English-speaking countries find it challenging to simplify complex ideas for their students.

Translating this scenario to teachers in public schools in Nepal, their challenges are even more pronounced. They not only grapple with simplifying content but also face the task of enhancing their and their students' English language

competency. Additionally, English becomes a substantial burden for them due to the increased workload compared to their non-EMI colleagues. This is particularly evident in the initial years of EMI implementation, where challenges related to recruiting staff and students are still being addressed (Ryan, 2018).

Teachers are responsible for improving their language skills through on-site and off-site professional development. However, teachers may struggle to gauge the kind and amount of support they need for their professional growth. A study in Indonesia by Hamied and Lengkanawati (2018) revealed an interesting aspect: while teachers felt confident about their language abilities, they encountered difficulties constructing grammatically correct written English structures. This struggle might be tied to fear of making mistakes or being unaware of their needs.

Improving teachers' English proficiency is paramount for teaching science and enhancing future educators' English language skills (Hamied & Lengkanawati, 2018). Teachers play a crucial role in the success of English Medium Instruction (EMI), but the proficiency levels of teachers and students can pose challenges to achieving desired outcomes. Interestingly, the shortcomings in the English Language Curriculum also contribute significantly to language proficiency issues for both educators and learners.

An intriguing observation is the impact of a weak English Language Curriculum, where teachers' language skills tend to stagnate, hardly progressing beyond the grade they teach. This stagnation is attributed to a tendency to memorize textbooks rather than actively develop language proficiency (Kirkpatrick, 2018). This phenomenon is also relatable in the Nepali context. Adding to this perspective, Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) align with Kirkpatrick's viewpoint and highlight four main challenges in EMI: lack of teacher competence, insufficient English proficiency among students, challenges in pedagogical approaches, and limited availability of resources. Despite these challenges, they acknowledge that EMI has contributed to enhancing the English competence of teachers.

Classroom interaction is crucial in enhancing students' communication competence in language. While students may sometimes appear disinterested, the role of the teacher remains pivotal. A study conducted by Alfahaid (2018) at a Saudi University underscores that teachers' lack of proficiency is a significant factor in students' reluctance or lack of interest in classroom interaction. The challenges in English Medium Instruction (EMI) seem more pronounced than in other linguistic

fields, potentially due to teachers' insufficient English language proficiency (Sahan, 2021). The proficiency of educators plays a central role in creating an engaging and effective learning environment, emphasizing the importance of addressing language proficiency issues among teachers for the success of classroom interactions.

The importance of teacher training becomes increasingly evident in the growing enthusiasm for English Medium Instruction (EMI). In public schools across Nepal, professional support for teachers is provided by a mix of non-governmental organizations, such as the British Council, Teach for Nepal, and OLE Nepal and the government. However, insights from other countries, like Spain, reveal that teachers desire a more robust, global, and comprehensive training and accreditation system (Macaro et al., 1970). An interesting perspective comes from EMI teachers in Italy, as highlighted in Helm and Guarda's study (2015). These teachers expressed concerns not about academic proficiency but deficiencies in their communicative English skills, particularly in spoken fluency and informal communication. This underscores that addressing language skills extends beyond academic proficiency in the EMI context.

However, deciding on the optimal training for EMI poses a challenge for the government. Trainers or facilitators must guide English proficiency and provide insights into methodological competence, as Lasagabaster (2022) suggested. This dual focus on language and teaching methodology highlights the multifaceted nature of practical EMI training. The success of English Medium Instruction (EMI) is significantly shaped by the interests of both teachers and students, but ultimately, policymakers' decisions determine its impact. According to Dearden (2015), policymakers often view EMI as global exposure for students, emphasizing the positive aspects of this instructional approach.

Medium of Instruction is synonymous with Language in Education (Farr & Song, 2011). Language in Education (LiE) policies are guided by two predominant ideologies: nationalism and neoliberalism (Sah, 2022b). Nationalist language ideology tends to favor a single dominant language for the nation, maintaining a monolingual tradition. In contrast, neoliberal language ideology supports LiE policies based on cost-benefit considerations, individual interests, and profit-making aspects (Piller & Cho, 2013). In Nepal, LiE policies incorporate both ideologies, acknowledging the politically acclaimed national language (Nepali) and a commodified international language (Sah, 2021). However, the implementation of EMI has revealed critical issues, as highlighted by Phyak (2013; 2016) and Sah and Li (2018). Challenges

include concerns about access, the quality of education, and the marginalization of groups with less recognized languages, cultures, and knowledge.

An extensive survey conducted by the British Council in collaboration with the Centre for Research and Development in EMI at the University of Oxford's Department of Education examined the status of EMI in 55 countries. The findings, as presented by Dearden (2015), indicated that while EMI is considered highly desirable, its effectiveness is hindered by factors such as a lack of linguistically qualified teachers, insufficient pedagogical support, and inadequate teacher preparedness. Moreover, the provision of EMI was identified as potentially contributing to social division. In Nepal, it is suggested that the implementation of EMI has been rushed, with teachers not adequately prepared to adopt this instructional approach. The perspectives and practices of teachers in policy formation, as well as their level of preparedness and execution, warrant further exploration based on research findings and claims.

Policy Review

The Constitution of Nepal (2015), amended to emphasize the use of the mother tongue in education, declares, "Every Nepalese community residing in Nepal shall have the right to get an education in its mother tongue and, for that purpose, to open and operate schools and educational institutes, per law" (Constitution Assembly Secretariat, 2015). However, this provision does not explicitly reference the adoption of English Medium Instruction (EMI), raising critical questions about the underlying priorities in Nepal's language policy. Ricento and Hornberger's (1996) analogy of language planning and policy resembling the layers of an onion highlights the intricate interplay between actors at national, institutional, and interpersonal levels. While the Constitution grants the right to mother-tongue education, the Supreme Court's decision in 1999 to bar local institutions from using local languages for non-Nepali-speaking communities reflects a top-down imposition that disregards grassroots needs (Limbu, 1999). Such contradictions suggest that national-level policies often privilege dominant languages, sidelining the linguistic rights of marginalized communities (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000).

In Nepal, EMI-related policies have been officially acknowledged in documents such as the Ministry of Education's School Sector Development Plan (2016) and the National Curriculum Framework (2019). For instance, the SSDP outlines a policy to "gradually increase the use of English as the medium of

instruction in secondary education" (MoE, 2016, p. 23). Similarly, the National Curriculum Framework (2019) states that English medium can be used for teaching other subjects except for social studies, moral education, Nepali arts, and culture in basic-level education (MoEST, 2019a, p. 32). While these documents illustrate a shift toward EMI, they fail to address key challenges, including the lack of teacher preparedness and inequitable resource distribution. As Sah (2022a) suggests, EMI in Nepal operates within a framework of multilingual education policies but functions as a transitional model. This transitional nature often exacerbates inequalities, privileging students in urban or elite contexts while marginalizing those in rural areas who lack access to quality EMI education (Tollefson & Tsui, 2003).

The flexibility provided by the education system to choose the medium of instruction—Mother Tongue, Local Language, Nepali, or English—is theoretically aligned with multilingual education principles (Nepal Law Commission, 2010; MoEST, 2019a). However, this flexibility often exists only on paper. Phyak (2016) argues that structural inequalities constrain local actors and lack the resources to implement mother-tongue-based multilingual education effectively. Examining practices in South Asia, including Nepal, India, and Pakistan, Sah (2022a) highlights that EMI policies often lack proper planning and are imposed without adequate consultation with local communities. This aligns with Canagarajah's (2005) observation that EMI, when unplanned, perpetuates linguistic imperialism, privileging English at the expense of local languages.

Despite strong advocacy for the mother tongue, Pradhan (2019) observes low parental motivation, driven by a lack of critical awareness about mother-tongue education's pedagogical and cognitive benefits. Conversely, elite policymakers and bureaucrats favor EMI as a symbol of modernity, reinforcing socio-economic divides. Critical theorists such as Edelman et al. (1992) would argue that this preference reflects the symbolic power of English, which is seen as a social and economic capital marker. Such ideological biases hinder the equitable implementation of mother-tongue-based education, perpetuating inequalities for minoritized students (Phillipson, 1992).

Phyak and Ojha's (2019) historical analysis reveals that Nepal's language policies have consistently prioritized linguistic nationalism, sidelining the country's rich linguistic diversity. While the SSDP anticipated that federalism would empower local governments to emphasize mother-tongue education (MoE, 2016), the reality

has changed. Federalism has not translated into localized decision-making that prioritizes linguistic diversity. Instead, the push for EMI has gained momentum, driven by global economic aspirations rather than local educational needs. As Sah (2022a) critiques, EMI remains a celebrated yet inequitable policy, deepening systemic injustices for students from marginalized linguistic backgrounds.

In conclusion, Nepal's language policy, particularly regarding EMI, reflects a complex interplay of national aspirations and local realities. While the Constitution and policy documents emphasize multilingual education, the practical focus on EMI often undermines these ideals. Future reforms must address structural inequalities by prioritizing teacher training, equitable resource distribution, and active engagement with marginalized communities to ensure that the benefits of education reach all linguistic groups.

Research Gap

The existing body of research in my study area, mainly focusing on English Medium Instruction (EMI) and its impact on public schools in Nepal, has been extensive and thorough. Scholars such as Ojha (2018), Phyak and Ojha (2019), Poudel and Choi (2021), Sah (2021, 2022b), Sah and Karki (2020) and Sah and Li (2018) have delved into various aspects, ranging from the implications of EMI policies to the broader societal stratification and hierarchy it has introduced in Nepali society.

However, despite this comprehensive exploration, a notable research gap exists regarding teachers' stories, experiences, and perspectives on adopting EMI. While previous studies have outlined the potential benefits of EMI, the involvement of practitioners in its implementation remains largely unexplored. There is a lack of in-depth examination of teachers' perspectives, experiences, and challenges in adopting EMI in Nepal. Existing research suggests that teachers often find themselves compelled to adopt EMI without adequate preparation, and their perspective in this scenario has not been documented. This research gap calls for further exploration, utilizing critical constructivist perspectives to understand teachers' challenges and opportunities in EMI implementation in Nepal.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explores the academic groundwork for studying English as the medium of instruction (EMI) in Nepali public schools. It examines the concept of EMI and the theory of Critical Constructivism to understand teachers' experiences

and relevant policies in Nepal. While research explores EMI's impact, a gap exists in understanding teachers' perspectives. This study aims to fill this gap by examining teachers' experiences and preparedness for EMI.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter addresses the philosophical underpinnings of the study, integrating the principles of Critical Constructivism to explore teachers' experiences using English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Nepal. The discussion covers the ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions guiding the study and situates the research within interpretivist and critical paradigms. Methodological considerations are then discussed using a qualitative approach and the narrative method. The research design section details the rationale behind the site and participant selection, explaining the criteria guiding these pivotal decisions. The chapter also explores the intricacies of data collection techniques and processes. It also explicitly outlines the study's ethical considerations and quality standards, underscoring the commitment to maintaining integrity and participant well-being throughout the research process. This chapter is a comprehensive guide, providing a robust framework for the ensuing research journey.

Philosophical Considerations

Philosophical consideration plays a *sine qua non*-role in any research study as it guides people's beliefs and actions. It also guides our research designs and methodology. This section discusses the study's ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions.

Ontology

The ontology of the researcher determines the research paradigm. It is a view of the nature of reality. My paradigm rests on the belief that human knowledge is “conjectural, probabilistic, influenced by the researcher and the theoretical lenses being used” (Cohen et al., 2018). It means there is no absolute truth. Ontology has enabled me to examine the underlying belief system and philosophical assumptions as a researcher about the nature of being, existence and reality (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). My research study is based on the experiences and perceptions of the teachers, and their perceptions and experiences will not be the same. They represent multiple realities.

Epistemology

Epistemology is the amount of information we can learn about the real world and how to obtain that knowledge. It comes from the Greek term *episteme*, which means “knowledge.” My epistemology is subjectively guided by the narrative method, i.e., subjectivist, interactionist, and socially constructed, that recognizes multiple realities. I followed a narrative inquiry that needs subjective experience rather than objective knowledge.

Axiology

Axiology is a study of value. Culture and environment shape value. This study is guided by the participants' experiences, perceptions, views, and values, which differ because of their experience, cultural context, and environment.

Multi-paradigmatic Research

A paradigm is a worldview that guides the research process. According to Willis (2007), “A paradigm is thus a comprehensive belief system, worldview, or framework that guides research and practice in a field” (p.8). Interpretivism and criticalism are my paradigmatic orientations. This study explores the as-is situation of the teachers adopting EMI and tries to find the practical and policy-related difficulties they face.

A concern for the individual characterizes the interpretive paradigm, which is the post-positivist paradigm. Cohen et al. (2018) stated that theories developed in the interpretive paradigm are generally opposed to positivism. As previously discussed, the interpretive paradigm focuses on grasping the personal realities of human experience. The interpretive paradigm allows researchers to develop in-depth local insights into the life-world experiences of teachers and students and the cultures of classrooms, schools, and the communities they are part of (Taylor & Medina, 2011). It demands a longer time in the field to understand the point of view and experience of the research participants.

This research study led me deeper into analyzing the policy and practice; I applied a critical paradigm. According to Taylor and Melina (2011), “In this type of research, writing as inquiry (shared with the interpretive paradigm) has an added critical dimension and becomes a means of critical analysis and ideology critique of established policy and practice. The researcher raises his/her critical consciousness and constructs a moral vision of a better society.” This paradigm led me to explore

deeply the participants' practices. The critical paradigm leads me to explore a deep understanding of the participants' practices.

Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method

This research study is based on narrative inquiry, exploring participants' life experiences. As a qualitative research approach, this study explores the teachers' experience and perceptions, which addresses the complexities of human experience in a classroom and outside of it. Thus, it is human-centered and brings the critical life events of the participants (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Polkinghorne (1995) claims it helps preserve complex human actions and their relationship with time sequence and change in environmental and personal contexts. It is a product of collaboration between the researcher and participating community members that understand and inquire about the participant's experience in a social, spatial, and temporal context.

Therefore, I need to follow the humanistic way to understand the reality of the field and the participants. In my research, I sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the research participants and tried to understand their perspectives on their natural environment. While doing so, I elicited, co-constructed, interpreted and represented participants' accounts of lived and imagined personal experiences (Barkhuizen, 2011). Getting real stories and understandings is possible through narrative inquiry.

Participants Selection

Conducting qualitative research, my study adopts purposive sampling, also called subjective sampling, consistent with Miles et al.'s (2014) observation that qualitative samples are typically purposive rather than random. In this approach, the researcher purposefully selects information-rich participants (Flick, 2018) and can address the research questions. Flick's (2018) three criteria, considering the timing of decision-making, the relationship between sample units, and the underlying goal, guide the selection process in a conceptually driven sequential sampling manner.

In my research, I interviewed four public schoolteachers in Mahalaxmi municipality. I used the purposive sampling technique to select participants: those teaching in public schools and employing English Medium Instruction (EMI) for content subjects. The initial step involved consulting with the school headteachers to acquire insights into instructional policies, followed by obtaining verbal consent from headteachers to interview eligible teachers who met the criteria.

Data Collection Process and Techniques

The study's data comprised my personal life experiences and the narratives, stories, and perspectives shared by the participants. The collection process involved in-depth interviews, during which I took notes, reflected on the discussions, and recorded the interviews. These interviews were semi-structured and open-ended to allow for rich and nuanced participant insights.

Data Analysis

I incorporated three simultaneous streams of activity, following the guidance of Miles et al. (2014): (a) condensing data, (b) displaying data, and (c) drawing/confirming conclusions. Data condensation involves thoughtful selection, focus, simplification, and abstraction of the field data. The subsequent stage, data display, leads to drawing conclusions and acting. The final step involves drawing and verifying conclusions. I adopted the qualitative data analysis method proposed by Creswell (2015). This involves preparing and organizing the data, investigating, and coding it, which includes delving into the overall meaning. This approach ensures a comprehensive analysis of the research data, starting from data collection, transcription, coding, thematization, representation, and interpretation and culminating in validating the findings.

Quality Standards

While narrative dissertations offer rich accounts of lived experiences, ensuring the trustworthiness of their findings requires careful consideration of established quality standards. Clandinin and Huber (2010) state that in narrative inquiry, time, social interaction, and location are key elements that define the scope of study and form the basis of understanding. Sociality refers to how interactions and relationships with others shape narratives. This can be explored through examining how participants position themselves within the stories and how their social contexts influence their experiences (Lieblich et al., 1998). Temporality highlights the importance of considering the sequencing and flow of time within the narratives. Clandinin and Huber (2010) expand on the concept, highlighting narrative inquiry's exploration of temporal shifts, the intrinsic narrative nature of experiences, ongoing autobiographical revisions, and the imperative focus on the temporal aspects of individuals, places, and occurrences. Finally, spatiality acknowledges the role of place and setting in shaping the narratives. This can involve examining how physical locations and social spaces influence the events and interpretations recounted

(Riessman, 2014). By attending to these dimensions, researchers can ensure their narratives are engaging but also well-grounded, insightful, and meaningful to existing knowledge.

In addition to these, I also employed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness criteria. They proposed credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity.

Credibility

Credibility refers to the truth of the data and findings. Credibility makes the data credible, and the readers feel how trustworthy the research is. It validates and establishes confidence in the establishment of confidence in the research findings and interpretations. The following five ways of producing and interpreting data are used: Extended participation, ongoing monitoring, cross-referencing of data and sources, feedback from colleagues, and participant validation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patnaik & Pandey, 2019). I spent a long engagement period with the participants and had the participants check the interview transcripts.

Dependability

Dependability keeps the data constant in similar circumstances (Polit & Beck, 2010; Tobin & Begley, 2004). In this process, another researcher agrees with the decision made during the research. The findings do not vary if the study is done with a similar type of participants in similar conditions (Koch, 2006). Dependability is also a condition where the data remains stable over the conditions and time of the research study (Polit & Beck, 2010).

I kept process logs and peer debriefings with a colleague to maintain dependability. I also kept records and notes of all the activities.

Confirmability

Confirmability is a condition of maintaining a study's findings neutral and consistent. It is like the objectivity criteria in quantitative research (Polit & Beck, 2010). Confirmability can be achieved by keeping elaborate notes of all the decisions and their analysis during the process. Achieving this is also possible through peer debriefings. Confirmability also demonstrates that the data is based on the participant's responses and not the viewpoints of the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2010; Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Transferability

Transferability is another source that helps the study maintain accuracy and trustworthiness. The findings are considered transferable if the readers find them applicable to their contexts. A “thick” description of a wide range of information from the data gathered to perform a transference can be used to accomplish transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patnaik & Pandey, 2019). During my research, I took authentic data and documents, verified them with my experience, and led the participants to self-reflection with sufficient rich descriptions so that the readers could compare his/her social setting of the study from a sociological perspective.

Authenticity

The last criterion, authenticity, relates to how accurately and honestly researchers portray a variety of realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Authenticity is defined as the researcher's ability to accurately convey the participants' feelings and emotions during their experiences (Polit & Beck, 2010). In this descriptive reporting approach, participants' quotes help readers understand the essence of the experience.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined five aspects of authenticity that should be evaluated in a study: fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical. I attempted to accurately present the various perspectives of the participants to ensure fairness and help them understand the intricate nature of EMI policies and practices in Nepal, contributing to ontological authenticity. I respected their viewpoints intentionally (Manning, 1997) while orienting the study towards significance and intentionality to inform educative authenticity.

Ethical Consideration

Quality criteria alone are insufficient for the quality of the knowledge we are producing; we also need to consider ethical concerns. The researchers' adherence to ethical principles keeps them bound to human values and prevents them from abusing the participant data. Miles et al. (2014) have listed the worthiness of the project, competency, informed consent, benefits, cost and reciprocity, harm and risk, honesty and trust, privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, integrity and quality, ownership of data and conclusions, and use and misuse of results as ethical issues. In this study, I have used informed consent, harm and risk, privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity as key ethical considerations, ensuring the research's ethical integrity and your confidence in its findings.

Informed Consent

The participants received sufficient information regarding the study in their language, which made their participation voluntary. I also informed the participants about the study's aim and future use, including what and why of the research (Willis, 2007).

Harm and Risk

Research is not free from harm and risk. It works as a double-edged sword that poses harm and risk to both the researcher and the participants. I made sure to keep this study free from harm and risk by making sure that the questions and data analysis do not blow the participants' self-esteem or "look bad" to others, to threats to one's interests and position (Miles et al., 2014).

Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity

I ensured they did not intrude or come closer to the participants than they wanted during the study to maintain their privacy. Privacy is a basic human need (Caplan, 1982, as cited in Miles et al., 2014). The participant's right not to participate in the study, not to answer questions or be interviewed, and other privacy were considered. Confidentiality makes sure that the privacy of the participants is protected. I have made sure not to share the information with the participants who disclosed their identities and communicated this to the participants at the beginning of the study. Similarly, anonymity is a way of making privacy and confidentiality authentic. I have not disclosed the participants' names, addresses, and occupational details, and I have used pseudonyms (Cohen et al., 2018) to ensure complete and total anonymity.

Chapter Summary

This chapter delves into the research methodology, exploring the philosophical underpinnings that guide the study. It acknowledges the subjective nature of knowledge and the influence of the researcher's perspective. Employing a narrative inquiry approach, the research centered on in-depth interviews to capture teachers' lived experiences with English as the medium of instruction (EMI) in Nepali schools. To ensure rich data, purposive sampling was used to select participants with experience teaching EMI. Ethical considerations like informed consent and participant privacy were paramount throughout the research.

CHAPTER IV

PARTICIPANTS' PORTRAYALS

In this chapter, I have presented the narrative from the research field featuring four individuals: Ms Motivated, Mr Insight, Ms Sunshine, and Ms Serene (pseudonyms). These narratives are based on interviews with these participants; their diverse teaching backgrounds contribute to the rich tapestry of this exploration.

Ms Sunshine takes us on a journey through her teaching experiences, giving us a glimpse into her valuable insights. Then there is Mr Insight, who has taught in different schools for the last 33 years. He shares reflections on his challenges and offers unique perspectives on teaching in English. Ms Sunshine, with her unique teaching journey, unfolds her experiences and perspectives, providing valuable insights. Mr Insight, with an extensive 33-year teaching journey in various schools, shares reflections on his challenges and unique perspectives on English Medium Instruction (EMI). Ms Serene, having 8 years of exposure to English Medium Instruction (EMI), narrates her struggles with language proficiency and expresses her commitment to enhancing teaching methods. Additionally, Ms Motivated, with 3 years of teaching experience, underscores the importance of motivation for teachers to engage in self-initiated learning within the context of EMI.

These stories were unveiled through both live and online interviews. Together, they weave a rich tapestry that reflects these passionate educators' diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Ms Motivated

In this narrative, we delve into the teaching experiences of Ms Motivated, a 29-year-old mathematics teacher at the basic level in Siddhipur, Lalitpur. After a bachelor's degree in mathematics education, Ms Motivated's initial exposure to English Medium Instruction began in grade I, marked by a translation-centric teaching method that she found less conducive to effective language learning. Despite excelling in examinations, the absence of an immersive English environment during her primary education is evident. Transitioning from a private to a public school, she now navigates the challenges of English Medium Instruction (EMI), employing bilingual methods to accommodate students with limited English proficiency. She

advocates for a balanced bilingual approach, highlighting the diminishing value of the Nepali language and emphasizing the importance of teacher motivation and self-initiated learning in preparing for EMI adoption.

Her insights extend to concerns about teachers' readiness for EMI adoption and the diminishing significance of the Nepali language. She underscores the need for teacher involvement in decision-making processes and recommends a standardized teacher appointment system to facilitate effective EMI implementation. Overall, Ms Motivated's narrative provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with English education in Nepalese public schools.

As an esteemed educator, Ms Motivated embarked on her teaching journey in 2078 BS as an Early Childhood Development (ECD) teacher in a private school. She later transitioned into a basic-level mathematics teacher in a public school.

Schooling

Ms Motivated, a 29-year-old mathematics teacher with three years of teaching experience, embarked on her journey in Lamjung, attending Saubhagyodaya Secondary School for primary education. English became compulsory for her in grade one, although the teaching approach was primarily translation-based. Despite this, she excelled in examinations by memorizing grammar rules. Her higher-secondary education in Lalitpur introduced her to mathematics instruction in English. Ms Motivated, now a dedicated teacher at the Basic Level, reflects on her teaching experience, stating, "Teaching for me was a chance to practice my English," emphasizing the importance of self-motivation for language improvement (Benson, 2013).

As an advocate for bilingual education, Ms Motivated shares concerns about the declining value of the Nepali language and emphasizes the need for a balanced approach between English and Nepali in the curriculum. Expressing a nuanced perspective on English Medium Instruction (EMI), she suggests introducing English early and gradually incorporating it once students are proficient in Nepali. Ms Motivated emphasizes the role of motivation in EMI adoption, urging teachers to take self-initiation for language learning. She also highlights the necessity for schools and local governments to involve teachers in decision-making processes, recognizing their valuable input in shaping effective language instruction policies.

Higher Education

Ms Motivated's higher education lacked the vibrancy of her earlier schooling. English learning was not prioritized during her higher secondary education.

Expressing her desire to learn English, she reflects,

I wanted to grasp English, yet the school environment did not foster it. Despite this setback, I thrived in exams by committing grammar rules and answers to memory. Throughout my twelfth grade at the same school, mathematics was instructed in English during the higher secondary level, albeit more out of obligation than encouragement from the teachers.

Despite the English-medium instruction, it felt more obligatory than motivating from the teachers' perspective. Nonetheless, she completed a Bachelor of Education in Mathematics.

Initiation into Teaching

Embarking on her teaching journey, Ms Motivated has navigated through various roles, initially covering all subjects at the primary level before specializing in Mathematics. Fondly recalling her experiences teaching grades 1-3, she shared, "I ventured into initiating English Medium Instruction (EMI) for grades 4 and 5." This interview section delves into the challenges encountered during the introduction of EMI, the gradual integration of English into her teaching methods, and the ensuing impact on student comprehension. Ms Motivated's teaching initiation reflects her adaptability and dedication to enhancing educational experiences for her students.

Exposure to English Medium Instruction (EMI)

Ms Motivated's initial exposure to English Medium Instruction (EMI) occurred during her education and later as a teacher. She shared her journey with English Medium Instruction (EMI) as a student and a teacher. Growing up in a village school where Nepali was the medium of instruction, she encountered English as a compulsory subject from grade one. Reflecting on her English learning experience, she stated, "I wanted to learn English, but the school did not give me that environment." Despite this, she managed to excel in exams by memorizing grammar rules and answers. Transitioning to higher secondary education, where math was taught in English, she found the English medium more compulsory than motivational.

As a teacher, her EMI experience is twofold. Initially teaching in a private school, she struggled with spoken English but improved through student interactions.

Transitioning to a public school where EMI was adopted, she found herself using bilingual methods due to the limited English proficiency of the students. During the interview, she said,

My initial teaching experience at a private school was challenging. Although proficient in writing and listening, my spoken English skills were lacking. However, interacting with my students enabled me to improve. Subsequently, I transitioned to a public school as a Mathematics teacher. Despite the school adopting English-medium instruction (EMI), primary and lower secondary students struggled to comprehend English. This required me to incorporate bilingual teaching methods to ensure all students could comprehend the material effectively.

She believes that while EMI should be a focus in public schools, it should not overshadow the importance of the mother tongue and Nepali language. Sujata advocates a balanced approach to language education, emphasizing bilingualism over monolingualism.

Mr Insight

Mr Insight, an experienced teacher with 33 years of teaching experience, is currently engaged as a primary school science teacher in Lubhu. During his parents' stay abroad, his educational journey commenced in Guwahati, India. Completing both primary and secondary education in Guwahati, where the medium of instruction was English, provided Mr Insight with a unique linguistic experience, given the diverse languages spoken in his family and school environment. His teaching journey began in Rupandehi, Basgadhi, eventually leading him to Bhairahawa, where he spent three decades in a secondary school. Despite linguistic challenges in the early days, Mr Insight's proficiency in English led him to teach the language and navigate the complexities of connecting with students who primarily spoke Tharu and Maithili.

Schooling

During Mr Insight's primary education, his parents resided in India. He completed both his primary and secondary education in Guwahati, India. Unlike his peers, he was exposed to an English-medium education during his primary years. Reflecting on his linguistic journey, he remarks, "At home, my family spoke Nepali while our neighbors conversed in Assamese. Meanwhile, we communicated in Hindi and English in school, providing me with a distinctive multilingual experience."

Initiation into Teaching

Beginning a teaching journey over three decades, Mr Insight encountered initial challenges with Nepali dialects and vocabulary in an environment predominantly dominated by Tharu and Maithili languages. Recounting his experiences, he stated,

I began my career as a primary-level teacher in Rupandehi, Bansgadhi. Eventually, I managed to secure a transfer to a nearby school in Bhairahawa, where I taught at a secondary level for approximately 30 years. Upon my children's completion of secondary education, we relocated to Kathmandu, and I accompanied them. Presently, I am a permanent resident of Hattiban, Lalitpur. Building a strong connection with the students took a considerable time.

Coming straight from a multilingual environment (English, Hindi, Assamese and Nepali) in Guwahati, he yet again embarked on his career in another multilingual community. Starting his teaching journey in Rupandehi, Basgadhi, Mr Insight faced the challenge of adapting to a new linguistic landscape dominated by Tharu and Maithili dialects. In Mr Insight's rich and varied experiences, from overcoming schooling challenges to navigating diverse linguistic landscapes in teaching, his journey is a testament to resilience, commitment, and a nuanced understanding of language education.

Exposure to English Medium Instruction (EMI)

Mr Insight's experience with English Medium Instruction (EMI) is unique. Quite contrary to other participants, he was exposed to EMI early. He shared his experience,

I finished my primary schooling in a village school where English was the medium of instruction, but other languages were employed to aid our understanding. After completing fifth grade, I transitioned to a central school. I should have entered sixth grade but was placed in fourth grade due to my English proficiency. As the language of instruction shifted entirely to English, comprehending the material became challenging. I relied on listening attentively and attempted to grasp the content independently.

For Mr Insight, navigating the English medium proved challenging, as he encountered difficulties understanding the curriculum. Unfortunately, there were no support classes available to assist with English comprehension. His experience as a teacher provides valuable insights into the challenges of introducing English teaching in his school. The decision, driven by the emergence of private schools and a desire to prevent a merger due to declining enrollment, lasted five years. However, the lack of proficiency among students and teachers in both English and Nepali led to the discontinuation of EMI. Mr Insight emphasized, *“The newly appointed teachers are prepared to adopt EMI, but the old teachers are not yet ready. It will take another decade to get it successfully run.”* This quote underscores the hurdles in teacher readiness, particularly for older educators, and suggests strategies for effective EMI implementation.

Mr Insight’s rich and varied experiences, from overcoming schooling challenges to navigating diverse linguistic landscapes in teaching and grappling with the complexities of EMI, stand as a testament to resilience, commitment, and a nuanced understanding of language education.

Ms Sunshine

Ms Sunshine, an accomplished educator with over a decade of teaching experience, specializes in imparting mathematics to primary and lower secondary students. Embarking on her teaching journey in 2063 as an Early Childhood Development (ECD) teacher in Rautahat, Ms Sunshine transitioned into a primary teacher specializing in English. Over time, because of an abundance of English language teachers in her school, she discovered her passion for teaching mathematics. As she unfolds her journey, the interview explores her experiences as a student, the inspiration behind her pursuit of English language teaching, and her subsequent shift to teaching other subjects, primarily mathematics.

Schooling

Ms Sunshine’s educational odyssey took her from Chandra Nigahapur for primary education to various schools for secondary education, with Nepali as the medium of instruction. Despite her early introduction to the English alphabet in grade four, she encountered challenges in English language learning, with notable improvements occurring later in her academic life. Reflecting on her student days, she underscores the impact of dedicated teachers and her evolving relationship with the

English language. Ms Sunshine reflected on her schooling experience, sharing, “I completed my primary education in Chandra Nigahapur and went to different schools for secondary schools. The medium of instruction was Nepali.” This glimpse into her early education highlights the prevalence of Nepali as the medium of instruction, setting the stage for her later observations and experiences as a teacher.

Higher Education

Fueled by outstanding performance in English and inspired by the impactful teachings of Mr Mahesh Bhattarai during her grade 12 studies, Ms Motivated shares, “I pursued my academic journey with a specific emphasis on majoring in English within higher education.” While she initially aspired to become a newsreader or musician, her passion gradually shifted towards teaching. Reflecting on this shift, she adds,

Initially, I did not consider becoming a teacher. As mentioned, I aspired to become a newsreader or pursue a music career. However, influenced by my brother's encouragement and the esteem associated with teaching, I eventually decided to follow in his footsteps. Moreover, my admiration of my students and inspiration from my teachers further solidified my decision to embrace teaching.

This segment unveils Ms Motivated's transformative journey from a dedicated student to an accomplished educator. Her academic pursuits and commitment to the teaching profession have seamlessly woven into the fabric of her identity, shaping her into the motivated and passionate teacher she is today.

Initiation into Teaching

Ms Sunshine's teaching experience encompasses roles as a primary-level teacher, where she initially taught all subjects and eventually focused solely on mathematics. Her teaching journey reflects her dedication to the profession and fondness for teaching grades 1-3. She recounts her experiences initiating English Medium Instruction (EMI) for grades 4 and 5, facing initial challenges with student understanding, and gradually incorporating more English into her teaching methods. Ms Sunshine shared her unexpected entry into the teaching profession, stating, “I was waiting for my SLC result, and the chairperson of this school called me to teach computers.” This quote captures the unplanned nature of her teaching initiation and the circumstances that led her to embark on a teaching career.

Exposure to English Medium Instruction (EMI)

Ms Sunshine's exposure to English was like any other public school student. She was introduced to English in grade four. She recalled her experience,

My experience with learning English was far from pleasant. It all began in grade four when I was introduced to the English alphabet. Despite being one of the better-performing students in my class, a significant setback occurred when a new teacher arrived during my third-grade year. He assigned us to read aloud the story of 'Rapunzel,' and to my dismay, I struggled with it like many of my peers. Feeling disheartened, I confided in my elder brother at home, who reassured me that he would talk to the headteacher. He spoke to the headteacher about the issue. This gave me confidence.

Her English proficiency remained low until ninth and tenth grades when a college teacher took on the task of instruction. While there was some improvement, it was not significant. Reflecting on her education, she recognizes that most English lessons were conducted in Nepali. She believes her proficiency might have been higher if she had the same opportunities as present-day students. However, she had to manage additional responsibilities before and after school, further challenging her academic progress.

Ms Sunshine's journey as a teacher reflects a blend of challenges and commitment to enhancing education, particularly in English medium instruction (EMI). Initially trained for early childhood development (ECD) classes, she transitioned to teaching all subjects in grades 1-3, a period she fondly remembers. Her passion for teaching blossomed, solidifying her decision to pursue this profession. Venturing into teaching grades 4 and 5 in English posed hurdles as students struggled to grasp the language. Resorting to translating words into Nepali initially, she gradually integrated more English into her lessons. However, she found the theoretical approach of Nepal's education policy impractical, observing stark disparities between public and boarding school students' English proficiency.

Despite skepticism from the school administration, Ms Sunshine persisted, initiating extra classes and employing innovative teaching methods like gestures and simple English phrases to aid comprehension. However, she emphasizes the importance of allowing students to learn in their native language, advocating for a balanced approach amidst the government's three-language policy. Reflecting on why schools adopt EMI, she identifies ignorance, the global prominence of English, and

societal pressures as contributing factors. While acknowledging the value of English proficiency, she cautions against neglecting the native language in pursuit of English fluency. Ms Sunshine's experience highlights the complex dynamics of EMI implementation, underscoring the need for thoughtful pedagogical strategies and a holistic approach to language education.

She emphasizes the need for a practical approach, arguing for policies that consider the diverse contexts of schools, particularly those running for a limited duration because of climate conditions. Ms Sunshine suggests regular teacher training, underscoring the importance of bridging the gap between policy and on-the-ground realities. Her insights provide valuable perspectives on the complexities of EMI adoption in public schools. Reflecting on her extensive experience with English Medium Instruction (EMI), Ms Sunshine remarked, “In the beginning, I taught grades 4 and 5 in English medium, but when I tried teaching in English, my students did not understand.” This quote unveils her initial challenges in implementing EMI and sets the stage for her insights into language policies and their practical implications.

Ms Serene

Ms Serene, a dedicated primary school teacher passionate about fostering effective education, was born in Lamatar in 2043 BS. Her educational journey began at Chetana Bidhyashram, a now-closed English-medium school in Lubhu, Lalitpur. Ms Serene, who completed her SLC in 2030 BS, shares her experiences and challenges during her schooling, shedding light on the impact of English-medium instruction (EMI) on her language proficiency.

Schooling

Her alma mater, an English medium school, presented an intriguing paradox. While the school's medium was English, most teachers predominantly used Nepali. This linguistic duality affected Ms Serene's desire to master English, leaving her yearning for more immersive language learning experiences. Despite facing challenges, she excelled in her SLC exam and proceeded to narrate her experiences post-schooling. Reflecting on her primary and secondary schooling, Ms Serene shared,

It was an English-medium school, but the teachers mostly used the Nepali language. The English teacher would use two languages. The teachers would use English and translate it into Nepali. No English was speaking and

listening activities, just reading and writing. I strongly desired to learn English, but I never got that opportunity.

This experience highlights the gap between the intended English medium instruction and teaching practices.

Higher Education

Ms Serene, having completed her higher education in Arts faculty with a focus on Nepali literature, shares insights into her academic journey. Hindered by circumstances, she could not pursue her dream of studying English literature. Despite this limitation, she exhibited resilience by opting for Nepali literature and continuing her education in the arts Faculty. Describing the impact of language choices in her schooling, Ms Serene stated,

We studied in Nepali and wrote assignments in English, which was challenging. I wished for more English instruction, but not entirely, as it would have been hard to understand. This affected my communicative English and teaching style, impacting my students' English proficiency.

This underscores the challenges students face when the medium of instruction diverges from their language proficiency, affecting both learning and communication skills.

Initiation into Teaching

Her teaching career, initiated while awaiting SLC results, led her to instruct various subjects, focusing predominantly on English, Mathematics, and Science. Ms Motivated's Initiation into Teaching unfolded in the dynamic environment of a primary school where she grappled with language challenges, striving to impart knowledge effectively. Her experiences in the classroom reflect the evolving landscape of education, marked by changing methodologies and the ongoing quest for effective language instruction. Recalling her entry into teaching during her youth, Ms motivated expressed,

While awaiting my SLC results, the school chairperson asked me to teach Computers. My family suggested I meet him, and he offered me a nursery teaching position. At 16 or 17, I was shocked but accepted. I was uninterested in teaching, but my parents encouraged me to try.

This highlights the unexpected start of her teaching career, showing how people may take unconventional paths in their professions.

Exposure to English Medium Instruction (EMI)

Ms Serene's English Medium Instruction (EMI) exposure shaped her teaching practices. Initially teaching English with a blend of Nepali, she gradually navigated towards incorporating more English in her lessons. However, challenges persisted, and she emphasized the need for flexibility in EMI implementation, considering students' diverse linguistic backgrounds and teachers' readiness. Ms Motivated's English Medium Instruction (EMI) exposure shaped her teaching practices. She reflected on her journey, stating,

I followed my teachers' methods, using Nepali to teach English. It took time to develop my methods. I struggled with pronunciation and phonics, only realizing after years of teaching that I lacked knowledge. My teachers were my models.

This encapsulates her evolving approach, showcasing a proactive effort to increase the use of English in the classroom.

Chapter Summary

This chapter examines the perspectives and experiences of four educators as they navigated English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Nepali public schools, shedding light on the research questions regarding teachers' perceptions and preparedness for EMI. Ms Motivated, a young math teacher, emphasizes the challenges faced by students and advocates for a balanced bilingual approach. Mr Insight, an experienced teacher, shares his struggles and successes teaching English in a multilingual environment. Ms Sunshine, passionate about math, reflects on her unplanned teaching career and the difficulties of implementing EMI. Ms Serene describes the gap between the intended use of English and the reality of Nepali-dominant classrooms. Their unique perspectives paint a nuanced picture of EMI in Nepal, highlighting the need for teacher training, flexible approaches to accommodate student backgrounds and the ongoing pursuit of effective language instruction.

CHAPTER V

PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EMI

This chapter delves into the intricate landscape of English Medium Instruction (EMI), specifically focusing on the “Perceptions and Experiences of EMI” within the context of primary education. The study explores the perspectives and encounters of teachers who teach math and science in public schools, offering valuable insights into the dynamic realm of implementing EMI at the primary level. This chapter seeks to uncover the multifaceted dimensions that shape how educators perceive and navigate the challenges and successes associated with EMI. This chapter also examines their encounters with EMI thus far, assessing their readiness for English as a medium of instruction. The study further explores the significance of well-grounded policy formulation in shaping the EMI landscape, delving into teachers' difficulties when instructing non-language disciplines. Furthermore, it investigates strategies for enhancing teachers’ agency in EMI, acknowledging their pivotal role in shaping effective language education practices. By incorporating these dimensions, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse facets influencing the experiences and perceptions of English Language teachers in EMI at the primary level.

EMI Encounters and Experiences

Ms Sunshine reflects on her educational journey and teaching experiences, emphasizing the importance of English proficiency in her teaching practice. She notes the absence of an immersive English environment during her primary education, a concern echoed in studies such as Wolfe and Cummins (1987), which emphasize the need for linguistic immersion for effective language acquisition.

She advocates for a balanced bilingual approach, expressing concerns about the diminishing value of the Nepali language. In her words,

The value of the Nepali language is decreasing due to ignorance, schools adopting EMI for student retention, parents' preference for English, and the misconception that English alone ensures success. Loving English is not wrong, but we should not neglect our language.

Her concerns about the diminishing value of the Nepali language align with research by Baker (2011), who discusses the potential erosion of indigenous languages in the face of EMI adoption.

Reflecting on her higher education, Ms Sunshine shares, *“I started my academic path with a focus on an English major.”* Her initial career aspirations shifted towards teaching, supported by her brother’s recognition of its respectability. Embarking on her teaching journey, she recalls covering all subjects at the primary level before specializing in mathematics. Fondly reminiscing about her experiences teaching grades 1-3, she states, *“I undertook the task of initiating English Medium Instruction (EMI) for grades 4 and 5.”* This showcases her adaptability and dedication to enhancing educational experiences. Her focus on an English major in higher education aligns with the findings of Yim and Norton (2001), who highlight the academic and professional advantages associated with proficiency in the global lingua franca. Her journey into EMI at the primary level reflects the adaptability and dedication observed in educators implementing language instruction reforms, as discussed by Bialystok (2001). Discussing her exposure to EMI, Ms Motivated highlights,

I joined a public school as a math teacher. The current school has adopted EMI, but the primary and lower secondary (basic level) students do not understand English. Therefore, wherever necessary, I must use a bilingual approach, i.e., Nepali and English.

Her unique perspective, having experienced EMI from both sides of the classroom, provides nuanced insights into the challenges and dynamics of incorporating this language instruction approach in public schools. This resonates with Lin's (2015) findings on the complexities of EMI implementation in diverse educational settings.

Mr Insight’s EMI encounter reflects a unique and challenging journey, echoing the broader challenges documented in research on implementing EMI in diverse contexts (Phillipson, 1992). The discontinuation of the EMI venture after five years aligns with studies highlighting the potential pitfalls and challenges associated with abrupt language policy changes in educational institutions (Macaro, 2009).

Mr Insight shares his experience with bilingual teaching,
During my early teaching years, many of our students started going to newly opened private schools. After a session, we realized that the students were

neither good at English nor Nepali. The dual-language struggle affected students and teachers, revealing a gap in proficiency and readiness for English instruction.

Addressing the outcomes of the EMI experiment, Mr Insight notes, “It was good for those smart students; they could improve their English, but most of the students did not learn English.” The intended retention of students from wealthier backgrounds was not fully realized. However, it proved beneficial for economically disadvantaged children who were spared the need to attend private schools for English education.

Ms Motivated's early education took place in a public school in Lamjung, where Nepali was the language of instruction. English was made a required subject for her starting in first grade. She reminisced about her time in school,

All other subjects were taught in Nepali. The teachers at the Primary level mostly used translation methods, which was not beneficial. I did not bother to learn English since the teacher translated in Nepali. I wanted to learn English, but the school did not provide that environment.

Ms Motivated's transition to teaching in English presented formidable challenges. She recalls, *"Starting from a private school, my English was not good enough. Though adept in writing and listening, verbal communication posed difficulties. Teaching became my English practice ground."* This immersion shaped her teaching style, emphasizing bilingual methods to accommodate students' comprehension gaps. Her shift to a public school, where English Medium Instruction (EMI) was adopted, further intensified the linguistic complexity. "Students in primary and lower-secondary levels struggled with English comprehension," she remarked. Navigating this landscape, she employed bilingual strategies, recognizing the necessity of bridging linguistic divides. Her journey underscores the multifaceted nature of teaching in English within Nepali educational contexts, emphasizing the importance of adaptive pedagogy and linguistic inclusivity.

Ms Serene's journey into English-medium instruction (EMI) began during her primary and secondary education at Chetana Bidhyashram in Lubhu, Lalitpur. Despite being in an English-medium school, the teaching approach was largely Nepali-based. She longed for a more immersive English learning experience, stating, “I wished my teachers taught me in English, *at least more English than Nepali.*”

Reflecting on her struggles, Ms Serene highlighted the impact of this approach on her English proficiency: “My communicative English is not good now because of this. This also affected my teaching; I followed the same teaching style, and my students’ English is not that good now.” Her struggles in English proficiency, echoed in her students, align with concerns raised by scholars such as Skehan (1998) regarding the impact of language teaching methods on communicative abilities. Her entry into teaching came unexpectedly when she was invited to teach computer science after completing her SLC. Initially, she taught in the nursery class, but later, she took on teaching English in some grades. However, she admitted to the challenge of finding her teaching methods, especially in pronunciation and phonics.

As she expanded her teaching repertoire to include subjects like Mathematics and Science in English Medium, Ms Serene struggled to balance English instruction with students’ comprehension levels: *“I used Nepali and still use Nepali because the students do not understand. I had no idea how to teach these subjects in English. It was self-preparation.”* Acknowledging the lack of school support for language preparation, she emphasized the importance of choosing the medium of instruction. Ms Serene recommended that schools assess students’ and teachers’ readiness for EMI, hire subject-specific teachers, and provide adequate preparation time.

Expressing disappointment with the limited impact of training programs, she accentuated the need for practical policy development through extensive discussions with teachers and schools. Ms Serene advocated for a nuanced understanding of the ground reality, emphasizing that policies should consider the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students, such as Tamang students who may not even know Nepali.

Readiness for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)

Ms Motivated’s journey as a mathematics teacher, navigating the challenges of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), reflects her resilience and commitment to professional growth (Cummins, 1995). She candidly shares, despite initially struggling with spoken English, *“My spoken English was not that good. I was good at writing and listening but struggled to speak a lot. Honestly, I learned to speak English from my students.”* This openness about her linguistic development positions Ms Motivated as an educator willing to learn and adapt. When asked about her readiness to teach in English, she provides a broader perspective, stating, *“I do not think all the teachers are ready to adopt EMI.”* This acknowledgment, coupled with her emphasis

on the importance of teacher motivation, suggests that Ms Motivated sees teaching in English as a collective challenge that requires a proactive and determined approach.

The narrative of Ms Motivated underscores the significance of ongoing professional development. Her experience with training programs, which focused more on the subject than EMI, highlights a potential gap that could be addressed to better prepare teachers for English-medium instruction (Bialystok, 2001). Her call for motivation and conviction among teachers, rather than mere training, further emphasizes the need for a self-driven commitment to language proficiency.

Mr Insight, a seasoned mathematics teacher with over 33 years of experience, shares a comprehensive perspective on his readiness for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in the primary school setting. His journey begins with a unique educational background, having completed his primary and secondary education in Guwahati, India, where the medium of instruction was English. Despite his family speaking Nepali at home, Mr Insight faced challenges adapting to the English medium, especially when he joined a center school where all subjects were taught in English. He recalls reflecting on his early teaching experiences, “I found English medium quite difficult. I had to struggle to understand the content. There were no English support classes.”

Mr Insight's teaching experience extends across multiple locations, and he notes the challenges of linguistic diversity, where his Nepali dialect posed difficulties for students. He shares, “*They used to make fun of me... People used to make fun of me and say how such a person who says ‘Basta.²’ to a backpack’ and ‘rasta³’ to ‘a road’.*” This reflects the linguistic intricacies he navigated, emphasizing the importance of effective communication in teaching. Regarding his experience with EMI, Mr Insight recounts a unique initiative in his early teaching years where his school transitioned to English instruction to prevent a decline in student enrollment. However, this experiment was short-lived because of the lack of readiness among both students and teachers. He candidly states, “*The teachers also were not ready to teach in English; their proficiency in English was also not that good. This continued for 5 years, and we stopped it.*”

Mr Insight observes a generational gap when discussing teacher preparedness for EMI, stating, “*The newly appointed teachers are prepared to adopt EMI, but the*

² Basta is a Hindi word meaning “backpack.”

³ Rasta is a Hindi word meaning “road.”

old teachers are not yet ready. It will take another decade to get it successfully run.”

He highlights the contrasting readiness between rural and urban teachers, attributing the urban teachers' better preparation to training programs and local hires who are proficient in English. Mr Insight acknowledges the support from the organization Collaborative Schools Network (CSN) in planning and teaching at his current school. However, he identifies a crucial gap in subject-specific training for teachers, especially for technical subjects like math and science. He suggests that schools should hire subject-specific teachers to alleviate the challenges of understanding both content and language simultaneously.

In terms of the government's three-language policy⁴, Mr Insight expresses optimism but recognizes the current challenges. He believes a fresh batch of dedicated teachers and effective regulation is essential for successful EMI implementation. He also highlights the reluctance of teachers to choose math and science because of EMI, contributing to a shortage of qualified educators in these subjects (Tedick & Cammarata, 2012). Providing insights into the role of local governments, Mr Insight indicates a significant issue where schools receive permission for upgrades but lack the necessary teacher support. He suggests that local governments should actively involve teachers in policymaking to ensure cooperative implementation.

Ms Sunshine brings a wealth of teaching experience to her primary and lower secondary math teacher role, spanning over a decade. Although her primary focus is mathematics, her English language teaching background has significantly shaped her educational journey. Ms Sunshine began her teaching career in 2063 BS, starting with an ECD class in Rautahat. Over the years, she transitioned through various teaching roles, securing a permanent position as a primary teacher specializing in English in 2071 BS. Despite her primary subject being mathematics, Ms Sunshine's English language expertise plays a pivotal role in her teaching approach (Shohamy, 2001).

Reflecting on her student years, Ms Sunshine's English language learning was not without challenges. A turning point occurred when a new teacher introduced the English alphabet in grade four, improving her English skills. Despite facing difficulties, her passion for the language persisted, leading her to pursue an education major with English as her focus (Norton, 2000).

⁴ Mother tongue, Nepali and English

Ms Sunshine's journey into teaching English was ignited by her aspiration to become a newsreader and the profound impact of her grade 12 English teacher, Mahesh Bhattarai. Reflecting on her transition, she recalls,

While I did not initially see myself as a teacher, encouragement from my brother and the perceived respect associated with the profession, along with witnessing Mr Bhattarai's inspiring teaching methods, gradually led me to embrace the role wholeheartedly.

Initially, teaching various subjects in English posed hurdles, with students grappling to understand. Undeterred, Ms Sunshine's commitment to innovation spurred her to introduce extra classes, gradually integrating English in a manner that resonated with her students. She emphasizes the importance of allowing students to learn in their familiar language, expressing reservations about the practicality of the three-language policy (Awuor, 2019).

Discussing the adoption of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Ms Sunshine attributes it to factors such as ignorance, the global prominence of the English language, and the perceived benefits of student retention. However, she advocates for a balanced approach, cautioning against neglecting the mother tongue. Ms Sunshine acknowledges the drawbacks of EMI, noting a decline in students' proficiency in both languages and inadequate English proficiency among teachers. She calls for regular training and emphasizes the need for policies to consider different regions' diverse contexts, suggesting a bottom-up approach to policy formation.

Ms Serene provides valuable insights into her readiness for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) through a detailed interview. When she was 36, her journey into teaching and experiences with English language education unfolded as she shared her story. Ms Serene's schooling occurred at a private institution in Lubhu, Lalitpur, called Chetana Bidhyashram, where she completed her SLC in 2030 BS. Despite attending an English medium school, she recounts that the teachers primarily used Nepali, with English being translated rather than spoken. She strongly desires to learn English, emphasizing the lack of speaking and listening activities during her school years, which impacted her language proficiency.

Reflecting on her schooling challenges, Ms Serene reveals the difficulties she faced studying in Nepal and writing assignments in English. This linguistic duality affected her communicative English skills, and she describes her current proficiency

as ‘broken English.’ Her regret is evident as she states, “If my teachers taught me well, I could give this interview in English.”

Ms Serene’s entry into teaching was unplanned. Awaiting her SLC results, she was offered a teaching position in computers at the same school. Initially shocked, she joined to pass the time, but her teaching journey expanded over the years. Despite her early interest in studying English literature, teaching responsibilities steered her toward studying Nepali literature at a nearby college. Teaching various subjects, including English, brought its own set of challenges. Ms Serene admits to initially emulating her teachers’ methods, using Nepali to teach English. Over time, she struggled with pronunciation and phonics, realizing that her teachers had been her models and her understanding was lacking.

Regarding teaching other content subjects in the English medium, particularly Mathematics and Science, Ms Serene faced hurdles because of her language limitations. She candidly confesses that her English medium usage was symbolic, relying on Nepali for effective communication. Despite self-preparation and assistance from colleagues, the school’s support was limited. Ms Serene suggests that schools should assess students’ and teachers’ readiness for EMI, emphasizing the need for choice when selecting the medium of instruction. She proposes admission tests for English proficiency, hiring subject-specific teachers, language preparation classes, and adequate preparation time for both schools and teachers. Her critique extends to training programs: *"Even the training did not help much; it only improved our technique, not our language."*

On the role of mother tongue in early grades, Ms Serene favors introducing English from the early years. However, she emphasizes that schools should not force teachers to use only English and should be well-prepared, cautioning against adopting EMI only for appearances. In addressing the role of local government, Ms Serene advocates providing trainers and model classes to bridge the gap between policymakers and practitioners. She emphasizes the importance of policy development through extensive discussions with teachers and schools, grounded in the reality of diverse student backgrounds. Ms Serene’s narrative paints a vivid picture of a dedicated teacher navigating the complexities of English medium instruction, grappling with personal language challenges, and advocating for thoughtful policies that consider the practical realities of classrooms and diverse student populations.

Significance of Well-Grounded Policy Formulation

Ms Motivated acknowledges the importance of EMI in public schools but emphasizes the need to balance it with preserving the Nepali language and mother tongues (Cummins, 2017; Baker, 2011). She underscores the pivotal role of language exposure at home and in schools, echoing findings that stress the influence of a linguistic environment on language acquisition (Snow & Genesee, 1989).

While English Medium Instruction (EMI) should remain a primary focus in public schools, we must not forget the importance of preserving our mother tongue and Nepali language. As a member of the Newar community, I experienced the significance of language exposure.

Expressing concerns about the declining value of the Nepali language, Ms Motivated suggests introducing English as a subject early in education, which corresponds with the studies advocating for bilingual education (Collier & Thomas, 2004). She emphasizes the importance of bilingual education and expresses sadness when Nepali children lose proficiency in their native language because of an overemphasis on English. “I feel sad when the Nepali children do not know Nepali and forget their language.”

Ms Motivated is candid about the readiness of teachers to adopt EMI, highlighting the necessity for motivation rather than just training. She suggests that teacher motivation is pivotal and can be achieved through self-initiation for learning English. She notes the current lack of focus on EMI in teacher training programs. *“None of the training I have attended to date focuses on EMI. They are rather concentrated on teaching subjects.”*

Advocating for teacher involvement in policymaking, Ms Motivated underscores the importance of consulting teachers to understand their needs and challenges better. She believes schools, local government, and central policymakers should collaborate with teachers to formulate effective policies. This aligns with the broader literature on participatory policy formulation, emphasizing collaboration between policymakers and practitioners (Fullan, 2015). “If only the schools, local government and the central policymakers consult with the teachers, they would be in a better position to support teachers in fulfilling the goal of the curriculum.”

Ms Motivated recommends motivating teachers through self-initiation and authentic audio materials for exposure to the English language. Additionally, she stresses the need for schools to provide sufficient time for teachers to adapt to EMI

and calls for a more consultative approach (Ball, 2008) in policy formulation. Her recommendation to use authentic audio materials for exposure to the English language corresponds with research promoting using authentic materials for language learning (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Richards & Rodgers, 2015). “The teachers should be motivated to take self-initiation for learning English. The teachers should use authentic audio materials to get exposure to the authentic language.”

Growing up in Guwahati, Mr Insight completed his primary and secondary education in an English-medium school with additional language subjects, like Assamese and Hindi. His teaching journey began in Rupandehi and later continued in Bhairahawa, where his proficiency in English led to a role as an English teacher. Despite initial challenges bridging linguistic gaps with students, he witnessed their success in English examinations.

Reflecting on an attempt to introduce EMI in response to student migration to private schools, Mr Insight acknowledged the difficulties. The initiative, initiated to prevent the merging of the school due to declining enrollment, was discontinued after five years because of students struggling with proficiency in both English and Nepali. Research in language education supports Mr Insight’s observations. Studies like Cummins (2000) emphasize the importance of considering students’ linguistic proficiency in both their native language and the language of instruction, highlighting potential challenges for implementing EMI successfully.

While he recognizes that newly appointed teachers are more prepared for EMI, Mr Insight underscores that older teachers, especially in villages, face challenges in adapting. His suggestion to hire locally trained, English-proficient teachers aligns with research by Pacheco and Hamann (2012), who argue for the importance of contextualized teacher training programs to enhance language proficiency and instructional effectiveness. Despite organizational support, Mr Insight noted that inadequate training hampers the effective teaching of technical subjects like math and science in English. This resonates with findings from research by Baker and Wright (2021), emphasizing the need for specialized training programs for teachers involved in EMI, especially in subjects with complex technical vocabulary.

Expressing optimism about the government’s three-language policy (Mother, Nepali and English), Mr Insight acknowledged the indispensability of EMI, given the current lack of viable alternatives. However, his concerns about the aging generation of teachers nearing retirement and lacking English proficiency echo sentiments

discussed in studies such as Clement and Murugavel (2015), highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address language proficiency gaps among educators. He shares,

I hold an optimistic view on this matter. There are no viable alternatives to English Medium Instruction (EMI). Cultivating a new cohort of proficient English teachers may take a decade, thereby reducing obstacles. However, challenges persist as some educators lack English proficiency due to their impending retirement, while others prioritize political involvement over professional growth. Government intervention is necessary to address these issues and cultivate a team of dedicated teachers. Additionally, EMI adoption has deterred some teachers from choosing Math and Science subjects, impacting workforce availability.

In proposing practical solutions for effective EMI implementation, including hiring local English-proficient teachers, running dual-language sections, and linking EMI adoption to government scholarships. His emphasis on teachers' involvement in policymaking also resonates with literature advocating for collaborative decision-making processes in education policy (Ball, 2012).

Ms Sunshine began her teaching journey in 2063 BS, starting with young kids in Early Childhood Development (ECD) and later moving to primary education, focusing on teaching English. Despite her background in English, she now teaches mathematics. This shift from language to numbers gives her a unique perspective on the challenges of using English as the medium of instruction. Coyle (2007) has delved into the difficulties and advantages of switching languages in education, explaining various aspects of teaching diverse subjects. Ms Sunshine's own experiences echo these scholarly insights, offering a deep understanding of the complexities involved in changing the language of instruction in education.

Ms Sunshine's early experiences as a student shed light on the gaps in the English language learning system. She describes her hopes for improvement, "I had to put in extra hours before and after school. If I had the opportunities students have today, my education would have taken a different path." Fueled by her deep love for the English language, Ms Sunshine chose a career in education, influenced by inspiring teachers and a sincere dedication to sharing knowledge. Initially uncertain about teaching, her perspective changed as she felt the respect associated with the profession and received encouraging support from her family.

Scholarly works by Cummins (2001) and Krashen (1982) explore the challenges students face in language learning environments. Cummins (2001) stresses the significance of supportive conditions and access to resources for language acquisition, echoing Ms Sunshine's belief in the transformative impact of improved educational opportunities. Krashen's insights on the affective filter hypothesis align with Ms Sunshine's journey, emphasizing the role of motivation and emotions in language learning success. These scholarly viewpoints add depth to Ms Sunshine's story, connecting it to broader themes in education.

As a primary-level teacher, Ms Sunshine initially taught all subjects, and her positive experiences teaching in grades 1-3 fueled her passion for education. However, her attempt to teach grades 4 and 5 in the English medium faced challenges. She acknowledges the theoretical nature of Nepal's EMI policy, emphasizing the disparity between public and boarding schools: "The same grade-level students in boarding schools can read and write in English, but the students from public schools cannot read and speak at all."

In terms of policy recommendations, Ms Sunshine emphasizes the need for regular training, stating,

The policy must transcend paper documents. Inadequate research precedes curriculum drafting. Centralized policies often falter in remote regions due to diverse contextual nuances. Consider schools operating six months yearly due to climatic factors; uniform policies lack applicability. Policy formulation should stem from grassroots input, with implementors consulted extensively for pragmatic execution.

She highlights the importance of considering diverse contexts in policy formulation and advocates for a bottom-up approach, where implementors are actively consulted to make policies practical.

Ms Serene, a primary school teacher with a rich academic background, shares her experiences and perspectives on the English Medium Instruction (EMI) policy in Nepal. Her insights shed light on the challenges faced by both teachers and students and underscore the need for well-grounded policy formulation. Ms Serene's early education at a private English medium school in Lubhu, Lalitpur, was characterized by a disparity between the school's designation and the actual teaching methods. Although the school claimed to be an English medium, teachers primarily used

Nepali, impacting her English language proficiency. She expresses her longing for a more immersive English learning experience, stating,

We studied in Nepali but wrote our assignments in English, which posed challenges. I wished for more English instruction, albeit not exclusively, to avoid comprehension difficulties. As a result, my communicative English suffers, impacting both my teaching and my students' proficiency. I comprehend English but struggle to respond fluently, resorting to what's termed 'broken English.' With proper English instruction from teachers, I'd confidently conduct this interview in English.

Transitioning into teaching, Ms Serene initially joined as a computer teacher. However, her teaching journey took a turn when she was asked to teach in nursery class at a young age. Despite the challenges, she embarked on a teaching career that influenced her subsequent educational choices. She acknowledges the impact of her teaching style on her students' language skills, reflecting on her “broken English” and the difficulties she faces in producing sentences.

While teaching English and other subjects, Ms Serene encountered obstacles in implementing EMI. She confesses to using Nepali as a crutch, and the lack of training and support from the school exacerbated the situation. She points out, “I could not teach these subjects totally in English. I think the English medium was just for name's sake.” Ms Serene advocates for more flexibility in selecting the medium of instruction, emphasizing the importance of assessing students' readiness and hiring subject-specific teachers. She highlights the necessity for teachers to have language preparation classes and a structured preparation period for schools shifting to EMI.

Expressing disappointment at the ineffectiveness of current training programs, Ms Serene emphasizes the need for the municipality and schools to allow sufficient time for the transition. She critiques the gap between policymakers and practitioners, suggesting that policymakers engage in extensive discussions with teachers and schools to understand ground realities. In Ms Serene's view, the EMI policy should not be a one-size-fits-all approach. She calls for a nuanced understanding of diverse student backgrounds, citing the example of Tamang students who may not even know Nepali, let alone English.

Difficulties in Instructing Non-Language Disciplines

Ms Motivated shared her experiences and perceptions regarding instructing non-language disciplines in English as a medium of instruction (EMI). Having

completed her Bachelor of Education in Mathematics, she initially taught in a private school where her English proficiency was challenged. Later, she joined a public school where EMI was adopted, but primary and lower secondary level students struggled to understand English, leading her to use bilingual methods. Ms Motivated expressed her belief that, while EMI should be a focus, the importance of mother tongue and Nepali language should not be overlooked. She emphasized, “The education should be bilingual rather than monolingual.” Dearden (2015) holds similar thoughts on the need for bilingual strategies to aid comprehension. Concerned about the diminishing value of the Nepali language, she argued for a balance between Nepali and English language education.

Regarding the introduction of EMI, Ms Motivated suggested starting English early but focusing on Nepali initially. She highlighted the lack of readiness among teachers to adopt EMI, emphasizing the need for motivation and self-initiative. She expressed disappointment in the current training programs, stating,

None of the training I have attended has focused on English Medium Instruction (EMI), primarily centered on teaching the subject matter. Instead of just training, teachers need to be motivated and convinced of the benefits. When self-motivated, teachers are more likely to try to improve their English skills. Schools should allow sufficient time for teachers to prepare, and local governments should provide essential guidance on teaching in another language. Schools should discuss the changes with their teachers, assess their needs, and gradually implement them.

She believed teachers should be involved in decision-making and consulted for better support. When asked about the support from schools and local governments, Ms Motivated accentuated the importance of involving teachers in policymaking and valuing their opinions. She suggested that locally hired teachers appointed by municipalities were more likely to adopt EMI because of their motivations. She called for a more unified and legalized process for teacher appointments:

The leader of my school encourages discussion, but in most schools, teachers' voices are not heard. They are neither involved in policymaking nor consulted. If schools, local governments, and central policymakers would consult with teachers, they could better support them in achieving curriculum goals. Seeing teachers protesting in the streets saddens me because their opinions are not valued. Teachers should be interviewed and surveyed regularly. There are

various ways of appointing teachers, which I believe should be standardized. For instance, I am appointed by the municipality, some by the schools themselves, and others by the education service commission. Ideally, the Education Service Commission should appoint all teachers or the appointments made by other entities should be officially recognized. Locally hired teachers are often more adaptable to EMI, and many are hired specifically for this reason.

Regarding EMI implementation, Ms Motivated recommended motivating teachers to self-initiate learning, use authentic audio materials, and provide sufficient time for preparation. Dhungana (2022) discusses the significance of self-directed, self-motivated, and self-initiated professional development in policy implementation. In conclusion, she highlighted the need for collaboration between schools, local governments, and central policymakers to better support teachers and successfully implement EMI. Having completed his primary and secondary education in Guwahati, where English was the medium of instruction, Mr Insight described his early exposure to English but highlighted the difficulties he faced in comprehending the language, stating, “I found English medium quite difficult; I had to struggle to understand the content.”

Transitioning into teaching, Mr Insight initially faced language barriers, as his Nepali was not well-received by the students. Despite his proficiency in English, he encountered challenges connecting with students who predominantly spoke Tharu and Maithili. Reflecting on his experience, he shared,

I found teaching initially challenging. My Nepali was not strong, and my language was difficult for the students to understand. Although I spoke Nepali, my dialect and vocabulary were hard for them to follow. Since my English was good, the school requested that I teach English instead.

Regarding EMI, Mr Insight’s experience included a unique attempt to introduce English instruction in his school in 2055 BS to prevent merging due to declining enrollment. However, this initiative was short-lived, lasting only five years. He noted, “After a session, we realized that the students were neither good in English nor Nepali. The teachers were also not ready to teach in English.” Despite efforts, the goal of retaining students was not fully achieved, particularly among the wealthier students.

Mr Insight emphasized the disparity in readiness among teachers to adopt EMI, stating, “The newly appointed teachers are prepared to adopt EMI, but the old teachers are not yet ready.” He highlighted the importance of subject-specific teachers to ease the burden of understanding content and language simultaneously. He recommended a strategic approach: *“The schools can also run two sections, one in English and another in Nepali.”* Regarding the government’s three-language policy, Mr Insight expressed optimism, acknowledging the absence of alternatives to EMI but raising concerns about the current teacher demographics. He indicated the reluctance of some teachers, especially in math and science, to embrace EMI because of their apprehensions and lack of interest in professional development.

In terms of local government support, Mr Insight highlighted the need for a more comprehensive approach. He stated, *“The local governments give permission to upgrade and start a new school, but they do not provide teachers.”* His suggestions included involving teachers in policymaking to ensure effective implementation and minimize dissatisfaction. Kirkpatrick (2014) also highlighted the role of local governments and institutions in providing adequate support and resources for the successful implementation of EMI in his article.

Ms Sunshine shared her journey, highlighting both positive and challenging aspects. Starting her teaching career in ECD in 2063, she transitioned to primary and lower-secondary levels, specializing in English. Despite her English background, she found teaching in English initially challenging, stating, *“In the beginning, I taught grades 4 and 5 in English medium, but when I tried teaching in English, my students did not understand.”* To bridge the gap, she resorted to bilingual methods, using Nepali to explain complex concepts.

Ms Sunshine emphasized the theoretical nature of Nepal’s language policy, noting, *“The same grade-level students in boarding schools can read and write in English, but the students from public schools cannot read and speak at all.”* She expressed concern about the three-language policy, asserting, *“Even the students in grades nine and ten do not know basic English. How can they teach in an English medium?”* She advocated for teaching students the language they understand and criticized the premature adoption of EMI without adequate preparation. Reflecting on why schools adopted EMI, Ms Sunshine identified ignorance, the international importance of English, parental aspirations, and a misconception that English

proficiency is everything. However, she warned against neglecting the mother tongue, emphasizing its role in facilitating language learning.

Ms Sunshine discussed the disadvantages of EMI, noting that students become poor in both languages, especially those without prior exposure to English. She pinpointed inadequate English proficiency among teachers as a significant hurdle, advocating for regular training. She remarked,

The policy should not exist only on paper. Insufficient studies have been conducted before drafting the curriculum. Policies designed centrally do not work in remote areas, as the context varies significantly. For example, some schools operate only for six months due to climate conditions. How can the same policies apply to these schools and those that run year-round? Policy formation should be bottom-up, with proper consultation from the implementers to ensure the policies are practical.

Regarding solutions, Ms Sunshine called for context-specific policies, bottom-up policymaking, and proper consultation with implementors. Her insights underscored the need for a practical EMI approach grounded in the realities of diverse educational contexts.

Ms Serene, a primary school teacher with an unrecorded duration of English Medium Instruction (EMI) experience, shared her educational journey and teaching experiences. Born in Lamatar in 2043 BS, she attended a private English medium school, Chetana Bidhyashram, in Lubhu, Lalitpur. However, her EMI experience was marred by a lack of English speaking and listening activities, leading to gaps in her communicative English skills. She expressed regret, stating,

My communicative English is not good, which has also affected my teaching. I followed the same teaching style, and now my students' English is not very strong either. I can understand others when they speak English, but I struggle to reply in English. I wish our teachers had taught us proper English. I must think a lot before constructing any sentences, and my English now is what we call 'broken English.' If my teachers had taught me well, I could give this interview in English.

Ms Serene commenced her teaching career at a young age, initially teaching computers to nursery students after awaiting her SLC results. She acknowledged the impact of her teaching style on students' English proficiency, emphasizing the need for improved English instruction. Transitioning to teaching English in primary grades,

she encountered difficulties in pronunciation and phonics, relying on self-preparation and colleague assistance.

Teaching non-language subjects such as Mathematics and Science in English proved challenging to Ms Serene. Despite the school's expectation of English Medium instruction for all subjects, she confessed to using Nepali because of students' limited understanding. Reflecting on the school's lack of support, she noted, "The colleagues helped me, but the school did not help." Regarding support from schools and local governments, Ms Serene advocated for a more flexible approach, allowing teachers to choose the medium of instruction based on students' readiness. She emphasized the importance of assessing students' English backgrounds and hiring subject-specific teachers. Ms Serene highlighted the gap between policymakers and practitioners, suggesting that policies should be developed through extensive discussions with teachers and schools, considering the ground reality.

In addressing the challenges of EMI, Ms Serene proposed a more gradual transition, adequate preparation time, language preparation classes for teachers, and support from the local government as trainers and model classes. She stressed the need for policies that align with students' diverse linguistic backgrounds, expressing concern for students like Tamang, who may struggle with English because of limited exposure to Nepali.

Enhancing Teachers' Agency in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)

In English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Ms Motivated provides a distinctive viewpoint, drawing on her diverse educational background. Throughout the interview, she shares insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with EMI implementation, shedding light on critical aspects of teacher agency.

Ms Motivated underscores the disparity in teacher participation in decision-making processes, revealing,

The leader of my school encourages discussion, but most schools do not hear the voice of teachers. They are not involved in policymaking and are never consulted. If only the schools, local government, and central policymakers consulted with the teachers, they would be in a better position to support teachers in fulfilling the goal of the curriculum.

This lack of involvement raises concerns about the effective implementation of EMI, as decisions are made without the valuable input of those directly impacted—the teachers. The interview reveals a notable absence of formal consultation

mechanisms for teachers regarding EMI adoption. Ms Motivated advocates for meaningful discussions, stating, *“I feel sad when I see teachers coming to the street to protest because their opinion is not valued. The teachers should be interviewed and surveyed.”* Her sentiment underscores the importance of respecting teachers’ voices and involving them in decision-making processes to create a positive teaching environment conducive to effective EMI implementation. Concerns about how teachers are appointed surface in the interview, with Ms Motivated suggesting, *“Either all the teachers be appointed by education service commission, or the teachers appointed by others should be legalized.”* This recommendation points to standardized procedures in teacher appointments to ensure consistency in EMI policies across different educational institutions.

In addressing teacher readiness for EMI, Ms Motivated emphasizes the role of motivation and self-initiation, stating, *“None of the training I have attended to date focuses on EMI; they are rather concentrated on teaching the subject. The teachers should be motivated and convinced rather than trained.”* Her perspective highlights the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation among teachers to enhance their English proficiency and readiness for EMI. While the interview does not explicitly touch upon parents’ voices, Ms Motivated emphasizes the necessity of maintaining a balance between English and the mother tongue, asserting, *“The focus should be the Nepali language, and after they can read, write, and speak Nepali, EMI can be introduced.”* This viewpoint underscores the significance of bilingual education, with exposure to both languages at home and school contributing to a more holistic language development for students.

Ms Motivated’s insights underscore the imperative of including teachers in decision-making processes and fostering a collaborative environment to ensure the successful implementation of EMI policies in public schools. Her perspective emphasizes the need for policymakers, schools, and local governments to actively seek and respect teachers’ input for a more sustainable and effective educational landscape.

In exploring English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Mr Insight shares a comprehensive account of EMI implementation’s challenges and dynamics. His narrative unveils a notable absence of teacher participation in decision-making, as he emphasizes, *“The teachers/implementors are not involved in policy making.”* This absence of consultation raises concerns about the effectiveness of policies formed

without the active involvement of educators, leading to dissatisfaction and protests. Mr Insight's insights highlighted the need for teacher involvement and consultation. He notes, "*Until and unless the teachers are consulted by the school administration, local government, and federal government, the newly formed policies generate more protests and dissatisfaction.*" This underscores the importance of creating avenues for teachers to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making.

Reflecting on teachers' challenges, Mr Insight expresses disappointment when teachers resort to protests, stating, "*I feel sad when I see teachers coming to the street to protest; it is because their opinion is not valued.*" This sentiment underscores the necessity for a more respectful and inclusive approach where teachers' voices are acknowledged and integral to shaping educational policies. Regarding policy formation, Mr Insight's perspective suggests that teachers are often excluded from this crucial process. His observations highlight the need for policies that consider the practical insights of educators, emphasizing the potential dissatisfaction and non-cooperation that arise when teachers are not actively involved in shaping educational strategies.

While the interview does not explicitly delve into whose voices are heard, Mr Insight hints at the influence of parental preferences. He notes, "*Some of the public schools adopting EMI are favored by the parents,*" indicating that parental opinions can significantly shape school policies and decisions. Insights into teachers' preparedness for EMI reveal a nuanced picture. Mr Insight notes that while newly appointed teachers are more ready for the shift, older teachers may require more time, estimating,

The newly appointed teachers are prepared to adopt EMI, but the old teachers are not yet ready. It will take another decade to run it successfully. Most of the teachers in villages are not ready to adopt it, but I found the teachers in cities are better prepared because of the training they receive, and the locally hired teachers are good at English.

This underscores the need for a gradual and well-supported transition for teachers to adapt to EMI. Expressing optimism about the government's three-language policy, Mr Insight acknowledges the challenges posed by teachers who may lack language proficiency or interest in professional development. His perspective highlights the complex landscape teachers navigate, where support and regulation are critical for successful EMI adoption.

In considering the role of local governments, Mr Insight raises concerns about the coordination and support provided to schools. His observations, such as schools being upgraded without corresponding teacher allocations, point to the need for better planning and collaboration at the local level to ensure a smooth transition to EMI. In offering practical suggestions, Mr Insight advocates hiring subject-specific teachers, running dual-language sections, and involving teachers in policymaking to enhance cooperation. His insights contribute to a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities in implementing EMI, emphasizing teachers' crucial role in shaping and successfully executing language policies in public schools.

Ms Sunshine unfolds a comprehensive narrative that delves into the multifaceted challenges of implementing English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). Within her rich account, several key themes emerge, offering insights into the role of teachers in decision-making, language learning experiences, policy formation, and the practicalities of EMI adoption. Ms Sunshine's experience hints at a notable gap in teacher involvement in decision-making processes at the school level. This raises questions about the extent to which teachers' voices are heard in shaping policies that directly impact their classrooms. The initial resistance faced by Ms Sunshine's initiative to teach in English underscores potential challenges in fostering an environment where teachers feel empowered to initiate innovative practices. She shares,

The government's three-language policy has caused difficulty. Even students in grades nine and ten do not know basic English. These are the same students who will be teachers in the future. How can they teach in English? How can students understand the concept even if the teachers have not understood themselves?

Despite initial skepticism, Ms Sunshine's experience highlights a shift in perception over time. This evolving dynamic suggests recognizing and respecting teachers' voices, even when their initiatives challenge established norms. However, the broader question arises: whose voices indeed influence decisions? The interview hints at factors, including parental will and external pressures, driving schools to adopt EMI. A critical aspect highlighted by Ms Sunshine is the process of policy formation. She advocates for a bottom-up approach, emphasizing the need for proper consultation with implementors to ensure policies are grounded in the diverse realities of different regions. This is consistent with the findings of Shohamy (2006), who

confirmed the infrequent participation of teachers in the development of language education policies. Her call for policies to be contextually sensitive and practically viable addresses the unique challenges schools face operating under different conditions.

The challenges in teachers' preparedness for EMI become apparent, with Ms Sunshine noting the struggle caused by inadequate English proficiency among teachers. Continuous training is crucial to enhancing language proficiency and teaching skills. Furthermore, Ms Sunshine's advocacy for using the mother tongue in education aligns with the idea that a multilingual environment positively contributes to language acquisition. In discussing the potential drawbacks of EMI, Ms Sunshine touches upon the concern that students may become proficient in none of the languages. This drawback is linked to inadequate English proficiency among teachers, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to address language learning challenges comprehensively.

Ms Sunshine's insights provide a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in EMI implementation. Her narrative serves as a compelling call for a more inclusive and contextually informed approach, where teachers actively participate in decision-making, policies are practical and sensitive to local contexts, and students' unique linguistic and educational needs are prioritized.

Ms Serene unfolds her educational and teaching odyssey, shedding light on the challenges encountered in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). The interview begins by exploring Ms Serene's education in an English-medium school. Although the school claimed to be an English-medium school, teachers' predominant use of Nepali created a significant gap in her English language proficiency. Reflecting on this, Ms Serene regrets, stating, "My communicative English is not good now because of this."

Transitioning to her teaching career, Ms Serene shares her initiation into teaching at a tender age, driven by familial connections to the school. Her teaching journey mirrors her learning experiences, highlighting the challenges of adapting teaching styles inherited from her teachers. Struggling with pronunciation and phonics, she acknowledges a deficiency in her language skills and a subsequent impact on her teaching methods. As she delves into teaching content subjects like Mathematics and Science in English, Ms Serene reveals a profound struggle; the pressure to adhere to English medium policy conflicts with the practical challenges of

students' understanding. Despite a desire to teach in English, she resorts to using Nepali because of students' language barriers. The lack of support from the school adds another layer to her difficulties, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support systems.

Ms Serene addresses the role of schools and local governments in facilitating EMI. She advocates for flexibility in the medium of instruction, allowing schools to assess the readiness of students and teachers. The absence of entry tests for English proficiency and the hasty admission of students pose significant hurdles. Moreover, Ms Serene underscores the necessity of hiring subject-specific teachers, emphasizing that language proficiency alone does not guarantee effective teaching. In her opinion,

Policymakers are not practitioners, which has created a gap. They do not know the difficulties the teachers and schools face. They could develop the policy after extensive discussion with the teachers and schools. Many Nepal policies are unsuccessful because they are developed without proper preparation.

Her insights extend to the broader issues of policy formation, where she emphasizes the need for policymakers to understand ground realities. The interview concludes with Ms Serene urging schools not to enforce strict English-only policies and calling for extensive consultations between policymakers and practitioners to bridge the existing gap. In Ms Serene's narrative, a plea for a more nuanced and supportive approach to EMI emerges—one that considers the complexities of language acquisition, teacher readiness, and students' diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Chapter Summary

This chapter addresses the research questions by examining the experiences of primary school teachers in Nepal who are implementing English Medium Instruction (EMI) in Math and Science. Specifically, it answers the first research question, "What is the perception of public-school teachers about adopting EMI?" It explores how teachers perceive the challenges and benefits of this approach (EMI) and their readiness for teaching in English. The chapter also examines the role of well-designed policies and how to empower teachers within the EMI environment. In response to the second research question, "How do the teachers narrate their preparedness to adopt EMI?" the chapter explores the teachers' self-assessed readiness and the factors influencing their confidence in teaching in English. Through their narratives, teachers highlight varying levels of preparedness shaped by access to training, language

proficiency, and resource availability. The chapter examines these accounts and uncovers the critical need for targeted support and professional development to build teachers' capacity in EMI settings.

CHAPTER VI

INSIGHTS, CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

My journey exploring primary teachers' preparedness for English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Nepali public schools was not a predictable path. What began as a seemingly straightforward venture unraveled unexpected twists and turns, ultimately revealing rich insights. This chapter, titled "Insights, Conclusion, and Reflections," explores past the findings to share the unexpected challenges and personal reflections that shaped the research process.

It highlights key insights gleaned from the research questions and applied methods. These insights extend beyond the local context, offering practical value and potential generalizability to the broader issue of teacher preparedness for EMI adoption. The chapter concludes by summarising the research's key nuances and presenting my reflections on the journey. Finally, it goes beyond the research, offering potential implications for education professionals and future researchers.

This chapter aims to be more than just a collection of data. It aspires to provide a deeper understanding by incorporating personal reflections and their impact on the research process. It also extends its reach by contributing to the ongoing discussion on Nepal's language policy and education reform. The chapter proposes practical recommendations for a more inclusive and effective approach to EMI implementation by synthesizing relevant research and identifying existing gaps. Ultimately, this holistic approach strives to optimize student learning outcomes and foster more significant opportunities for academic success and socio-economic advancement within the Nepali education system.

Insights

When comparing these findings with other studies on EMI in different countries, a common theme emerges: the need for a more nuanced and context-sensitive approach. For instance, research from Sah and Li (2018) highlights similar challenges in other contexts, where theoretical ideals often clash with practical realities. This comparison underscores the importance of tailored solutions considering local contexts, teacher feedback, and students' needs.

These insights reveal the complexities of implementing EMI and move beyond acknowledging the challenges. They urge further exploration into the lived experiences of educators and students to fully understand the multifaceted nature of language acquisition and the nuanced dynamics within schools. By considering these insights and fostering a more participatory, multifaceted approach that prioritizes teacher engagement, comprehensive language development, and a supportive ecosystem, policymakers can unlock the full potential of EMI and create a sustainable path for successful program implementation in Nepali public schools. Ultimately, these insights pave the way for a future where EMI serves as a tool for enhancing educational opportunities, language acquisition, and global citizenship for students in Nepal.

Teacher Marginalization

The study reveals a profound sense of marginalization among teachers beyond language proficiency challenges. This marginalization results from a disconnect between policy expectations and classroom realities. In our study, teachers like Ms Motivated and Mr Insight feel excluded from decision-making processes and express frustration over inadequate support and training (Sah & Li, 2018). For example, Ms Motivated shared a poignant story about being handed a new curriculum without prior consultation or training, *"It is like being asked to build a house without any tools or blueprint. We are expected to perform miracles without the necessary support."* According to Ball (1998) and Apple (2013), top-down reforms often marginalize teachers by overlooking their perspectives.

Mr Insight echoes this sentiment, noting that the top-down policy implementation often ignores valuable insights from teachers. He stated, *"We understand our students' needs better than anyone else. However, our voices are rarely considered in decision-making."* This lack of inclusion leads to policies misaligned with classroom needs, exacerbating teacher challenges.

Empirical studies underscore this disconnect between policy intentions and classroom realities, emphasizing the need for participatory policymaking (Sah & Li, 2018). This approach ensures policies reflect educators' contextual challenges, fostering ownership crucial for effective implementation. By integrating teacher voices, policymakers can ensure policies are informed by on-the-ground experiences, tailored to address contextual challenges, and fostering ownership and agency among

educators. This participatory approach enables educators to contribute invaluable insights into EMI program development and implementation.

Language Proficiency

The emphasis on English language proficiency as a barrier often oversimplifies the issue. Teachers reported struggles with specific aspects of the language, such as idiomatic expressions and cultural references, that are not covered in traditional training programs. Ms Sunshine highlighted this by saying, *"It is not just about knowing the words and grammar. It is about understanding the cultural context behind the language. Without this, our teaching feels incomplete."*

The emphasis on the multifaceted nature of language proficiency aligns with Cummins' (2000) concept of *"bilingual competence,"* which extends beyond grammatical proficiency to include cultural and communicative competence. Canagarajah (2005) similarly argues for contextualized language learning approaches that acknowledge the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students and teachers. To address these multifaceted challenges, comprehensive language development programs are needed. Such programs should include cultural immersion components, opportunities for real-life practice, and continuous professional development. For example, peer-learning groups where teachers can practice language skills in a supportive environment could be beneficial. Additionally, integrating language learning with subject matter teaching could help teachers feel more comfortable and competent in using English.

Supportive Ecosystem

Building a supportive ecosystem is crucial for the successful implementation of EMI. This involves more than just providing resources; it requires creating a culture of collaboration and continuous learning. Hargreaves (2001) advocates for collaborative cultures in schools where teachers engage in shared decision-making and support one another's professional growth. Fullan (2015) emphasizes the role of leadership in fostering environments conducive to continuous learning and innovation. Effective mentorship, highlighted by Feiman-Nemser (2001), supports teachers in navigating new instructional practices, promoting reflective teaching, and addressing student needs. Peer support networks, where teachers can share experiences and strategies, can play a significant role. Mentorship programs can provide personalized guidance and support for teachers transitioning to EMI. As one

participant suggested, *"Having a mentor who has been through this process can make a difference. It is about learning from each other's successes and mistakes."*

Comparative studies reveal the need for a nuanced, context-sensitive approach to EMI implementation, tailoring solutions to local contexts, teacher feedback, and student needs. Understanding educator and student lived experiences elucidates language acquisition's multifaceted nature and school dynamics nuances. A participatory, multifaceted approach prioritizing teacher engagement, comprehensive language development, and supportive ecosystems can maximize EMI potential, creating a sustainable implementation path for Nepali public schools. Ultimately, EMI is a tool for enhancing educational opportunities, language acquisition, and global citizenship for Nepali students.

Reflections

Initially, acquiring access to participants for interviews presented a considerable obstacle. However, this hurdle was successfully overcome through cultivating trust and recognizing the significance of their perspectives and experiences. The support extended by school leadership further facilitated this process. The diversity among participants, encompassing variations in teaching and English Medium Instruction (EMI) backgrounds, age, and gender, prompted a profound journey of self-reflection for me. Their narratives became my voyage of self-identification and introspection. The experience of empathizing with their difficulties in language acquisition and instructing in an English Medium Instruction (EMI) setting resembled a voyage across time. Overcoming access challenges through trust-building and collaboration with school leadership resonates with Creswell's (2015) qualitative research methodologies. As practiced in this study, establishing a report with participants enables access to authentic narratives that deepen understanding of teachers' experiences and perspectives.

Amid the rigorous data collection and analysis process, a persistent question lingered: Was integrating EMI into the Nepali School Curriculum prudent? Despite its apparent simplicity as a "yes," the answer came with a caveat: a well-organized plan and a robust support infrastructure were necessary. It appears the participants had been eagerly awaiting this opportunity to share their perspectives, expressing both the struggles and successes associated with embracing EMI. This journey also fostered a compassionate perspective towards educators grappling with the complexities of teaching in English. Previously, I had often lamented the teachers' proficiency, but

this research granted me more profound insights into their internal struggles. Reflecting on integrating EMI into the Nepali curriculum aligns with the literature on educational policy evaluation (Spillane, 1999). Effective policy implementation requires careful planning, ongoing evaluation, and responsiveness to feedback from stakeholders, including teachers and school leaders.

In addition, the research project allowed the participants to share their experiences, empowering them in the process. It afforded me a profound understanding of the intricate dynamics of implementing language policies, underscoring the importance of acknowledging practical classroom realities. Additionally, it honed invaluable research and interviewing skills that will undoubtedly enrich my future academic pursuits.

Conclusion

This study examined how community schoolteachers in Nepal view and get ready to use English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) for non-language subjects. Drawing on interviews with educators, the research revealed a multifaceted landscape of opportunities and challenges associated with EMI implementation.

Teacher Agency

Enhancing teacher agency in EMI adoption aligns with literature advocating for participatory policymaking and teacher empowerment (Priestley & Biesta, 2013). Empowering teachers as active agents in educational change promotes commitment to and ownership of policy goals. A critical finding is the need for increased teacher agency in EMI adoption. The educators felt excluded from the decision-making processes. Ms Motivated advocated a bottom-up policymaking approach, while Mr Insight highlighted the teacher's dissatisfaction stemming from a lack of consultation. These findings suggest a need for a more collaborative approach that values teacher expertise.

Training and Support

While some teachers recognized the importance of English proficiency, current training programs were deemed inadequate. The educators emphasized the need for intrinsic motivation, self-directed learning, and ongoing support throughout the transition. Ms Sunshine emphasized the importance of authentic learning materials and dedicated preparation time. These findings suggest a need for revised training programs that address these needs. Revising EMI training programs to address

teachers' ongoing needs and context-specific challenges resonates with research on effective teacher professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). High-quality training programs should integrate theoretical knowledge with practical skills, supporting teachers' growth as effective EMI instructors.

Context-Sensitive Policies

The interviews emphasized the importance of context-sensitive policies that consider the diverse learning environments of public schools. A recurring theme was acknowledging the mother tongue. Vogt et al. (2017) highlight this point, arguing that a one-size-fits-all approach to EMI implementation is unlikely to be successful. Consideration must be given to teachers' qualifications, students' language proficiency, and curriculum design. Ms Motivated suggested a bilingual approach that initially prioritizes the mother tongue, while Ms Sunshine advocated for policies that address local contexts and student needs. Ms Serene called for flexibility in the medium of instruction based on student readiness. The research also highlighted the need for subject-specific teachers, as emphasized by Mr Insight. Multilingual education approaches that integrate the mother tongue alongside English can benefit students' learning and cultural identity. This can also address the need for subject-specific expertise, as teachers may be more comfortable using their mother tongue for specific subjects. Advocating for context-sensitive policies in EMI implementation aligns with the literature on educational equity and diversity (Banks, 2016). Policies that recognize and leverage students' diverse linguistic backgrounds enhance learning outcomes and promote inclusive educational practices.

In conclusion, a more collaborative and context-sensitive approach to EMI implementation is crucial. Empowering teachers through increased involvement and providing adequate training and support are essential. Furthermore, policies should be flexible and adaptable to the unique circumstances of each school and student population. A sustainable and effective model for EMI in Nepal's public schools can be achieved by addressing these challenges and acknowledging the complexities of teacher perceptions and preparedness.

Future Research

This research offers valuable insights for policymakers, school administrators, and teacher training institutions to work towards a more prosperous and sustainable EMI strategy. Future research could build upon these insights by exploring specific

strategies and interventions to support teachers adapting to EMI. Comparative studies across different regions or countries could offer valuable insights into the contextual factors influencing EMI implementation. Finally, research on the long-term impacts of EMI on student learning outcomes and language proficiency is needed. These avenues for future research have the potential to inform policy and practice in language education and contribute to the improvement of educational outcomes for all students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview Guidelines

The interview with four primary-level teachers who teach Mathematics and science in English medium instruction (EMI) aimed to delve deeper into their personal, social, academic, and professional experiences using unstructured interview techniques. The goal was to document their experiences with EMI both as students and as teachers.

1. Start by discussing the study project's themes, ethical considerations, and your credentials.
2. On the first day, casually discuss recent professional engagements, schedules, and educational practices, ensuring flexibility in scheduling.
3. Focus on socio-cultural, family, academic, and professional milestones impacting personal and professional growth within the EMI framework.
4. Begin discussions on:
 - Participants' experiences with EMI as students and its impact on their educational journey.
 - How their EMI background influences their teaching practices in Mathematics and science.
 - Values and strategies contributing to their personal and professional growth in an EMI environment.
 - Academic achievements and school experiences related to EMI.
 - Early professional experiences and academic background within an EMI context.
 - Classroom practices and professional development specific to teaching Mathematics and science in an EMI setting at the primary level.
5. After the individual interviews, delve into specific topics with each participant concerning English medium instruction (EMI), including their teaching experience, perspectives on EMI, experiences with EMI as both students and teachers, the support and training they have received, and their personal beliefs regarding EMI.

Appendix II: Sample Data Transcription

Name: Ms Serene

Age: 36 years

Teacher: Primary

Subjects teaching: All

Speaker	Direct speech	Context
R	म्यामले चाहिँ स्कुलको प्राइमरी लेभल सेकेण्डरी लेभल कहाँबाट गर्नुभयो?	<p>She was told the reason for the interview, and I asked for her permission. She agreed and took the researcher to an open space available in the corridor. She was happy to share her experience and story.</p> <p>Only the interview part is recorded. The teacher who introduced me to Sulochana ma'am agreed to engage her students in the library.</p>
T	यो चाहिँ लुभुमा स्कुल थियो एउटा। त्यति खेरचाहिँ त्यो प्राइभेट हो, मैले प्राइभेट स्कुल नै पढेको ।	The sound of students talking is heard throughout the interview.
R	अँ.. ओके	
T	त्यतिखेरचाहिँ त्यो स्कुलमाचाहिँ यताबाट जानेचाहिँ त्यो स्कुलमा पढ्ने मात्रै थियौँ, त्यस्तो हुन्थ्यो त्यतिबेला।	

R	ए... अँ...	
T	त्यस्तो हुन्थ्यो सँधै कया, ग्रुप नै थियौँ	
R	अँ	
T	प्राइभेट स्कुल थ्यो, चेतना विद्याश्रम भन्ने स्कुल थ्यो, त्यता हामी जान्थ्यौँ, त्यो स्कुल थ्यो पहिला	
R	हजुर हजुर	
T	तर अहिले त्यो स्कुल कोल्याप्स भयो।	
R	ए अहिले त्यो स्कुलै छैन?	
T	छैन, स्कुलै छैन...स्कुल कोल्याप्स भयो...अनि २०६० मा चै मैले SLC त्यहीबाट देको।	
R	२०६० सालमा SLC त्यहीबाट गर्नुभयो, है। भनेपछि तपाईंले सानै कक्षा LKG Nursery हुँदै पढ्नुभो त्याँ कि कसरी पढ्नुभयो?	
T	वान क्लासदेखि नै पढ्दा मैले	
R	ए हजुर,	
T	वान क्लासदेखि नै...	Not clearly audible
R	अनि वान क्लासदेखि नै... अनि हजुरले साठी सालमा SLC दिनुभयो है!	
T	अँ साठी सालमा	
R	अनि हजुरको जन्म कहाँ भयो?	
T	यहीं ललितपुर, लामाटारमै	

R	ए लामाटारमै भयो?	
T	हजुर	
R	कति सालमा भयो?	
T	२०४३ सालमा	
R	२०४३ सालमा, ए... प्राइभेट स्कुलमा पढ्नुभा' रैछ है?	
T	हो सर	
R	अनि त्यो गर्दाखेरि, त्यो बेलामा, जुन सानो कक्षादेखि नै प्राय सबै इङ्लिस मिडियम थियो होला।	
T	इङ्लिस मिडियम थियो।	
R	इङ्लिस मिडियम थियो। अनि हजुरलाई पछाडि जब, त्यसोभए त यो पछाडि पढाउनलाई अङ्ग्रेजी माध्यममा पढाउनलाई त्यसले कतिको मदत गर्‍यो?	
T	एकदमै सर, त्यतिखेर त, अब यो स्कुलमा पनि त त्यो अहिलेको जस्तो कोटा टिचर भन्ने पाउन एकदमै गाह्रो थियो सर,	
R	हजुर हजुर	
T	म यहाँ आउँदा यो स्कुल प्राइमरी मात्रै थियो।	
R	ए, हजुर, कति सालमा यहाँ आउनुभयो म्याम?	
T	सर मैले हजुरले अघि स्टोरी जस्तै भन्नुभो नि,	

	<p>त्यस्तै छ के मैले म स्कुल SLC देर बसिराको थँ। यहाँको चेयरम्यानले चाहिँ अँ अब कम्प्युटर सिकाउने यहाँ कोही...मेरो भाइबहिनी यहीं पढेका हुन् के</p>	
R	ए हजुर	

Appendix III: Sample Interview Data (Translation Version)

Name: Ms Serene

Age: 36 years

Teacher: Primary

Subjects teaching: All

Speaker	Direct speech	Context
R	Namaskar ma'am. Could you tell me about your primary and secondary education?	She was told the reason for the interview, and I asked for her permission. She agreed and took the researcher to an open space available in the corridor. She was happy to share her experience and story. Only the interview part is recorded. The teacher who introduced me to her agreed to engage her students in the library.
T	I went to a private school in Lubhu, Lalitpur. There were only a few of us who went to the school. We would walk in groups. The name of the school is Chetana Bidhyashram, but it is closed now. I wrote SLC exam in 2030 BS. I studied in that school from grade I till grade 10.	The sound of students talking is heard throughout the interview.
R	Could you tell me where you were born?	
T	Yes, of course. I was born in Lamatar in 2043 B.S.	

R	Was your school an English medium school?	
T	Yes, it was.	
R	Can you tell me about your experience in detail?	
T	It was an English medium school, but the teachers used mostly Nepali language. English teacher would use two languages. The teachers would use English and translate it in Nepali. There was no English speaking and listening activities, just reading and writing. I was strong desire to learn English, but I never got that opportunity.	
R	What other difficulties have you faced due to this?	
T	We had to study in Nepali and write our assignments in English. It was not easy for us. I wished my teachers taught me in English at least more English than Nepali. But not English totally, because that would make us difficult to understand. My communicative English is not good now because of this. This also affected my teaching; I followed the same teaching style, and my students English is also not that good now. I can understand when other speak in English but cannot reply in English. I wish our teachers taught in proper English. I must think a lot before producing any sentences. My English now is what we call 'broken English'. If my teachers taught me well, I could give this interview in	

	English.	
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Appendix IV: Sample Coded Interview

Participant 1 (Ms Serene)

Speaker	Direct speech	Codes	Generated Themes
R	Namaskar ma'am. Could you tell me about your primary and secondary education?		Theme 1: EMI Encounter Thus Far Theme 2: Readiness for English as a Medium of Instruction
T	I went to a private school in Lubhu, Lalitpur. There were only a few of us who went to the school. We would walk in groups. The name of the school is Chetana Bidhyashram, but it is closed now. I wrote the SLC exam in 2030 BS. I studied in that school from grade I till grade 10.		Theme 3: Significance of Well-Grounded Policy Formulation Theme 4: Difficulties in Instructing Non-language Disciplines. Theme 5: Enhancing Teachers' Agency in English as a Medium of Instruction
R	Could you tell me where you were born?		
T	Yes, of course. I was born in Lamatar in 2043 B.S.		
R	Was your school an English medium school?		
T	Yes, it was.		
R	Can you tell me about your experience in detail?		

T	<p>It was an English medium school, but the teachers used mostly the Nepali language. The English teacher would use two languages¹. The teachers would use English and translate it into Nepali². No English was speaking and listening activities, just reading and writing³. I was a strong desire to learn English, but I never got that opportunity⁴.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bilingual teaching approach 2. Grammar Translation Method 3. Lack of emphasis on speaking and listening skills 4. Desire to learn English not fulfilled 	
R	<p>What other difficulties have you faced due to this?</p>		
T	<p>We had to study in Nepali and write our assignments in English⁵. It was not easy for us. I wished my teachers taught me in English at least more English than Nepali⁶. But not English totally, because that would make us difficult to understand. My communicative English is not good now because of this. This also affected my teaching, I followed the same</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Language mismatch in instruction and assignments 6. Desire for increased English instruction 7. Influence on teaching style and students' English proficiency 8. Impact of 	

	<p>teaching style and my students' English is also not that good now⁷. I can understand when others speak in English but cannot reply in English. I wish our teachers taught proper English. I have to think a lot before producing any sentences. My English now is what we call 'broken English'. If my teachers taught me well, I could give this interview in English⁸.</p>	<p>inadequate instruction on English proficiency</p>	
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