

DOMINO EFFECT OF ACTIVE LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
CLASSROOMS: AN ARTS- BASED INQUIRY

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A Dissertation

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Nagma Pandey* for the *Degree of Master of Philosophy in English Language Education*, presented on *26 January 2025*, entitled *Domino Effect of Active Learning in English Language Classrooms: An Arts-Based Inquiry*.

APPROVED BY

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Prof. Laxman Gnawali, PhD

Dissertation Supervisor

The study explores the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms which employs Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984). Domino effect creates a situation wherein the first event causes another similar kind of event and the second event further causes another similar event and the process of creating events keeps going on impacting learners immensely either positively or negatively. The research scrutinizes the positive domino effect, i.e., good impacts which occur in a series or a chain reaction in a learner with the implementation of various active learning strategies. The research is all about how a notable transformation takes place in a learner who gets to understand things better through his/her first-hand experiences in or outside the classroom via the implementation of various active learning techniques.

I have used Arts-based inquiry as the research methodology in order to generate information from my participant students. Arts-based methodology allows a researcher not only to study, retrace and reassess both the emotive and personal experiences of learners but also allows him/her further reflections on those lived experiences. It helps in questioning more rather than providing fixed answers, without hindering data generation and analysis, directing the researcher to newer avenues for exploration (Naidoo et al., 2023). This methodology accepts both linguistic and non-linguistic art forms. Thus, visual and literary arts like artifacts, interview transcripts, reflections, poems, pictures, paintings, doodles etc., are used as the data for the research.

The study contributes to the exploration of the application of active learning strategies in English language classrooms for the cognitive development and competencies in a learner. As the world is demanding for a paradigm shift in academia,

i.e., from the traditional teaching approach to a more promising one (Garnham et al., 2024), the study serves as a handbook for the aspiring teachers to learn how the use of active learning strategies cause a positive domino effect in pupils, simultaneously, encouraging them to apply and advocate active learning teaching methods. With the use of arts-based methodology, it proves to be an experimentation on how multiple art forms can be used to generate, thematize and analyze data. The study is a beacon for newbies who want to be an artist-researcher like me. Moreover, it works as a strong documentation on how the implementation of active learning techniques can bring transformation in learners by ensuring in them the acquisition of literacy skills and life skills.

.....

26 January 2025

Nagma Pandey

Degree Candidate

शोध सार

अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर डिग्रीको लागि नगमा पाण्डेको शोध प्रबन्धको शिर्षक " अङ्ग्रेजी विषयको कक्षामा हुने सक्रिय अध्ययनको श्रृंखलाबद्ध प्रभाव एक कला आधारित अनुसन्धान" १३ माघ २०८१ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

.....

प्रा. लक्ष्मण ज्ञवाली, पीएचडी

शोध निर्देशक

यस अध्ययनले डेभिड कल्बको अनुभावात्मक शिद्धान्तको प्रयोग गर्दै अंग्रेजी भाषा सिकाइने कक्षामा सक्रिय सिकाइ विधिको प्रयोगले हुने श्रृंखलाबद्ध प्रभावको गहन खोज गरेको छ । श्रृंखलाबद्ध प्रभावले एउटा यस्तो स्थितिको सिर्जना गर्दछ जहाँ पहिलो घटनाको कारणले अर्को त्यस्तै किसिमको घटना अनि त्यस दोस्रो घटनाले फेरी त्यस्तै किसिमको, अर्थात सकारात्मक भए सकारात्मक र नकारात्मक भए नकारात्मक नै, अर्को घटनाको सिर्जना गर्दछ । जसको फलस्वरूप यस्ता घटनाहरूको सिर्जना हुने प्रकृया यसरी नै अवरल चलि रहन्छ । यस प्रक्रियाले विद्यार्थीहरूमा अधिक रूपमा सकारात्मक अथवा नकारात्मक रूपमा अति नै गहिरो प्रभाव पार्दछ । यस अध्ययनले भने सक्रिय सिकाइ विधिको प्रयोगले एउटा विद्यार्थीमा पर्ने सकारात्मक श्रृंखलाबद्ध प्रभाव अर्थात श्रृंखलाबद्ध रूपमा देखा पर्ने उत्तम प्रभावहरूको श्रृंखलात्मक प्रतिक्रियाको सुक्ष्म ढंगले अवलोकन गर्दछ । यस अनुसन्धानको सार कसरी एउटा विद्यार्थीले कक्षा कोठा भित्र वा बाहिर आफ्नै प्रत्यक्ष अनुभवहरूद्वारा विभिन्न सक्रिय सिकाइ प्रविधिहरूको प्रयोग गरी सिकाइएका विषयवस्तु अभै राम्रोसंग बुझ्न सक्दछ र आफूमा महत्वपूर्ण रूपान्तरण महसूस गर्दछ भन्ने हो ।

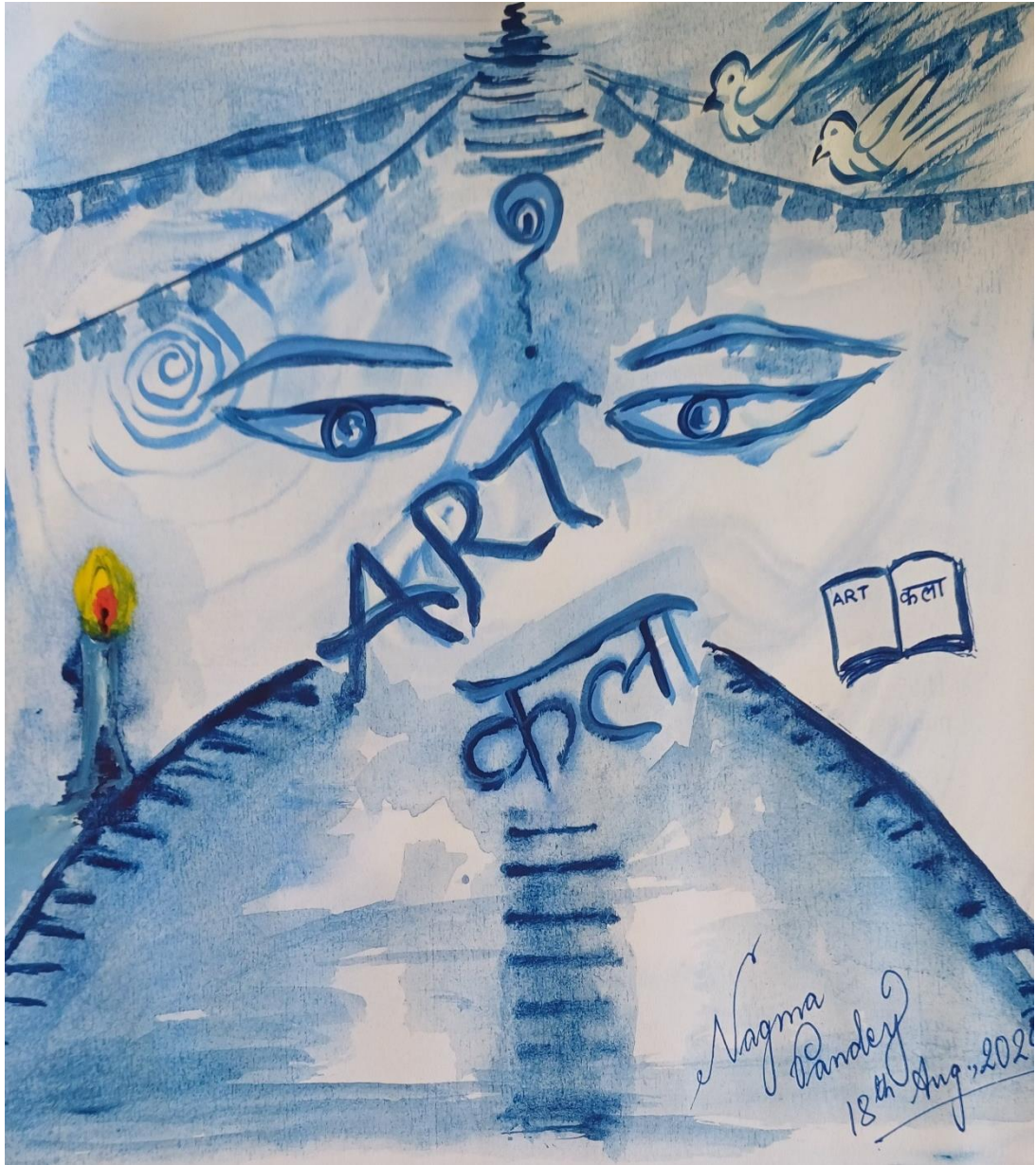
मैले आफ्ना सहभागी विद्यार्थीहरूबाट सूचना संकलन गर्नाको निम्ति कलामा आधारित अनुसन्धान विधिको प्रयोग गरेकी छु । उक्त अनुसन्धान विधिले खोजकर्तालाई विद्यार्थीहरूको भावनात्मक र व्यक्तिगत अनुभवहरूको अध्ययन पुनः अनुसरण र पुनः मुल्यांकन मात्र नभई उनीहरूको जीवन भोगाई र सिकाइ प्रति अभै चिन्तन गर्न सघाउ पुर्याउछ । यसले स्थिर अथवा पूर्वनिर्धारित उत्तरहरू दिलाउन नभई खोजकर्तालाई तथ्यांक उत्पादन र विश्लेषणमा अवरोध नपुर्याईकन भनै गहिरो खोजी गर्न मद्दत पुर्याउदछ । यसरी एउटा खोजकर्ताले कलामा आधारित खोज विधिको प्रयोग गर्दा सूचना संकलन, विश्लेषण र अन्वेषण गर्ने धेरै नयाँ अवसरहरू प्राप्त गर्दछ । यस विधिले कलाका दुवै भाषिक तथा गैरभाषिक रूपहरूलाई सहज तरिकाले अँगाल्दछ । तसर्थ, यस अध्ययनको तथ्यांकका

रूपमा दृश्यकला र साहित्यकलासँग सम्बन्धित विभिन्न पाटाहरु जस्तै: सहभागी विद्यार्थीहरु तथा खोजकर्ताका कथाहरु, कविताहरु, चित्रहरु, परावर्तनात्मक लेख रचनाहरु, फोटोहरु आदिको प्रयोग प्रशस्त मात्रामा गरिएको छ ।

यस अध्ययनको योगदान भनेकै अंग्रेजी भाषा कक्षामा सक्रिय सिकाई विधिको प्रयोगले विद्यार्थीहरुमा हुने संज्ञानात्मक विकास र उनीहरुमा हुने दक्षता अथवा सिक्ने क्षमताको द्रुत गतिमा भइरहेको पद्धति परिवर्तन जस्तै, परम्परागत शिक्षण विधिबाट एक उज्ज्वल एवं आशाजनक विधितर्फको मार्गसँगै यस अध्ययनले प्रगतिशिल शिक्षक वर्गलाई सक्रिय सिकाई विधिले विद्यार्थीहरुमा पार्ने सकारात्मक श्रृंखलाबद्ध प्रभावको बारेमा मार्ग निर्देश गर्दछ । यस अनुसन्धानलाई आकांक्षी शिक्षकवर्गको निम्ती सक्रिय सिकाई विधिका उपायहरुको प्रयोगले कसरी विद्यार्थीहरुमा सकारात्मक श्रृंखलाबद्ध प्रभाव पार्दछ भन्ने कुराको चुरो बुझाउने एउटा सही पुस्तिका वा मार्गदर्शिकाको रूपमा पनि लिन सकिन्छ । साथै, यस अध्ययनले शिक्षकवर्गलाई सक्रिय सिकाई विधिका विभिन्न उपायहरुको कक्षामा प्रयोग र अझै दरो हिसाबले समर्थन गर्न पनि हौसला दिन्छ । यस अध्ययन स्वयं नै एक पूर्ण प्रयोगात्मक प्रक्रिया भएको छ किनभने यसले कलामा आधारित अनुसन्धान विधिको अनुप्रयोगद्वारा कसरी कलालाई विभिन्न स्वरूपहरुलाई समावेश गरेर सूचना संकलन, विषयवस्तुकरण एवं विश्लेषण गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने कुरालाई प्रमाण गर्न खोजेको छ । तसर्थ : यस अध्ययन म जस्तै कलाकार अनुसन्धाता बन्न चाहने नयाँ शोधकर्ताहरुको लागि बाटो देखाउने सुनौलो प्रकाश हुन सक्दछ । अन्तमा, यस अध्ययनले सक्रिय शिक्षण विधिहरुको कार्यान्वयनले सिकाइकर्ताहरुमा साक्षरता र जीवनोपयोगी सीपहरु हाँसिल गराउदै कसरी रुपान्तरण ल्याउन सक्छ भन्ने विषयमा दरिलो दस्तावेज बनेको छ भन्दा अत्युक्ति नहोला ।

.....
नगमा पाण्डे
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

१३ माघ २०८१



“Art is the waterfall that flows from the heart’s deep spring, it melts the mind and cleanses the soul”.

“हृदयको गहिरो कुण्डबाट भर्ने भरना हो कला, यसले मन पगाल्छ र आत्मा नुहाउँछ ।”

Bhatta (n.d)

This dissertation entitled *Domino Effect of Active Learning in English Language Classrooms: An Arts-Based Inquiry* was presented by *Nagma Pandey* on 26 January 2025.

APPROVED BY

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of the Library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

..... 26 January 2025

Nagma Pandey
Degree Candidate

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DECLARATION

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

.....

26 January 2025

Nagma Pandey

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DEDICATION

To my father Umesh Chandra Pandey, mother Muna Pandey, spouse Bivek Bista, son Bilakshan Bikram Bista and daughter Vedanshi Bista. Also, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to all my professors who always smoothened my path in my MPhil journey, always being the guiding light to me that helped me go through even in the darkest of my hours.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Phew, it's done!!

But I know I am not alone.

As you were always by my side.

I could make this significant stride.

Felicitations!! To all my allies

I am truly grateful to you guys!!!

Figure 1

Best Flowers from the Eden of My Heart to the Ones Who Contributed to Materialize this Dissertation.

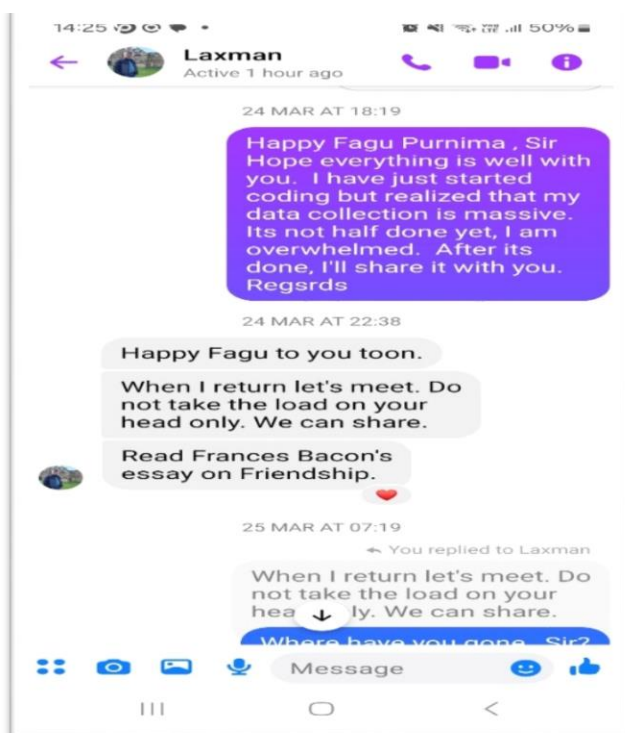


Tons of thankfulness to the universe for sowing in me the seed of aspiration to study further after a long gap for which I began my MPhil journey and, hopefully, will opt for a PhD too in the near future. Bouquets of gratitude to all the heads, hands and hearts that always motivated me to move further when there were times I was immensely frustrated and was on the verge of giving up. I am much obliged to Sr. Jessy CJ Puliyanthuruthel who was the one who suggested me to join Kathmandu University for its effective and systematic pedagogical ways. Though it was a solo journey as a researcher, there were many people who always influenced me positively and helped me reach my destination; as a matter of fact, the thesis has taken its shape.

With deep reverence, I hereby remember all my Gurus, namely Prof. Laxman Gnawali, the positive energy personified; Prof. Jai Raj Awasthi, my muse; Prof. Lava Deo Awasthi, a true Eastern philosopher; Prof. Krishna Pd. Parajuli, a real motivator; Prof. Hem Raj Kafle, an artist disguised as an educator and Prof. Tikaram Poudel, a guiding genius. Without their perennial teaching and guidance, I would not have been able to contribute through my research, though as a drop, to the broader realm of academia.

Figure 2

A Sweet Messenger Chat with My Dissertation Guide



Prof. Gnawali was my thesis guide, too, who earnestly supported this venture of mine when I myself had a doubt regarding my project. His tip to his alertness and concern regarding the progress of my research and writing every time he called or texted me. It generally used to be him and not me who gave a call for our further meeting for the discussion on my dissertation. This proves how concerned he was about my research.

When I was reluctant to see him once as I had not been able to dig deeper

into my research project, the professor texted me: ***“Do not take the load on your head only.***

We can share. Read Francis Bacon’s essay on Friendship”. That was an aww.....moment for me that he doesn’t know how those words impacted me. Thank you Sir for being so kind and for always being there for me not only as my mentor but also as my true companion.

A very special appreciation goes to my dear senior (I cannot mention her name here due to research ethicality but will be indebted to her forever), a PhD candidate in English Language Education, Kathmandu University, without whose help, I wouldn’t have been able even to start my data collection. When I was hunting for an educational institution desperately and got deaf ears to my approach from four institutions in Lalitpur, she was the one who appeared as a ray of hope when she told me that she would talk to her vice Principal about my MPhil field visit and as said, she spoke to Mrs. Rana and I was called the very next day without any delay. So, Mrs. Rana happens to be that kind person who allowed my visit not merely for a few days but for months. My visit started from the month of May 2023 to the month of October 2023 and a few more days in the month of March 2024. Mrs. Rana was and still is pretty warm and welcoming that she was ever ready to help me in this project. Her warm smile and calming voice still reverberate in my heart. Similarly, the third person I owe from this institution is Mrs. Manandhar who bore my presence in her classroom as a researcher for months. Hers was the English classroom (Grade 4 ‘Experience’) which I observed for almost one hour every single time I visited the school. At times, I even felt so guilty for entering the class, an intruder breaking the flow, as the students used to be distracted by my entrance into her classroom. Some would even jump out of the carpet area to greet or hug me, and that definitely would disturb the class. But Mrs. Manandhar was always patient. Thus, heartfelt gratitude to the trio, the beauty of which is, all three are females helping a female. I always felt the great feminine power while working with them.

I can never forget to remember my family every single time I accomplish something in my life. Cheers to my soul mate Mr. Bivek Bista who was always more enthusiastic than me pertaining to this academic journey of mine. He had taken charge of bringing me all the materials shared by my professors in all different semesters. Thank you dear *Raja* for always giving me those golden wings to fly to the azure of academia. My heart overflows with love and gratitude for my red heart and blue soul, my kids namely Bilakshan Bikram Bista (son) and Vedanshi Bista (daughter). I apologize dear *Bachhas* for not being available to you for a couple of years. Despite my physical

presence at home, I would always be lost in a corner, busy with my research project. At times, I had even forgotten to prepare their midday meal on time.

My deep reverence to my parents, the very first teachers in my life, Mr. Umesh Chandra Pandey (father) and Mrs. Muna Pandey (mother) for always teaching me to aim high and to work wholeheartedly on whatever I do. Thank you *Maami* and *Uncle* (I call my dad 'uncle') for ingraining in me crumbs of confidence and optimism that though the circumstances turned antagonistic at times, I kept moving forward determined and doughty. *Maami* and *Uncle*, I earnestly apologize hereby for being reluctant to visit you even after getting several calls from you. I am certain that you have understood the reason why.

Last but not the least, my deep appreciation goes to Mr. Noor Jung. Shah from the WCC, KU; Mr. Surendra Bhatt and Mr. Raju Maharjan for helping me to bring the dissertation to its final form.

By and by,

Figure 3

Painting entitled " Eternity is the Sea Mixed with the Sun", by Arthur Rimbaud.

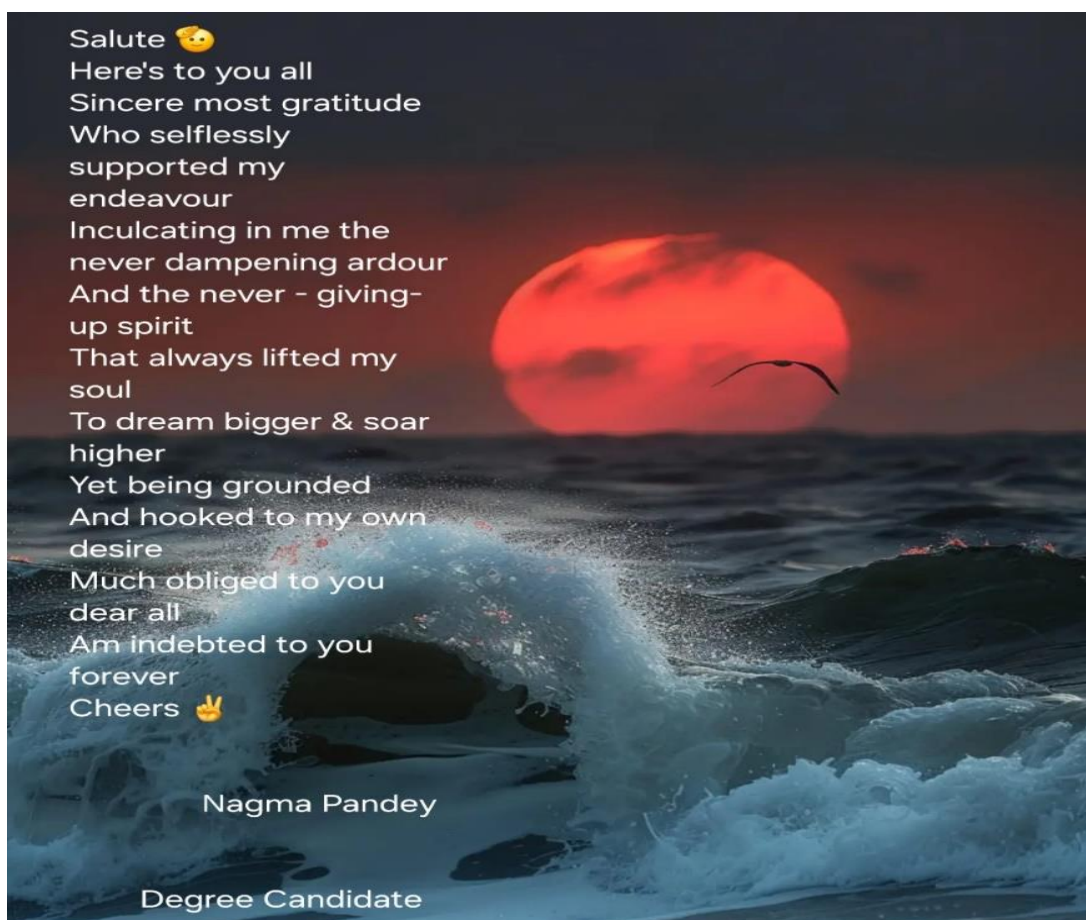


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ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Abstract Conceptualization
AE	Active Experimentation
CE	Concrete Experience
Chat GPT	Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer
COVID 19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
DIY	Do It Yourself
EAP	English for Academic Preparation
ECED	Early Childhood Education & Development
EFA	Education for All
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	Experiential Learning Theory
KU	Kathmandu University
KU	Kathmandu University
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PPE	Pre-Primary Education
RO	Reflective Observation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SSRP	School Sector Reform Plan
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCC	Writing and Communication Center
WHO	World Health Organization

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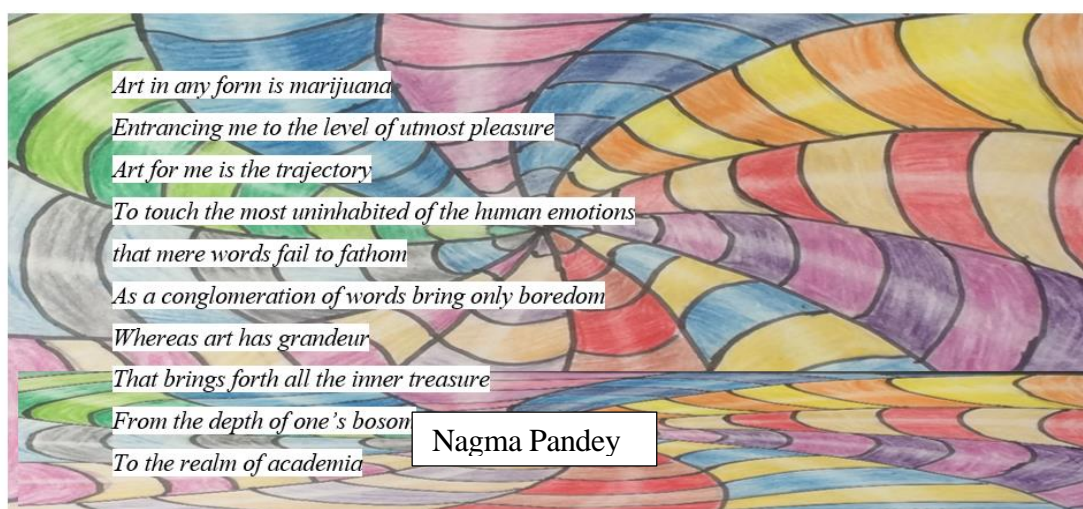
A LETTER TO MY READERS

Dear All

This is a euphoric moment for me to have been able to introduce myself as a research artist or. . . you can even call me an artistic researcher. There is a flimsy barrier between the two as the former is more about exploring and analyzing facts, ultimately synthesizing them artistically or creatively into the body of a research paper. The latter is more of focusing on the creative facet of expression with the inclusion of the artifacts and the work of art found during the process of writing a research paper, a volume of commingled artistry and the findings made during the process. This paper owns the specialties of both as I have tried to the best of my ability to make it an arts-based inquiry via the inclusion of various artifacts or the samples of my participants' work such as poems, short stories, personal letters, sketches etc.; interview transcripts from my field visits, free writing, my reflections during my MPhil. journey and my research field visits; paintings and photographs that I traced while on the journey and a few even I myself made. Hence, I have used only visual and literary forms of art. Also, the paper is definitely a product of field visits, data collection, data analysis and data synthesis conducted with rich rigor. Thus, it is a research paper laden both with art and written data because I believe that:

Figure 4

A Picture Spotted on the Classroom Wall During My Field Visit



Thus, I have chosen art-based inquiry as the methodology for my dissertation to bring about those hidden facts which is not possible only through interviews and

observation which are the principal methods of qualitative research. The journey of this research itself was an attempt to balance art and writing. On the one hand, it was pretty much fun to gather the various artworks created and composed by my participants and some others and squeeze out meanings hidden behind them besides extracting their ideas related to active learning through multiple interviews, light chit-chats and observation. On the other hand, it was no less than biting a bullet, gravely demanding time, energy, patience and hard work. Not only the photographs of various artistic expressions, worksheets and creative works of my participants but also different paintings made by some other artists and some sketches, doodles and paintings made by myself serve to the purpose of molding the paper to arts-based.

Moreover, I felt like a lost pup at times as I have chosen something that doesn't have a very long history in the field of education, in the context of Nepal. I felt very uncomfortable sometimes to prove myself because our traditional structure of academic writing demands more straightforwardness and simplicity of expression of the ideas collected. But it happens to be a duty of a novice researcher like us to add a new brick to the old edifice of academic writing, or to give an aesthetically different twist to what is called academic writing. I still remember how my professors used to remind us time and again to think of something "Out of the Box" to create something that is truly authentic. Consequently, I had the urge to go the extra mile that made me choose this title, i.e., *Domino Effect of Active Learning in English Language Classrooms: An Arts-based Inquiry*. This also adds to the supply of authenticity that I have to this dissertation writing. I, hereby, as a researcher, am only trying to showcase what is authentic to me which is immensely connected to art and creativity, more specifically, visual arts and literary arts combined with academic writing. I don't want to be a mediocre; I want to excel in academic writing for which being authentic and organic is essential. Hence, I found art-based inquiry to suffice to my hunger for newness and genuineness in academic writing.

Thus, this research paper is an attempt to converge both art and writing to explore the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal. In addition, the research spotlights the positive cumulative impacts that transform young learners through various activities related to active learning that are designed to improve not only their literacy skills (hard skills) but also life skills (soft skills) that help them become street-smart. The present pedagogical scenario also targets to focus on producing such young people who know the mantra of sustainability and survival in adverse situations, which is possible through active learning.

Have a great reading!

Regards,

A Research Artist

Figure 5

A Painting That Resembles a Research Artist in Her Pensive Mood



*Source: Spotted on the Library- Wall of One of the
Educational Institutions at Dhulikhel)*

23rd August 2023

Venue: Senior Library (One of the Educational Institutions at Dhulikhel)

(Free Writing)

The background song being sung by the little students is slowly driving me to a different zone. . .Sabin Rai's "मलाई माया गर्ने, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो तिमी नै हो.." (meaning: "You are the one who loves me"). The tapping of the rain drops on the trees around, plants, grounds and on the roofs of a cluster of this building, it's

Figure 6

Rain Drops



(Source: saatchiart.com)

accompanying the song. The song is being repeatedly sung, "मलाई माया गर्ने, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो.." because of their music class going on, and so are the wholesome raindrops, beating the earth repeatedly, causing to create a tapestry of sound and rhythm, a pattern so enchanting.

These raindrops are the tiara upon the green hair of Mother Earth and me....., I am a speck inside her, with my laptop open, trying to jot down some of the feelings accumulated in my heart at the present moment. My feelings are all associated with the vibe that I got here, a very queer vibe which is undoubtedly a medley of beauty and purity which has inspired me to pour my heart out. I am in a corner in the library, the only human being who is in with me is the librarian, a lady of middle age, reading a book at the moment. The library is laden with books, there is nothing so special about that, but something that caught my attention was, the beautiful paintings hung on the walls which

are made by the students who study here. Oh... they are beautiful that their splendor propelled me to capture them in my cell phone picture gallery, definitely with the permission of the librarian. Art in any form has that effect of belladonna for me. Art is marijuana that allows me a different liberty that I always long for. It provides me that wild excitement because of the hues of emotions being expressed through them. Oh ...how I admire those beautiful hands and hearts who created these marvels bedecked here and there, and the song, it still serves as the best background music for my free writing at this wing of the school periphery.

I am gradually dragged into the serenity of the place despite the song at the background and the music of the raindrops beating the roofs, and the ground and the roads and the greenery. Nature is painting a masterpiece outside striking its brush and colours in the form of raindrops and the paintings created by the creative sapiens inside the library have some alignment with the painting created outside. Now I can feel that the rainfall is not down-pouring as it was before some time. But still, the ongoing song is touching the softest corner in one of the chambers of my heart “मलाई माया गर्ने, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो, तिमी नै हो”reminding me of my beloved ones. Moreover, the song is even compelling me to comprehend what that is, not who they are whom I love or who the ones are who love me. Definitely, I have many answers to “whom” and “who” but I have only one answer to “what”, that is “ART”. I am a true lover of art-related creative things, either that be painting or music or song, or writing or dancing and so on and so forth. This day at this place is going to be a fuel for my creativity whenever I will think about it. After many a day, I have amassed this zeal to sit down quietly and write down, I mean type, what so ever comes out of me. Thank God, I had brought my laptop with me today thinking that I would utilize my time if I would get some free time. Oh, I am totally so engrossed in the trapezium of my feelings that I didn't even notice that there are a few students now at the library sharing the same huge table where I have posited my dear laptop. It seems like they were already here when I was immersed in my feelings, but now, when they stood up to go, I have come to this realization that they were here, though not when I began writing.

I thank thee, dear Lord for arranging my visit here. I am here with my girls from the different sections of class 12. I, in fact, have accompanied them for the joint school workshop for students on “Slam Poetry”.

Since the organizing school slammed the door for the teachers from the participating schools and just let the participating students in (just kidding), in fact, they had allowed us to choose either to stay inside the workshop venue or to go out and explore the periphery, we, all the teachers from different schools who have accompanied our students for the same, chose not to stay in. Consequently, I am exploring my writer self in this corner as I do not want to walk to the wilderness in the rain to navigate the place with the two other fellow teachers, with whom I was sharing my pedagogical techniques as a high school English teacher about an hour ago in the Principal's office, sipping the cup of green tea he offered to each one of us.

"Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."

- Picasso (n.d.)

CHAPTER I

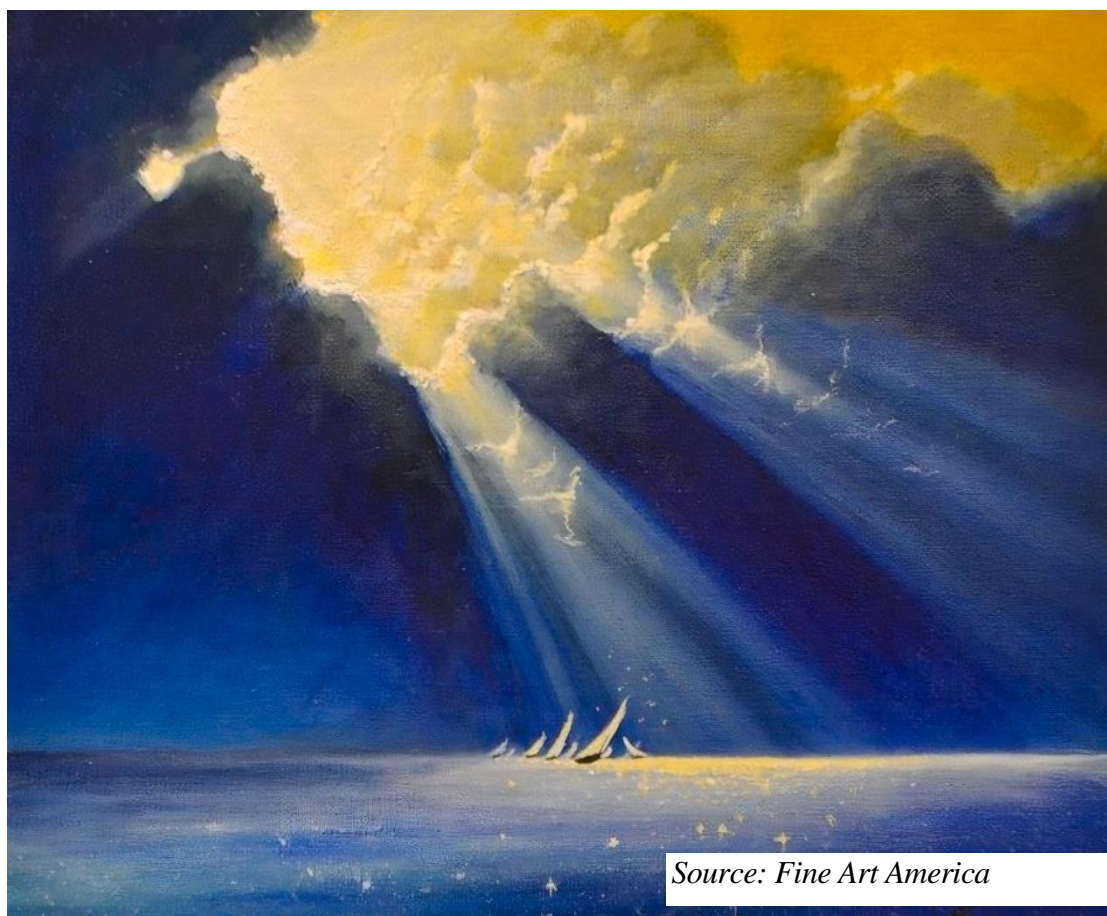
PRELUDE: SETTING THE STAGE

The study attempts to scrupulously explore the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal. Active learning has become the need of academia, more specifically, English language education. As D'Mello (2022) articulates, it has gained momentum in the educational domain at present as an effective instructional approach which draws learners out of their comfort zone. It allows them to participate actively into learning and constructing new knowledge. This can be beneficial not only in the learners' formal learning phase but also for their lifetime. Thus, the key issue for the study is active learning. It scrutinizes the series of positive impacts, i.e., the domino-effect of active learning, that develops in students through active participation and first-hand experiences in learning. It also strives to understand various literacy as well as life skills attained by learners which can be of great help for them even after their school. The study embraces the Arts-Based Inquiry as its methodology to fathom the constructive ripple effect of active learning in the pupils learning English.

This chapter is the curtain-raiser for the entire study as it attempts to shed light on what actually propelled me to conduct the research and how I got fascinated by the topic I have selected. A self-composed ode respecting the feelings of my students, that compelled me to be an empathetic teacher, deep thinker and an enthusiastic researcher, begins the chapter which is followed by the section 'Vignette of Epiphany' which reveals the sudden realization I had regarding the importance of active learning. Both the ode and the episode of epiphany build together the contextual framework of the study whereas the third section of the chapter contains an anecdote from my teaching career that highlights the concrete details which led me to be a supporter of the use of active learning approach while teaching English. The rationale of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, boundary fixation (delimitations) and the body of the study (structure of the study) are various other facets that are neatly knit to serve together in the completion of the first chapter.

Figure 7

Bodhi- “The Awakening”



Source: Fine Art America

An Ode to Sentience

*Oh! The beauty of that Bodhi
 Still embraces my elated spirit
 The astounding aliveness I felt
 Amidst my lovely learners
 Their crazed clamor
 For being able to be the best of the best
 Since one fine day their schoolmistress
 Awesomely allowed them
 To be what they could be wholeheartedly
 They needn't mask their true self
 And their colossal creativity
 Each independent individual could showcase her strength,*

*Their contagious smile
 Transferred at full tilt
 From one corner of the class
 To the entire colloquium
 Dear me! What bliss and ecstasy
 What propelling vibe and energy!
 Which triggered my sentience
 And transformed me into an advocate of student-centered pedagogy*

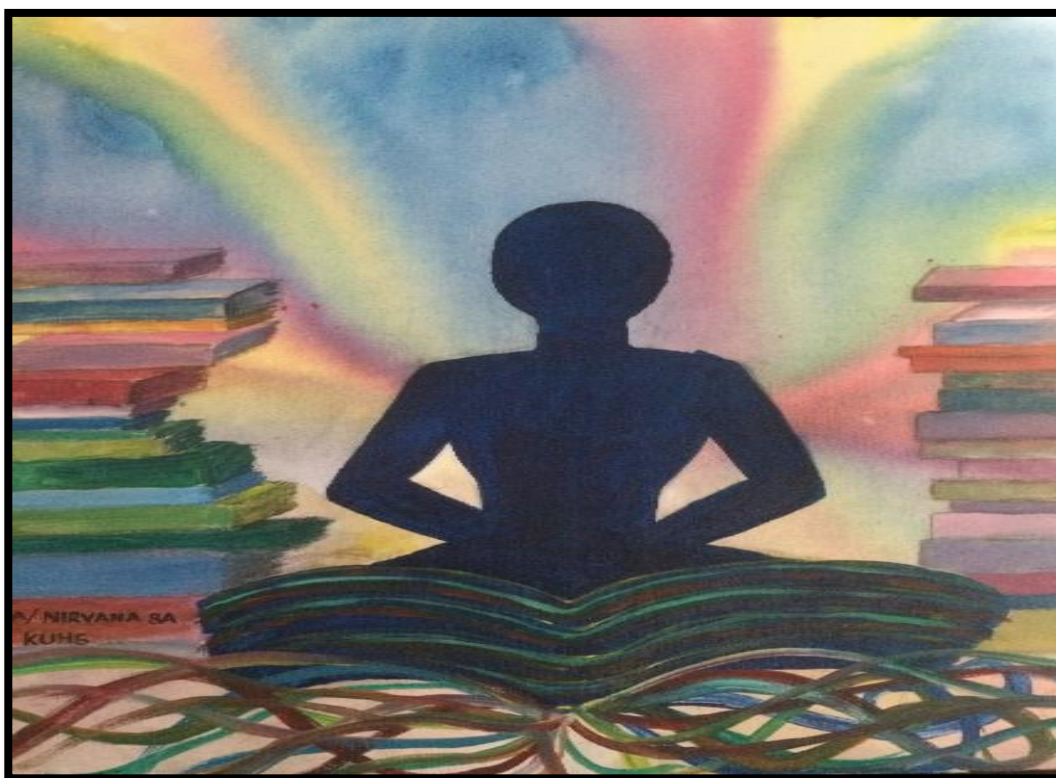
-Nagma Pandey

Vignette of Epiphany

This section of this chapter simply tries to simplify the aforementioned ode which deliberately opens the door to how my journey of promoting active learning while

Figure 8

A Painting Representing My Light-bulb Moment, Found on the Wall during My Field Visit



teaching English and advocating it dawned. The ode expresses how one beautiful day I could realize the better ways of learning for my pupils so that they could acquire knowledge easily and independently, without concealing “their true selves”. The session with my girls was not simply an ordinary one, rather, it was an outstanding class because

I had my light-bulb moment in the classroom and that particular moment is referred to as a “vignette of epiphany” here, which means, the episode of sudden realization. I came to ascertain immediately that there is no way of teaching better than the pedagogical strategies that demand the students’ active involvement and interaction which finally leads to their transformation.

The girls were at full blast, as loud as the silver trumpet’s martial blow. And the noise, “their crazed clamor” was ignorable for me because my girls were trying to be the best versions of themselves after I allowed them to enact the story that I was teaching them. They were gradually crawling out of their comfort zone. Everyone had a happy face with a broad smile that contagiously spread from one corner of the classroom to another and finally touched me, too. Yes, I was smiling with them, rejoicing their creativity. Each individual was able to showcase her strength which added extra bliss to my teaching. Every single child was a happy and independent learner then because they were learning the lesson by doing an activity based on what was taught to them on their own. The smile on their faces was the outcome of their victory over their shyness, whereas the smile on my face was the consequence of that “elated spirit” and “ecstasy” I had at that particular moment. I realized their need, and the very realization triggered my love for active learning which transformed me into “an advocate of student-centered pedagogy”.

Walking Down the Memory Lane..... “The Awakening”

Figure 9

A Spooky Pic. Spotted on a Wall in the Corridor during My Field Visit. There It is, the CANTERVILLE GHOST!!! Can You See It?



In the year 2013, while I was teaching “The Canterville Ghost” by Oscar Wilde which was included in the English book i.e., Learning to Communicate of class 8, in one of the

highly reputed educational institutions in Lalitpur district, I experienced the awakening, my first understanding of active learning as the best learning method. There were 52 girls (as it's a girls-only school) who were simply staring at me with a hope to experience something else while I was standing on the platform in front of the classroom and explaining Wilde's masterpiece. Despite completing the thorough explanation of the story with full energy, I could see the peculiarity of my girls' stillness, and there was no trace of excitement or happiness on their faces. They looked bored and fatigued after such a long explanation though they admitted that they understood the story. I couldn't see any spark of happiness and sense of achievement in them. They had simply listened to me just for the sake of listening because I ruled the platform and was the sole speaker.

Borrowing Friere's (1968) banking concept of education, I was merely trying to deposit knowledge in my students' brains, exactly as the teachers who follow traditional approach in teaching do. I tried to put myself into their shoes and felt very guilty about what I was doing. The very moment, I realized that that was not done and then immediately I knew what I had to do. This realization was the outcome of my girls' desolateness, their faces barren and bleak without their smiles. I was repentant and apologetic, though I did not actually say "sorry" to them. As Kaur (2019) elucidates, a teacher's role is diverse at present, from being a facilitator to being a confidant to the students. Thus, I thought of rewarding them by letting them use the platform which I had been using as my personal territory, for I realized that my task as a teacher was to open the window for them so that they could get to see the vista that would widen their mental horizon. I wanted them to acquire not just hard skills but also soft skills which would be with them for their lifetime. As differentiated by Aggrawal (2024), hard skills are

Figure 10

The Window That Lets My Pupils See the Vista That Widens Their Mental Horizon



acquired easily in educational institutions as they are learnable, whereas soft skills might not be associated with any certain study or curriculum but are still essential for resolving

any sort of problem in life. Hard skills are literacy skills which are technical, whereas soft skills are life skills which are non-technical. With the implementation of active learning techniques, learners can acquire hard skills and can simultaneously acquire soft skills too that can bring transformation in their behavior as well as attitude. I involved the entire class actively into an activity relevant to the story taught. I divided the class into four groups according to the four houses: red, blue, yellow and green. I asked them to conduct a role play on the story, giving them one week's time. Lo! They had transformed into something else, a bunch of happiest and the most creative beings merely after a week. Role play is one of the most effective active learning strategies through which students learn various 21st century skills like communication, collaboration, flexibility, adaptability, creativity etc., that bring transformation in their behavior and attitude (Aura et al., 2023). Through the use of that one active learning strategy, i.e., role play, my girls could achieve various literacy and life skills which was the positive domino effect of active learning. The literacy skills they learnt were reading, writing, listening and speaking. Similarly, the life skills they learnt were the importance of teamwork, mutual help, time management skill, communication skill etc. They were triumphant over their vacillation and me, yes.....I was utterly overwhelmed to see them attempting to prove themselves the best which made me say “**EUREKA !!!**” It was an epiphany moment for me.

I was convinced completely through this incident that active learning is an archway to acquisition of knowledge that has two branches: literacy skills (hard skills) and life skills (soft skills). As stated by Sulaiman and Abdullah (2024), the techniques of active learning are employed increasingly at present as they help in accomplishing academic success as well as improving critical thinking, conceptual comprehension and motivation in learners unlike the traditional lecturing pedagogical approach. This particular incident in my life gave rise to the topic for my MPhil. research, i.e.; Domino Effect of Active Learning in English Language Classrooms, as I desperately wanted to scrutinize what other positive effects occur due to the use of active learning strategies in learners as one simple activity of a role-play transformed my girls massively. In fact, it was a two-way traffic as not just my girls as the learners but also me as the teacher got transformed, as since that incident, I began using more and more active learning techniques while teaching English. This made me very much inclined to the practice and advocacy of active learning approach in teaching. And finally, the core issue of my MPhil. dissertation has become active learning. That's how this journey began.

The Rationalization

There is a vast difference between knowledge and wisdom. Wisdom is achieved by integrating knowledge (Bratianu & Bejinaru, 2023). Knowledge remains useless until and unless it is transformed into wisdom, i.e., the knowledge acquired by a learner becomes wisdom only when it is applied in the real-life situation of the learner. If hard skills are the elements of knowledge, we can call soft skills the components of wisdom. Meacham (2024) defines wisdom as a balance between simultaneous increment in the knowledge one possesses and the self-recognition that one has much more to know than what he knows. Hence, knowledge and wisdom are the two wheels of a bicycle. The application of knowledge in one's real life is possible only when knowledge is acquired through active learning. This is possible through the learner's first-hand experiences which has been proven by great philosophers like Jean Piaget, David Kolb, Lev Vygotsky and John Dewey through their theories (Malik & Behera, 2024). Moreover, Kolb's theory of Experiential learning has been used in this paper, too, whereas the other three theories which are Piaget's cognitivism, Vygotsky's Constructivism and Dewey's pragmatism are also discussed thoroughly due to their relevance to the topic. According to Cambridge Assessment International Education (2020), active learning is the golden key that can be used in English language pedagogy that helps students become lifelong learners, letting them acquire not just knowledge but also change that knowledge gained into wisdom. As the wise saying goes:

"Every increase in knowledge requires an increase in wisdom".

(Russell, 1954)

Active learning provides them with deeper and greater participation that even helps them understand better how creatively and critically active they can become, thereby attaining knowledge and even becoming able to transform the knowledge acquired into wisdom by implementing in their lives what they have learnt inside the classroom. As opined by Kazakova et al. (2020), the techniques of active learning improve the personal abilities of pupils that contribute to the construction of the necessary competencies, creativity and criticality in them. Consequently, they become able to apply the knowledge amassed in their private as well as public life even after their formal education comes to an end, which makes them not merely knowledgeable but equally wise people. So, this study focuses on various positive successive effects of active learning in English classes as I have come to know through the review of

various scholarly articles that no researcher, till this date, has studied what the series of constructive effects of the use of active learning approach in English classrooms is like, using arts-based inquiry as the methodology.

Tiwari's (2023) study highlights the experiences of Nepali students learning English in Nepal and Australia. His is a comparative study that shows pedagogical differences between passive learning and active learning while learning English in Nepal and Australia. Gholami (2014) researched the usage of active learning strategies for an interactive EFL class, Ramil (2018) studied the progress in learners' English speaking ability via active learning activities, Vuorela (2019) researched active learning and grammar exercises in EFL workbooks, Hung (2015) found out the effects of flipping the classroom for English –language learners to foster active learning, Wibowo and others (2020) explored the pre-service teachers' perceptions on the strategies in building an active learning environment in English classroom, Jones and Bursens (2015) studied the effects of active learning environments; moreover, they focused on how stimulations trigger effective learning. These are a mere hint of many of the researches that are conducted on various topics of active learning.

The National Curriculum Framework (2019) targets to replace the old curriculum within the period of four years beginning from the year 2020. According to Ghimire (2021), the framework is more learner-friendly which focuses not only on teaching various subjects but also life skills. Shrivastava (2023) further opines that the new curriculum aims at the holistic development of the students by implementing a pupil-centric approach that is based on practice and competency development. The curriculum, besides focusing on the four literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, even supports vocational education that helps students acquire life skills for sustainability.

This study well justifies the aim of the new curriculum by exploring the implementation of active learning and its ripple effect on the holistic development of a child. The study can even be a blueprint to help the people involved in pedagogy get more inclined to the application of active learning which is a method that is successful in upgrading the learners' state of mind, providing them hard skills and even instilling in them soft skills. This research can even add to the effectiveness of English language pedagogy, more specifically in Nepal. Besides, it can encourage English language teachers to apply the methods of active learning as it sheds light on the positive impacts of active learning that are directly related not only to a child's learning of literacy skills but also life skills. The study is an amalgam of art and data which can prove that various

forms of art can even be used to express the vastness of human emotions, thereby stimulating novice researchers to opt for arts-based inquiry as an effective methodology for their research. Almost everyone involved in language pedagogy is aware of the importance and life-changing effects of active learning, but only awareness pertaining to it is not enough; it must be well documented so that the researchers and educators get benefitted. Hence, the documentation of my investigation on the topic will take its stand as a rich source of information about the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in the present context of Nepal.

The Problematization

Knowledge is not simply passed from an individual to another, rather, it is created in the minds of the learners. Bodner (2019) clarifies how knowledge is created by stating that it is constituted socially, and is not plainly held by mere individuals. Surface knowledge is one-directional, and we need to explore deeper knowledge and most importantly, unrevealed and unexposed knowledge for which active learning is needed. Knowledge is acquired through shared experiences, more particularly through involvement in a typical form of life, with particular language games (Ennals et al., 2011). Thus, a teacher can only guide or show diverse paths of knowledge, and learners are the ones who steer through the path of their choice based on their personal discernment. They become able to choose the right path which has an everlasting effect if they get to learn things being involved rather than being passive receivers. Being the active receiver allows a learner to acquire both literacy and life skills which are also known as hard and soft skills respectively. The study underlines both these skills as the domino effect of active learning. This is what my research has tried to explore. Hence, the study sheds a broader spectrum of light on the series of positive effects created by the use of active learning method in an English language classroom.

There are scholars who have researched a lot about active learning as this pedagogical method is the need of academia in the present scenario, for it aims to bring transformation in the learners' mental processing of knowledge, their behavior and attitude and their capability to adaptability. Tiwari (2023) examines the significance of the use of pedagogical techniques focusing more on comprehensive language skills and practical language skills that help learners improve their communication skills, technology integration, enrichment of contextual vocabulary etc. The qualitative study has an interpretative framework with narrative inquiry as its methodology. It broadly highlights the learning experiences of five Nepali student participants studying advanced

level English for Academic Preparation (EAP) course at Melbourne City College Australia. It is a comparative study that shows pedagogical differences between passive learning and active learning, while learning English in Nepal and Australia. The study emphasizes effective English language teaching via active learning techniques. Nepali (2015) probes into the practices of student-centered techniques followed by secondary-level English teachers in Nepal. His study is based on the active learning practices implemented by 45 English language teachers from Baglung district in Nepal. The study reveals that the teachers use learner-friendly techniques as far as possible but they have not been able to practice active learning approach while teaching poetry as they feel it easy to use our traditional method of lecturing and explaining while teaching poems. Kshetree (2023) delves into the teaching techniques and trends followed by the English language teachers of Butwal sub-metropolitan city. The observation of the classroom activities used by the trainee teachers to ease the English language learning process amongst their pupils is the core of the study. These are some of the researchers from Nepal who have positively addressed to various issues related to active learning approach in English language classrooms.

Similarly, there are some foreign researchers who have chosen the domain of active learning method as their subject matter to investigate. They have looked into different issues related to active learning method and its strategies. For example, Qablan (2024) advocates the use of active learning strategies in different educational settings because it helps in acquiring, creating, applying and sharing knowledge. He further focuses on the importance of metacognition that helps pupils assess their own understanding of the things they have learnt. In order to attain this highly critical skill of metacognition, he suggests various active learning skills in the classroom. Gholami et al. (2014) delve into the issue pertaining to the interactive EFL class with the use of active learning strategies. The study recognizes the strategies of active learning in English classes and then investigates how these strategies affect the learners' interactions. It even contributes to the creation and preparation of a highly interactive pedagogical atmosphere in English classrooms. Ramil (2018) advocates active learning practices to improve students' speaking skill. The study reveals that the various strategies of active learning help in the improvement of students' proficiency of English speaking ability. The study also shows the students' increasing confidence and enthusiasm to join the English-speaking classes. The research suggests the English teachers to plan out their lessons and activities effectively to set up well-

organized, active English-speaking classes. Vuorela (2019) weighs up active learning and Grammar exercises in EFL workbooks. He analyzes most commonly used teaching materials in Finland from classes 7 to 9 basic education with an emphasis on the practical aspect of Grammar. Particularly, the study examines if the new secondary school workbooks contain any active learning strategies to make grammar exercises more interesting. More specifically, the research attempts to figure out if the theoretical trends in Grammar instruction and the updates on the national curriculum have affected the designs of the Grammar activities in the workbooks.

Furthermore, Hung (2015) focuses on the two important strategies of active learning out of many, which are flipped classrooms and Web Quest technique. His study emphasizes flipped classrooms for English language learners in order to implement active learning approach and scrutinizes the likely effects of flipping the classrooms on English language students' academic performance, their attitudes toward learning and their level of enthusiasm in the participation with the application of Web Quest active learning technique. He claims that semi-structured and structured designs are far more effective instructional designs than non-flip lessons. Wibowo et al. (2020) have conducted a study that relies on pre-service teachers' perceptions, on the schemes in building an active learning environment in English language classrooms. They assess what kind of strategies can be applied to create an active learning environment in English classrooms and what preparations should be made by the pre-service English teachers for the effective teaching-learning process in English classrooms. Kamrulzaman et al. (2018) emphasize the impact of active learning strategies on students' attitudes toward English via descriptive quantitative analysis and assert that most of them have positive attitude toward English language and implementation of active learning. They even admit that the higher-order cognitive skills and soft skills can be developed through the use of active learning strategies.

The above discussion reflects that researchers and educators both are very much inclined to the method of active learning that they have amply examined the various concerns of active learning. Active learning teaching techniques are innumerable which are rapidly gaining ground and are studied from various other angles and dimensions. Yet, the study on the positive cumulative effects of active learning approach in an English language classroom is missing which proves that there is a gap in this subject matter which this study explores. Besides, arts-based inquiry is the methodology used for this investigation which adds freshness and originality to the study. There are still some

problems to be resolved or some questions to be answered, viz: Do the English language teachers of Nepal implement active learning strategies in their classrooms for various constructive effects on the learners? Do the learners enjoy active learning strategies being used in their English classrooms? What are the benefits of using active learning method in Nepalese English language classrooms? In order to dig deeper into these matters so that this study can contribute to meet with the objectives of our latest curriculum and to bring some improvement in teaching English language in Nepal, I have embarked on this investigative journey.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the positive domino effect of the implementation of active learning strategies in English language classrooms and also to traverse how it helps them acquire literacy as well as life skills through arts-based methodology.

The Queries the Research Resolved

1. How does the implementation of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal create a positive domino effect on the learners?
2. How does active learning help students not only in learning literacy skills (hard skills) but also in acquiring life skills (soft skills)?

Boundary Fixation

In order to accomplish a researcher's goal and objectives, the study has to fix its boundary, or it has to be delimited, i.e., setting up a borderline for the research work. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019) unanimously support the aforementioned assertion and further divulge that the researchers, with the purpose of achieving their objectives, set the boundaries for their research. Thus, it is up to the researcher what limits s/he wants to set to achieve her/his desired goal. In fact, delimitations of my study help me to explain "why I did not do it like this" and not "why I did this" (p. 157). Thus, the fixation of boundary helps me elucidate why I did not choose some other ways to conduct my research. I have narrowed down my study to the exploration of the positive domino effect of active learning in the students of English language classrooms so that I can be more focused on the chain reaction of active learning that creates a series of learning benefits that follow one after another, enabling the learners to learn English easily and simultaneously, helping them to learn various literacy skills and life skills so that they become able to lead an independent and successful life at present and even in the future.

First and foremost, I have abstained from exploring the negative domino effect of active learning approach if there is any. One of the scholars, during the time of the proposal defense of this dissertation, had asked me what I would do if I came across the negative domino effect of active learning. I would like to readdress the gentleman's query hereby that I have refrained from delving into anything negative related to the implementation of active learning strategies, if there is any. Moreover, I haven't reviewed any of the scholarly articles or academic paper related to that as that's not the matter of my concern or interest. For this study, active learning approach has only positive impacts on the learners which I have scrutinized successfully.

Secondly, I have delimited the research to the experiences of only four research participants and only one progressive school in Lalitpur as the research site. All my participants were the students and not the teachers, as my objective was to trace the domino effect of active learning on learners. For this research, the expression "domino effect of active learning" only refers to the literacy skills and life skills acquired by learners with their active involvement in learning through the first-hand experiences they accumulated.

Lastly, I have not opted for the methodologies like narrative inquiry which is the collection of the real stories from the participants through which the researcher knows their real personality (Butina, 2015), case study which happens to be an in-depth study of a participant or participants (Rajkar, 2024); ethnography which lets the researcher immerse in a community or a group to closely observe the interactions, culture or behavior of its members (Caulfield, 2020), action research which according to Gnawali, et al. (2021) is a practice-based research that aims at discovering the best solutions to the problems found in a classroom. The research is an arts-based inquiry as I want to transfer the latent and intangible emotions, memories and experiences related to active learning, of my participant students, into visible pictures, tangible paintings and readable literature such as narratives, poetry, letter, reflection etc. (Wang, 2023). I have not used various other forms of art, such as performance art, film, plastic arts, etc. My research employs only literary and visual arts. As a researcher, I want the study to be an assemblage of art and data. Smith (2009) better speaks out my heart stating that various forms of art can be chosen to capture the juvenile inventiveness, imagination and great energy the learners demonstrate. Moreover, arts in different forms ignite those ideas the pupils cannot express clearly in words.

Hence, I have intentionally restricted my study to the constructive domino effect of active learning, researching the issue via arts-based methodology, though there are wider prospects and possibilities of investigation pertaining to active learning, in order to be more earnest in the study.

Body of the Study

Body of the study focuses on the structural organization of this dissertation. Basically, this research has eight chapters which are ‘Prelude: Setting the Stage’, ‘A Montage of Reviewed Literature, Demystification of the Positive Domino Effect and Discussion on the Theoretical Framework’, ‘Research Methodology: Philosophy, Arts-Based Research and a Leap from Saldana to the Cycle of Four Seasons’, ‘Candid Portrayal of My Participants: The Pizza Girl, Miss Know-All, Mr. Cool Philosopher and Mr. Loud’, ‘We Are Art: An Acronym for Various Active Learning Strategies’, ‘Domino Effect Detected in the Participants through David Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory’ ‘An Odyssey of an Artistic Researcher from Winter to Autumn: Impression, Impacts and Insights’, ‘Tying Up the Loose Ends: Perspectives, Reflections and Conclusion’ respectively.

The first chapter is all about the introduction of the entire study, contextual framework, rationale of the research, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions and delimitations of the study. Similarly, the second chapter deals extensively with different kinds of literature reviewed which are as: thematic review, theoretical review, policy review and empirical review. It also consists of demystification of the positive domino effect, gap analysis as well as the conceptual framework of the study. The third chapter clarifies the research methodology used for the study, philosophical considerations, research paradigms which are interpretivism and postmodernism, methodological consideration, i.e., the research is a qualitative one which has employed arts-based inquiry, research design, data analysis, quality standards and ethical considerations. The fourth chapter offers a vivid view of all my four participants, viz: the Pizza Girl, Miss Know-All, Mr. Cool Philosopher and Mr. Loud. It also reflects on the transformation, i.e., positive domino effect of active learning that occurred in the participants.

The fifth chapter clarifies why I have chosen arts-based research as the methodology and what kinds of art are invariably used in my dissertation. It also presents and explains a specimen curriculum entitled “WE ARE ART,” which can be the bedrock for the application of active learning teaching techniques. The sixth chapter unfolds how

all four participants evolved gradually through the use of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. It has been detected through the chapter that the domino effect of active learning, such as various literacy and life skills take place in all the participants observed for the study. The seventh is a reflexive journey of an artistic researcher from winter to autumn, which highlights the method of data collection and analysis that was implemented for the dissertation. The Eighth or the final chapter is a touch-up to the entire project. It teems with the perspectives developed after the exploration of the issue, reflections on the entire journey and an emotively poetic epilogue that recapitulates the journey of the study.

Chapter Encapsulation

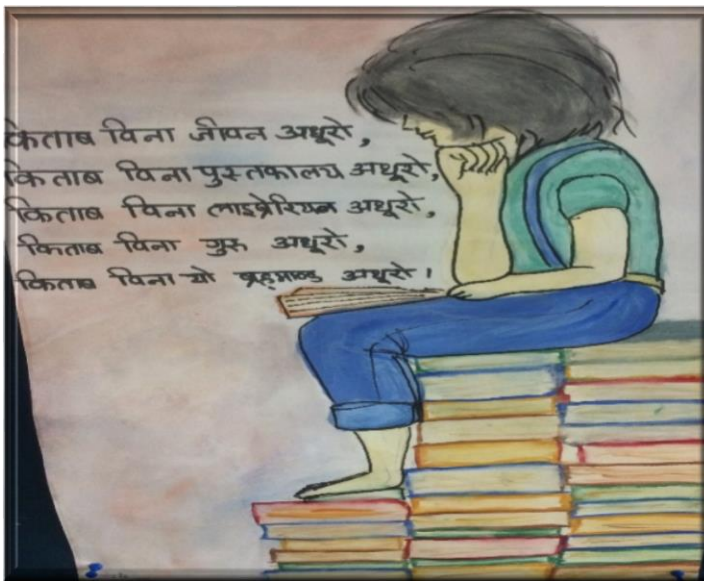
In a nutshell, chapter one is the introductory chapter fully laden with the ideas pertaining to the theme and the theory I have undertaken to conduct the research. Beginning with the prelude, i.e., the opening move with an ode that sheds light on what triggered me to regulate this research based on the domino effect of active learning and how I chose the topic, I have reflected upon the episodic piece in my life which created an epiphany moment for me when I suddenly realized that active learning is the best pedagogical method that brings about transformation in learners. Through the rationale of the study, I have justified the significance and novelty of my study, followed by the problem statement and the purpose of the research. The core questions that worked as the guiding principles for the entirety of the research lie in the very chapter which is followed by the delimitations that I have set for this project. The final segment is the body of the study, that is, the synopsis of each chapter that transpires this dissertation.

CHAPTER II

A MONTAGE OF REVIEWED LITERATURE, DEMYSTIFICATION OF THE POSITIVE DOMINO EFFECT AND DISCUSSION OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 11

A Painting That Depicts My Condition as a Researcher: An Avid Reader



Source: Library- Wall of One of the Educational Institutions at Dhulikhel

The chapter is laden with the assortment of the literature I reviewed for the research. Review of literature, the backbone of any research project, helps in figuring out the notions of other people in the same area of one's study but in a different way, thereby aiding to the researcher's forward movement in his/her study. Arshed and

Figure 12

This Book-tree Signifies the Importance of Literature Review



(Source: Library- Wall of One of the Educational Institutions at Dhulikhel)

Danson (2015) shed light on the significance of literature review stating that it may sort out an argument, set up the requirement for further inquiry, and elucidate a topic for exploration. Literature review actually helps in the proper structuring of the entire study. The montage presents the thematic review based on the domino effect of active learning. Then, it discusses the theoretical review relevant to this study, i.e., Lev Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism, Jean Piaget's theory of cognitivism, David Kolb's theory of Experiential Learning and John Dewey's theory of Pragmatism. The document then highlights the policy review of Nepal pertaining to the theme of active learning and the provisions we have regarding it in the context of Nepal. It also presents empirical review, the review of the scholarly articles based on active learning and its impact on the students in English classes. The chapter concludes with the discussion of the research gap and the conceptual framework of the study.

In the journey of reviewing literature, I came to an understanding that there are various theories that can be used for my research. Some of those that align with the theme are even discussed in this chapter with the purpose to highlight the relevance and connection of those theories such as constructivism, cognitivism and pragmatism. However, I have chosen only one theory for the research as I found it easy for me to link it to my study and use it accordingly for the process of data analysis. Thus, the theory that I have employed here is "Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory". In the field visit, while getting accustomed to the experiences, emotions, attitudes and behaviors of my little participants, I could trace that they all went through various phases of experiential learning, as highlighted by David Kolb, to make an understanding of an issue. As elucidated by Kolb and Kolb (2024), learning takes place in an invariably recurring cycle with different phases. Hence, learning is never linear. And as said by the duo, experience is crucial for entering into this cycle which I realized being amidst my star dusts, who were ever ready with the accounts of their experiences. They always wanted an active listener for themselves so that they could narrate their anecdotes and experiences. Thus, from then on, I was mentally set that I would be using Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory to understand and interpret the learning experiences of my little participants and to explore the transformation that would take place in their academics and their behaviors.

From the moment I decided upon my research topic, my passionate hunt for various reading materials related to my area began. Besides, I went through many

books, several other dissertations submitted to Kathmandu University and various other scholarly articles, which definitely were helpful enough for me in one way or the other. *The Cambridge Guide to Research in Language Teaching and Learning* by Brown and Coombe was the first book that I read and reviewed for my virtual class presentation. I still have the fresh memory of the session when I presented the review of the book in one of my MPhil. first semester classes amongst my friends and the Professor. This gave me a distinct overview of several research methods in second language acquisition. Besides, Robert J. Lowe's *Uncovering Ideology in English Language Teaching*, Freire's *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Hopson and Scally's *Lifeskills Teaching and Qualitative Research*, edited by David Silverman were the first ones of the kind I read in my MPhil. first semester journey which I will cherish all throughout my life. Now, I would like to shed some light upon the thematic review I made and then other kinds of literature review, respectively.

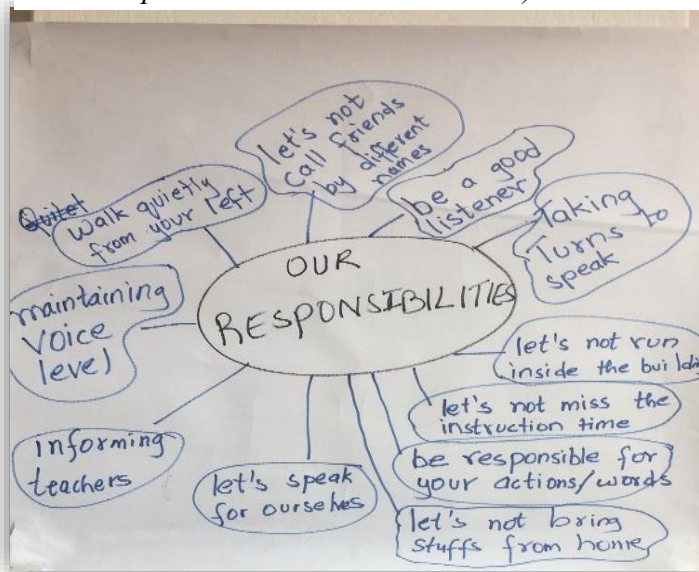
Threading the Theme

Since the study scrutinizes the positive domino effect of active learning, i.e., the various good impacts a learner experiences in an English class as the ripple effect of active learning, I would like to refer to some of the materials that I went through. They were heavily loaded with the major theme of my research, i.e., “active learning”.

The process of threading the theme helped me make a proper thematic review for the research. Through what Felder and Brent (2009) have to say, I have come to the understanding that active learning is the archway to acquisition of knowledge because anything relevant to the course and that the entire class is called upon to do individually or in a pair or in a group, rather than simply note-taking, listening or watching passively, leading them to be responsible for all their actions, is active learning. Thus, the implementation of “active learning” ensures active involvement of a student in learning. This provides positive impacts on a learner as learning becomes enjoyable and interesting when it teaches one the value of collaboration, teamwork, high-order skills, and many more. Active learning makes the process of sharing and extending knowledge better by developing the skill of analyzing things and critical thinking that helps learners face and solve problems easily (Khan et al., 2022).

Figure 13

Points Accumulated by the Students of Grade 4 'Experience' (as jotted down by their lead teacher & posted on the classroom wall.)....SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES



The learners feel shared responsibilities that bind them together to learn things better. They become able to analyze things critically which facilitates each one in the team to be better in making decisions and solving problems. They learn how to be liable for

their actions and, thereby, get motivated to be responsible and better human beings.

Active Learning: Archway to Acquisition

Education is persistently recreated in the praxis. Freire (2000), with his potent words “to be, it must become” (p. 84), compels me to quote Shakespearean expression from the opening soliloquy of his *Hamlet, Act III, Scene I*:

“To be or not to be, that is the question”. (Shakespeare, 1623, Act III, Scene I)

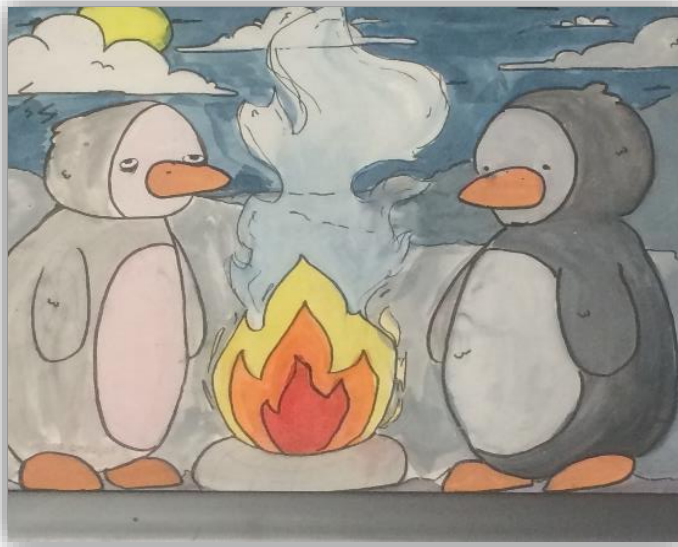
Active learning is the archway to acquisition which frees a learner’s mind from the dichotomy of “to be” or not “to be” as it constantly propels a pupil towards the path of “becoming” somebody through his or her direct involvement in learning. “Becoming” somebody, here, means becoming an independent learner that leads to the acquisition of both soft and hard skills for sustainability and adaptability in any situation. Quoting Freire again, “Education is the practice of freedom” (p.81), which lies at the heart of active learning. Each girl in my class was trying to become the best version of herself as they were more into praxis: reflecting, thinking and acting on their own.

In a way, they were constructing and recreating knowledge which had made learning easy and interesting. The principles of active learning, as expressed by Kalem and Fer (2003), are different and more fun-filled for students which help them obtain information on their own and orient responsibility that contributes to the flourishing of creative and productive learning skills. Learning acquired once through the direct involvement in various activities and interaction helps one comprehend the significance

of teamwork and creativity, enabling him/her to think critically which can be useful even in the long run of his/her life, imparting life lessons and teaching life skills.

Figure 14

A Painting Spotted during the Field Visit That Shows how Fire of Knowledge Provides Warmth to Both the Parties



Nobody on this planet knows everything; however, every human being is capable of offering another individual something to learn from his/her own experiences. Hopson and Scally (1981) define knowledge as the fire that provides warmth to both the parties, the one

who imparts it as well as the one who receives it. Thus, teaching and learning are not irreversible roles, which means, every person is a learner and a teacher simultaneously. Every single person can teach another and learn from the other as well. Hence, teaching-learning is a process that creates a win-win situation for both the teacher and the student. Students in a classroom can also teach each other as well as learn from each other. They should be provided enough space to explore and construct new knowledge as every child is capable of creating and constructing ideas. Kynigos (2015) opines that actual learning takes place through the procedure of engagement in different classroom activities that leads the learners to owning their original ideas, their own style of learning and provides them exposure to openly express their ideas for the purpose of communication as well as exploration. Thus, the students should be allowed to have first-hand experiences through various activities like role-play, group discussion, quizzes, journal writing, reflection writing, project work, each one teach one, memory game, round table, think aloud etc. (Mercat, 2022) which are the different techniques of active learning.

Active learning strategies are the most effective pedagogical strategies that lead the learners to the route of positivity, creating a perfect teaching-learning atmosphere. Xina (2020) clarifies the importance of the use of these strategies asserting that they can

be used to teach the skills of English language as well as the skills of life. One of the essential requisites of active learning environment is that both the learner and the facilitator must be committed wholeheartedly to a dynamic relationship where in both commonly share a responsibility for instruction (Fern et al., 1993). Active learning strategies help learners learn not only the chapters taught, rather they start showing improvement in “student-teacher interaction, student-student interaction, academic achievement, communication skills, higher level thinking skills, teamwork, attitude towards the subject and motivation to learn” (Geressu, 2008, pp. 15-16) which are various positive domino-effect of active learning.

Active learning is a technique of educating pupils and transforming them into cognizant beings, letting them have their effective participation in classroom activities. They are not passive listeners and mere note-takers. Mulongo (2013) characterizes them as the ones who direct and initiate the class where active learning methods are used. Implementation of active learning needs a depth of refining information that results to deeper understanding and better retention of knowledge, allowing growth of special interest and attention in the students (Synder, 2003). The techniques of active learning are considered best of the best to help a child develop his/ her cognitive and creative power. Learners need ample space for reflecting, discussing, debating, inquiring, analyzing and investigating. Jones and Bursens (2015) unitedly claim that learners need to acquire not only a proper foundation of discipline-specific knowledge and skills but equally a number of higher order skills in order to cope with ever altering environments and complex work procedures. Through problem solving education, learners experience the emergence of potential to perceive knowledge critically in them (Freire, 2000). Development of critical consciousness in learners helps them construct new ideas, leading them to the avenue of knowledge attainment.

Active Learning: Pathway to Learning Life Skills

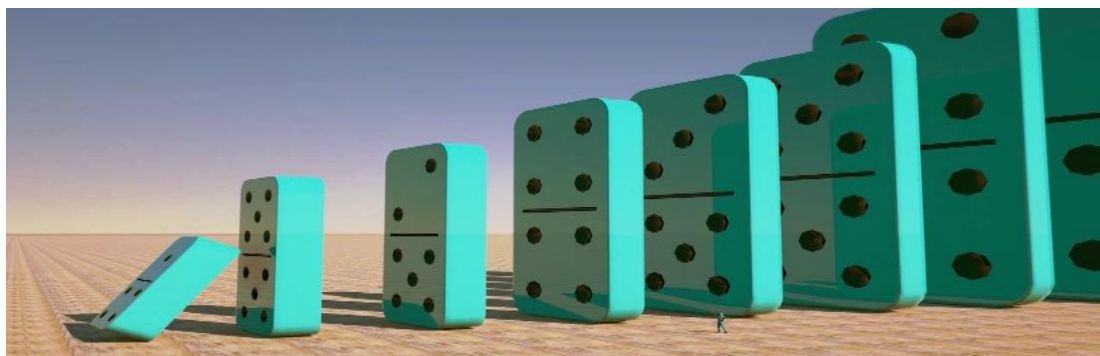
Active learning is an archway to acquisition of knowledge, wherein knowledge refers not only to literacy skills but also to life skills that make one smart enough to cope with adverse situations in his/her life. World Health Organization (1993) defines life skills as those potentialities that aid to adaptive and optimistic behavior, which enable mankind to tackle effectively with the pressure and challenges of everyday life. The kernels that develop into life skills are found in any learning strategy based on communicative language learning. Learners’ communicative skill prospers through active learning (Knight, 2018). Learning must impact a student in such a positive manner that

its impressions must retain for one's lifetime which helps an individual to be independent in all different phases of his/her life. Thus, learning must have an everlasting impact on a learner.

Implementation of active learning not only allows students to be independent learners but also great communicators and even teaches them the skills needed for their life beyond their school or college or university. That's why life skills learning has become a prime concern of educational institutions so that students learn problem solving techniques, dealing with emotions and stress, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal skills, communication skills, decision making strategies, self-awareness, self-motivation etc. which WHO (1996) term as life skills. This series of skills refers to the domino effect or cumulative effect of active learning which are achieved one after another just like the falling dominoes, one after another, in a domino game forming a beautiful pattern. But one thing is to be noted here that the fall does not invite any disaster,

Figure 15

Domino Effect



(Source: Getty Images)

because the fall in a positive domino effect is a marvel that only motivates one not to lie down passively but to move forward more actively and enthusiastically. It is more organized and beautiful as it falls, catching a rhythm and following a splendid pattern. As elucidated by Schroeder (2018), everything that we do and everything that exists is and has a domino effect. She juxtaposes well between a bad domino effect and a good domino effect and comes to a conclusion that the fall in a bad one is destructive, whereas the fall in a good one is constructive. Hence, the principal concern of the research is only to explore the constructive or positive domino effect caused due to the implementation of active learning strategies in an English language classroom.

The impact of active learning is tremendous as the students develop self-confidence, experience deep learning, polish higher-order thinking skills such as critical

thinking and problem solving ability, practice life skills, become optimistic towards learning and life, develop leadership quality, inculcate team spirit and value collaborative learning (Kamarulzaman et al., 2018). In this way, there are various positive knock-on effects of active learning which are beneficial not only for their school or college level but even for the different phases of their lives.

An English language classroom learning environment laden with active learning strategies enables the learners to take part in various classroom activities, act sensibly, react wisely and reflect accordingly, both as an individual or in a group (Altunay & Yurdabaken, 2012). The students' participation, action, reaction and reflection upon learning activities and outcomes are analogous to the domino effect. As one single oblong structure of the domino gets a slight push, the others in a pattern fall down, creating a pleasant sight. Similarly, there are various positive effects of active learning which ultimately aid to the success of a student.

As explored by Vaughan and Wall (2012), with the implementation of active learning strategies, students' enthusiasm for learning increases, negative issues related to their behavior decreases, they are more focused on activities, a smoother flow of teaching-learning is experienced, more interest and willingness in learning occurs in the learners due to self-motivated activities and participation and they display positive attitude throughout learning. These are nothing more than the positive domino effect of active learning; such effects are achieved one after another.

The Decisive Domino

The decisive domino
The first one in the series
Dauntless and determined
Stands out from its doppelgangers
Sturdy and strong
Waiting for a slight push
Whack.....!!!
Oh! the grand show of the falling dominoes
Descending, yet not declining
The fall so distinct
Yet beautiful and brilliant
A patterned revelation
A delightful dune formed with a fall

A fall so smooth, rhythmic and rippled
A kaleidoscopic view
The fall is not the fag end
But the crack of a new dawn
That marks the “construction of new knowledge”
Created without any bondage
 - Nagma Pandey

Demystifying Positive Domino Effect

Figure 16

Dominoes in a Series



(Source: iStock)

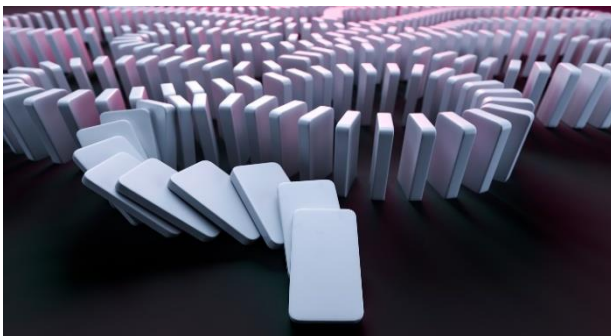
Dominoes are oblong objects standing in a series just to fall down, one after another, after the first domino, the decisive one, is applied upon some external force with a slight push. The dominoes fall in an array, forming a dune-like pattern that is appealing to human eyes. The fall of every single structure is not a decline or destruction; rather, an accomplishment of a kind in terms of positive domino effect.

Farber (2012) favors this patterned fall and defines every single fall as the achievement

of something good that, ultimately, a student gets to experience a tremendous outcome with the fall of the final block. Thus, the falling dominoes are not the hurdles or the challenges but the achievements longed by a learner since long.

Figure 17

Falling Dominoes, Forming a Pattern



(Source: Getty Images)

The study investigates how the various objectives set by the teacher for learners are achieved one after another, finally, enabling the students to acquire both literacy as well as life skills as the final outcome.

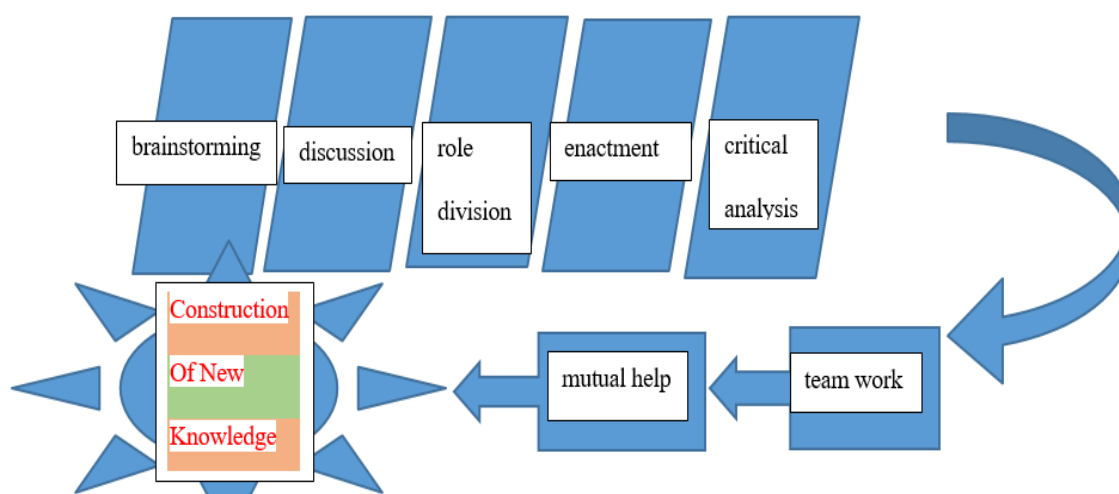
The game of dominoes is physical whereas the term domino effect is

conceptual. The positive domino effect is more about cause and effect. The first domino, according to Mahr (2022), causes the second one to fall after it is knocked over and the second to the third one and the process continues till the last one is knocked down. Similarly, a positive impact created due to the implementation of active learning strategies leads to a series of more and more good effects, finally teaching the learners both hard and soft skills required for the lifetime.

For instance, when I used one of the techniques of active learning, i.e., “role-play,” in my English classroom twelve years back (in the year 2013), the girls at first discussed (discussion/ brainstorming) with each other in their respective groups, then they divided their roles (role division) amongst each other, then they were ready for the enactment after which one girl from each group even critically analyzed (critical analysis) the story *The Canterville Ghost* at the end on the basis of their common understanding. A group representative from each group analyzed the story based on the points she had collected from every group member, which shows that they were a team working together (teamwork), learning from each other (mutual help). As soon as active learning was introduced, the classroom transformed into a sort of social setting where they could share their ideas and feelings, where they got freedom to move out of their comfort zone and demonstrate what they could actually do, where knowledge was being constructed (construction of new knowledge). Thus, various positive cumulative effects like: brainstorming, discussion, role division, enactment and critical analysis took place which can be demonstrated via the following figure:

Figure 18

Positive Domino Effect Achieved



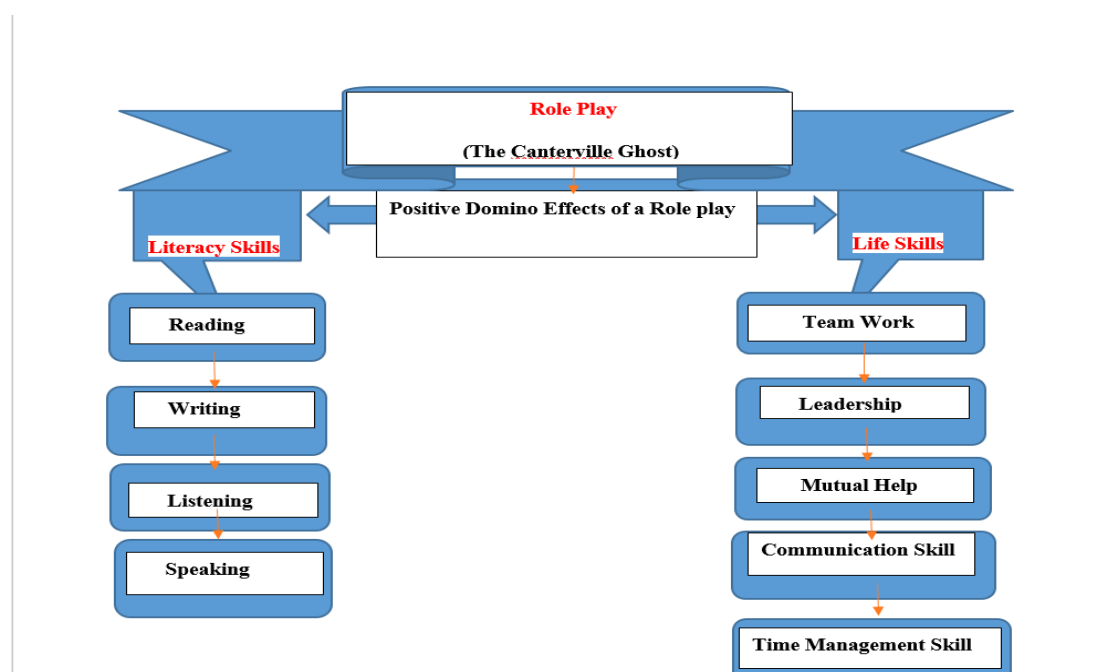
These good effects which are brainstorming, discussion, role division, enactment and critical analysis, can be taken as blocks of dominoes and the final outcome achieved

was the development of team spirit and mutual help that led to the construction of new knowledge. The critical analysis made by each group was different from the other that was so overwhelming for me, for I could easily figure out what was happening in the classroom. Their analysis was the result of their understanding. The best thing that had happened was the construction of knowledge through their active involvement in the classroom. One active learning strategy, i.e., role play, was used which had its domino effect on the learners as a series of occurrences took place on its own, such as; brainstorming, discussion, role division, enactment and critical analysis. The series of these positive effects led to teamwork and mutual help that ultimately helped in the construction of new knowledge. They unitedly constructed knowledge. Their ability to analyze the storyline and the characters can be taken as the new knowledge formed since each group analyzed in their own way. One analysis was different from the other. This acquisition of knowledge was the outcome of their teamwork and mutual help, not my explanation.

Furthermore, they acquired literacy skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. They read the story before they brainstormed. Brainstorming, discussion and delivering their dialogues in front of the class added to their speaking skill. They had prepared the dialogues to enact the story that helped them in their writing. They were interacting and discussing, even dividing their roles, that not merely helped them in the

Figure 19

Positive Domino Effects of a Role Play



development of their speaking skill but also in their listening skill. Simultaneously, they acquired life skills as they understood the value of teamwork, leadership, mutual help, communication skill, time management skill and many more. The given figure best clarifies how they attained literacy and life skills through the implementation of one active learning strategy, i.e., a role play.

Theorizing the Theme

Learners are no longer passive recipients of knowledge; rather, they are the super active creatures who construct knowledge according to the recent pedagogical trend. Thus, learning is not merely absorption or recording of knowledge, for students can very creatively use the current knowledge to create new and more beautiful ideas. Language is a social construction and is learned through interactive and collaborative methods (Saleem et al., 2021). Knowledge is not transmitted but constructed within the four walls of an educational institution, even outside a school or a college. According to Bodner (2019), Piaget was the pre-eminent constructivist for his view on construction of knowledge in learners' minds which is based on the study of how pupils acquire knowledge. He believes that knowledge is acquired through the lifelong constructive process, and active learning strategies always aid to this construction of knowledge. The construction of knowledge is a process that encompasses various things that happen in a social setting in the classroom such as; interaction, brainstorming, discussion, collaboration, teamwork, mutual help etc., borrowing the words of Montero-Fleta et al. (2024), from acquiring knowledge to creating knowledge and from instructing to constructing newer knowledge occurs in a classroom with the use of active learning techniques. Thus, deep learning which is ongoing for a lifetime takes place through active learning as the students experience learning through various learning strategies.

Connectedness of Active Learning with Constructivism, Cognitivism and Pragmatism

Active learning has a deep connection with the theories of constructivism, cognitivism and pragmatism. The concept that learners attain knowledge by constructing newer knowledge on the basis of their experiences and older ideas they have perceived is deep rooted to the theories of great thinkers such as Piaget, Dewey and Vygotsky (Hunter, 2015). Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism, Piaget's theory of cognitive development and Dewey's theory of pragmatism pave the golden path for the flourishing of active learning. Besides, David Kolb's experiential learning theory lies at the heart of active learning since learners gain knowledge in active learning through their

participation and their first-hand experiences. Cognitivism takes mind as a vessel that processes information and ideas. It focuses on the idea of whole and not pieces since it takes concept as a unified whole. Dewey's pragmatism, which favors the view that knowledge is created via the active adaptation of human beings to their surroundings, is considered today as one of the essential prototypes for social constructivism (Reich, 2007). Thus, language learners are always able to adapt to their surroundings if provided opportunities by the teachers. So, it is a teacher's duty to let them improve their adaptability by introducing into teaching various strategies of active learning that finally helps them acquire literacy skills as well as life skills. The acquisition of both these skills transforms a learner into a successful human being which is the need of the entire world today.

Active Learning and Constructivism

The theory of constructivism holds the idea that students gain knowledge through their active participation in learning and construct new knowledge on the basis of the old one. Jaleel and Verghis (2015) feel the need for the shift of this emplacement of the construction of knowledge from individual to collective construction of knowledge. Knowledge is dynamic and can be changed and created. The learners who are guileless and quite naive can also construct knowledge in order to add another block to the edifice of pre-existing knowledge. Bereiter and Scardamalia (2010) think that classrooms can be transformed from knowledge transmitting organizations to knowledge creating institutions with the proper implementation of various strategies of active learning. Passive learning pedagogical approach has been criticized time and again by various critical thinkers like Freire, Rousseau, Dewey, Vygotsky and even by some international organizations like UNESCO and UNICEF (Shah, 2020). This shows that constructivist theory is gaining its ground rapidly in the pedagogical field. Thus, the study also firmly believes in the fact that knowledge is not transmitted but is constructed through the learners' active involvement in classroom activities and their first-hand experiences.

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky is regarded as the propounder of social constructivism theory according to which language and culture are the foundation on the basis of which mankind experiences emotions and feelings, communicates ideas, and understands reality (Akpan et al., 2020). He focuses on collaborative learning and opines that a learner must come into contact with the outer world where there are people like him who construct knowledge based on their shared notions and mutual help. Thus, according to social constructivism theory, construction of knowledge depends on the learners' joint

effort and the teachers are mere facilitators who simply create the environment for the students to work in a team. The students' understanding finds a shape not just through adaptive confrontations with the real world but also through interactions among various people who have various social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Liu and Matthews (2005) together focus on the main point in Vygotsky's theory that prioritizes social collectiveness as the key to acquisition of knowledge and intellectual elevation in an individual. Students need to come together for the creation of newer ideas. Active learning approach allows learners to come together, collaborate and create ideas giving the classroom the essence of a social setting where mutuality is the key that brings forth the specialty of the learners' individuality through the usage of various teaching-learning tools and techniques.

Active Learning and Cognitivism

Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget created many groundbreaking theories regarding child development, more specifically, cognitive development in children. His theories are especially about how a juvenile mind develops and how it is able to think rationally. Alhabib (2021) adores Piaget's chain of thinking pattern, i.e., four different mental stages that are sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational; take place in a child's mind which always follow the same order in all the children. His basic concern, as Alhabib (2021) analyzes, is how educators can impact children's learning positively, based on these four stages, while teaching learners of different age groups. Piaget's study examines how children perceive things rather than to what extent they learn and grasp new ideas. A human mind continuously tries to balance new ideas with past experiences and previous knowledge achieved. Lee (2016) believes that one of the effective cognitivist techniques to encourage higher order thinking in students is to lure them to process their minds critically and creatively by beginning a lesson with a hook in order to create interest in learners. In the form of warm-up activities, learners can be hurled some reflective questions related to the previous class or a review quiz can be that bait to propel prior learning which helps in the active involvement of the students. At times, the teacher can even begin the class with the anecdotes that are relevant to the chapter that is going to be started. Indeed, warm-up activities, reflective questions, review quizzes and sharing anecdotes are all different strategies of active learning.

Piagetian Cognitivism describes the four stages of intellectual development in every individual which are: "psychomotor, the intuitive, the concrete operational and the formal operational stages" (Sjoberg, 2010, p. 487). The way children perceive things in

their surroundings differs in each different stage, that is why several methods of teaching should be used so that they can grasp knowledge without much difficulty in each single phase. Piaget, like Dewey, rejects traditional teaching –learning process where the teacher speaks and the student listens. He totally disagrees that knowledge is created without the learners' participation. The fundamental mechanism of adaptation that helps humankind to achieve cognitive development is actually made up of two complementary processes of assimilation and accommodation. The former is the mental process of an individual's dealing with the environment in regards to his present cognitive structure whereas the latter is the process of modifying structures according to the environmental pressures (Pardjono, 2016). Both these processes are equally important for adaptation to take place which reaches its culmination stage with the occurrence of equilibrium. And both the processes of assimilation and accommodation can take place only when there is the implication of active learning strategies in a classroom. This helps better when applied in English classrooms.

Active Learning and Pragmatism

John Dewey advocates for pragmatism in education, although Charles Sanders Peirce is considered the father of pragmatism in philosophy. Mere theoretical studies do not help learners attain intellectual advancement at the highest level until and unless they are applied in human life and for the well-being of mankind. Heinemann and Defalco (2014) argue that mere practical studies cannot help one until methods of inquiry are incorporated with practicality. Thus, according to the duo, Dewey provides a robust foundation for cooperative learning which he strongly supports through philosophical as well as pedagogical rationales. Language learning should be practical and learner-engaging as language, according to the learning theory of pragmatism, is a tool to solve problems and to do the right action at the right time to achieve success in one's life. Language is not to mirror or simply describe or represent reality. Thus, implementation of active learning techniques can definitely help learners to use language as a tool, that is, to use it to make decisions, solve problems, communicate well and express ideas better, adapt to various odd situations, manage time and to maintain a poise in life.

Reality is always in flux. It fluctuates invariably that dimensional change while attempting to understand reality is needed. Attaining knowledge is a deal between learners with their learning environment (Firmanto et al., 2019). This theory treats the learners as the vital party in pedagogy that they must not be misunderstood and misguided. They learn better and faster when their natural creativity is polished and

encouraged by teachers in anything they do. Learners should not be punished while in the process of creating ideas. As researched by Chowdhary, Chowdhary and Gangopadhyay (2016), corporal punishment can discourage them from being openly expressive. And when they fail to express ideas, they fail in all spheres of life. So, several kinds of games, in fact, techniques of active learning, are to be used in teaching which work as learning tools, allowing learners that liberty to be more expressive, open-minded and creative. After all, creativity is the mother of all newer principles and paradigms.

Iowa State University (2017) enlists 226 active learning techniques which can be used as learning tools for students as they have innumerable advantages for learners. These strategies are far more effective and easily beat lecturing method and are even easy to implement and are immensely fun-filled. Some of these strategies are “picture prompt, think break, updating notes, word cloud guessing, instructor storytelling, grab a volunteer, Socratic questioning, reverse Socratic questioning, pass the pointer, turn my back, empty outlines, student polling, discussion row, pass the chalk, pass the dart” (Iowa State University, 2017, p. 1-3) and many more which function as the stepping stones for knowledge construction. Classroom liberalization definitely helps students grow mentally at a faster rate as it teaches them the value of learner independence and responsibility.

Active Learning and Experiential Learning Theory

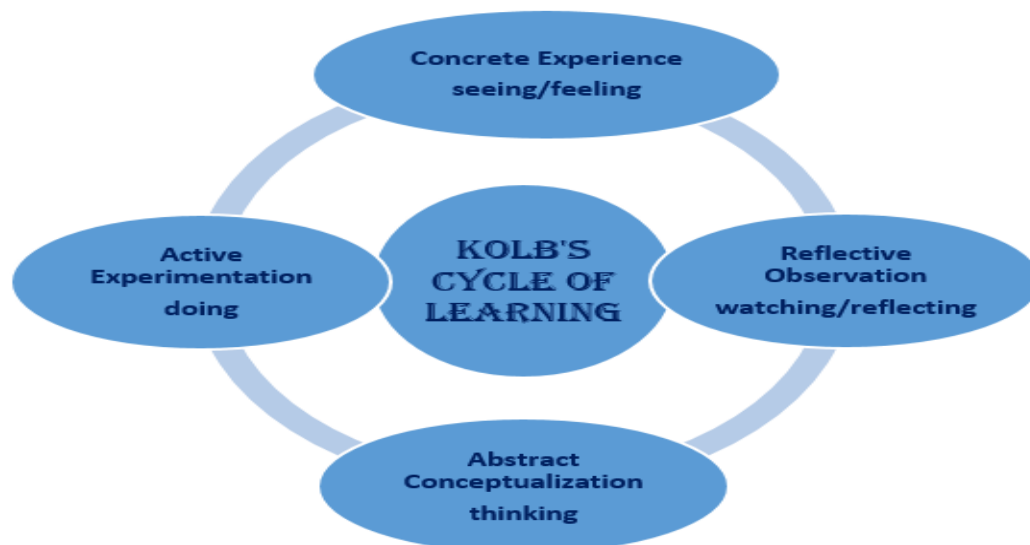
David Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) materializes active learning because experiential learning is participatory, wherein learning takes place through experiences that the learners have. According to Cherry (2022), David Kolb, a renowned American psychologist and an educational theorist, was greatly influenced by other great theorists like Dewey, Lewin and Piaget which inspired him to propound Experiential Learning Theory. They all opine unanimously that English language teaching should emphasize highly on the role of human experiences in learning. This helps in the transformation of the learners’ experiences into knowledge.

It provides a way to structure and sequence the curriculum. Healey and Jenkins (2000) state that it gives the indication of how the course is to be taught in order to bring improvement in students’ learning process. They admit that the theory focuses on the cyclical process of learning which consists of four stages, i.e.; sensing/feeling, watching/reflecting, thinking and doing. And all these different stages of learning adapt different learning styles. Learners do have different learning styles in different phases; however, teachers must be able to understand their own learning styles in different situations so that they can be capable of facilitating their students better.

ELT stands on six wonderful propositions which are shared by the scholars like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Kurt Lewin, William James, Paulo Freire, Carl Jung, Carl Rogers and some others which are: learning is a process in which students engage, every learning is nothing more than relearning, the resolution of conflicts must take place through learning, learning refers to a holistic process, learning is the outcome of combined transaction between the learner and the environment and learning is the process of constructing knowledge (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Thus, the experiences of an individual matter a lot because they take a beautiful change in the process of construction of knowledge which is called learning or, more significantly, experiential learning which is directly associated with active learning as experiences matter equally even in this process of learning. Learners are able to create new knowledge through their own involvement and experiences with the use of active learning techniques which lets them, as believed by Torlind (2019), to relate and then reflect upon the issues being taught.

Figure 20

Kolb's Cycle of Learning Adapted from Kolb, 1984



This way, they get activated to use the knowledge they construct through their first-hand experiences. Thus, real life experiences are at the heart of active learning because of which the study is based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. Kolb's learning theory is completely based on a cycle which consists of four different phases of learning. Kolb & Kolb (2018) believe that learning is not less than breathing. Thus, it is a process that goes on till one lives. That's why the learning cycle also is a recurring process of "exchange between the learner's internal world and the external world" (p. 8). The four different phases of experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting keep going on till one constructs a new idea.

Figure 21*The Cycle That Demonstrates Four Different Phases*

This process repeats when the learner again experiences something else. Nugent (2020) explains that a learner can enter into the experiential learning cycle any time

(Source: After Kolb, 1984) depending upon the circumstances, situation and the environment. With the practice of all four modes of experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting, s/he masters her/his task and increases the level of understanding. Abdulameer (2020) strongly believes that all these four modes activate a learner to the best of his ability and maximize his role. Thus, memorization does not have any place in active learning that focuses on the development of reflecting and thinking and on the ability to accept collaborative learning, teamwork and active participation.

Connectedness of Active Learning and Experiential Learning Theory

Active learning, as a pedagogical approach for progressive education, started gaining its ground in the late 19th century. According to Sulaiman and Abdullah (2024), it advocated experiential and learner-centered methods from the time of its birth. The major methods of active learning approach are experiential and collaborative learning. The former is an active learning method that allows students to learn through their own first-hand experiences either they be inside or outside the classroom. Similarly, the latter is an active learning method that encourages group work or teamwork in learning to attain a common goal, guaranteeing a social setting for the acquisition or creation of knowledge. John Dewey (1938), a great philosopher, argues that learning is possible only through real life experiences, active involvement of the pupils and genuine reflection and not rote memorization as in the traditional approach of learning. This proves that there is a vast connectedness between active learning and experiential learning as they complement each other.

In the beginning, active learning was more applied in elementary and secondary levels (Sulaiman & Abdullah, 2024). However, they further assert that its significance in

the field of progressive education was understood greatly that in 1980s and 1990s; it replaced the lecturing methods in college education, reshaping pedagogical practices. This revisiting massively demanded the techniques like collaboration, classroom discussions, simulations, debates and various games designed to meet the objectives of the curriculum. In the words of Abuzandah (2020), education based on experiences stimulated the curiosity of the learners which made a huge paradigm shift from the lecturing method to the participatory method that supported problem-based learning which was based on experiences. This experience-based learning confirmed in the learners the sense of being active by letting them do things on their own.

I hear and I forget

I see and I remember

I do and I understand

- Confucius (n.d.)

Experiential learning helps learners do things on their own and understand the ideas better. Borrowing the words of Gentry (2013), experiential learning is “participative, interactive and applied” (p. 19) which even happen to be the traits of active learning.

“There are two goals in the experiential learning process. One is to learn the specifics of a particular subject, and the other is to learn about one’s own learning process.”

- (Kolb, 1984)

Kolb’s theory of Experiential Learning is the best approach that supports any kind of learning, growth and transformation. Abuzandah (2020) further mentions that experiences are the core not only of experiential learning but also of active learning that improves in learners the ability to think critically and creatively. The theory is all about experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting which I found my participants doing unknowingly in the process of making meaning with the implication of various strategies of active learning.

Experiential Learning Theory as the Theoretical Framework of the Study

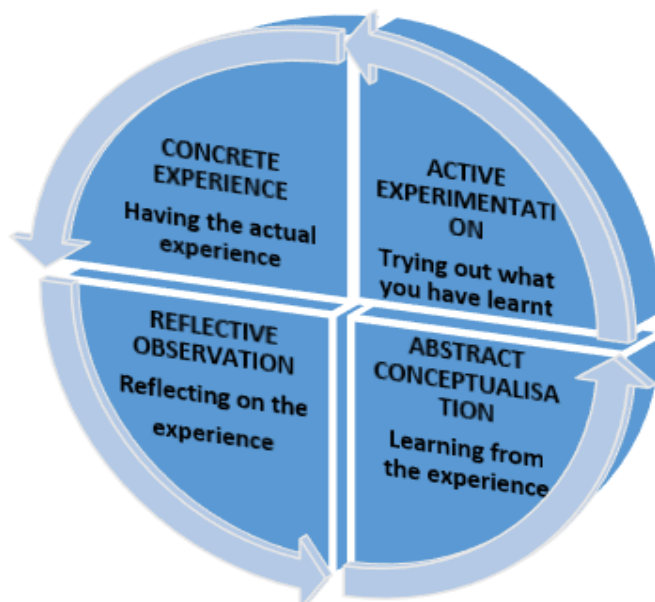
The study stands tall and robust on the foundation of experiential learning theory. Though there are various other theories like constructivism, cognitivism, pragmatism etc. which show their connection with active learning approach, I found Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory more appropriate to this research as I discovered my participant students going through the four different phases of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation while in the process of constructing knowledge (Mcleod, 2024). Learners go through all four stages, starting with experience

and ending with the implication of the experience gained which occurs in a recurring cycle. As the students complete all four stages of Kolb's Learning Cycle, they accomplish being active learners for whom concrete experiences matter the most (Chiang et al., 2021). Thus, experience is the crucial aspect in learning according to Kolb's learning cycle. His theory concerns greatly with the cognitive processes of learners. The theory has two levels:

- 1) Four stage learning cycle
- 2) Four learning styles

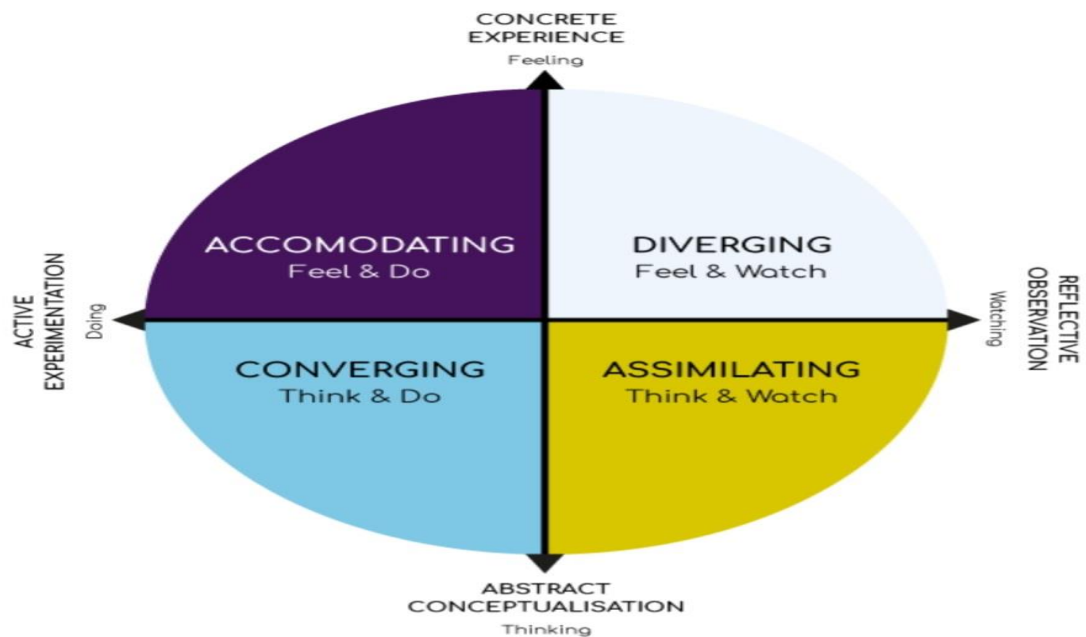
Figure 22

Kolb's Four Stage Learning Cycle Adapted from Kolb, 1984



Kolb (1984) defines learning as a process wherein the construction of knowledge takes place via the “transformation of experiences” (p.38). Learning based on problem-solving skill takes place through this perpetual cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualization and then experimentation. At first, the learner has a concrete

experience or a situation which s/he reflects upon on the basis of her/ his pre-existing knowledge. This reflection helps her/him attain a new idea which leads to active experimentation, i.e.; the implementation of the new idea or knowledge gained in her/his private or public life (McLeod, 2024). This is how s/he attains both hard and soft skills. In order to lead a successful life, only hard skills, at present, won't help. Thus, a person needs soft skills as well which can be learnt through an important aspect of active learning, i.e., experiential learning (Hoi et al., 2020). Through continuous observation and some interviews, I could figure out the literacy skills and life skills my participants learnt. Those skills are termed as the domino effect of active learning in the study.

Figure 23*Kolb's Four Learning Styles**(Source: Cambiana, 13.01.23)*

Learners have different ways of learning which Kolb categorizes into four different styles of learning (Fawcett, 2022):

1) Diverging (feeling and watching- CE/RO): The learners who prefer diverging style of learning like group work. They listen to others' feedback with an open and accepting mind. They like to be amidst people. They are highly imaginative people. They like to gather information as well as brainstorm ideas. They are sensitive learners who prefer watching rather than doing. They have several viewpoints on one concrete situation.

2) Assimilating (watching and thinking- AC/RO): They are the learners who are more into clear and logical ideas than listening to people. They demand a clear and rational explanation rather than an opportunity that is practical. Such learners prefer reading, listening to lectures, reviewing facts, assessing concrete experiences, exploring analytical models etc.

3) Converging (doing and thinking- AC/AE): The learners with such a learning style are more into technical tasks and problems. They can find solutions to problems and have decision making skills. They are good at technology who like to experiment with new concepts and ideas. They become better when they can apply proven theories to worldly problems.

4) Accommodating (doing and feeling- CE/AE): They are the ones who depend on intuition rather than logic. They tend to use the analyses made by others who love to learn through an experiential approach. New experiences and challenges always attract them. They are at the best of their ability when they can actively do things. They progress through their experiences. According to Idkhan and Idris (2021), accommodating learning style is dominant in most of the people. Most of the learners depend on other's analysis of ideas rather than making their own analysis.

Implication of Experiential Learning Theory to Discover the Positive Domino Effect

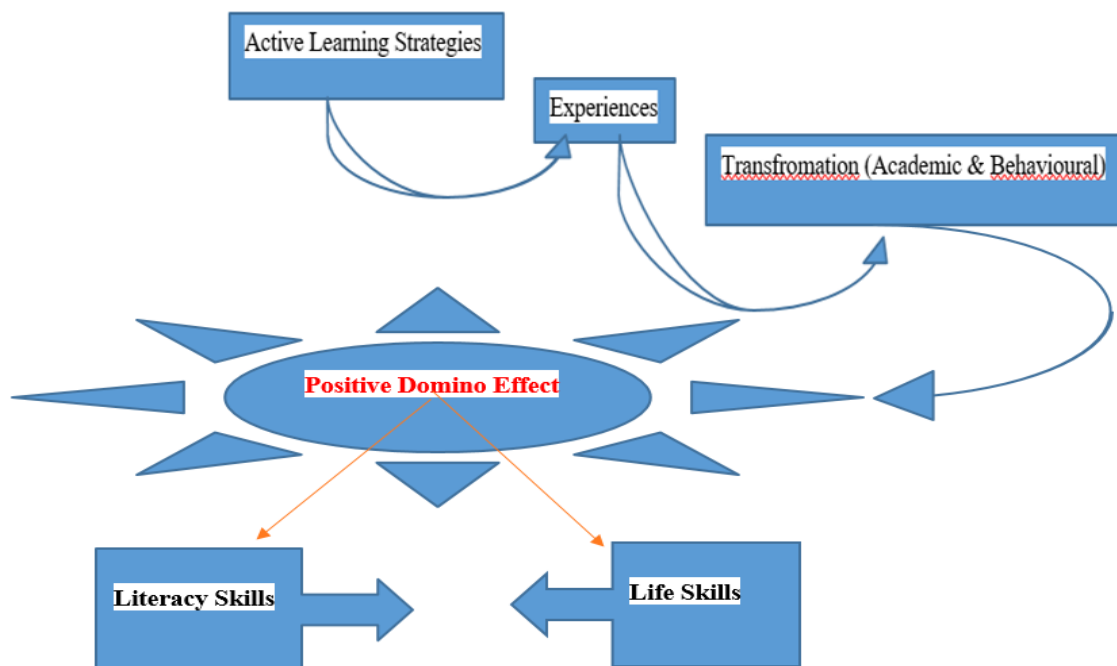
I have linked experiential learning theory with the theme of active learning in order to explore the positive domino effect of the implementation of active learning strategies on my participants. Through almost six-months' observation with some breaks and pauses in between, I could notice a vast transformation in each of my participant students. They all entered into the cycle of experiential learning through which they were able to experience, reflect, think and then ultimately act what they had learnt. Consequently, they all went through a vast transformation which I have discussed in the chapters that follow. I discovered a significantly positive change in my participants through the implication of experiential learning theory (Hill & MacDonald, 2016). Active learning and experiential learning are like two different sides of the same coin. In the absence of experiences, active learning is not possible; neither is experiential learning. The connectedness of active learning and experiential learning is mentioned in the earlier paragraphs of the research which is a concrete evidence of how the two are interlaced. I noticed that the real life experiences, as mentioned by Gentry (2013), were handy enough to give a meaningful context to the learners. The learners were able to relate their experiences with the subject matter discussed which resulted to the optimization of their understanding. That was how learning took place in them. And they were able to relate their real life experiences as they had ample opportunity to reflect, think and act because of the student-friendly learning environment in their classroom due to the use of active learning approach.

I could notice that each of my participants experienced a positive domino effect through the use of active learning techniques used. With every new lesson taught, depending upon the classroom environment and their personal experiences related to the issues discussed, they all experienced the positive domino effect, which is the finding of the study. There was a noticeable improvement in their literacy skills like reading, writing, speaking and listening. Simultaneously, they had even learnt the life skills like

the ability to communicate well, listen to their friends actively, solve problems, manage time etc. Hence, the implication of this theory to discover the positive domino effect can be well illustrated through the figure given below:

Figure 24

Positive Domino Effect Achieved through Active Learning



In a nutshell, I have linked Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory with the study to find out what positive effects my participants experienced. As the theory encompasses a learning cycle for the construction of new knowledge, all my participants went through the cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking and finally acting or implementing the knowledge constructed. Thus, due to the use of active learning strategies, my participants could enter into the cycle of experiential learning that they could relate their real life experiences with the issue discussed. Those experiences transformed into academic and behavioral changes in them, and they were able to achieve the positive domino effect, which was the accomplishment of literacy skills and life skills.

Nepal Education Policy on Active Learning

In this section, I aim to seek the measures that are set up by the educational policy of Nepal for the application of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal and what the prudent highlights are regarding the tools and techniques of active learning in our country.

“Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali” (समृद्ध नेपाल, सुखी नेपाली)

- Oli (n.d.)

The above quote reflects the overall goal of Nepal for which education is one of the most fundamental requirements. Right to education is stated in article 31 of the constitution of Nepal, according to which, every Nepali citizen has the right to acquire free and compulsory education up to the basic level and free education up to the secondary level (National Education Policy, 2076). The constitution of Nepal 2015 necessitates the major roles of local government for the proper administration and management of school education. Thus, it is high time that the local governments should also play an effective role to improve our education system, focusing on the acquisition of knowledge for a lifetime rather than promoting an exam-oriented education system which is possible through the incorporation of active learning method in our education system.

With the intention to upgrade the life standard of the people through all-inclusive and unbiased quality education, the Nepal government has developed various programs like Education for All (EFA), 2001-2015, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 2000-2015 and School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP), 2009- 2015 etc. in order to make sure that quality education is provided to the learners of all levels at all different situations which lead to impactful and insightful learning outcomes. Sustainable Development Goal 4: Education 2030 targets the flourishing of Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED)/ Pre-Primary Education (PPE), promoting lifelong learning, technical & vocational education and skill development (SDG 4, 2019). SDG 4 emphasizes on education that teaches life skills and advocates global citizenship with the view to foster global connectedness (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology [MoEST], 2019). Though the current education policy focuses massively on all-inclusive education, it can be comprehended referring to the context that active learning approach is highly in demand in the realm of Nepali academia as the policy strictly focuses on the acquisition of life skills and livelihood skills. It aims for holistic education which helps in connecting the nation with the world.

Relationship Between English Education and Active Learning in Nepal

“If you want 1 year of prosperity, grow grains. If you want 10 years of prosperity, grow trees. If you want 100 years of prosperity, grow people - educate them.”

- Chinese Proverb

The Education Policy of Nepal has improved in the past decades with the strict implementation of free and mandatory basic education so that no child is deprived of it. Khati (2024) alludes that English language has been employed in private as well as public schools in Nepal at present as the medium of instruction. However, “English education in Nepal is termed as the third-hand version of a system that originated in Britain, came to India and, then, through India, came to Nepal” (Khati, 2003, p.132). We must revamp and reshape our English education system, merging the better strategies of our old education system with the strategies of active learning. Contextualization of the system is the need of the time. “Ensuring that programs are in place to stimulate children’s intelligence, leadership, and entrepreneurial spirit from cradle to career will supply the country with the quality workforce it needs to meet and exceed its development goals” (NIRT & AIR,2017, p. 7). Though there is no distinct mentioning of the implementation of active learning strategies anywhere in the texts concerning the education policy of Nepal, it can be traced here and there in the existing lines in those texts that the need for child-centered pedagogical methods has been felt. Also, the focus on the holistic development of a child through skill development and vocational education shows the demand for active learning in the English language classrooms in Nepal.

There are provisions of teacher development programs and teacher trainings; however, the teachers are not yet capable of adapting to student-friendly pedagogical activities (Rai, 2021). He mentions further that this is really saddening that there is still lecture-driven teaching, most specifically in our public educational institutions and the only sources of learning happen to be textbooks. The subject matter is mostly lectured even at the primary level which proves more practicality to the teachers rather than the students which is a great loss in Nepali education system. In the words of Koirala (2003), the education system in Nepal still seeks rote learners and the educators who produce learners that opt for memorization. On the contrary, our society and the rest of the world highly demand for competitive students and efficient teachers. That’s where the paradox lies. To find a proper resolution so that such paradoxes vanish is the task of every single individual dedicated to the field of teaching-learning. And it has been understood that active learning is one of the solutions for such anomalies. The country which does not have a very long history of the establishment of formal education has at least reached this position where one of the targets of the School Sector Development Plan(SSDP) is to improve students’

learning via the enhancement in the quality of the teaching-learning atmosphere by bringing reforms in the curriculum, teaching techniques, examinations and assessments as well as enriching textbooks (Rai, 2021). This is a good news for the advocates of active learning teaching methods like me.

Despite the bitter reality of traditional teaching-learning method being dominant in the context of Nepal, there is a spark of hope seen through the ramification of learning circles, started by various schools, and tole (village square) classes when there was the absence of classroom-based teaching-learning due to the COVID 19 (UNESCO, 2021). Such learning circles consist of a small group of facilitators and learners where there is more support for individualized learning which is a tiny step towards active learning. K.C. (2024) reveals that there is a space for the improvement of Nepal's education system as he has found out that the educational practices followed and the policies formed in Nepal ensure equitable and quality education. Teacher development trainings, reflection forums and orientation sessions can be the remedial measures for our wounded education system. Parent-teacher Associations can be the platform for fruitful and insightful discussions. Reading circles for learners can be another platform for the students. Non-formal academic sessions and analytical journalists of the media group can also be a forum for sustained discussion over the issues around paradoxes (Koirala, 2003). Thus, there are various ways how we can elevate our education system so that English language learning as well as active learning will not be a cry for the moon in the rural areas of Nepal. Moreover, even educational institutions in urbanized areas have been facing such dilemmas and paradoxes related to the incorporation of active learning methods in English language classrooms. Hopefully, we will have a very clear policy highlighting the significance of active learning in English language classes very soon.

Empirical Edifice

This is a crucial facet of the literature review which sheds light on the recent relevant researches made globally that are related to active learning and its positive impacts. Thus, this segment deals with the empirical review I made for the study. Actually, the theme of my research is the domino effect of active learning; however, I did not find any research related to the particular theme. Thus, for my empirical review, I have made a thorough study of the researches conducted with the theme of active learning in English language classrooms and its positive impacts. While seeking for the related scholarly articles, I really had a tough time gathering the

appropriate articles; however, I have tried my best to make a proper empirical review which is the heart of this entire study.

Tiwari (2023) examined the significance of the implementation of pedagogical techniques, focusing more on comprehensive language skills and practical language skills that help learners improve their communication skills, technology integration, enrichment of contextual vocabulary etc. His study highlights the experiences of Nepali students learning English in Nepal and Australia. Thus, it is a comparative study that shows pedagogical differences, differences between passive learning and active learning while learning English in Nepal and Australia.

Nepali (2015) inquired into the practices of student-centered techniques used by secondary-level English teachers in Nepal. His research participants were 45 English language teachers from Baglung district in Nepal. The study revealed that the teachers have used learner-friendly techniques as far as possible but have used traditional method of simply explaining point-wise while teaching poems.

Gholami et al. (2014) conducted a research on interactive EFL class with the use of active learning strategies. The study recognizes the strategies of active learning in English classes and then investigates how these strategies affect the learners' interactions. It even contributes to the creation and preparation of a highly interactive pedagogical atmosphere in English classrooms.

Ramil (2018) carried out a research on advocating active learning practices to improve students' speaking skill. The study reveals that the various strategies of active learning help in the improvement of students' proficiency of English speaking ability. It also shows the students' increasing confidence and enthusiasm to join the English speaking classes. The research suggests the English teachers to plan out their lesson and activities effectively to set up well-organized active English speaking classes.

Vuorela (2019) carried out a study on active learning and Grammar exercises in EFL workbooks. The study analyzes most commonly used teaching materials in Finland from classes 7 to 9 basic education with an emphasis on the practical aspect of Grammar. Particularly, the study examines if the new secondary school workbooks contain any active learning strategies to make grammar exercises more interesting. More specifically, the research attempts to figure out if the theoretical trends in Grammar instruction and the updates on the national curriculum have affected the designs of the Grammar activities in the workbooks.

Hung (2015) carried out a research on flipped classrooms for English language learners in order to implement active learning approach and studied the likely effects of flipping the classrooms on English language students' academic performance, their attitudes of learning and their level of enthusiasm in the participation with the application of Web Quest active learning technique. He claims that the semi-structured and structured designs are far more effective instructional designs than non-flip lessons.

Wibowo et al. (2020) conducted a study on the schemes in building an active learning environment in English language classrooms. The study is based on pre-service teachers' perceptions. They studied what kind of strategies can be applied to create active learning environment in English classrooms and what preparations should be made by the pre-service English teachers for the effective teaching-learning process in English classrooms.

Kamrulzaman et al. (2018) conducted a research on the impact of active learning strategies on students' attitudes toward English via descriptive quantitative analysis and found out that most of them have positive attitude toward English language and implementation of active learning. They even explored that the higher-order cognitive skills and soft skills can be developed through the use of active learning strategies.

Braxton et al. (2000) conducted a research on the effect of active learning on the college student departure process revising Tinto's Theory. On the basis of their study, they opine that active learning approach plays the most significant role in influencing students' decisions regarding their persistence in the college or departure from the college. They have studied the effect of active learning on college students' decision-making process in regards to their retention or dropping themselves out in the beginning sessions, but they do not study about the other influences of active learning, more specifically, positive influences in an English language classroom.

Mulongo (2013) carried out a study on the influence of active learning teaching methodology on learner participation and proclaimed that the effect of active learning teaching methodology on learner participation "taught by teachers that had highly adopted active learning teaching methodology (high uptake) compared to those teachers that had not, i.e., the effect of active learning teaching methodology on learner participation (p.157). His study also attempts to analyze the immediate

outcomes of active learning in learners, i.e., understanding of the content, change in the attitude towards the lesson taught etc.

Jones and Bursens (2015) conducted a research on the effects of active learning environment and the way simulations trigger effective learning. They believe that “Students benefit more in terms of affective learning when they are approached by an active learning paradigm instead of a traditional teaching paradigm and simulations are excellent examples of active learning environments (p.262). They take simulations as “popular teaching tools in political science and EU studies curricula” (254). According to them, simulations are the best examples of active learning environments. They use their experience with EU simulations in academic programs in order to add insights to the pedagogical comprehension of active learning tools. They have come to the conclusion that participation in simulations adds to the improvement of the pupils’ ability related to “accurate self-assessment”.

Research Gap

After the review of the relevant literature I could gather so far for my study, I have come to the realization that the theme of active learning is very fascinating. Many researchers around the world have tried to dig deeper into what active learning actually is, what its strategies are and how the implementation of these strategies helps in teaching and learning English language.

Tiwari (2023) explored the significance of the use of the learning techniques focusing on the experiences of Nepali students learning English in Nepal and Australia. He compared the pedagogical differences, differences between passive learning and active learning, while learning English in Nepal and Australia. Nepali (2015) examined the student-centered techniques implemented by secondary and higher-secondary English teachers in Nepal. The study revealed that the teachers used learner-friendly techniques in the classroom but used traditional method while teaching poems. Gholami et al. (2014) studied how the various active learning strategies affect in the interaction of the students learning English. The research further focuses on how a highly interactive teaching-learning environment can be created in English classrooms. Similarly, Ramil’s (2018) study was an attempt to examine how active learning strategies add to the enthusiasm and confidence in the students learning English so that they can fluently speak in English with ease and they even readily join the English-speaking classrooms without any hesitation. Another research was conducted by Vuorela (2019) which emphasizes on the study of the type

of teaching materials or tools used in Finland, from classes 7 to 9. It focused more on the practicality of Grammar lessons and tried to find out if any active learning strategies are included in the English workbooks to make Grammar lessons more interesting. Furthermore, other researches that were conducted in the past focused on various other aspects of active learning like Hung's (2015) study focused on the use of Web Quest active learning technique for English language learners, Wibowo's (2020) inquired about the pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of several strategies to create active learning environment in English classrooms, Kamrulzaman's (2018) study was more focused into the positive change in the attitudes of English language learners with the application of active learning strategies, so on and so forth.

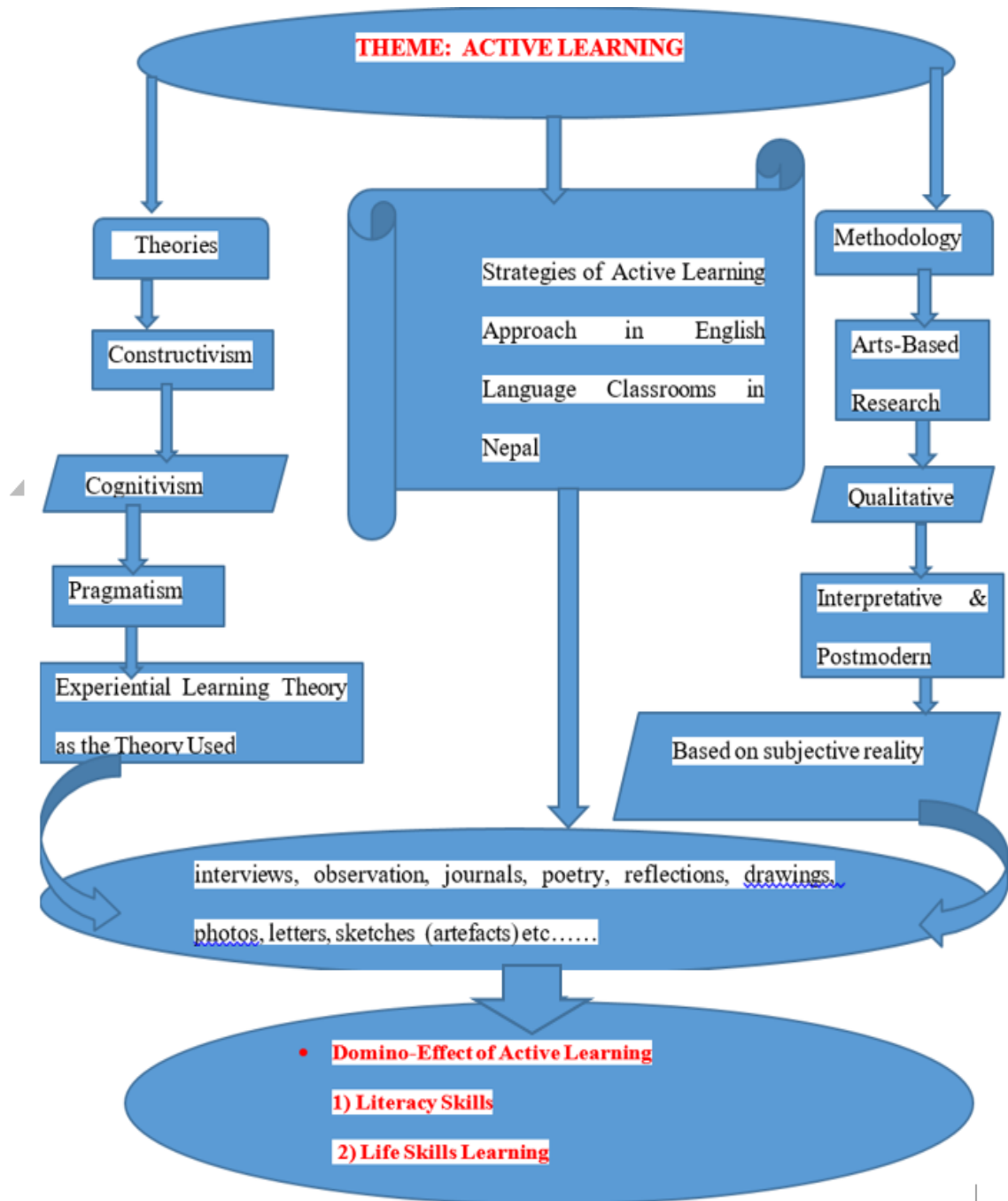
To the best of my knowledge, I hardly found any profound academic research conducted on the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms. The domino effect here refers to such positive impacts of the implementation of active learning approach in teaching-learning English that the students become able not just to learn English but also acquire various other life skills too which prove to be beneficial for them in every phase of their lives, even after their school or college. Moreover, I did not find anyone conducting a research on active learning using arts-based inquiry.

Thus, I can claim hereby that there is a deep crevasse in the existing knowledge regarding active learning and its implementation in English language classrooms. Therefore, I want to fill this gap with this research project.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 25

Conceptual Framework



The above figure serves as a blueprint that outlines the research procedure and clarifies the connections of the study. It structures the ideas that are at the heart of the research, systematically representing all the significant elements that sculpts the study and provides it a vivid shape. As the figure shows, active learning is the principal theme of the study which encompasses the application of the strategies of active learning approach to bring a positive transformation in learners in English language classrooms in Nepal as its

sub-theme. Though the study shows the connection of various theories like constructivism, cognitivism and pragmatism with the theme of active learning, it embraces Kolb's experiential learning theory to study the data gathered, thematize and analyze them. Through various qualitative methods like interviews, observations, journals, poetry, reflections, drawings, doodles etc., the study reveals how the positive domino effect of active learning, i.e., literacy skills and life skills, are learnt or achieved by students through their first-hand experiences in or outside the classroom. Moreover, the study is a qualitative research which flourishes under the methodology of arts-based inquiry. Believing on the idea that reality is multiple and subjective, the study employs interpretivism and postmodernism as its philosophical approaches. The dissertation is a wholesome package where an academic writing weds octopoid art forms.

Chapter Encapsulation

In a nutshell, the second chapter extensively discusses the various kinds of literature reviewed in the journey of this dissertation writing. The chapter comprises a thematic review, theoretical review, policy review and empirical review. It also highlights the fact that the research employs Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory as its theoretical framework as I, as a researcher, found all my participants experiencing the learning cycle and adapting to the learning styles of Kolb. Basically, I have learnt from the reviewed literature that various studies have been conducted on active learning so far; however, there still exists a deep gap because I hardly found any research made on the positive domino –effect of active learning in English language classrooms. Moreover, I grasped innumerable ideas related to my topic through the rigorous review of the related literature which allowed me to proceed with my academic journey smoothly. The chapter ends with the conceptual framework of my journey which is the skeletal structure of the study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: PHILOSOPHY, ARTS-BASED RESEARCH AND A LEAP FROM SALDANA TO THE CYCLE OF FOUR SEASONS

“Research is a systematic effort to gain new knowledge.”

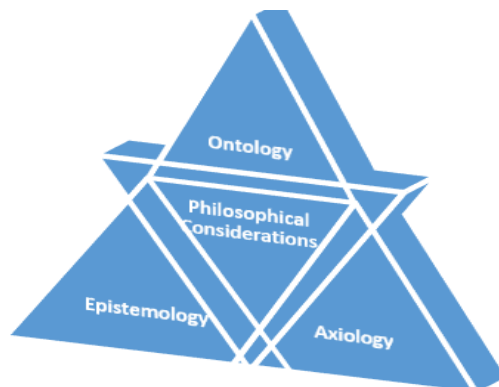
(Redman & Mori, n.d.)

A research methodology is essential in the process of gaining new knowledge as it systematizes a research. It is the only way through which a researcher can answer the research queries and fill up the gap. Patel and Patel (2019) consider it as the path that leads a researcher to the systematic solution of the detected research gap or problem. A research methodology is a highway that leads to the resolution of a research problem in a systematic manner (Khan et al., 2023). They focus concertedly on the crucial role of a research methodology as it ensures reliability, validity and credibility to the research findings. This chapter deals with the methodological basis of the study which displays the steps that have been undertaken to reach the desired destination of exploring the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal. It begins with philosophical considerations and research paradigms which are the roots of the study upon which the study is grounded. Then, the research methodology that I want to apply in this research, i.e., arts-based research, has been discussed. Furthermore, the reasons for selecting the site of the study, selection of the participants and the techniques and processes of data collection are discussed here. The chapter also sheds some light upon the data analysis process, quality standards and ethical considerations of the study.

Philosophical Considerations

Figure 26

Philosophical Considerations



Every research study has its own philosophical foundation, depending on the nature of the research problem. According to Listowel (2021), research philosophy encapsulates beliefs, dogmas and values that guide the quest for knowledge. It is all about a researcher's beliefs and presumptions on how

knowledge in his research project is generated and developed into the shape of a dissertation. Simply, it means what s/he is doing while embarking on his/her scholarly journey. A researcher may have certain assumptions related to human knowledge (epistemological assumptions), about those realities that occur in the research process (ontological assumptions) and about how your own value system affects your findings (axiological assumptions) (Saunders et al., 2009). A researcher must be clear about what philosophical considerations s/he has before s/he starts his/ her journey so that s/he will have a clear vision of how s/he will move further. It helps the researcher to better understand the components of truth related to the research topic and the research gap. Biedenbach and Jacobsson (2016) state that all those ways a researcher employs to his/her research project is a research philosophy. Those ways are the knowledge on the existence of reality, how the reality is achieved and on what value theory the research relies.

The various offshoots of research philosophy, such as ontology, epistemology and axiology, should be taken into consideration to understand what a qualitative researcher believes in and how s/he will proceed further to the course of data collection and analysis. Joshi (2019) defines ontology as “the ways of being and becoming”, epistemology as “the ways of knowing,” and axiology as “the ways of valuing” (p. 23). As a qualitative researcher, my ontology is all about the multiple realities of my participants who came from different social, cultural, familial, geographical and religious backgrounds. Epistemology refers to my knowledge of the issue from the point of view of an artistic researcher and axiology deals with what values I carry as a researcher while carrying out the study on the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms. Thus, the branches of philosophy which are ontology, epistemology and axiology related to this study are discussed in the lines that follow:

Myriad Truths

Ontology is the philosophical understanding of being or what already exists and the researcher’s ontological assumption helps in the way the study undertakes (Comunale et al., 2023). As an interpretivist researcher, I believe in multitudinous facets of truth because there are different ways how a single entity is perceived by different individuals based on their personal experiences and backgrounds. Meng (2020) avers that reality is not rigid or inflexible because every individual’s perspectives on different matters differ and these differences in perceptions matter immensely as they make reality changeable. Thus, I believe that reality is subjective. Since I was willing to explore the positive domino- effect of active learning in English language classes in the context of Nepal, this

study is a qualitative research. Investigating multifarious faces of truth in regard to a series of positive effects of active learning in the students learning English was my aim. So, I have accepted wholeheartedly the realities that came forth through my participants' understanding and learning.

I collected the necessary information by being a keen observer of the experiences my participants gathered in the process of meaning making and an active listener of the invaluable stories of my participants. They were sweet little kids who always had a lot of narratives to share with me. They would usually start before I would ask them any questions. Moreover, I am a research-artist who bagged various artifacts from the classroom, e.g., worksheets, project works, drawings, hand-outs, letters, poems etc. which were handy for the project. Anything that expressed the experiences, emotions and ideas of my participants like drawings, lyrics, poems, journals, reflections, paper crafts, photographs etc., were happily accepted and analyzed to reach the conclusion of the study. Art has no limit, and so do the artifacts that I collected every day during my visit. They were of great use to me as an arts-based researcher. I also collected data through some open-ended interviews so that I could reach various levels and layers of what reality about the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in the context of Nepal actually was. I conducted my research on four of the students learning English in one of the progressive schools in Lalitpur district. As defined by Tippett and Lee (2019), progressive education embraces the ideas of the great scholars like Freire, Dewey and Kolb as it focuses primarily on child-centeredness, acquiring knowledge through experiences and students' involvement in learning. They believed that knowledge emerges through the various kinds of human experiences, which is key to my data analysis too. I was aware of the fact that the school practised progressive education before I started going there for my research work. The data collected from every participant was important for me which contributed together to my research findings, providing a strong ontological background for my analysis.

Manifold Ways of Knowing

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge that clarifies what the concept of knowledge is, how it is used and why it has the features that it owns (Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996). My epistemological stance depends upon my ontological assumptions, i.e., truth has many faces because it is in flux with the perceptions of different individuals. Since I am a staunch believer of subjective reality, I amassed the knowledge cum data through arts-based inquiry, using both literary arts (e.g., poems, reflections, letters, etc.)

and visual arts (e.g., paintings, drawings, craft work etc.). This helped me discover myriad truths pertaining to the various good impacts of active learning strategies that my participants achieved. According to Bourne (2024), epistemology is the way knowledge is acquired. It is all about how I came to know what I have revealed here as a true find of my study. The manifold sources of my discovery of the truth about the domino effect of active learning in an English language classroom were the unheard sagas directly from the mouths of my participants, the letters they wrote expressing their feelings, the poems the little minds composed, their masterpieces of prose work, the drawings and doodles made by the ever enthusiastic learners etc. I minutely studied their expressions, works and many other modes of creativity they were into. I found out that they were the storehouses of energy and enthusiasm fully loaded with bright nuances of creativity. And their creativity shone through the implementation of active learning strategies in their classroom. Hence, knowledge was acquired through arts-based inquiry which allowed me to encompass manifold ways of knowing the reality for my research.

Theory of Value

Axiology is the theory of value. It plays a significant role in guiding a researcher to make ethical decisions as well as to evaluate the importance and effects of research findings. Ginaadriani (2023) states that axiology refers to the philosophical know-how of value which tries to find answers to the questions such as; what is valuable and how the values and ethics influence the process of research and its end product. I valued the perceptions, ideas and expressions of each of my participants because they all had different thought processes, experiences and critical thinking abilities and everyone's idea mattered for the thematic analysis of the research project. All four of them were different individuals with different levels of creativity and their notions were valuable in their own ways. Thus, the research is value-laden that prioritizes research ethics and aims at unbiased collection and analysis of the data collected.

In fact, the research is the celebration of each of my participant's individuality and uniqueness. Biedenbach and Jacobsson (2016) define axiology as that branch of philosophy which deals with "what is valued and considered to be desirable or good" (p. 140). I considered their individual ability to understand and learn things as the aspect desirable for my research. There weren't any prejudices over any participant's ideas and beliefs. Being an individual, I have my own thought process and mentality on the issue that is being discussed in this document, yet, I exerted myself not to impose my own values, beliefs and emotions upon my participants. Instead, I respected their values and

standards in the process of collecting and generating the invaluable data by means of continuous observation of their experiences, assignments, activities and expressions in the classroom. One English period was equal to one hour, and within the time span of one hour, I could notice several ways through which my participants were relating their real-life experiences with the issues being discussed in the classroom. Thus, learning was participatory and fun-filled that the classroom was always full of constructive noise.

Jumbo Combo of Interpretivism and Postmodernism

Interpretivism was the inaugural paradigm that I had chosen for my research. Gradually, the deeper I moved into my project- proceedings, the clearer I was about the need of one more paradigm to structure my research for which I opted for Postmodernism. Since I adored my participants' individuality and believed that truth has multiple faces as believed by the scholar Benta (2018) who is never tired of explaining the plurality of reality, interpretivism and postmodernism helped me to adorn the myriad truths discovered.

Truth can never be constricted and interpretivism holds subjectivity of reality at its heart as it stands as the outcome of the criticism of positivism. Alharahsheh and Pius (2020) state that interpretivism regards human beings as completely different from physical phenomena that they cannot be explored as the physical phenomena are explored. It supports the depth of meanings provided by every single person and focuses on the fact that truth or knowledge cannot be generalized. Thus, I valued each of my participants' emotions and experiences as I believe exactly like the great psychologists and pedagogues namely; Papert, Piaget, Bruner, Dewey, Vygotsky, Freire etc. (Ackermann, 2004), that knowledge is constructed by the learners themselves which is possible through the application of active learning approach. Hence, I navigated through the ways how my participants learnt English via their first-hand experiences and active engagement in learning and how they reflected upon their own involvement to construct their own views and ideas. Moreover, in the process of learning language, unknowingly, they were even learning life skills, not merely literacy skills. In this way, I dived into the meaning-making process and found out that the domino-effect of active learning results to the acquisition of literacy skills (hard skills) and the attainment of life skills (soft skills), in English language classrooms.

An interpretivist believes that human beings aren't marionettes, they have consciousness and above all, they are complex creatures who have a heart that pumps not only blood but even different emotions. Thus, Nickerson (2024) believes that different

people observe the same thing in different ways, defining truth differently and that's what I minutely scrutinized in my participant students. They were in the same classroom, taught the same subject matter by the same teacher, but they all had different grasping capabilities. However, one thing that was dominant on all four of them was their desire for learning that was never-ending. And this desire was ignited by the active learning approach used in the classroom.

I was always in search of liberation of expression and finally, realized that there could not be any other paradigm better than postmodernism for my project, after interpretivism. Postmodernism is a rejection of traditional ideas and objectivity of truth. According to Campbell (2018), it focuses on how our traditional ways of thinking and interpreting truth can be dismantled. It allows a researcher to explore diverse avenues and value multiple meanings of reality. And I, as an artistic researcher, always was free-spirited as far as possible though I knew that there is a fine line between only writing and an academic writing. I always sought creativity and criticality in academic writing too as a result of which, I gave birth to this jumbo combo of interpretivism and postmodernism which happens to be my dissertation. The study embraces both the participants' and the researcher's postmodernist ways of expressing ideas through an equally liberating methodology called arts-based inquiry.

We are human beings and we have our own ways to explore and define reality because we have our own living experiences. There is no reality that is fixed and there is nothing called a universal narrative as Guerin (2022) believes. Also, we have our own ways of learning and interpreting ideas based on our experiences and the classroom environment. Thus, reality is socially constructed. There is no fixed idea of reality as it is subjective and relative. For some people, truth is a clearly explained fact whereas for the post-moderns, truth is not the fact that is clearly stated because it is constantly changing. Farhan (2019) says that it is not true that the postmodern people do not believe in truth but the idea here is, they have their own definition of truth, unlike others'. The ways one thinks beyond a modernist perspective, without creating alternative metanarratives, is postmodernism, says Multani (2020). In this sense, the dissertation is a laboratory where various ways of expressing the core idea of the positive domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms are supported, processed and proved.

A researcher can be referred to as a bricoleur and an interpretative bricoleur is the one who produces a bricolage through the process exactly like quilt making, joining together "a set of representations that are fitted to the specifics of a complex situation"

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p.45). For an interpretivist cum postmodernist researcher, a research is an interactive procedure which depends upon an individual's personal background, familial background, communal background, social background, race, ethnicity etc. So, the study regards all four participants and their opinions and experiences, who had different backgrounds from mine. I put myself into their shoes and looked into the matter, studied and scrutinized through their lenses and empathized with them to generate data. I remained a true bricoleur while in the process of collecting information and connecting every dot to shape and nourish it, embracing the four assets of a researcher- ethos, pathos, logos and kairos.

Bricoleur, I AM.....

Lotus blooms in the mud

And still spreads mirth

Desires blossom in an aching heart

And cover its every isolated part

Dreams sprout in weary eyes

And soar higher to reach the skies

Lotus, desires and dreams

Desires, dreams and lotus

Dreams, lotus and desires

Remind me of my aim

Reverberating deep down

Down, down, down in the vastness

The same sounds echoing continuously

Round, round, round in the chamber so deep

In the cellar of my soul

The reverberations

The echoes

Unanimously resound

Bringing back to my psyche
The four assets of a researcher
Ethos, pathos, logos and kairos
A bricoleur I am
In need of collecting and shaping
My chaotic bricolage.....
My thesis
Totally topsy-turvy, awaiting my final touch
My caressing
My fondling
A sweet stroke
With my sublime thought
I will revive it
An artistic researcher I am
I will vivify it
With the elixir of various art forms
And resuscitate it
My thesis!
My dream, my desire, my lotus
My thesis!!
My thesis!!!

[By [Nagma Pandey](#)-Tuesday,

13 December 2022, 11:30 PM

13th December Reflection]

Why Interpretivism as My Research Paradigm?

Since I am a qualitative researcher who believes in multiple realities, interpretivism is the best paradigm which acts as a strong philosophical foundation for my research. Different forms of art are used as the methods to explore the multifaceted realities that depend on the experiences as well as the raw emotions of my participants. As stated by Greenwood (2019), arts-based inquiry is for exploring the multi-headed realities that are complicated as life experiences are multisensory. These complications and intricacies of subjective realities can be detangled through various art forms in more interactive ways, bringing to the surface the realities hidden in the depth of a human psyche. As Nickerson (2024) opines, these realities can be explored only by diving deeper; that is what an interpretivist does. And I, as a research artist, have always aspired to submerge into the peculiarities of human experiences and thought processes through their various expressions via different visual and literary art forms. Interpretivism would give me that liberty to explore all the serpentine avenues of my participants' experiences so that I would be able to fathom the transformation in my little research participants. Nickerson (2024) further asserts that human beings are complex creatures as they are emotional beings driven by different hormones, they react differently to different things in different situations which interpretivism, as a philosophical doctrine, helps to bring out. Thus, I have opted for interpretivism as my research paradigm as my participants were little human beings with their own experiences and emotions. Through various behaviors, attitudes and reactions people show in various situations and circumstances, knowledge can be constructed by interpreting their meanings (Ulz, 2023) as truth cannot be generalized, it is subjective. Thus, I have attempted to document the multiple realities which were totally authentic and organic about my participants.

As an interpretivist, I wanted to explore the subjective realities and interpret them according to my interactions with my participants. I wanted to research the culture or pattern of the constructive effects caused by active learning approach on my participants. I wanted to know the "subjective meanings of my participants" (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022, p. 424) as I wanted the world to understand how they constructed knowledge or got involved in a meaning making process with the implementation of active learning strategies. Moreover, I wanted to understand the positive domino effect of active learning in my participants who were from different socio-backdrops. Thus, interpretivism is one of the two paradigms I have used in for the research.

Why Postmodernism as My Research Paradigm?

The fact of the methodology used for the study, i.e., “arts-based research”, itself is a strong evidence that proves the idea that I wanted to explore the culture of learning via the implementation of active learning strategies in my participants in a “different way”. Postmodernism is the paradigm I have chosen not before I started the journey of writing but after it all began. Somehow, in the midway of the research procedures, I felt that interpreting the data only through the lens of an interpretivist researcher would not be enough for me as I believe that reality bears no restrictions and it is always in a stage of jelly which fluctuates uncontrollably (Trivedi, 2020). We can go through various alleys to explore and express what truth is. Thus, I have chosen postmodernism to express reality in my own way. As Sudartini (2024) states, postmodernism deals with the acceptance of differences. It claims that there are innumerable narratives about one reality. It accepts and appreciates the complexity of diversity. I was so much desirous to embrace the differences of my participants’ realities and their diverse ways of understanding things.

All my four participants were different from various angles; their personalities, behaviors, familial, societal, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and above all, their ways of perceiving and expressing things. This made me become a postmodernist as I wanted to accept all their differences and rejoice in the expressions they demonstrated through their juvenile poetry, stories, assignments, sketches, paintings and so on and so forth. Besides, I did not want a barrier when it came to making meanings out of their experiences and emotions. I wanted to appreciate the mosaic and the fragments of my participants’ dealings with their levels of understanding. As a postmodern researcher, my intention was to give my participants elbow room as I didn’t want to have any license to impose my power upon them or control their expressions and feelings. I simply wanted to observe and listen to them without interrupting them and wanted to interpret my findings, celebrating the differences I found in their meaning-making processes (Mandal 2020). Overall, my inclination towards postmodern paradigm was because of the multiple faces of reality that I believed in. There is no singular truth and I wanted to prove that. I was able to prove that as I conjoined the different fragments and fibers related to my participants’ experiences and shaped the dissertation as a beautiful variegation of words and multiple art forms.

The Concert of Interpretivism, Postmodernism and Arts-Based Research

My study on the domino effect of active learning was completely based on the philosophical base of interpretivism and postmodernism. From the time when I attended a

session on postmodernism in one of my MPhil. academic writing classes, my mind was brimful of the ideas about what I would do to inquire on the issue that I had selected for the research. Coincidentally, in the same class, the two different presentations on postmodernism and arts-based research were made by two KU scholars that my brain had already nullified all other ideas that I had previously about how I would conduct my research. The psychic impression was indelible that I began with the identity of an arts-based interpretivist researcher. But with the flow of time, as the research matured, I started feeling that something was lacking and the realization took place when I had already crossed half the way. The realization was that I wanted liberation of expression for myself and my participants which was possible through postmodernism.

Unknowingly, I had already put forth freely what was true to me. But with the use of the postmodernist approach not only in data collection and data analysis but also in dissertation writing, I could authenticate the paper that has given me utmost peace. As Elaati (2016) asserts, postmodernism is never glorified in regards to its theoretical precision as it is heftily loaded with debated concepts, divided ideas and dubious meanings. I know well that I will definitely be questioned one fine day regarding various odd aspects in my writing as it has followed a flow of its own creating the spectrum that is strange. It, at times, might disconnect the readers from what actually academic writing is as it is defined generally and might connect them to the burst of crude emotions that one usually finds in a sort of personal write-up. However, I would like to admit hereby that I have not dared to distort what already exists as an academic paper. The dissertation might look a bit different but it carries all the elements that a scientific paper should contain. And I believe that there is proper coherence among those elements. Elaati (2016) further mentions that postmodernism celebrates the sense of liberation that transgresses all the established norms and marked demarcation in order to create renewed histories. I have always been longing for this liberation in writing because of which the writing owns this shape. But I have taken a great care of its structure and given it the appropriate framework of an academic writing without latching the stream of emotions and thoughts oozing from within me. It is because this freedom was needed to support what I believe in, i.e., *“There are multiple realities which can be expressed in multiple ways and my way is simply one simple postmodern way”*. Also, I needed this freedom to support my methodology as well. Thus, the dissertation is the harmonization of the trio.

The marvel of the trilogy is that there are many features they share with each other. As Kroeze (2012) admits, interpretivism, due to its traits that align with

postmodernism, is also regarded as a postmodern research philosophy. Both these “isms” show similarities to each other as both deal with the reality that has many faces and facets, that is created and is fluid. Bresler (2006) mentions that aesthetics is the core of a qualitative research and “art experiences” (p. 52) can brighten up the important aspects of it, such as, data collection, analysis and writing. Various forms of art can illuminate the inquiry and interpretation of a research that helps in the easy expression of postmodern idea of differences in reality through the research findings. Jaitly (2017) posits art on top of all other things as it is crucial to human life and living. Art, according to her, began from the primitive caves and is everywhere around us, not only in galleries or museums. Thus, without various art forms, even trying to understand various realities in one’s life is almost next to impossible as art is inseparable from human beings. In that sense, the dissertation is the concert of interpretivism, postmodernism and arts-based research as one complements the other because of their common features such as pluralism, diversity, breaking down the boundaries and all-embracing nature.

Arts-Based Research as My Research Methodology

Oct 18 Reflection

-By [Nagma Pandey](#) - Tuesday, 18 October 2022, 9:47 PM

HANGOVER.....yup, I still have it of today’s class as it was brimful of intoxicating topics, for they were interesting. And they were interesting because they are of my kind. In fact, I love to listen to the people for hours and hours who talk about new and challenging stuff and about crossing the established bars or the limits. I believe, Grounded Theory, Art-Based Research, Postmodernism and Metamodernism are all the latest terminologies. And moreover, art in any form never fails to fascinate me.

I believe that every human being orlet me particularize it, every researcher is an artist. The only difference is, some love to play with only black and white whereas some others are fond of multicolours. A researcher who prefers his/her thesis to be in black and white is more of a linguistic being whereas the one who opts for visual arts, music and sound arts, film and video, performing arts, literary arts, portraiture, reader theater etc. is a non-linguistic being. However, both a linguistic being and a non-linguistic being can equally create an impact to add up a new knowledge to the existing ones.

And me.....????!!! I am confused here. I know I love to play with words like a pianist plays with all the blacks and the whites in his piano to create a mellifluous piece of art, i.e., a musical composition. Also, it is undeniable that I was truly impressed by Shikha Ma'am's presentation on Arts-Based Research and I was being really taken away while she was presenting. In fact, I could feel that suffocation in my deeper self. I know I want to do so much. I want to explore all the avenues and be a real postmodernist, I want to be a Hippie when it comes to writing and simultaneously break free and apply various art forms voraciously too to express my findings while writing my dissertation. This wilder side of me had even reached its pinnacle when I was listening to respected Sujan Sir when he said that a research can be completely non-linguistic too. But.....I feel broken and devastated when there is not even anyone offering you a cup of coffee when you return home from your job place, not even a single day and to make the matter worse, the used utensils and the dishes inviting you to play with them in the sink, waiting for your touch since early morning every day, the laundry basket ever blooming with the clothes to be washed and every nook and corner of your house waiting for your divine touch with a broom and so on and so forth..... pretty hilarious yet painful!!! An artist I am, painting my house and my family with hues of happiness every day. Also trying to add more unique colors academically to what is already regarded as a set of beliefs, a paradigm.

Figure 27

A Painting Gifted to Me by Ms. Know-All. It is Full of "Hues of Happiness" Found in My World



The above-mentioned reflection of my own, dated 18th October, 2022 after Advanced Qualitative Research Methods class, very well clarifies why I wanted to

become an artist-researcher opting for arts-based inquiry as my research methodology. This methodology, as opined by Simons (2007), does not rely on a conventional way of explicating and analyzing; rather, it leads to a trail of “seeing and understanding”. It can be the best way of offering a voice to the ones who are “less articulate” in words and learn things differently (p. 295-296). It gives a researcher much liberty to enrich the document in a creative manner through various forms of art like, short narratives, images, cartoons, pictures, paintings, sketches, vignettes, dialogues, graphics and many more.

Elliot Eisner, a professor of Art and Education at the Stanford Graduate School of Education was the first scholar who coined the term and entitled a conference presentation held at Stanford University in the year 1993 as “Arts-based Research”. Thus, the term arts-based research in social sciences was originated in the year 1993 for an educational conference at Stanford University by him. (Wang et al., 2017). Researchers started the different forms of arts as poetry, play, painting and drama as significant tools to express their research findings in the year 1980. The early 1990s was the beginning era for the use of the term “arts-based research” or “arts-based educational research”. And this artful methodology bloomed in the real sense in the early 2000s (Cahnmann, 2013). An arts-based research differs according to the context of the study and different forms of arts being used in the study through which the researcher gets to interact with the participants, thereby, becomes able to understand their emotions and lived experiences (Morris & Paris, 2021). Both the researcher and the participants can meet at a juncture of expression and understanding which cannot be done through mere words with the help of various arts- based activities and art forms because “art, at its best, has the potential to be both immediate and lasting” (Leavy, 2017, p. 3). Strong emotions find better and even more direct ways of expression through different forms of art rather than through words because it is not possible to verbalize one’s heart out just via words. Thus, arts-based inquiry can lead to the optimum level of success in data collection and more importantly, while generating meanings out of the collected data.

Hence, arts-based research, which is a methodology apt for a qualitative research, demands a different dimension towards the discovery of knowledge from both the audience/readers and the research-artist, focusing on an epistemology that is based on experience and interaction (Seregina, 2015). The method is more about weaving a special bond between the researcher and the participants, fruitful communications and interactions between them and it has enough space for the participants’ experiences and thoughts. When art and text go hand in hand, the researcher can create magic in the form

of a great scholarly document. Moreover, an arts-based research “demonstrates four attributes: commitment for aesthetic and educational practice, inquiry-laden processes, searching for meaning, and interpreting for understanding” (Sinner et al., 2006, p. 1234). Thus, the research project can be called an interesting academic journey full of aesthetically creative activities that contribute to a meaning-making process with the implication of arts-based research, a qualitative approach for data collection and generation.

Any researcher can use arts-based practices or methods as long as they are suitable for the study and its context. In fact, Kara (2015) puts forth her remarkable statement saying that every researcher can go for artistic activities that promote creative ideas and thoughts. Anyone can perform arts-based activities like drawing, making a collage, writing a poem or a short narrative etc. and it is to be understood by everyone that creating a poor artwork does not mean that a researcher has failed as far as the elucidation or representation can express the emotions expected to be caught. These emotions can be the richest source of data for the researcher.

Both artistic praxis and the praxis of a research that is qualitative can be regarded as crafts. Leavy (2015) firmly believes that both these practices are integrated due to the blending of creativity, artistry, problem formulation and resolution, reflection and interpretation. Thus, arts-based research is one of the most effective qualitative research methodologies in which theories and practices are tight-knit with the process of inquiry at the heart, encompassing value aesthetic understanding, evocation and motivation. Both the researcher and the researched are motivated to create a bonding as they are somehow brought closer to the point of a beautiful attachment by various tools used under arts-based inquiry. And that was what I experienced during the field visits. Those visits brought forth the artist in me and I could explore the creative self of my participants as the lens that I had had was that of an artistic researcher.

Arts-Based Research to Unravel Artistry of Active Learning

“I never made a painting as a work of art, it’s all research.”

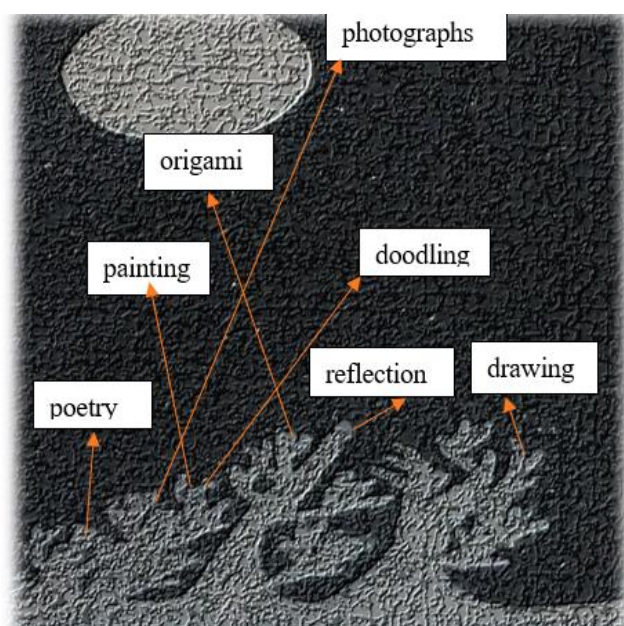
-(Picasso, n.d.)

Art has a myriad of tentacles like painting, origami, doodling, drawing, poetry, prose, reflection, narrative, dance, song, drama, photography etc. In whatever form it is, visual or sensory or auditory, Karacov and Levinstein (2021) believe that the ultimate function of art is an expression of one’s creation and imagination. One’s feelings and ideas find an outlet to be expressed beautifully via varied art forms. When a person fails

to express what is in his heart through the direct use of his accumulated vocabulary, he can let his inner voice shout out loud through any form of art. The imaginative aspect of the human brain gets materialized only through varied forms of art. According to Walker (2021), the major art forms include literature, painting, sculpture, movie, theatre, music, and architecture. Thus, there are various means of expression through which an individual

Figure 28

The Pic. Modified by Me after Taking a Snapshot from the Research Site: "Tentacles of Art"

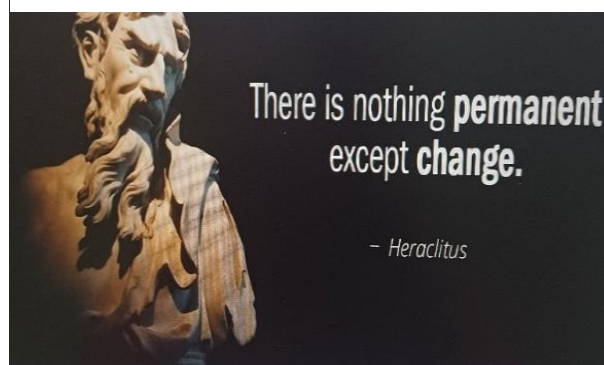


can speak his heart out though without speaking in the real sense. There is no such facet of human life which is untouched by art. In fact, every little thing we do is an art, anything and any creature existing on the lap of nature is an art, nature itself is an art. For Raghuwanshi (2021), art simply is synonymous to creation. When we fail to recognize the artistic elements rampant in us and around us, sadly, we fail to live as living itself is an art. And

definitely, there must be the infusion of art in academic writing for which I have ventured this project. The study is heavily impregnated with various forms of art that some readers who take academic writing as estranged from artistic creativity might feel this research work implausible. But again, we must accept the fact that nothing is permanent. Thus, the study is a mere attempt to create a vivid picture of the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal with the use of various art forms.

Figure 29

Change is Inevitable



(Source: A-Z Quotes)

It is a mere attempt to discover beautiful patterns of active learning through arts-based inquiry. Art has many branches and any form of art can be used in order to share the information gathered through data collection and to generate meaning in an arts-based research. A research artist communicates through various activities related to art with the participants for the collection of genuinely organic data from them so that a real scholarly arts-based work takes its form. Seregina (2015) adds that an arts-based research emphasizes on such artistic practices that recreates and redesigns the entirety of a research process and its expressiveness, demanding continuous reflexivity, diverging from the traditional approaches. This methodology is a tot in the field of research. It is slowly gaining its ground in the present day realm of research. Research scholars are more passionate about mixing art with knowledge at present that it is seen applied in varied disciplines like education, health, psychology etc. It helps in bringing forth the hidden emotions and amplifying them through various art forms. The ultimate output is laden with any kind of artifacts created by or with the participants and the notions of the researcher drawn directly from the data collected via interviews, observation, field notes and even other resources pertaining to the issue being explored (Morris & Paris, 2021). It uses artistic practices as an integral part of a research project, promoting the avant-garde. It is a research methodology that implements a different approach to how and in what context knowledge is constructed, what knowledge is created, and who created knowledge, providing divergent perspectives. Thus, the dissertation is an extravaganza of artifacts, field notes, field data, reflections, self-composed poetry etc. Amongst innumerable of the art forms, the study gives space only to more of visual arts and literary (written) arts due to its own limitations.

Visual Arts: To Optically Elevate the Emotions

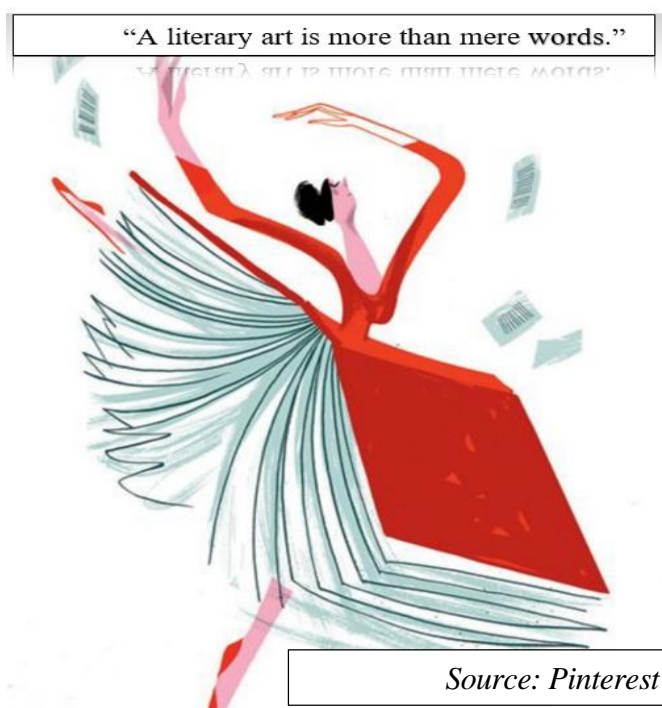
Any human expression that is basically visual like painting, drawing, doodling, photographs, crafts, video, architecture, sculpture, movie, graphic design, interior design etc. are visual arts. At present, both fine arts and applied decorative arts and craft come under the umbrella of visual arts (GBendal, 2020) which directly appeal to eyes and then enter into our heart. The use of visual arts in a research paper not merely adds to the aesthetics but equally contributes to the genuine expression of one's feelings and ideas related to a particular topic or issue. Such art forms express ideas artistically and are even narrative in nature which help us in comprehending the pattern of one's understanding which can hardly be achieved via other ways. In fact, any art work that we can appreciate visually, that is visual in a tangible manner, comes under visual art. Such arts are

immensely expansive that might include not merely fine art but also an artifact or more amazingly, even a physical object that is visible (Hendricks & Cawley, 2014). The study embodies massively the artifacts achieved during my data collection process which are visual in nature. Besides, it also embraces a few of the visual arts that I, as a research artist, created randomly on my own while being in a brown study. Thus, the visual art forms used in the dissertation like paintings, sketches, doodles, pics of the artifacts collected from the participant students etc., elevate their real life experiences and emotions as they aid to the visualization and opticality of the data.

Literary Arts: To Emanate the Warmth of Words

Figure 30

Literary Art is More than Mere Words.



Art in different forms may embrace varied colors, shapes, sounds, rhythm, design, patterns etc. but literary arts is all about words, either in a plain form or in a metaphorical or sonorous form of language. In that sense, it goes beyond just a play of words but the expression of the unsung and the unexpressed.

Art is not a means of decoration, rather, it is the outcome of rigorous practice as well as skill. Akwanya (2021) defines art as pure creation and not ornamentation. Just like a

painting is a pictorial representation embellished with water and various colors, a literary work is an art or mimesis that is possible only through words. Any literary art, viz; poetry, play, prose, fiction etc., is an aesthetically elevated creation. Literary arts is more than mere words inscribed on a sheet of paper. It is the storehouse of the stories, lived experiences, desires, hopes as well as the dilemmas of the people. Literary arts is highly engaging that offers one to get truly connected to the world, igniting a spark of enthusiasm to amass more knowledge regarding the various ongoing issues (Cunningham, 2023). Literary arts is the most powerful and magical representation of people's feelings, aspirations and imaginations. The study tends to create a smooth

blending between literary arts or creative writing with the academic writing, thereby, shedding light on the real opinions and emotions of the participant students. Clouden (2009) glorifies the power of words stating that words are the most crucial not only for communication but also for expressing and understanding which helps in polishing competence and capacity in a human being. Words used appropriately can bring magic not only in human relationships but also in an academic paper. Thus, the dissertation has actually valued the power of words, for it embraces literary arts to bring out the warmth that words, in the form of narratives, reflections or poems emanate.

The Domino Effect of Active Learning: An Artistic Revelation of Constructive Output

The domino effect is an artistic revelation of how the various petals of learning by doing unfold in a pupil. It is a multiplier effect that is caused since a domino can actually knock down an object which is around one and a half times its size (Stillman, 2021). A slight positive stirring created in a learner through the implementation of various active learning strategies can lead to a chain of huge constructive impacts, thereby allowing the student to motivate himself to construct newer ideas and simultaneously analyze them to the level of creating deeper meanings. The initial event that causes a single or more secondary events that are better than the primary event is what the domino effect refers to (Yang & Qian, 2019). Hence, taking the reference of the dominoes displayed in an array, various literacy skills and life skills one learns through active learning can create a tremendous effect in a student. The impact is not transitory but everlasting that can be beneficial for one lifetime. This is what the present education system aims for. As the mildest push on the first one guarantees the fall of the remaining pieces, the use of one single strategy of active learning allows a learner to achieve deeper experiences of learning. And this is all about the aesthetics of the domino effect, though falling, they fall in an array that is a sight to see. As Bresler (2006) too agrees, aesthetics is the kernel of a qualitative research which, when expressed through the various artistic expressions, elevates the whole process of a research. Hence, through the study of the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms in the context of Nepal, I have tried to embrace the artistic revelation which is the cause of a knock-down effect of active learning method. And the methodology, i.e., arts-based inquiry, intensifies the beauty of the revelation.

Canvas of Creativity

A learner's mind is undoubtedly a canvas of creativity that owns its own unique marvel which is as beautiful as a splendid painting. It is potent enough for the construction of knowledge provided that the pupil is a part of the learning atmosphere which allows him or her to learn actively. According to the psychologists, creativity is the ability to generate such ideas which are not merely original but equally adaptive (Simonton, 2015). The ideas produced should be functional as well as workable. In that sense, creativity makes an individual tackle with the new circumstances, solving the problems to the core that appear unexpectedly. Such a capability is always pretty significant in everyday life. On the one hand, it has been accepted that knowledge is the genesis of creativity whereas, on the other hand, there is a huge mass which believes that too much of knowledge can even restrict creativity in a person (Dietrich, 2004). Hence, rather than imposing the knowledge that prevails, the learners should be allowed to create their own ideas that is very much possible through the implementation of various techniques of active learning.

The only thing that is to be provided to the learners is the opportunity to go the extra mileage so that they become independent and intuitive thinkers. According to Unwin (2019), there is a tremendous necessity of an "Active Learning Curriculum" that is more learner-centered and allows the pupils to get actively involved in the practices of creativity, collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving and social participation. It is a dire need of the time that the learning activities that enable the learners to actuate their perceptions and organic ideas are to be designed. Along with the design of such activities, they should get ample space to collaborate and brainstorm with the other learners like them that consequently leads them to the height of conceptual consciousness and comprehension. There is the need of incorporation of active learning strategies into every single facet of our course design in order to open all the windows for critical, creative and independent thinking (Sudhakar, 2018), for learning is a phenomenon of invention and innovation, not the amassing of facts. Learners are the ones who create knowledge and posit themselves at the best place in the academia by creating connections to the existing ideas and experiences. A learner-centered democratic atmosphere in the classroom breaks all the barriers of passive or receptive learning, since such an atmosphere lets them imagine, invent, hypothesize, research and investigate. This brings transformation in them as they don't just remain pupils but they change into little thinkers and researchers just

like a larva turns into a beautiful butterfly after going through various stages of metamorphosis.

Figure 31

Metamorphosis from a Larva to a Butterfly That Resembles how Pupils Transform from Learners to Little Thinkers & Researchers



Qualitative Tools to Tell a Tale

A research methodology cannot culminate without various tools or devices used under it for data generation. The collection of data and its analysis helps in finding out the answers to the research questions. The tools are the methods which are used to gather data needed for the study. Taherdoost (2022) opines that data can be collected through primary methods as well as secondary methods. He defines the two different kinds of data as he says that the data which is yet unpublished and is untouched or unintervened by other scholars is the primary data whereas the one that is derived from already published resources is secondary data. The study is an arts-based inquiry under which there were various tools used which well facilitated the research project enabling the collection, organization, analysis and publication of the outputs. The literature review section of the study is based on the secondary data whereas the methodology of the study is robust only due to the primary data collected and processed. The following are some of the major data collection tools that I used for the project:

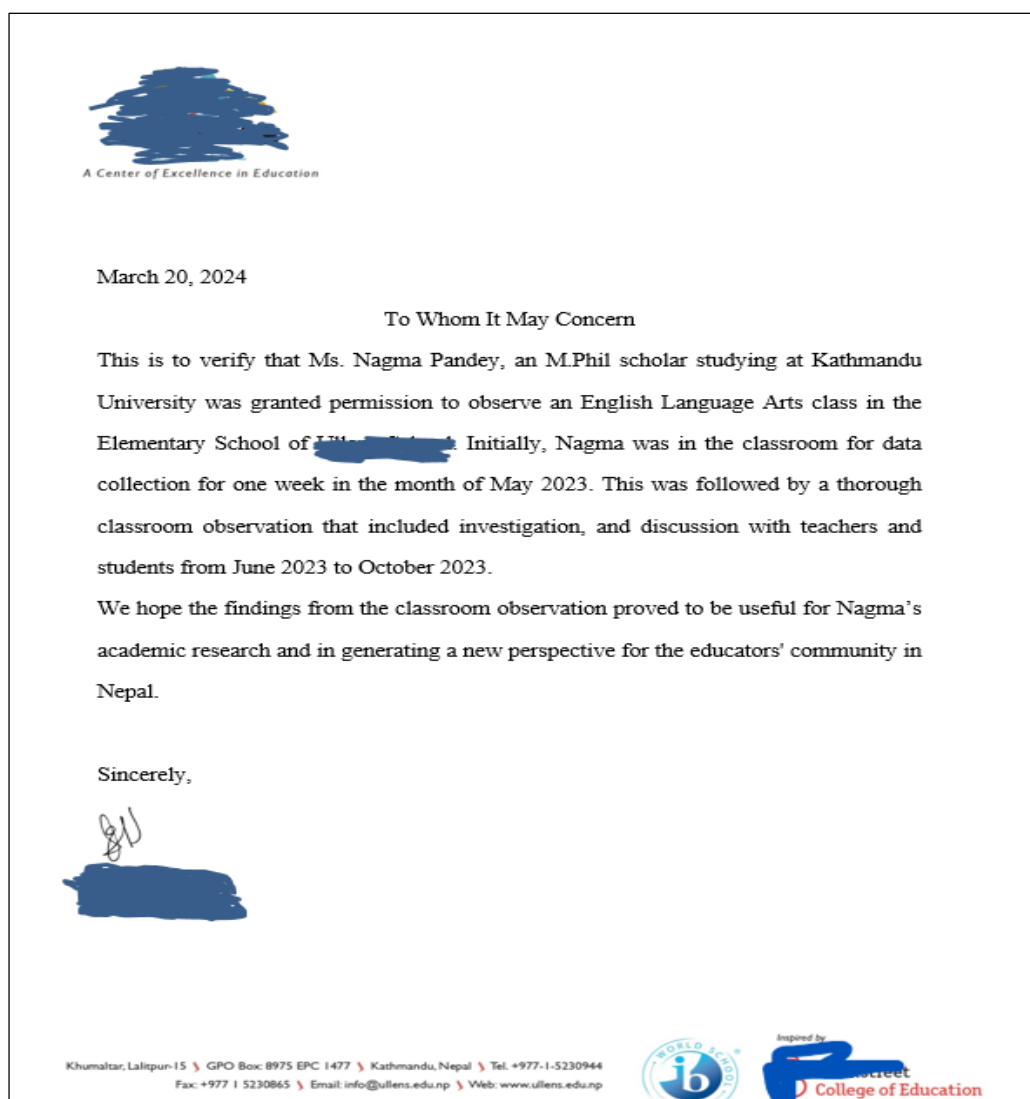
Observation

Observation was the nucleus of the study. A very long search finally led me to a great find, the right educational institution for my MPhil. field visit. After I got permission to visit a progressive school in Lalitpur for my data collection, a prolonged observation, from the month of May 2023 to the month of October 2023 accompanied by

three consecutive days of yet another observation in March 2024, took place. Undoubtedly, there used to be breaks in between and on Saturdays and Sundays, they used to have a holiday. Similarly, on Tuesdays, they would go for a swim and would return to school just for the last class which would be their English class. Thus, they would be hyper in the last class as they would just have arrived that their English teacher wanted me not to visit the class on Tuesdays as she would be exhausted and busy pacifying and channeling their high energy. The other days in a week, I would be sitting at a corner in the classroom observing the class and working actively amassing data, recording occurrences, behaviors and phenomenon on my laptop and even making field notes. I always visited the class with my laptop and would always be on guard not to miss out anything that could be significant for my study. Observation allows a researcher to experience the firsthand real-time happenings in the real setting whereby he/ she can collect authentic information about his/ her participants' behavior.

Figure 32

Verification Letter from the School I Visited for My Data Collection



Satapathy (2023) deems the data collected through observation as unfiltered, rich and reliable that helps in the documentation of truly natural happenings. I not only collected the necessary information through observation but also felt that I was getting closer to those students as they were always welcoming and took a great pleasure in my presence. I was never a stranger to them, not even on my very first visit. A very warm and welcoming attitude of theirs always dragged me closer, and yet closer, to them.

I am a high school English teacher at a renowned institution in Lalitpur. My school would get over at 12:30 pm every day and by the time I would reach my research spot, it would usually be around 1:00 pm. I was lucky enough as the English class would start at 1:00 pm and I did not have to interfere with the timetable provided to me by the institution where I was working. After a hectic day's work, I used to reach this school where I would always be reenergized and replenished having been recharged by the high and happy energy of the little wonders. The pupils here were ever energetic and enthusiastic that they were always up and never let me down too. They always greeted me from their place and some even threw themselves towards me to give me a tight hug as a bonus to my visit. Sometimes, when I would turn up after a long gap, they would fling interrogations to me like where I had been and why I hadn't gone to their class. One or two would even start briefing me about what they did in my absence and how I missed their fun activities. Some even used to ask me if I could be there in their classroom forever and be their teacher. I don't know why such a bond grew between us. In fact, they were very pure souls who could easily charm anybody and I was no exception.

Reflection on a Field Visit (May 15, 2023)

Time: (9: 43 pm)

Oh man!!! I feel so elated and even my soul is smiling at the moment as I have found a perfect place for my field visit. Just before a couple of weeks, I was on the brink of giving up.....yup seriously. I was hunting for a progressive school for my field visit. I approached the people from four different schools but they all declined to my humble request. They didn't allow me to visit their institution even to talk to them in person. I was so heart-broken then. But now, "Kintsugi", a Japanese method of joining broken pottery

using gold dust, has taken place in my once shattered heart that it is cured and pacified to the core. My heart is brimful of happiness now and it increases each day I get to see my busy bees, my bundles of hope. It has not even been many days that I have started visiting them; however, we are so much fond of each other that we love each other's company. Ms. Know-All wildly threw herself to me today and gave me a huge hug. Imitating her, there were some others too who came rushing to me that I had to stretch

Figure 33

Classroom Map Drawn by Mr. Loud, a Snapshot Taken in the Classroom



my arms wide enough to fit in all of them. Me, a mother duck covering her ducklings under her warm wings. Pure souls!!! They are pretty naïve and innocent creatures. The teacher rang a small hand bell and then they released themselves from the warmth they always wanted to get entangled into. I was still looking at the assembling kids at the carpet area, the domain for their brainstorming, sharing and interactive sessions.

At times, I even feel like they are pretty smart, indeed smarter than we old-school fellows as they belong to Generation Alpha....."Mini Millennials" as they can give their logic to anything that happens and are bold in making decisions and solving problems. Also, I have felt that they are smart learners who don't hesitate to ask questions until they understand things completely. But yes.....they are true to their hearts, they don't fabricate things. When they were asked by their lead teacher to make predictions about the "Boa Constrictor" from the novella "The Little Prince" that they had been studying, they came up with beautiful ideas, some were quite funny as well as interesting. That proves that they are highly imaginative and creative learners for whom nothing is

impossible under the sun. As the novella focuses on the curious, innocent, untamed spirit of the major character, the little prince, I find the same kind of spirit in these learners as well. They are free-spirited and highly inquisitive that they always have a lot of questions to ask their teachers. Just like the adventures of the little prince reflect a quest for real happiness and teach one the responsibilities of relationships, these mini millennials are in the pursuit of happiness for themselves and for the people around them. My happiness reached its pinnacle when my Pizza Girl came to me, unhesitant, to show what she had drawn then and there, a boa constrictor.

Figure 34

Snapshot of the Boa Constrictor Made by the Pizza Girl



This openness was the inner beauty not only in the Pizza Girl but almost all of them. They were always excited to be expressive and share their creativity. And I, as a true researcher, did not want to miss this opportunity to keep a record of this new creation of my girl (Pizza Girl). So, I clicked it and now, it rules the photo gallery of my cell phone. I was in a dilemma what I would observe before the real observation began. But now, I have discovered that observation is that tool which not merely provides a

Figure 35

Snapshot Taken in the Classroom That Displays the Learners in the Red Carpet Area



researcher a sturdy data but also allows her to befriend the researched. However, I am aware that this warmth and friendship will come to an end once I stop visiting their place. This realization is biting my inner self at the moment. Argh.....!!!

As soon as I would enter the classroom, I would try to isolate myself, but in vain sometimes. They would surround me while I would be sitting at a table. I had to remind them of the assignment given by the teacher and then they would disperse. The classroom itself was a spacious place which was bright and well-furnished. There were the students' worksheets hung everywhere and their project works were placed on top of the shelves. All four walls had their work displayed, as if they were the gold medals dangling on the bosom of a sturdy soldier. There was a smart board on one wall and the wall opposite to that had a whiteboard where one could see two new words written for every single day, termed as "words for the day", besides other things mentioned related to their daily routine. A bookshelf at a corner was proudly standing with the tag on its forehead- "Reading Corner".

Figure 36

Reading Corner , a Snapshot from the Classroom



The most amazing thing about the class was, it was called grade 4 "Experience". Similarly, other two sections of grade 4 were called "Exploration" and "Reflection". Experience, exploration and reflection are the key elements of active learning, too.

Knowledge is the outcome of experiences being explored, reflected and transformed (Lamm et al., 2024). The learners in this classroom gained first-hand experiences,

Figure 37

The Corridor Greatly Laden with the Creative Works of the Students.



reflected upon them and transformed them into newer ideas as the creation of new knowledge. This itself proves that the school focused on the implementation of active learning approach.

Moreover, the corridors and stairs were all greatly laden with the creative works of the students. They were free to wear any sort of casual dress as the school did not have any uniform. Even the teachers were free to wear any kind of dress. The children were allowed to drink water and even go to the washroom during class hours. I saw them talking freely to their friends as well as to their teachers. There was mutual help and the spirit of teamwork. They not only learnt lessons but also values of compassion, kindness and love for each other. Learning was never demanding, rather fun-filled and interesting. They learnt not only inside the classroom but even outside it. They were even taken for field trips and excursions time and again and had to reflect on the trips and to prepare reports and reflect on them in the classroom after such trips. Thus, learning was never tedious for them that made them ever curious to think deeper and learn further.

Interview

Interview was the second tool that I used for data collection. I used to interview the participants usually in their break time. Sometimes, I would even have a brief talk with them inside the classroom without affecting the work they would be doing. In fact, it

was not me but they themselves who would come to me and talk when I would be documenting the things observed in the classroom. Sometimes, I even used to record our casual conversation before they would be aware that their words were being recorded. Monday (2020) regards an interview as one of those powerful data collection instruments which allows a researcher to extract the crudest data from the greater depth that truly helps in the investigation of the issue. The interviews were open-ended, casual and unstructured and were later transcribed to withdraw the required information. The students there were so lively and that if I would start interviewing one of my participants, then some others who were not my participants would also want me to ask them questions. So, just for the sake of their happiness, I was compelled to talk to non-participants also sometimes. I sometimes typed the conversations between the teacher and the students in the classroom itself which took the form of an important field data. And sometimes, I used to record the conversations between the teacher and the entire class on my mobile phone without letting them know that I was recording their crude conversations. However, I had informed the school management and that particular teacher about it on day one itself. Later, I used to listen to them again with high hopes to find some treasures for my research. Thus, the interviews and even such conversations proved to be utterly useful for the project.

Field Data and Field Notes

As far as possible, I always collected raw data directly as the field data and wrote reflections on some of them the very evening after I would reach home. Sometimes, I made some field notes too in the diary that I used to carry. I used to type every single thing that I observed. According to Pacheco-Vega (2019), writing field notes and field data and squeezing out meanings from them is an inseparable aspect of a researcher. Whether the researcher is in the field or at home, s/he is always connected to the field data and notes collected to withdraw insights and information for the research. Thus, I used to collect field data and then make a profound study of them time and again to find out if the resources I required were hidden in them. I never forgot to carry my laptop to the field. The first thing that I would do after entering the class used to be setting apart myself with my laptop and type everything seen and observed. Though being amidst them, I had always been able to create a space for my thoughts and a lone time for myself. I even took photographs of the works done with a permission from the teacher. I also collected many of their worksheets from the teacher thinking that they would be beneficial for me during the time of data analysis. When there would not be spare worksheets, with the permission

of the lead teacher, I would click the worksheet contents, hoping to achieve some materials for my data from them. However, there had even been days when I was lost in my own world of doodling rather than typing field data or notes.

Figure 38

A Doodle I Drew inside the Classroom

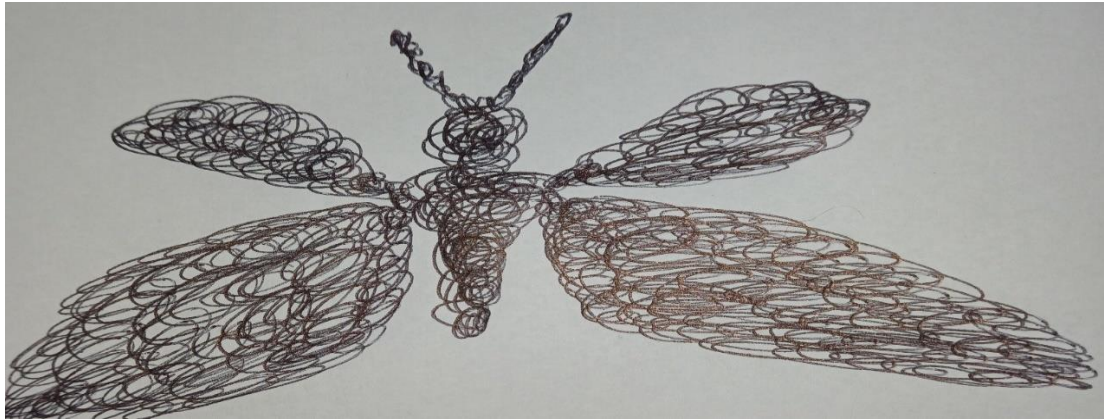


Figure 39

A Doodle I Drew inside the Classroom when I didn't Feel Like Typing Field Data



Artifacts

Artifacts were the other important tool that I collected for the data generation and analysis. They are the human-made objects for finding out solutions to the practical problems (Weigand et al., 2021). The artifacts I collected were the worksheets, handouts, photographs, articles written by my participants, sketches, drawings, paintings, letters, poems, stories etc. Friedman (2007) admits that the words spoken vanish in the air but the artifacts collected serve as the best of the qualitative tools. Thus, I hauled anything that was related to my participants which really helped me a lot later in the course of analysis and meaning-making. Anything I felt handy for the research, I either treasured them in my mobile gallery or in my clear bag. Along with observation of the participants'

behavior, attitude, activities, nature and personality, I even collected things that could be of use for my investigation.

Research Site and the Selection of the Researched

I selected my participants from one of the progressive English medium schools in Lalitpur. It follows Nepal government's national curriculum, however, with its own innovative pedagogical techniques. The school aims at child-centered and interactive learning and emphasizes on critical and creative thinking. Thus, the school follows a balanced curriculum that focuses on active learning. I had well researched about the school before I chose it for my field visit. I made it sure that the school implemented active learning approach which is the theme undertaken for the study. The first day I visited the school, I felt a very different vibe as the students studying there were free to wear anything they liked and moreover, I could sense freedom of expression there. There were no restrictions regarding their general attire and hairstyle. They didn't have a school uniform; however, uniformity peeped through every nook and corner as one thing that seemed so dominant in their personality was, they all were the masters of their mind when it came to learning. They shared not only things but also knowledge.

I selected four student participants through purposive sampling method because I wanted my participants to be able to provide me the best information to achieve what my research really wanted to explore. They were the children from grade 4 since I believed that the younger the participants were, the truer the feelings and thoughts they would share. I selected four such participants and they were completely different in nature from each other. Pizza Girl was the one who would never be available at one place and she was the master of her will. She wouldn't listen to anyone and would always do whatever she wanted to do, without taking permission from her teacher. Ms. Know-All was the smartest of all who was active and intelligent. She was the one who was much focused on her studies. Mr. Loud was always loud, vocal and talkative. He always wanted to be the first one to share his ideas and would speak without giving a second thought to what he would be speaking. Mr. Cool Philosopher was the one who looked totally different with his cool hairstyle and dressing sense. He was least bothered about things and would handle any situation calmly.

Unfolding the Latent Potent of the Data.....a Hard Nut to Crack!!!

Any information or data collected by a researcher has some hidden meanings in it. A researcher not only gathers information but also reveals what the reality is or shares to the world what the discovery is after processing the collection and using it for the process

of meaning making. The rawer the data is the more potent it is because the organic data leads to the revelation of a greater discovery in any research. So, I collected a huge bulk of data with the use of the above-mentioned tools and then, ultimately, examined them minutely coding, thematizing and analyzing which helped in drawing conclusions. Jnanathapaswi (2021) mentions that thematizing allows a qualitative researcher to analyze and interpret the huge data. This helps in finding patterns and developing themes. On the other hand, coding is a very beginning stage of data analysis that leads to a detailed and more meaningful interpretation. This influences the final result. Similarly, Rosencrance (2021) defines the process of data analysis as the evaluation of massive information collected in different ways in order to read the repetitive trends and patterns or to find other insights. In order to find the patterns, I analyzed the collected data the way it best suited the content and the theme of my research.

Various forms of arts like drawing, reflection writing, journal writing, poetry, brief narratives, sketches, paintings, pictures, letters etc., were used to make the research an arts-based inquiry. Every participant's views and artworks were respected and I tried to maintain the authenticity of the data gathered by not fabricating them as per my desire. Classroom observations were made and well documented in my laptop for further reference. The open ended interviews were recorded and then transcribed for the analysis of data. They were interviewed only in the short breaks, without hampering their English class, that also with the permission of their lead teacher. But I loved talking to them even in the classroom when they would themselves come to my place and sit with me. In fact, the table where I was sitting was even shared by a few of the students that they would share even many things about their academics as well as personal lives without me asking them any questions. We, the researcher and the researched blended pretty well that I was not a stranger but a part of the classroom. I clicked many of the photographs of the works they did to suffice my dissertation with the data that was needed to support my research for which I had taken permission from the school authority beforehand. I even maintained my personal diary for pre-coding, memoing and writing down the aspects that I missed out recording. Thus, I always was a one-woman army when I would be there in the research setting, well equipped and fully prepared.

I had a tough time dealing with and distilling the collected data, for it was a massive collection and at first, I was confused about how to analyze the data. I had both literary and visual art forms to analyze. Besides, I had amassed enough field data and field notes, written reflections on most of them. Thus, I researched a lot and came to

realize that Saldana's method of data analysis would be apt for my study. I even remembered that I was assigned to make a presentation on Saldana in one of my MPhil. classes which gave me confidence to go for it. Thus, I had two cycles of data coding though there can be various cycles as coding is a heuristic process (Saldana, 2013). The first cycle of the coding encompassed a single word to phrases to some sentences to even some visual art forms like photos, drawings, doodles etc. and the second cycle encapsulated the core details from the first coding. In fact, the second cycle coding was the reorganization and reanalysis of the first one.

I preferred descriptive, in vivo, initial and concept coding in the first cycle whereas pattern and focused coding in the second cycle (Rogers, 2018). Coding helped me to connect the phase of data collection to the phase of data analysis. I was even aware enough to write analytic memos and reflections while collecting the data which proved to be quite useful in the analysis process. After the completion of the cycles of coding, I categorized the codes into larger groups that were more of analytical groups to create themes out of them. These analytical groups helped me in the preliminary phase of analysis. Though delving into analysis, I was moving back to data and code restlessly back and forth still trying to figure out if I missed out something significant. Thus, I was not just sticking to the summaries and the categories but still exploring the data and the codes hoping my data would come to life as the final analysis. The process of coding and thematic analysis was not that fascinating. It was time-consuming and I was very much outcome oriented. However, I finally realized that the final analysis was a cry for the moon as I failed to analyze the collected data properly as my data was the admixture of literary and visual arts. Gosh!!! Though I tried hard to include the visual arts for coding, I failed miserably that I gave up on this idea of Saldana's coding and analyzing. Then I was certain that I had to think of an alternative as I felt a great difficulty analyzing the data using the method of Saldana. This late but great realization led me to invent a cyclic method of data analysis which I based on the cycle of four seasons.

A Giant Leap from Saldana to the Cycle of Four Seasons: the Three I's

In one of my visits to my thesis guide, after an hour's discussion on the process of proper analysis of the overwhelming data that I had collected, I felt like I knew what I had to do. The professor was trying to give me the framework of how I could interpret and analyze the data and make a meaning out of it. I felt like I understood what he was trying to say; however, after reaching home, I was dumbfounded as if I had lost all my senses. Hit mercilessly by the bewilderment of maintaining a poise between my profession,

family and the academics, I was mentally numb and at my wit's end. For a couple of weeks, I did not even open the laptop to deal with my ongoing dissertation writing, for I had become a fish that fell from the pan into the fire. After reprocessing my brain again to think of an option that could replace Johnny Saldana, I finally found out a way to do it artistically. It was one fine day, when I was on my terrace, with my dear laptop on my lap, thinking deep about how I could handle the massive data I had gathered. In a snap of a finger, this idea about the connection of my data with the cycle of four seasons came into my mind. I had visited the research setting all Winter, Spring and Summer to collect data and stayed at home in Autumn interpreting and analyzing the data collected, just as the farmers work almost throughout the year and harvest the crop in Autumn. I felt a connection between this cycle of seasons in nature and my cycle of data collection, interpretation, analysis and meaning-making. That was how I architected my own technique of data analysis that made me make a massive leap from Saldana to my own method of the cycle of four seasons that comprises the three I's: impression (what I observed), impacts (how I felt) and insights (how I derived meaning), for the elucidation and insights generation. This is further well clarified in the chapter that follows.

During the process, I took perseverance and ethics as my formulae to move further and to analyze better. Perseverance was needed not to stop at any cost though the process seemed like never-ending and ethics was needed because I wanted the data, which was not merely data but also my participants' experiences and feelings, to be treated with respect and care. Creativity was another important element that I took as my armor throughout the process as an arts-based researcher cannot do at all without it. Creativity is required to think in a deep manner and in a different way because a qualitative data is not a concrete data. Arthur (2021) explains that a qualitative data needs deeper understanding and interpretation. Both literary art forms (e.g., reflections, free writing, poems etc..) and visual art forms (drawings, paintings, photographs etc..) were included in the research as the sources of data and information which needed creativity, criticality, ethicality and flexibility. Hence, this is how I generated meaning from the data I had collected taking a long period of time as the shift from Saldana to my cyclical method of four seasons was an uphill battle.

Quality Standards of the Study

Maintaining the quality of a research is one of the significant aspects because it adds to the reliability and validity of a study. In fact, Stahl and King (2020) say that qualitative methodologists have made many attempts to itemize how trust in a qualitative

research can be developed and then enhanced. The criteria, a researcher must take into consideration in order to maintain the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research, vary depending on the type of research conducted and the issues addressed.

More specifically, the study relies on arts-based inquiry as its methodology that there can be a debate if the traditional quality standards are to be maintained in it, too (Lewandowska et al., 2023). In the context of this study, though it is an arts-based research, it is not practice-based (Gauntlett, 2021) as it does not use the performative arts, theater or filming. In that sense, the very quality standards implied for a scientific paper can be used here as it is an academic paper which has merely a two out of many types of creative arts, i.e., visual arts and literary arts. On this matter, Korstjens and Moser (2018) say that the “same quality criteria apply to all qualitative designs” (p. 121). Thus, the research project falls under the category of a qualitative project; hence, the quality standards applicable to a qualitative research are applied in this study too. Putting forward what Boeck and Tepe (2021) have to say, the study is a pursuit of knowledge based on a set of concrete research queries by using artistic means like paintings, sketches, poetry, narratives etc. The only difference one finds here is, it might be a bit more evocative as very expressive forms of art like drawings and sketches made by the little participants are used here; besides, the letters and narratives written by the participants themselves are embedded and the poetry composed by them enhances the paper. As opined by Esche-Ramshorn and Roudavski (2012), there is a distinct feeling a researcher experiences while encountering the emotions flowing out of the core of the participants. The same thing happened to me as well when my Pizza Girl offered me her pizza made of jigsaw puzzles and when Mr. Cool Philosopher composed a poem about me for me. However, every researcher must be aware of and liable for his/her actions in the process of making a new discovery through various research stages like data collection, data analysis and dissemination, for a researcher is purely a researcher. So, to maintain quality and authenticate the research, I have focused mainly on the following points:

Credibility at the Core

Credibility is at the core of the research as it adds to the reliability and trustworthiness of the research findings. Treharne and Riggs (2015) expound that prolonged involvement with the participants, triangulation, member checking, persistent observation etc. which assure for the credible and congruent outcomes of the research fall under credibility. As said by Ahmed (2024), the accurate reflection of the reality experienced by the participants is credibility. I have tried to ensure the accuracy of the

data and findings through perpetual observation, collection of the real artifacts used, triangulation and prolonged engagement with my participants so that I could build trustworthiness in my research. Bhandari (2022) defines triangulation as a research strategy that helps a researcher increase the validity of data credibility of the findings. Through the process of triangulation, any research prejudices can be mitigated. I conducted in-depth interviews with my participant students as well as their teachers in order to triangulate or cross-check the validity of the data. I could achieve the nuances of their true self, emotions, and experiences by building a rapport with my fellow participants. This helped me in collecting rich and real data. In order to enhance the credibility of the analysis and interpretation and to avoid the possible prejudices, I collected data through different means like interviews, observation, artifacts etc.

Authenticity to Ensure Novelty

A research project is a failure if it lacks authenticity and originality. “Authenticity criteria include fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity, some of which overlap with critical paradigms” (Morrow, 2005, pp. 252-253). In order to establish authenticity, I have made it sure that the voices of my participant students were documented and represented fairly, I have included their multiple perspectives on the area of research. I have focused on the genuineness of the data so that it can contribute to the achievement of the desired outcome. Moreover, I have conducted ample study to guarantee that the problem the research solved was not discussed before. In that sense, the research is authentic and ensures novelty in the realm of academia. As stated by Shannon and Hambacher (2014), authenticity deals not only with the research issue selected and discussed but also with whether the project can contribute to the domain of education in micro level and to the society in macro level. I am certain that this project can benefit both in micro and macro levels through its credible findings. The ones who will benefit directly are the educators, researchers and even policymakers who have not yet been able to discuss much about active learning and its constructive effects while formulating plans and policies pertaining to the education system of Nepal as mentioned in chapter two, policy review.

Verisimilitude Versus Fabrication

Verisimilitude in research shows the closeness of the data to reality. It refers to the theory of closeness of an assertion to the truth (Fine, 2021). It helps in enhancing the credibility and convincingness of the data. I have ensured the plausibility and relevance of the data collected by focusing on emotions that were true to my participants and giving

the real details of the setting and atmosphere of the institution I visited. I have made it sure that I collected data from the real participants and never twisted the information gathered. Olivares (2021) believes that something that has the “appearance of truth” and the likelihood of “being believed” (p. 3685) refers to verisimilitude. Hence, there are no made-up expressions as the data collected through triangulation is credible and also possesses the quality of verisimilitude due to its plausibility and authenticity. Aligning with the idea of Elbom (2023), all the crucial elements of the paper like the characters (participants), the conversations documented, images, the description of the setting etc., are convincing and lifelike because there is no fabrication; rather, the actual experiences, feelings and experiences of both the researched and the researcher vivifies the paper.

Ascertained Confirmability

Confirmability emphasizes that data analysis and interpretations of the findings are not the concoction of the researcher’s wild imagination, but are derived genuinely from the organic data (Tobin & Begley, 2004,). I have ensured that my research gained its shape through the real raw data collected and then transformed into its exact interpretation. The collected information was not affected or influenced by any sort of prejudices; rather, it portrays the real responses of the participants themselves. I have established confirmability through audit trail, and triangulation. As Carcary (2020) mentions, an audit trail adds clarity and transparency to the overall framework of a research which includes everything from the research design, data collection, analysis and synthesis to the theoretical, methodological and interpretative aspects that lead to the final outcome. On the other hand, Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, Dicenso and Blythe (2023) opine that triangulation ensures the validity of the data and the findings. The strongest elements to ascertain confirmability in this research are transparency and reflexive journaling. Ahmed (2024) focuses on impartiality in the interpretation of the data which the study also relies on. Thus, the study ascertains confirmability to prove that the information the paper provides is genuine.

Ethical Standards of the Study

A qualitative research embraces some ethical standards which safeguard the welfare of the participants’ sharing and narratives. There are certain research ethics which are the values that govern a person’s attitude and behavior (Parveen & Showkat, 2017). Ethicality really matters the most in a research project so that the dignity, rights and privacy of the participants can be protected. In the name of gathering deeper information, a researcher does not have any right to violate human rights. As suggested by Laryeafio

and Ogbewe (2023), it is the researcher's responsibility to protect the well-being of the researched under any circumstances. It is the choice of the researched how much information to give and if the participants feel any sort of harm, they can even opt for withdrawal from the participation at any point they want. Thus, I have only done the things that are morally doable. I haven't given any space for unnecessary contriving of the data and information which has eventually contributed to the authenticity, credibility and truthfulness of the research. Besides, I have ensured the proper maintenance of anonymity and confidentiality of the participants' identity as each individual has his/her own familial, social, cultural and religious backgrounds and restrictions. I have respected each participant's feelings and emotions and have tried my label best not to hurt anyone's feelings.

In fact, I did not have to come across any unwanted circumstances or misunderstandings as there was a rapport built up between the researcher and the researched. I could feel a sort of spontaneity in regards to the collection of the necessary data and details as my participants were ever ready to come to me and discuss about various matters before I would ask them any questions. At times, I even felt like I was interviewed by them since they always had a lot of questions to ask me. And that was okay for me as that was the result of the bond that was created between us which was indeed beneficial for me. As emphasized by Bhandari (2024), the research relies on the voluntary participation of the subjects and is free from any form of misconduct or plagiarism. The points chiefly maintained as my research ethical criteria are as discussed below:

Anonymity to Respect Participant-Identity

In a qualitative research, anonymity helps in obscuring the real identity of the participants as the researcher has no license to reveal the personal details and information of the researched. Anonymity operates confidentiality (Dube et al., 2014). I have not disclosed the original identity of the participants in the study and have confirmed that dignity of their family, ethnicity, culture etc. are maintained all throughout the process of the project. I rechecked the probable risks and vulnerabilities that could harm the participants before selecting them for the research. Even after the completion of the dissertation writing, I revised it a few more times to confirm if anonymity was maintained properly. Kang and Hwang (2023) assert that anonymity is the key to a credible and unbiased research. I made it sure to maintain anonymity of my participants' personal identity not only while collecting data but also while analyzing and interpreting it. I used

pseudonyms as the Pizza Girl, Miss Know-All, Mr. Cool Philosopher and Mr. Loud in order to conceal their identities. Also, the setting or the research site has not been disclosed anywhere in the paper.

Confidentiality to Maintain Privacy

Confidentiality supports anonymity. It refers to “protecting of the raw data and only publishing the aggregated results that cannot be traced to an individual or an organization” (Badampudi et al., 2022, p. 3). I have not disclosed any information given to me by the participants without their consent and have anonymized the participants by keeping their identity confidential to maintain privacy. Moreover, I have given all my participants a pseudonym each and have not even disclosed the name of the educational institution where I made my field visit. As highlighted by Bos (2020), I never tried to play with my participants’ self-esteem and dignity; rather, they were pre-informed about the objectives of the research and how the data collected from them would be used in the research. He further mentions that confidentiality and trust go hand in hand. There was a common understanding between the researcher and the researched that no limitation would be crossed in order to achieve the desired goal.

Issues of Aesthetics

An arts-based inquiry is not merely grounded to art as it primarily synergizes different art forms with research. Thus, the research is not pure art, it is not “art for art’s sake,” which was the movement originated in the 19th century France that glorified the aesthetic features of art (Meyer, 2023). Hence, the research is an academic paper which might not create sensuous pleasure as its goal is to bring to the light the constructive effects of active learning in English language classrooms and contribute to the broader domain of academia, not to provide that sense of awe. So, I was in ethical dilemma at times, more specifically while collecting artefacts, as my participants were not the artists and neither am I. However, as Leavy (2017) admits, I remained more flexible and open in accepting ideas and artifacts and there were such moments too when I relied on my “internal monitors” or “hunches” (p. 11) and treasured every single stuff either that be a sketch, a doodle, a poem, a story, a letter or anything that I thought would be handy for the research. This way, I made my participants feel good by taking anything they offered to me and even made myself free from the issues related to aesthetics.

Absolute Interpretation

As an artistic researcher, my concern was not merely the prolonged observation, interviews and written data but also the visual methods like photographs, paintings,

drawings, craft works etc., in order to capture more details and unique data that is different from the written and the verbal ones (Glaw et al., 2017). I had a great time analyzing and interpreting the visual forms of art as it allowed me interpretation that was more grounded and expressive, taking me beyond the boundaries of the written data (Bergbom & Lepp, 2021). Thus, I made it sure that the interpretation that I made out of verbal, written and visual data was credible and accurate. I was aware of the target of the project that I did not have much difficulty in the interpretation of the different kinds of data that I had collected, more specifically, after I designed my own cyclical method of data analysis based on the four different seasons in nature. Also, I had a beautiful bonding with my subjects that understanding their emotions and experiences was not a big deal for me. The field visit that was ongoing for six months from May to October (2023) and the final three days' consecutive visits after four months' gap in the month of March (2024) paved a smooth path for absolute interpretation of the data. Since my concern was the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms, I took enough time for data collection and interpretation.

Reflexivity and Representation

The study being the outcome of both literary and visual art forms, I could feel that I got an opportunity to know better about myself, in fact the newer facet of my personality. Also, the dissertation helped in the revival of my love and reverence for both literary and visual art forms. As mentioned by Skukauskaite, Trout and Robinson (2021), my engagement with various art forms helped me become more reflexive about myself as a researcher, my beliefs and values in relation to my research issue and objective. This aided in the making of more unbiased project as I was aware of how my research would contribute to the society. Reflexivity provided me deeper understanding of my principles and values about the study that helped me transcend my personal background to create new chances to learn about self and the research. This self-awareness in the form of reflexivity helped me represent my participants' expressions and experiences genuinely without being prejudiced. Thus, the research is a true representation of the invaluable information collected.

Chapter Encapsulation

In a nutshell, the third chapter echoes what methodology I have used and on what basis. A research stands as an empire on the bedrock of ontology, epistemology and axiology. The first fraction of this chapter reveals my ontological belief in multifaceted nature of truth, epistemological know-how of the truth through the use of various art

forms as my source of gathering information and my axiological belief which is strongly value-laden. This is followed by the segment that elucidates why I have opted for interpretative and postmodernist paradigms. An MPhil. class reflection well reflects how I got into arts-based inquiry as the methodology for the research. Before that particular class, I was not even aware that an academic paper can be an arts-based research. The chapter also focuses on the two types of arts which are used in this academic writing for both data collection and thematic analysis which are:

- 1) Visual arts (e.g., paintings, doodles, sketches, picture collages etc.)
- 2) Literary arts (e.g., poems, narratives, reflections, song lyrics etc.)

This is followed by the disclosure of the research tools that I have used to discover the truth about the issue addressed by the study. The other areas touched here are the research site and the process of the selection of the participants which is lastly followed by the process of data analysis, quality standards and ethical standards of the research. The chapter reveals the pang I felt in my nerves in the process of data analysis before I shifted from Saldana to my own cyclical method of data analysis. It clearly justifies why, me as a research artist, sprang to my own method of data analysis though I had begun and almost reached halfway using Saldana's method.

CHAPTER IV

CANDID PORTRAYL OF MY PARTICIPANTS: THE PIZZA GIRL, MISS KNOW ALL, MR. COOL PHILOSOPHER AND MR. LOUD

The ideas, experiences, activities and attitudes of my participants, who were the small children of around 9/ 10 years of age, are the substratum for the dissertation. They were the linnets from grade four “Experience”, never bored to chirp the stories of their experiences about their family life and school life. It seemed like the entirety of their lives revolved around their family, more specifically, their parents, and around their school, more specifically, their friends and teachers. I was quite lucky to have got their attention and love every day as I entered their classroom. They were the liveliest human beings I had ever met who were ever welcoming and adorable. I used to get vivified after a hectic day, being amidst them. They helped me navigate my juvenile self while being with them, almost four hours each week.

I had chosen four of them. I opted for the fourth graders as the smaller the learners are, the better they pour their hearts out. I could trace clear demonstration of the various activities at hand and moreover, could track transformation that occurred in them within the period of certain months. In fact, even the vice principal of the educational institution which I had chosen for my MPhil. field visit had suggested me to base my study on the learners from the primary wing, for in their school, there was more of the implementation of active learning pedagogical approach in the junior classes. I had no problem with what she suggested since I was already very grateful to the school for allowing my field visit after trying with four other schools and failing painfully. I was in fact, pretty frustrated when I faced failure while approaching the earlier four reputed schools in Lalitpur district. Hunting for a suitable school for the process of my data collection made me anxious and agitated as I spent months approaching various authoritative figures from different educational institutions. Finally, I landed up in this particular school located in Lalitpur for my data collection.

As mentioned above, there were four participants whom I had selected via purposive sampling method. This particular section mirrors my participants’ personality, behaviors and their potentiality of acquiring knowledge under which comes analyzing, critiquing and synthesizing the knowledge acquired. Every day was a heyday in their lives as something new was always learnt through various activities. I was so much

fascinated the way this particular institution had divided grade four into three different sections. The most interesting thing was, there were four sections and each section was given a name related to active learning, i.e., exploration, experience and reflection, this is what the little ones did in the process of learning English or any other subjects. They seemed to me like miniature of philosophers who were ever exploring facts, experiencing life and reflecting upon what was accumulated as knowledge. Every single child could be the subject of my study for each one was unique in his/ her own way. Since that was not possible for me, I stuck to only four of them whom I have given pseudonyms for the sake of research ethics. These pseudonyms are based on their personalities, attitudes and activities they performed during my observation span. Their new names for the purpose of this research are:

- 1) The Pizza Girl
- 2) Miss Know-All
- 3) Mr. Cool Philosopher
- 4) Mr. Loud

The Pizza Girl

Figure 40

Self-sketched Portrait of Participant 1:

THE PIZZA GIRL



She was the most interesting of all as she disliked being at a fixed place, doing the work given and following her teacher's instruction, my first student participant. She was the master of her will who was always busy with her own personal project and would design the assignment for herself. I have given this name to her because she was small and round just like a mini pizza. Moreover, the name originated from a heart-warming incident that happened in their classroom, i.e., grade four 'experience', one day. I was busy with

my laptop as usual, observing the class and gathering field data. The entire class was given a classroom assignment and the kids were writing it. Only one small kid approached near me out of nowhere and offered me a piece of pizza she had prepared out

of some pieces of triangular jigsaw puzzles. There was a different radiance on her face which was the reflection of her happiness. I was a bit confused at first but in no time, I knew what I had to do. So, I took a piece from the joint whole and then pretended as if I was eating it. On seeing this, she was happier than before.

Me: Hi! Don't you have to do your class assignment?

The Pizza Girl: Mmmm....I have already talked to the teacher. I...mmm...I... will do it in my choice period tomorrow.

Me: Oh.....!! What is choice period?

The Pizza Girl: We.....mmmm... can do anything of our choice in that period.

(Later, I came to know from one of the participants that it always started from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m. and they could do

any task relevant to the lessons taught earlier from any subject in that period.))

Me (With both my eyes and mouth wide open): Oh.....WOW!

This incident is still fresh in my mind. Thus, she happens to be my Pizza Girl. She was one of her kind and was not bothered about what was happening in her surroundings. She was ever busy with whatever she liked to do and no one disturbed her, not even her own teacher. The other day, she came with something in her hand and showed it to me while others were busy writing their classwork. As usual, she was so happy to show me that wonderful thing in her hand.

The Pizza Girl: (Comes close to me and gives a cute smile) Look!!

Me: What's it?

The Pizza Girl: Mmmm...this is my plant.

Me: (Since I couldn't see any plant but merely a small water bottle lid with some soil in it. I asked her-) Hmmm.....!!! Where is the plant? I cannot see one.

The Pizza Girl: (Bringing the bottle cap filled with soil even closer to me) It is under the soil.

Figure 41

Snapshot from the Classroom that Displays the Pizza Made by the Pizza Girl out of those Triangular Pieces



Later, I asked her teacher what she was talking about. She told me that there was a small sprouted gram that she had sowed in that bottle cap, covering it with a little soil that she took out from the ice-cream jar with soil where they had sowed some gram seeds to practically study the process of “Germination”. My heart filled with awe and love for the girl when she went rushing towards the open window and stretched her hand with the very bottle lid with soil and gram seed out as it started raining suddenly. She wanted to water the seed hidden under the little soil.

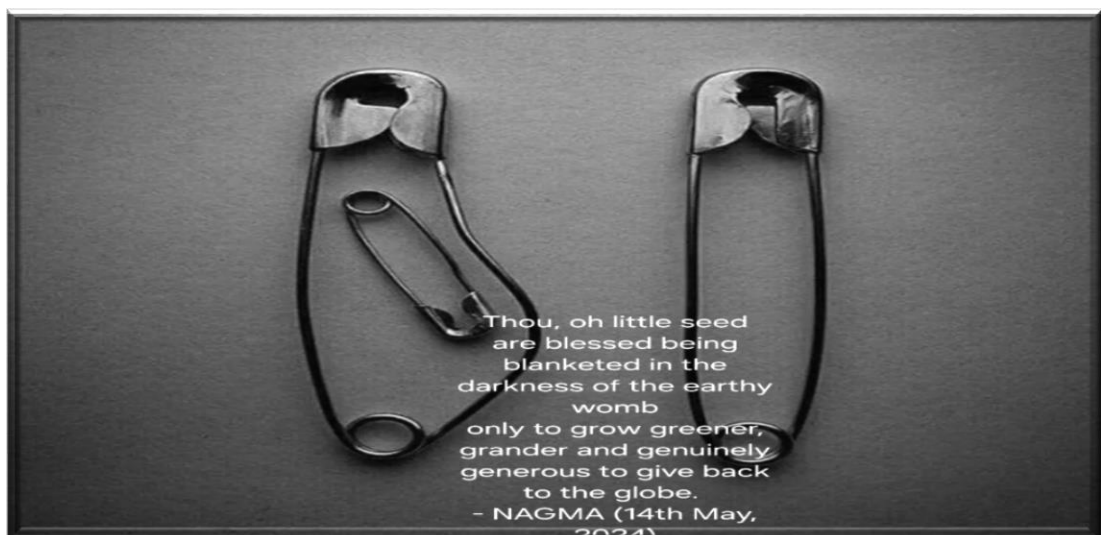
Figure 42

"Germination" Demonstrated in the Ice-cream Jars, a Snapshot Taken in the Classroom



Figure 43

The Little Seed



Source: Us & Art, by 9gag

The Little Seed

*Thou, oh little seed
Are blessed being
Blanketed in the
Darkness of the earthy womb
Only to grow greener,
grander and genuinely
generous to give back
to the globe*

- Nagma Pandey

I was so much influenced by this gesture of the Pizza Girl that I had composed the aforementioned poem as a reflection upon this cute incident. I felt like she herself was the little seed sprouting to become a tall and robust plant in the future. She was a jolly girl, full of creativity and happy in her own world. She was self-involved but selfless. She was the little seed in the darkness, gradually inclining her purer self to the illumination of knowledge. The seed hidden under the soil symbolized she herself for me because she was unaware of what she actually was but I could see, as a deep observer, the halo of creativity around her. She was ever exploring the layers of reality in her own childish ways that was pretty fascinating for me. Thus, she was one of the most interesting pupils amongst twenty-five others in the classroom that I was happy that I chose her to be one of my participant students. There were so many such instances where she was found to have been exploring herself, with all by herself. Once, I had reached the school a bit early, around five minutes. I thought of staying inside the classroom and wait for the children who were playing in the ground. When I got inside the classroom, I was baffled to see only my Pizza Girl all alone without being accompanied by a single friend of hers. So, I went near her and asked her why she hadn't gone outside to play. But she did not answer. She did not even want to look at me. I asked further:

Me: Hello! Why are you here....., all alone?

The Pizza Girl: (She looks down and toys with a pencil color that she is holding in her hand. Her Numeracy teacher enters the class, she looks at her and looks down again.)

Me: Dear, let's play together..... I will be your friend today. Is it okay?

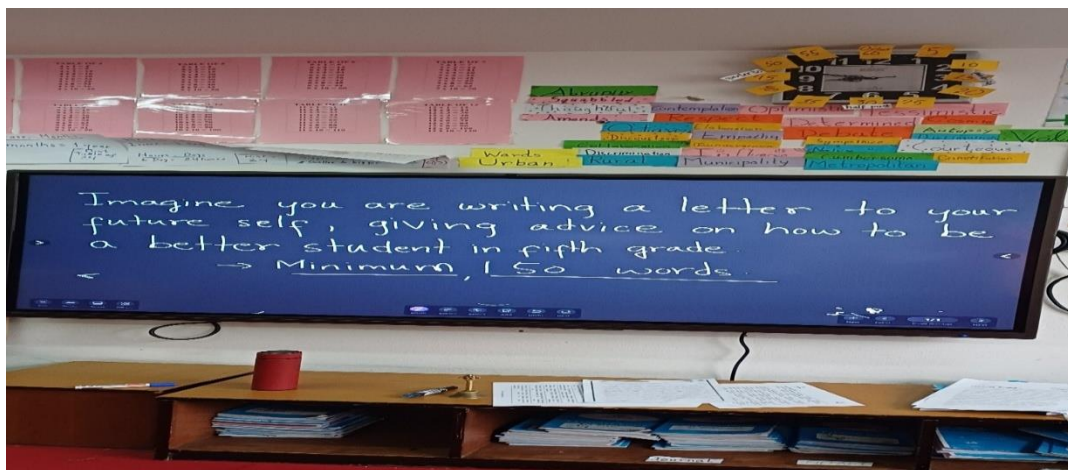
The Pizza Girl: (No reply yet. She looks at her Numeracy teacher again and looks at me and then looks down again.)

I took her on my lap and asked her lovingly what had happened to her. But this small bundle of cuteness had chosen not to communicate with me that day. Thus, I didn't feel like digging deeper and simply left her in her space. Later, I gathered from one of her teachers that she had disappeared since 9 o'clock in the morning till the bell for the lunch break rang. Thus, though they did not use the word punishment in their school, she was asked to be inside the classroom and not to go outside to play so that she would realize the consequence of what she did. No teacher was ever harsh to her no matter what but they always made it sure that she herself had to be responsible for her actions. However, during class hours, I had seen her coming into and going out of the classroom many a times without asking for anyone's permission. But this time, she had disappeared for hours that the teachers were quite stressed. As a result, she had to stay inside the classroom because she had just arrived from her long hibernation.

There are many sweet sagas about the Pizza Girl. In fact, I can write a novella on her if needed. She was always warm and she never was far away from me. Every day, she used to have something special to share with me. One day, it was the 20th of March , 2024, when the entire class was busy writing a letter to their future self,

Figure 44

Snapshot from the Classroom That Displays the Question (Letter to Future Self)



she entered the class very late, even after me. She was clueless at first what her friends were doing. She came to me and gave a honey-sweet smile looking at me. She was still standing and smiling looking at me, holding her hoody which had covered only her head

and the back of her body. She had not worn it properly. I realized that she wanted me to ask her why she had worn it that way:

Figure 45

Snapshot from the Classroom That Displays the Pizza Girl Covering Her Head with a Hoody after Her Recent Haircut



Me: Hey..... sweetheart!!! How are you? Why have you worn your hoody in that way? (I tried to remove it from her head but she didn't even allow me to touch it, still smiling.)

The Pizza Girl: Haa....Ha... ha....(She moved a bit far from me and then again came very close to me. I understood what she wanted. She was

dodging me while I was trying to remove the hoody. And then she would chuckle, pointing at me, happy at my failure. The process continued for a while and ultimately, I was able to see what was hidden under the hoody.)

Me: HEY!!! I saw it....

The Pizza Girl: WHAT.....?? Ha...ha....ha,....

Me: Your head,... ha...ha....ha...

The Pizza Girl: You saw it?

Me: What...?? Your new hairstyle?

The Pizza Girl: (Smiling) Yeeaaa.....

Me: (Laughing) YEEAAAA.....(We both laughed out loudly, freely.)

We took the advantage of the lively, productive noise on the discussion about 'My Future Self' in the classroom. The Pizza Girl was least bothered about her future self as she was busy laughing at her present self. Seemed like she was the staunch believer of "carpe diem". The second last day of my field visit, i.e., 21st March 2024, something incredible happened. I could not believe my eyes when my Pizza Girl showed me what she had made. According to her, it was a DIY model of a windmill made out of the simple plastic items she had. When I asked her if she made it all by herself, she was assertive. This touched me deeply that I gave her a tight hug and told her to be more hard working in the future. But immediately, she confessed that she had not made it alone,

rather, she and a group of her friends had made it together. She even said “SORRY” to me for telling a lie. I loved her more after that incident because she was a creative learner transforming into a good human being; one needs courage to say “sorry”.

Figure 46

Snapshot from the Classroom That Displays the DIY Windmill Model Made by the Pizza Girl.



Miss Know-All

Figure 47

Self-sketched Portrait of Participant 2, MISS KNOW - All



Miss Know-All was my second participant who, via the name given to her, is clear enough what kind of person she was. Any time her teachers asked questions, she was ready before hand to answer them. In fact, it seemed like she always felt she knew everything and no one in the classroom could or should beat her. Promptness marked her very special characteristic. I got to know from her teachers that she was like that not only in her English class but in all other

classes as well. She seemed and sounded like she was always in a great hurry to put forth her view regarding anything asked, anything that happened and any discussion that took place. She was the first one who had pronounced my name correctly when I visited their

classroom for the first time. I was taken inside by the primary-school coordinator who began a light but lively chit-chat with the students as soon as we entered the classroom. Then she talked to the English teacher who was instructing her learners something about the assignment given to them. The kids were all gathered at their most favorite place, the carpet area which was a U-area. Then I told them:

Me: Hello! Good afternoon.

Students: Good afternoon, teacher! (Thinking that I was their new teacher.)

Me: I am not going to teach you but I will be a part of your class for some weeks.

Is that okay, children?

Students: YESSSSS..... (As they were as energetic as quasars which are celestial bodies that emit exceptionally huge amount of energy which particularly look like stars when looked through a telescope.)

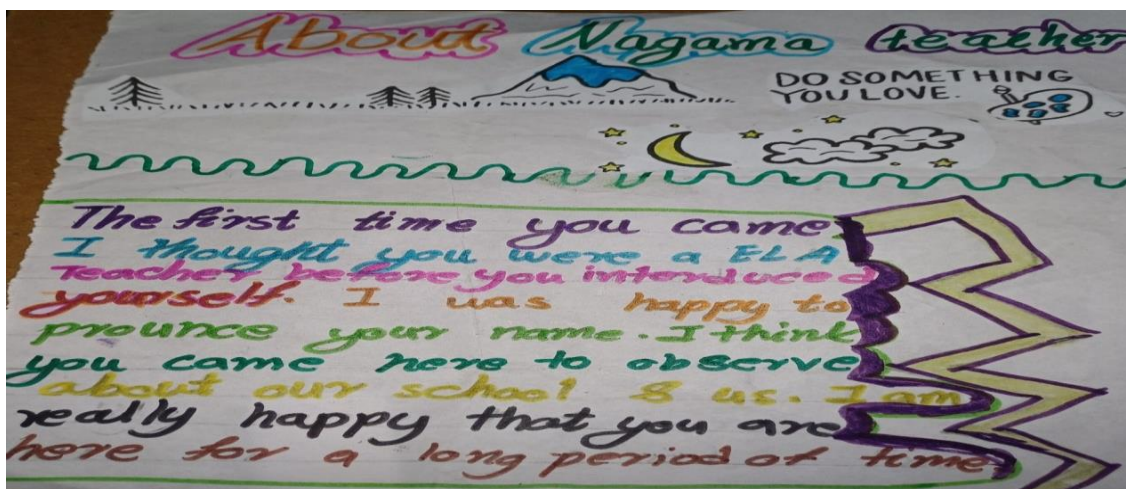
Me: That's grreeaaaatttt.....!!!! Oops! I forgot to tell you my name. My name is.....(I simply spelt it-) N-A-G-M-A.....Can anyone guess the right pronunciation?

(There were many others who willingly tried to pronounce it but failed. However, Miss Know-All was the one who succeeded in the first attempt itself.)

Miss Know-All: (Standing up with her right hand stretched up in the air with utmost vigor.....n-uh-g-m-ah

Figure 48

The Way Ms. Know-All Expressed Her Happiness on being Able to Pronounce My Name before Anyone Else could do, a Snapshot Taken in the Classroom



I felt like I was in the seventh heaven when a small girl pronounced my name quite properly, that also in her first attempt. I can enumerate a long list of illustrations when she had always tried to prove herself the first rising star out of others. These children were like stardust, emitting their own glorious illumination of enthusiasm, hope, imagination, vigor and excitement every time. It was not because I was with them but because they were naturally like that: super active kids with a lot of noise, movements, queries to be replied, problems to be resolved, stories to be narrated, games to be played etc.....and moreover, the greatest gift given to me every day used to be a number of tight hugs from them every time I entered the class. Oh my...my...! A time span of one complete hour for their English class never seemed like enough for their juvenile quest for knowledge which was never-ending.

Figure 49

Snapshot from the Classroom That Displays the Pupils' Group Work on Similes & Metaphors



Source: The English Language Classroom which I Observed

Once, while teaching similes and metaphors, the teacher had given them a handout which contained a poem entitled “My Family is Like a Christmas Tree”, laden with similes and metaphors. They were all seated in the carpet area with a hand out each. The teacher first asked to recite it together along with herself. They all did it quite well. After the recitation, the teacher asked:

Teacher: What does

“my family is like a Christmas tree” mean? (“My family is

Like a Christmas Tree” was the title of the poem.) Does the poet mean that his family is a Christmas tree? (Before she could call out a student’s name, Miss Know-All raised her hand like a string of lightning in the sky and promptly, she said the answer, her own genuine answer.)

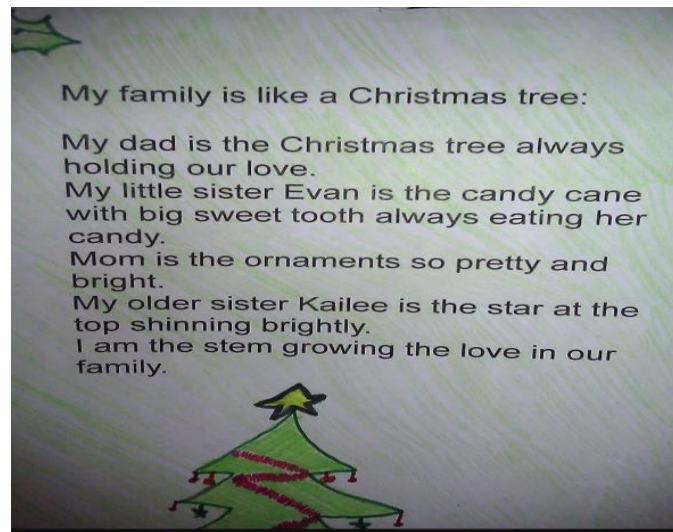
Figure 50

Snapshot from the Classroom about My Family is Like a Christmas Tree

Miss Know-All: The poet is only saying that his family is not a Christmas tree but only “like” a Christmas tree.

Teacher: Very good, Miss Know-All.

(Everyone gave a thunderous clap for her that motivated her to the



marrow that could be seen in her smile and body language.) Teacher: “My dad is the Christmas tree always holding our love”, can anyone explain what this line means?

Miss Know-All: (Before anyone could answer, in a great hurry...) My dad is not the real Christmas tree but he is as big and strong as a tree, supporting our family.

Teacher: WOW!! Give her a big hand. (Everyone clapped for her and she is overwhelmed.)

Teacher: “My little sister Evan is the candy cane” (It was the second line of the poem). What does he mean? Not Miss Know-All.....(Before she could finish her answer, Miss Know-All opened her mouth again.)

Miss Know-All: (As fast as a bullet train though this question was not just flung at her but for everyone.) May be she likes candy. (Haaaaaaa.....a humongous giant of laughter from the whole class immediately ate her confidence up that she simply gave a quirky smile and settled down for the time being.)

One of the students: May be the poet is trying to say that she is as sweet as a candy or she is the sweetest person in the family.

(Miss Know- All, still retaining the same smile on her face clapped whole heartedly after the teacher declared that the answer given by that particular student was correct.)

Teacher: “Mom is the ornament so pretty and bright?”, any explanation?

Wait.....wait....wait.....mmmmm....From the one who has not spoken yet?

One of the students: She is like an ornament....(Before she could complete her sentence, another spoke.)

The other student: She is pretty and always happy.

Teacher: Anyone else with a different answer?

Another one: She is very bright and happy.

(This process of question-answer keeps going on until they interpret all the lines given in the poem. The last line was- “I am the stem growing the love in the family”.)

Teacher: “I am the stem growing the love in the family”, can anyone interpret this line?

(Miss Know-All finally came up with a BANG....with her very creative answer.)

Miss Know-All: Without a stem, all other parts of a plant or tree cannot grow properly. It helps in making the tree stand tall and strong.

Teacher: Very Good!!! The poet is simply comparing the family members to a Christmas tree. It is all about similes and metaphors. A simile is a comparison between two things with the use of the words “like” or “as,” whereas a metaphor is a direct comparison without the use of “like” or “as”.

“My family is like a Christmas tree”, is it a simile or a metaphor?

Almost everyone: (Noisily) Simile because the word “like” is used to compare between family and Christmas tree.

Teacher: “My dad is the Christmas tree”, what is it??

Everyone except a few: Metaphor because no “like” or “as” is used.

[At the back of the paper, there was yet another short poem. The teacher asks someone to recite.]

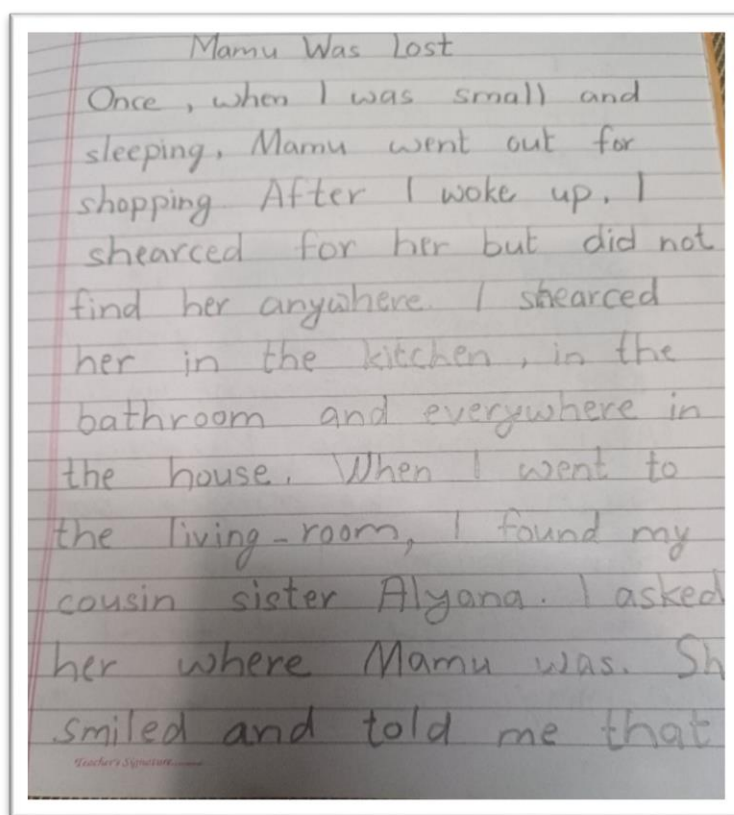
One thing I understood about Miss Know-All after all was, she was an enthusiastic learner who always kept herself open to various questions and always tried to answer them in her own way. There was no show-off or imitation; she always tried to answer what she thought was correct.

In one of the English classes I observed, I found the children fully engrossed in listening, interacting, brainstorming and summarizing the story they were learning. It was the story entitled “Sanu and the Big Storm”. Sanu is the principal character in the story who rescues her lost mother from a huge storm. I was sitting at a corner, observing my

participants. I could read their facial expressions changing along with the change in the situations and circumstances in the story. It seemed like my participants had put themselves into the shoes of *Sanu* as they looked stressful and sad when *Sanu* in the story lost her mother and were highly jubilant when *Sanu* found and rescued her mother. They were the perfect examples of the learners who were less ego-centric and more logical as they could empathize with *Sanu*'s situation and were even becoming the part of interactions, putting forth the ideas they had constructed analyzing *Sanu*'s situation.

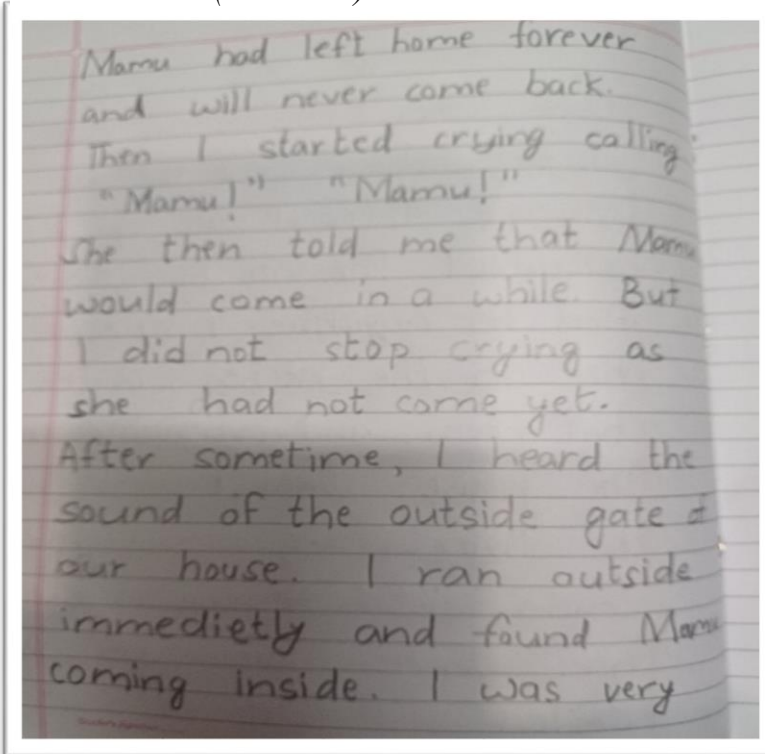
Figure 51

Snapshot from the classroom That Displays the Story "Mamu Was Lost" Written by Miss Know-All



Before explaining the story, the teacher read the lines from it and asked them to follow her. After a while, she made each one of them read one line each. Then she began explaining it. After explanation, she hurled a probing question: “Who is *Sanu* and what happens to her in the story?”, the learners were in a hurry to put forth their

opinions. The teacher allowed each one of them to share their ideas and appreciated everyone's sharing. They were allowed to brainstorm and interact simultaneously that they were more confident when they said their answers to the other questions asked. The carpet area with the learners and the teacher was like a mini Socratic circle where many questions regarding the story were raised and answered with much ease. This activity was interesting for my participants and it was more fun-filled as some of the ideas shared were humorous. The teacher was focusing on construction of knowledge. She was more into what they perceived rather than if they actually learned. I could observe the development

Figure 52*Mamu was Lost (Contd.....)*

of rationality or logical thinking in my participants that they were easily involving themselves into the process of meaning making, analyzing and synthesizing ideas they had perceived. Thus, construction of ideas was emphasized

through this activity which had many layers of active learning strategies like reading, narrating, explaining, interacting, discussing, analyzing and synthesizing knowledge, summarizing etc. My participants were in a sort of social setting in the classroom, thinking critically and creatively and sharing what they thought, in the carpet area during the discussions. Besides, a few of the learners were even able to relate the story with their own life occurrences, one of whom was Miss Know-All. She shared how she had cried for so long when she was told by one of her acquaintances that her mom had left her.

Miss Know-All: Teacher...mmm... I have something to share.

Teacher: Oh ... is it? What is it? If it is about the story, you can share; otherwise, there is always next time, may be in the morning circle tomorrow.

Miss Know-All: It is my own experience. Once, my Mom also got lost.

Teacher: Really?.....hmm., and then?

Miss Know-All: It happened when I was four years old or so. I was asleep and when I woke up, I didn't see my Mom around. I started searching for her everywhere in the house but she was nowhere.

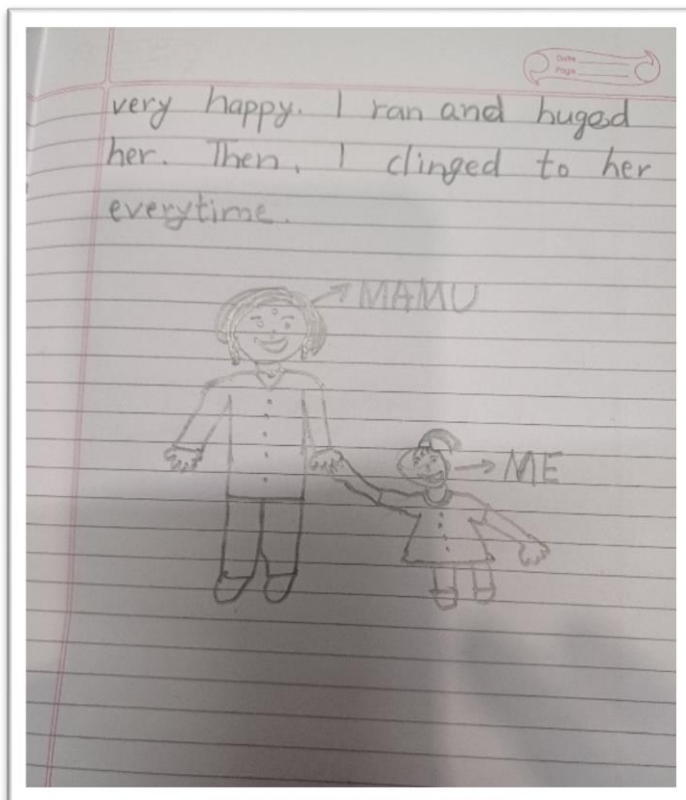
Somebody in the class: Oh..... so scary, I would cry if it had happened to me.

Teacher: Shhhh.....Listen to her.

Miss Know-All: Then I saw my cousin sister in the living room and asked her where Mom was. She told me that my Mom had left me and would never come back (Her eyes were a bit watery when she was narrating her anecdote.)

Figure 53

Mamu was Lost (Contd....)



One of the students: OhNo...Had she really left forever?

Another student: No....I saw her Mom last month when I had gone to her house on her birthday.

Miss Know-All: Now she is there with us. But at that time, she had gone for shopping while I was asleep and my cousin sister had lied to me telling that she had left forever.

Mr. Loud (Very loudly):

OHMAN! SHIT!!... So mean of her.

Miss Know- All: After she said that Mom would never come back, I started crying. She again told me that she was only lying but I did not believe her as it had already been so long and Mom was not there at home. Suddenly, I heard the sound of the gate being opened and rushed outside to see if it was Mom.

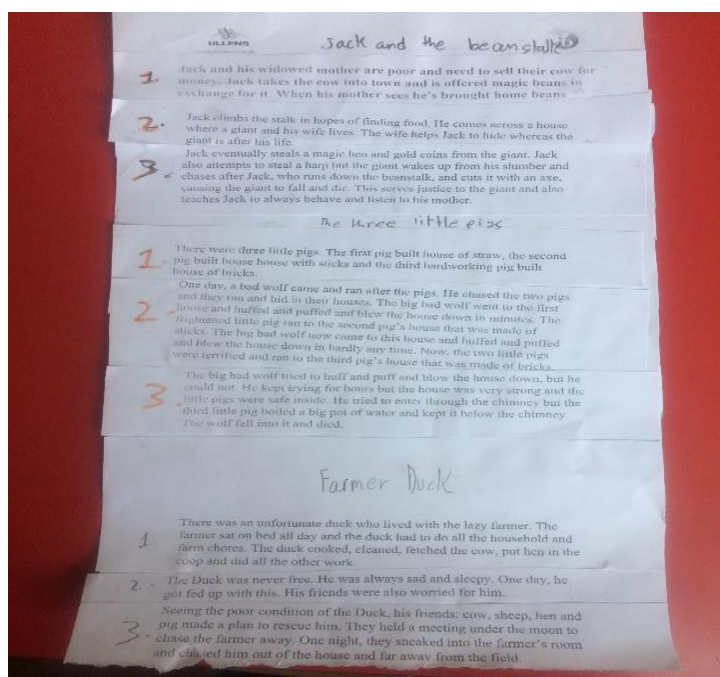
Thankfully, it was her and I jumped into her arms. After she was home, I felt so relieved that I didn't leave her alone even for a second. Teacher, may I write my story and bring it tomorrow?

Teacher: Mmmmm....okay! If there are some others too who would like to write your own story, you can also bring it tomorrow. But make sure that it should be

about you and your mom, just like Miss Know-All and her mom and Sanu and her mom.

Figure 54

Snapshot from the Classroom That Shows the Excerpts of Stories Arranged in an Order by Miss Know-All.



This kind of personal sharing helped the learners in narrating, analyzing and synthesizing knowledge. Moreover, she could connect and show relation between her own personal happening and the story she learnt in the classroom. In a way, she had constructed her own idea of the relationship between her mom and *Sanu*'s mom and she herself and *Sanu*.

Later, the children were given three stripes of paper with the story excerpts and were asked to arrange them orderly and paste them neatly on the paper provided together in the right order that formed the summary of "Sanu and the Big Storm". For more practice, they were provided many other stripes with the bits taken from some other stories to organize them orderly. Miss Know-All didn't take much time to complete and submit it to her teacher. The productive clamor of the learners had filled up the entire classroom. Each individual who succeeded in pasting the stripes in proper order looked triumphant, ditto like my girls in 2013 when they were doing the role play on *The Canterville Ghost*.

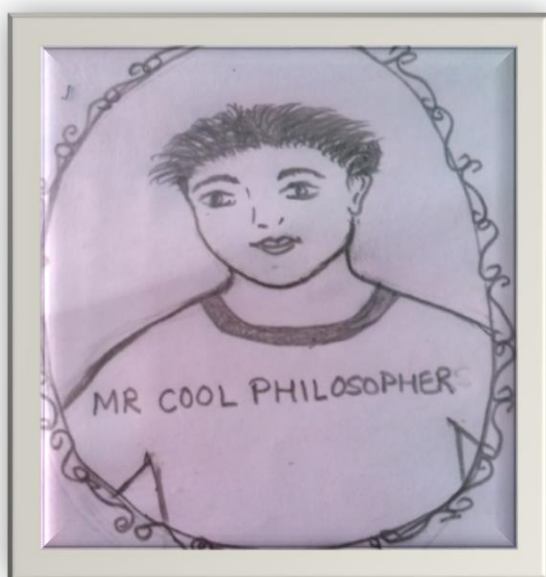
I had not expected that Miss Know-All would really write her anecdote. To my and everyone's utter surprise, she had written one. That was in proper order of the beginning, middle and end as the teacher had focused on in the previous classes. She was called in front of the class and the teacher asked her to read her story aloud. She did it so well and got a thunderous clap from the entire class. She had even drawn the picture of her Mom and she herself that even brought tears in my eyes which I hid very fast. I was pretty touched by her writing and her sketch. This shows how creative Miss Know-All

was. The latter days also, she was always ready with her assignments. Besides, she would also be ready to help her teachers by collecting diaries, arranging the books on the shelf, distributing and collecting worksheets etc. She always looked spick and span and her assignments were also always neat and up to the mark.

Mr. Cool Philosopher

Figure 55

Self-sketched Portrait of Participant 3: MR. COOL PHILOSOPHER



My third participant was Mr. Cool Philosopher. He was the coolest amongst all as his dressing sense was simply distinct from others and he was a philosopher as he used to think deep and come up with very unique ideas. Also, he always had innumerable questions to ask his teachers as well as his friends. Once, he came up to me and interrogated me as if to investigate what I was doing:

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Hey! What are you typing there?

Me: Dear, I am a university student and I am doing my assignment here.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Student.....(haaaaaaaa). You are so big to be a student. Are you a big student?

Me: (With a smile) Yes.....I am a big student. And I go to a university, a school where big students go.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: (Surprised) Oh.....! What assignment are you doing?

Me: A project work, just like the one that is given to you by your teachers.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: What kind of project work is it?

Me: I just have to prepare a report observing your classroom activities. That's why I come to your class almost every day.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Oh.....! Then slowly moves away to the other side of the classroom and starts talking to his friends.

Once when I entered the class, a bit early as the lunch break was not over yet, I found some of the students playing inside the classroom. The classroom was utterly littered. While some were busy playing inside the classroom, a few came to me and hugged telling me how badly they missed me the day before when I had not been there due to some personal reasons. Mr. Cool Philosopher was also one of them who even told me that he wanted to write a poem on me. Thus, he had many questions to ask me so that he could write about me. In the meantime, the teacher entered and after the class assembled in the carpet area to listen to what instruction she had for them, she asked them to take their “journal copies” out and write down the question:

“Reflect on your trip to Nagdaha and write about your experience. What you observed there and what new things you got to know.”

She then asked them how they felt about the day’s trip to Nagdaha. Then I realized that they were taken on a trip on that day and the teacher wanted them to reflect upon it after their return before they would actually write about it in their journal copies. Also, as the teacher had been teaching summary writing that week, she was even trying to kill two birds with one stone. I mean, she would ask them to reflect upon the trip summarizing the experience about the trip in only three sentences. She asked them to share everything that happened on the trip serially, in a continuous order. A girl took a little longer time to tell her experience. The teacher asked them to summarize everything the former student shared in only three sentences. She reminded that a summary owns three important parts- beginning, middle and end. One of them tried to summarize but missed some important details in the course of making it short. Mr. Cool Philosopher, who had been listening quietly to his friends for long, accepted the challenge ultimately. He summarized the trip in the following way:

Mr. Cool Philosopher: (spoke as if in a pensive mood....) we saw three aquatic plants, we had our worksheet there, we did it there and came back.

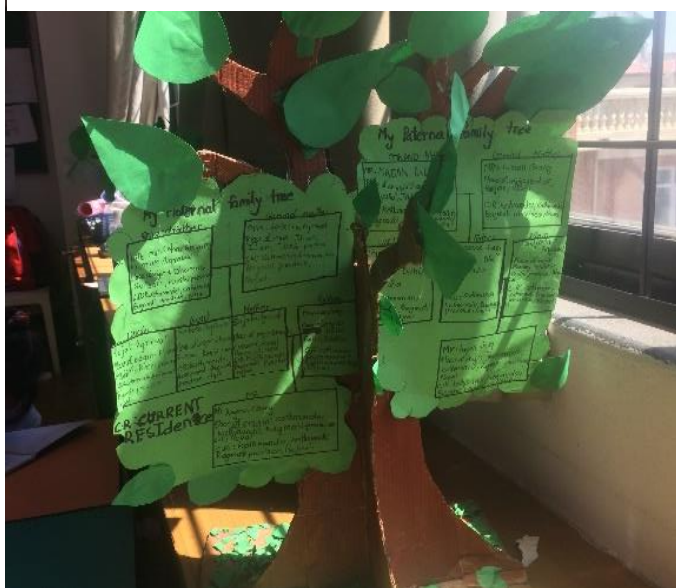
They were even asked to do the summarization of the chapters 6,7 and 8 from the book “The Little Prince” as their home assignment. Mr. Cool Philosopher was never in a hurry to spit out what was in his head. He was usually calm and composed, over all, he was cool. However, he readily accepted challenges that came across in the classroom. Summarizing the trip in his own words pretty well, he proved that he was focused who could both analyze and synthesize knowledge, i.e., he was critical and creative.

Similarly, another activity that my participants were involved into was making a family tree which was their home assignment. The teacher simply explained what a

family tree was but she didn't give them any idea of how they could do it. The next day when they brought their assignment in the form of a project work, I was awestruck to see that they all had different, more specifically, creative ways of doing it though the written details they had included were about their family members. This kind of activity led them to a collaborative work with their family members which taught them the importance of teamwork.

Figure 56

Snapshot Taken in the Classroom That Displays Mr. Cool Philosopher's Family Tree



Mr. Cool Philosopher had also made his family tree and submitted it to his teacher.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Hello! Nagma teacher. You are still doing your project work in your laptop? Is it going to be very long?

Me: Hello! Yup...boy, I am still doing my project work. It will be very long which will take the

form of a book.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Oh WOW!! Ah....mmmm... I have already completed my project work. Look there! That family tree is mine.

Me: WOW.....!!!! It's so beautiful. Did you do it yourself?

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Noooooo.....

Me: Are you not supposed to do it yourself? Who helped you then?

Mr. Cool Philosopher: My whole family.

Me: Oh yea? Great...!!! Did you enjoy doing it with them?

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Very much!

Me: How did your family members help you while making this tree? Can you tell me?

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Every one helped me in making my family tree. It looks like a real tree with green leaves, branches and a fat trunk. My dad and mom

helped me by cutting green leaves for the tree. Mmm.....my uncle and aunt cut out the branches mmmm.....and the trunk of the tree. I colored the leaves, trunk and the branches. Mmmm...my grandparents helped me in pasting the leaves. I also wrote some lines about every member of the family. It was a great fun.

Me: Really...? That means it was a teamwork, right? Do you like to do such work together with your family?

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Yes. My grandparents made me laugh a lot while doing it. They told me so many funny incidents about my Dad when he was a child.

Me: (Haaa.....) That's interesting. It seems like you know more about your family now, right?

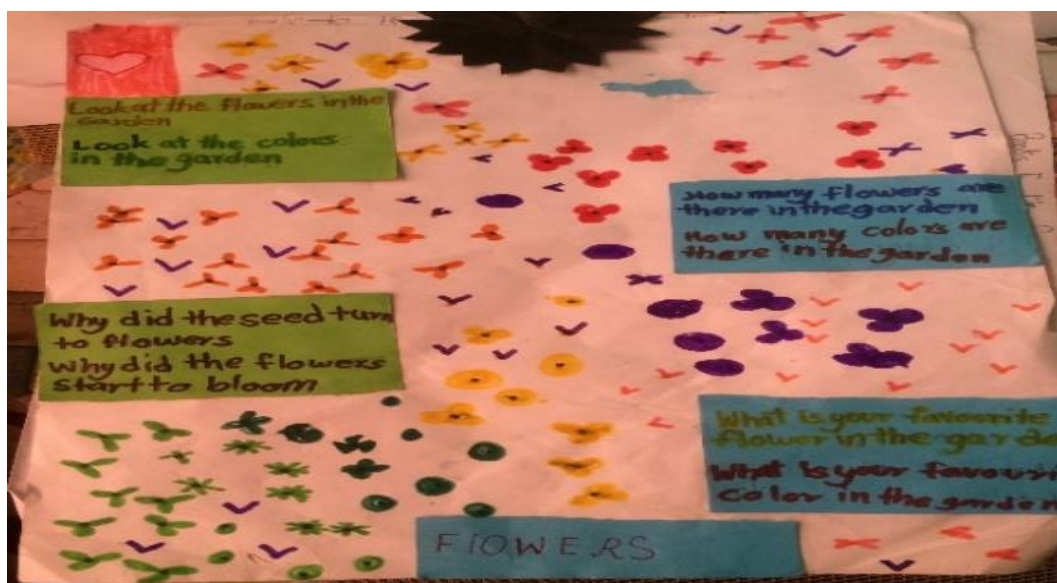
Mr. Cool Philosopher: Yes. I did not know that my Dad was so naughty in his childhood. He once sneaked into the kitchen at night to eat 'laddoos' made by my grandmother but unfortunately, he was caught red-handed that made him feel ashamed (Laughs.....). Wasn't that so funny?

Me: (Haaaa.....) What else do you know now about your family that you didn't know before?

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Mmmmm.....I did not know that my grandfather loves writing poetry and my grandmother loves crocheting. He wrote a poem about me last Saturday. I also want to write poems like he does. Ahhhhh... I have written

Figure 57

Snapshot of the Self-Composed Poem by Mr. Cool Philosopher



one. It is at home. Do you want to read it?

Me: Oh WOW! Why not? Bring it tomorrow, okay? Don't forget.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Yes, I will not forget.

Mr. Cool Philosopher had actually written a poem. He had composed one on “Flowers,” where he exhibited his written as well as artistic creativity. There were many queries about flowers even in the poem as I could see many Wh-questions in the poem. In fact, he was a very inquisitive child. He was self-motivated to write this poem which I asked him to recite for me. And he did. One day, while I was busy with my field data in the classroom, Mr. Cool Philosopher came to me and started talking:

Mr. Cool Philosopher: Hello! I have a surprise for you.

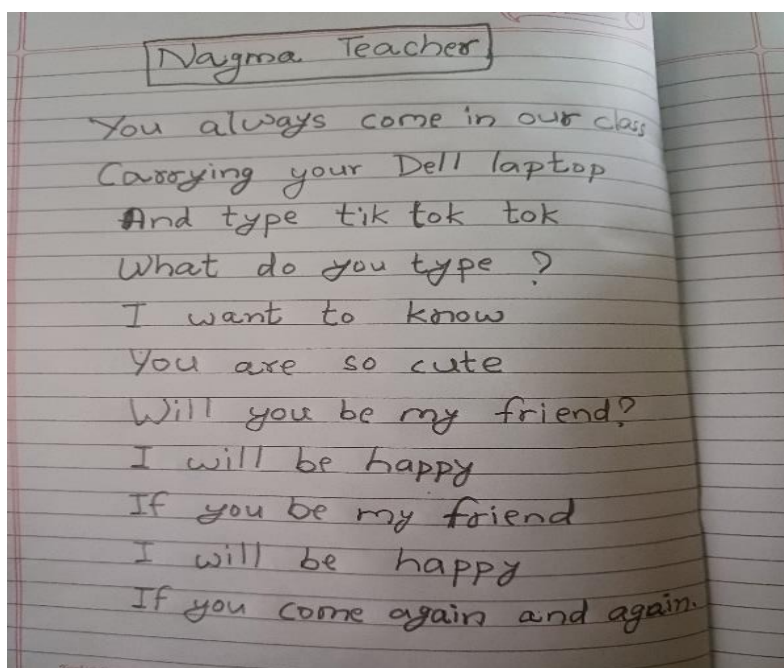
Me: (Smiling) WHHAATTTT.....!???

Mr. Cool Philosopher: (Opening the notebook that was in his hand) Here it is. Can you read it?

Me: (Looking at the notebook) Bro.... you have written a poem about me!

Figure 58

Snapshot of the Poem Entitled "Nagma Teacher" by Mr Cool Philosopher



Mr. Cool Philosopher: I can write a poem on anyone, anything. So, I wrote one on you also. I told you that I wanted to write a poem about you. Did you forget?

Me: Yea.....you had said once but I had not thought that you would actually write.

Mr. Cool Philosopher: But I wrote and it is for

you. Recite once.

Me: Oh.....(I recited it and gave him a hug as it made me very emotional. I had not thought that he would be composing a poem on me. I felt so blessed after reading this new creation of his.) Thank you so much, boy. I love you.

Mr. Cool Philosopher (Blushing): Mmm.... I love you, too. (and then he ran away).

Indeed, a very special kind of attachment had grown between me and the learners there. They were straightforward and frank, and so am I. May be because of these common traits, we had become very good friends. Once, when Mr. Cool Philosopher had his birthday, he had even kept a big bar of Snickers for me since morning till the afternoon as I used to visit them when they had their English class which usually used to be in the last period.

Mr. Loud

Figure 59

Self-Sketched Portrait of MR. LOUD



Once, when I reached the class around twenty minutes late due to a heavy traffic, and moreover, I had restarted my field visit after a gap of around three weeks, Mr. Loud, my fourth participant, directly shouted from his working area as soon as he saw me:

Mr. Loud: (On top of his voice, fully distracted by my abrupt entrance)

Hey.....hey.....!!! I'm sorry to say that I have already forgotten your name. Why didn't you come for so many days? This is what happens when someone is absent for so long. (Others noisily called out my name and a few even came rushing, as if to compete to hug me. I always received this warmth that they always made me feel so close to their hearts.)

Other students: (Unanimously.....) NAGMA Ma'am..... (I had to hush them to the extent of decreasing their volume. The class was so much distracted that I felt myself as a culprit of the English teacher who was teaching them then.)

However, I must admit one thing that they always revived my inner self and energized me to the optimum level no matter how tired I used to be after my hectic

routine that compelled me to reach the school. Oh! How I wished if only I had wings to take me to my destination smoothly.)

Mr. Loud: Oh..... Now I know it! (Still very loudly).

Everyone: Ha.....ha.....ha.....

This was when I had noticed Mr. Loud as a very interesting character for my research. He was so vocal about everything, in fact every petty thing. His another interesting quality was that he could not miss to comment upon every single thing that happened in the classroom. In fact, he was amongst those noisy birds who would talk every single time. At times, he would even disturb the class by only talking to his friends continuously and not listening to his teacher. He used to be the one to give information about the absentees. He also used to be the one to complain about the Pizza Girl (and a few others). He was always very fond of reading the lessons and used to irritate his teacher usually by asking her to let him read the lesson, almost every day (though the teacher hardly expressed that she got irritated). He would even manage time to ask me about my personal likes and dislikes.

Moreover, when I would be late for the class sometimes, he would even aware me of what I missed and what lesson or activity they were doing then. He would even tell me the lessons and activities that I missed when I would be absent for some days. And if someone else would do that task before he could, then he would be pretty disappointed; in fact, crest fallen. He was a powerhouse of energy who was pretty spontaneous and of course, LOUD. He was loud because he was vocal and straightforward; he could not keep anything to himself. He was loud because he really had a very manly, hoarse voice, though he was a little boy. He had the loudest voice in the classroom that the teacher would generally ask him to soften himself.

Once, when the teacher was teaching “parts of a story”:

Teacher: Do you all remember what we had done yesterday?

Mr. Loud: Yes.....ma'am..... “Past of Story” (He had spoken in a great hurry, that also very loudly, so that he could be the first one to answer the teacher.)

Everyone: Ha.....ha.....ha.....

Mr. Loud (Realizing what he just said)....oh...oh...ahhhh.....mmmmm....

Everyone: Ha.....ha.....ha..... (Louder)

Mr. Loud: I mean “PARTS OF A STORY” (He spoke clearly, correctly and more loudly then.)

Teacher: Very good, Mr. Loud. But always think before you speak next time, okay.....

Mr. Loud: Yes, teacher.

Everyone: Haa...ha....ha.....(looking at him).

Ms. Know All: Teacher, there is a proverb, "Look before you leap". So, we should always think before we speak or do anything so that people won't laugh at us.

Teacher: Very good, Ms. Know All. You are right. We should think ten times before we speak or do anything. Do you know why? It's not because others will laugh at us.

One of the students: Mmm...because we will make mistakes if we act or speak without thinking as Mr. Loud did.

Everyone: Ha..ha....ha.... (Again looking at Mr. Loud. This time, Mr. Loud also laughs out loudlyas if laughing at himself)

Another student: Teacher.....we should ourselves bear the consequences of what we speak or do . So....ah...we must not speak without thinking.

Teacher: Very good.....!!! You both are right. So.....look before you leap, children. Okay, can anyone tell me what the different parts of a story are?

Mr Loud (As if he had forgotten what had just happened.....) I can tell teacher.

MmmmBeginning, Middle and End.

Teacher: Very good.....Mr Loud. But did you think before you answer this time.....NOOO....YEESSSS.....YEESSS.....

Everyone: Ha....ha.....ha.....(Looking at him hysterically).

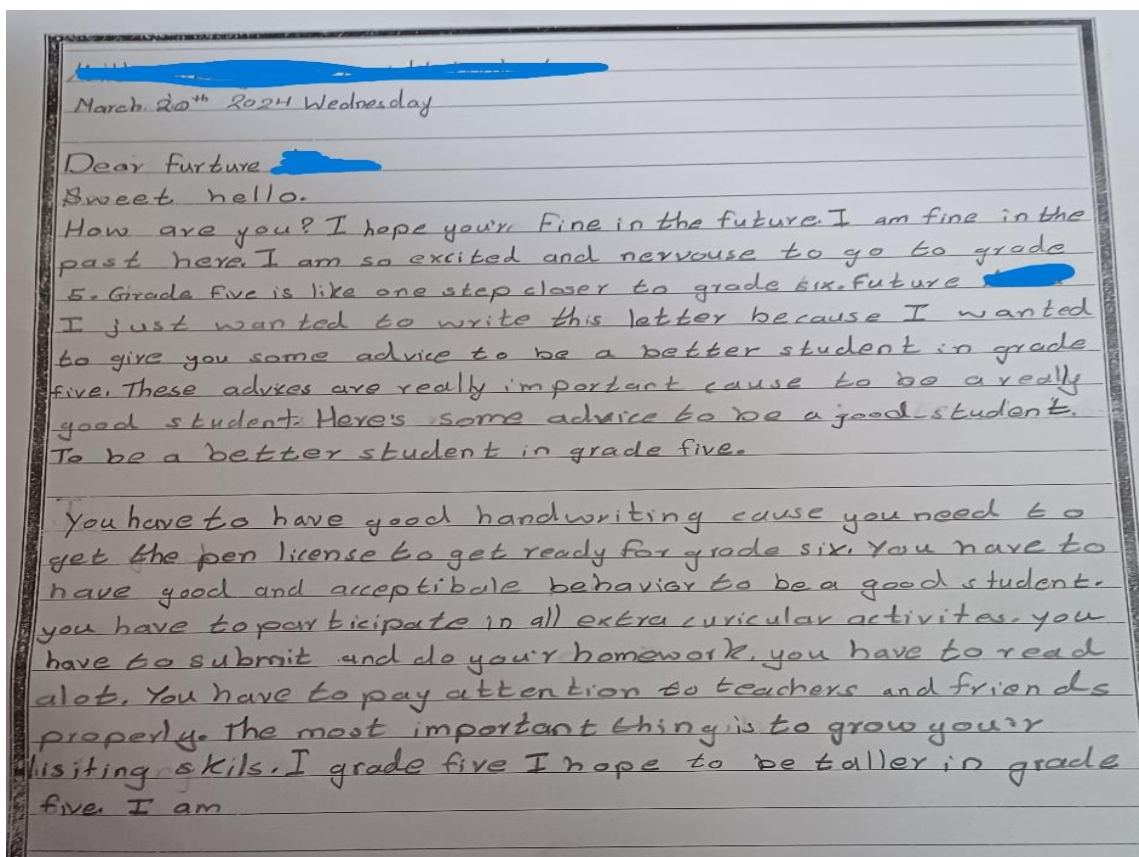
That's what Mr. Loud was like.....very.....very LOUD.....all the time.

Once, when they were reflecting on the trip to Nagdaha summarizing it in only three sentences, Mr. Loud was disturbing the class time and again, simply blabbering without any sense. The teacher asked him to move forward and sit with her but he turned deaf ears to her. Thus, she warned him that she would count only five and by then, he had to sit in front with her. She started the countdown and then slowly, he moved from his place and sat next to the lead teacher. One of the assistant teachers thanked him politely for obeying his teacher. Later, after everyone dispersed from the carpet area to write their homework in their diary, the lead teacher called Mr. Loud again who had disobeyed her and distracted the class even using a scratch pen on his friend's back. She gave him a nice corner talk that from then on, he was much attentive and less troublesome.

The thing about Mr. Loud that touched me very much was when he showed me the letter that he had written to his future self. Writing a letter to their future self was a class-assignment. Mr. Loud, after he wrote it, showed it to me which goes like this:

Figure 60

A Snapshot from the Classroom That Displays the “Letter to My Future Self”, Written by Mr. Loud



Through this letter, I could understand what significant changes he wanted in him when he would reach class 5. Significantly, I was very much moved by the second last line of this letter- “The most important thing is to grow *you’r lisiting skils*”, there are spelling errors in this line but I could easily understand what he actually meant to write though the keywords are spelt wrongly. This sentence proves that he had realized what his pitfall was and how he wished to be a better student in the future.

An excerpt of the communication transcript when the teacher was teaching ‘Directions’, which I had recorded better portrays Mr. Loud’s loud personality:

A student looking at the smart board: Teacher, what is a “roundabout”

Teacher: Roundaboutah.....is the one which is there at Jawalakhel where there is the statue of King Birendra, have you seen that?

Student: A...ah... yup..... I have seen it

Teacher: Now, you have to listen to the conversation in the recording and then you have to understand the directions, then you will have to write which direction in the assignment given to you. Are you all ready?

Students: Yesssss

(All come back to their working areas, definitely making a lot of noise.)

Teacher: For this activity, you don't have to open your mouth. You just need to listen quietly and carefully. Begin with your name and date.

Mr. Loud: Teacher, I didn't understand this....(pointing at the worksheet)

Teacher: Wait.... We haven't yet begun.

Teacher SHHHHH.....Quiet....everyone.... I am still waiting, all of you to be quiet. Alright... can I start the recording? ,....1....2.....3....

(The students are all listening to the recording and some speak in between whom the teacher quietens with a big HUSH.....

Mr. Loud: (For the second time) I didn't understand anything...

Teacher.....Okay, one more time I will play the recording. (This is the third time she has played the recording. Also, she repeats the instruction after the recording that seems like helping the children.)

(Quietly, they are listening to it now. The class is tranquil now but in between, some are complaining how fast the speaker in the recording is speaking.

Finally, the teacher says: Do you want me to read it for you? Then, it will be easy for you.

Students: Yes....

(The teacher begins reading, the students, trying their best to do, look quite involved. Yet, it seems like they are having much difficulty doing this assignment. The assistant teachers are also roaming around, instructing the students, observing what they have done and helping them.)

Teacher: Okay, let's quickly do with the mass correction. Are you all done?

[While discussing the answers, the teacher is even asking if anyone has a different answer to make sure if anyone is wrong. Finally, it seems like they have understood what it is all about, (but my Pizza Girl, she is again busy roaming around and stealthily, moves out of the class.)

In the meantime, the other teacher, probably Maths.....who is sitting with her laptop on, in the same classroom, is suddenly surrounded by the little pupils' mob as all of a sudden.....the stuff she has been doing in Chat GPT is exposed on the

smart board screen. She is quite unaware of this which is at first noticed by Mr. Loud who begins shouting: "Teacher, you are using Chat GPT!!" Haa.....haa.... The Mob: Chat GPT.....Chat GPT....Chat GPT (Surrounding her with a huge laughter that the poor teacher is literally buried under their noise. She does not know how it got exposed on the big screen and is bewildered.)

Mr Loud: Teacher, you tell us not to use Chat GPT and you are using it.....you use chat GPT...chat GPT....chat GPT..... EXPOSED....EXPOSED !!!

(The entire class is after her teasing that she is helpless now, seems like she has no words to defend herself.....she is trying to say something. But none is ready to listen to her....they are circling around her shouting "Chat GPT exposed.....Chat GPT exposed.....!!!).

The lead teacher (trying to distract them from their very recent discovery about the Maths teacher's use of Chat GPT in the classroom so that she can help her colleague be guilt-free): It's cleaning time now, clean the class....Some begin cleaning but a few others, led by Mr. Loud, are still after the Maths teacher, trying loudly to prove her guiltyPOOR TEACHER!!!

Chapter Encapsulation

In a nutshell, the chapter contains the detailed information on the four participants (students) for my research whom I had selected via random sampling method. They belonged to the age group of 9-10, from grade four "Experience", namely:

- 1) The Pizza Girl
- 2) Miss Know-All
- 3) Mr. Cool Philosopher
- 4) Mr. Loud

CHAPTER V

“WE ARE ART”: AN ACRONYM FOR VARIOUS ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

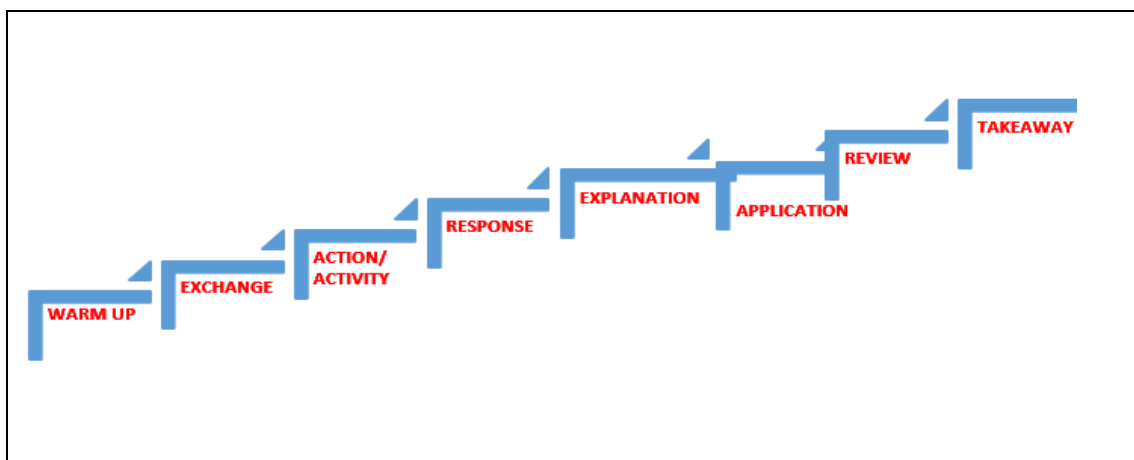
The chapter begins with my own reflection writing after one of the academic writing classes. The professor had begun the class discussing the acronym “WE ARE ART,” that he coined to refer to various steps of active learning strategies that can be used in a classroom. This discussion created a lasting impact on me because I was working then on this very dissertation writing which has active learning as its central issue and arts-based inquiry as its methodology. Thus, with the permission of the professor, I have used this statement, which is in fact an acronym for various steps of active learning strategies, in this chapter because I found it relatable to what I observed in my field visits that has helped me in molding my research findings. “WE ARE ART” is the acronym for various active learning strategies as: W=warm up, E= exchange, A= action/ activity, R= response, E= explanation, A= application, R= review and T= take away. I found all these steps being applied in the English classroom where my participants were growing every single day. With the implementation of various such strategies, they were able to learn various literacy and life skills which I have mentioned as well as tried to prove in the lines that follow. Grade four “Experience” was indeed a laboratory where experimentation took place every single day that let the pupils experience learning with their active involvement. I have used Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle to clarify how my participants experienced positive transformation in them. I have referred to that transformation as the domino effect of active learning strategies in this research writing.

Reflection, 30th May, 2023

I still feel the tingling sensation of the sweetness the statement “WE ARE ART” provided to me at the onset of the virtual session with the professor on the 30th of May, 2023. The statement seems so simple at its surface but its gravity is impenetrable, vast and enchanting, more specifically for a research artist like me who adores art. Indeed, my antennae were stimulated at the very first sight of these three special words that I was ready beforehand to soak in whatsoever would be offered to us because art in any form is the most beautiful of anything that exists for me. In fact, anything that we do is a form of art. Living itself is an art. Nature is a piece of art. When we fail to infuse art in life, it becomes cumbersome and intolerable that it becomes a bombshell of boredom but with a

tinge of art in it, miraculously turns into a bonanza. Failure in merging art with our action cripples us, restricting any act of creativity. Art is to express that latent beauty which is the key to pleasure and happiness at the same time. Pleasure is sensual whereas happiness is spiritual and art naturally blends both, invariably calming and again exciting me in no time to the core for my creation which is going to be the extravaganza of art in the form of my dissertation writing.

*A bricoleur or a research artist or an artist-researcher, whatever you say, this has become my real identity at present. I have been visiting a progressive educational institution these days to collect data and artifacts for my research project. I observe my learner participants almost every day for the span of at least one hour. This golden hour is the most productive time of my entire day as I am able to explore the art of learning that occurs naturally through the pupils' active involvement in various activities in the classroom. Moreover, being a part of the classroom, I have even realized that **"We are a piece of art created by God"**, borrowing the professor's words. The fourth graders in the classroom look like tiny stardust, moving here and there, delicately designed by God. The little wonders are the busy bees all the time, humming, moving from one corner of the room to another, interacting, discussing, brainstorming, summarizing the lessons, role-playing, reflecting, narrating their own stories and above all, learning by doing things on their own, architecting their real identities. Each one is a little gem of an individual that they all are capable of creating knowledge but in different ways. Had it been traditional teaching, I would not have been able to trace the artistic and creative elements in them. In fact, each one is a feather in his/her teacher's cap and a crown to his/her parents. A real educator provides enough space to learn and grow so that each learner transforms into a masterpiece. A teacher is the one who carpenters artistically the ladder which has various steps like:*

Figure 61*WE ARE ART*

*The proper use of this ladder can cause learning take place easily. And active learning approach in teaching English can help a learner experience all these step-by-step. Conceptualizing these points as a classroom curriculum helps in accelerating teaching-learning process, thereby benefitting both the teacher and the learner. A classroom curriculum should be designed with the view to give life to learners' enthusiasm and inventiveness. According to the professor, "**A teacher has an authoritative role to make the students active**". Yup, making them active is enlivening the art they are for which a teacher is solely responsible.*

"I believe in perspectives, not methods. When you say perspective, there is a process, a procedure.....", these words by the professor give me a sigh of relief. People's perspectives matter a lot. Every person is a human being, a creature that can become something, because of the perspectives he has. I am delighted that we can put forth our perspectives in our research projects, for every new perspective is the genesis of a new philosophy. I am thriving each day to preserve and nurture my perspectives. The professor was playing the role of a bricoleur too in the classroom as he was collecting our perspectives on the statement that led to our warming-up session and again, he shared with us that he was researching in the classroom, motivating each individual present to be a proper source of data generation for his article. Good luck to the professor for his future endeavors!

From the role of a researcher, he made a leap to the role of a teacher after a while, continuing his explanation on literature review, its purpose, format and performance. Literature review is done for the purpose of linking the research work with the existing studies which helps in the identification of research gaps, highlighting the point(s) of departure. It even adds to a researcher's knowledge of breadth and depth of the scholarship of the topic chosen so that he can assure and assert novelty of his study. Heavy engagement of a researcher in literature review makes the entire project strong. Literature review can have three different formats: chronological/ historical, thematic-chronological and geographic-chronological. We even focused on sources, selection, synthesis, citation and positioning of literature review. We had had a quite lengthy discussion on literature review for which he had even displayed some samples for us to ponder. Additionally, we even discussed some research reporting verbs and then we headed to the discourse of 'materials and methods' as well as critical perspective (method) in research writing.

*As the beginning session on "We are Art" provided me jubilation, the ending phase contributed to the revelation of the idea that **"There are conventions in different disciplines"**. Thus, we may have minimal scope of intervention to someone's writing. A piece of academic writing that is short for us can be a lengthy one for the scholars of other disciplines and vice versa. This disclosure from the professor has made me reflect on how I ruthlessly pinpointed on a reviewer's write-up last week. Specially, I detested the format of the review article for which I am feeling guilty at present. Oops!! My own reflection seems like it's getting longer and longer. Now, I have a doubt on my own writing. It might be pretty long for the ones who abhor lengthy writings. Gosh! How am I to limit my art of expression? Please, help me.*

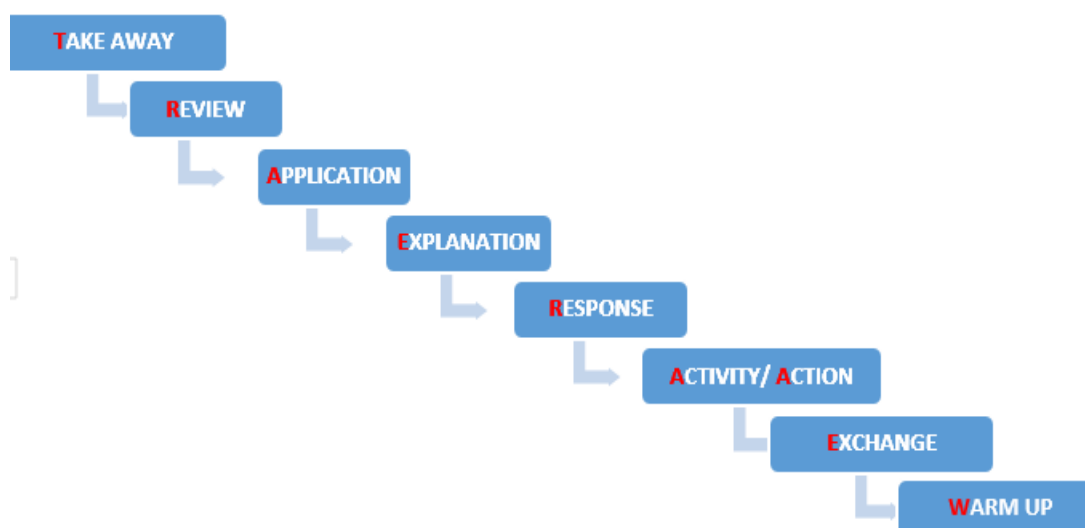
"WE ARE ART": Acronym for Active Learning Curriculum

The above long reflection mirrors how we can design an "Active-Learning Curriculum" that stimulates the creative side of the students. "WE ARE ART", the acronym for various active learning strategies, is borrowed from one of the sessions of the Academic Writing class in MPhil in ELE, 2023. Not only as a researcher but equally as an academician, I felt the urge of documenting this beautiful creation. Consequently, I have included it here in this facet of my dissertation with the permission of the respective professor who created this acronym including the principal strategies of active learning. It

can be incorporated into classroom curriculum as it is wholly based upon the Socratic Method of dialogic techniques that fosters critical thinking through the following steps:

Figure 62

The Ladder of Active Learning Strategies



The above steps in the ladder of “WE ARE ART” can be the guiding factors that help in a productive question-answer session in a classroom. The dialogic method of Socrates allows in asking fruitful questions that results to the disclosure of deeply held beliefs and ideas (Sutton 2020). The Socratic questioning approach to enhance learning and knowing deeper is a contribution to the art of conversation, for a dialogue is needed to use as a tool, rather than simply the educator pouring his knowledge into a learner’s mental bucket (Conor 2024). I found these steps, along with some more strategies, being followed even in my research site.

Beginning a class with a warm-up activity always rejuvenates the students that they become entirely ready to soak in what the teacher instructs. They are fully set to learn actively, ready to paint their canvas-like minds with the colors of creativity, inventiveness, innovation and criticality that learning becomes fun, frolic and fruitful at the same time. According to Cambridge Assessment English (2020), there are various warm-up activities like- “animal mimes, teacher says, anagrams, Kim’s games, draw it, pictograms, virtual ball games, one-word stories, correct me, sentence race, yes/no game, alphabet stories, just a minute, celebrity, questions dialogues” and many more that charge the students with energy and positivity to learn and to create their organic ideas regarding the topic that is going to be discussed in the classroom.

After warm-up activities, exchange of ideas related to the topic discussed or brainstorming can help a lot to the learners enter the meaning-making process. In a brainstorming session, as opined by Paulus and Kenworthy (2018), the students should not be criticized for any of the ideas shared, they should be allowed to speak out anything that comes out from within, there should be focus on the quantity of ideas because the more the ideas get accumulated, the better the chances of generation of good and newer ideas become and various ideas amassed can even be joined together to make better ideas. Brainstorming is always an effective tool of active learning that involves everyone in the classroom, thereby helping the learners to stir and squeeze out whatsoever is there in them, creating a pathway to the generation of beautiful ideas.

After brainstorming, when the learners are made to do the activities designed for their overall involvement, the understanding reaches the next level. Learning is the process of cognition which takes place only when the new and the old knowledge are merged well in or outside the classroom. The classroom environment matters a lot in learners that it can either encourage or discourage them to learn things. Thus, various activities that engage the students both physically and mentally can help them learn and develop a positive attitude towards learning which even helps them in their holistic growth (Akan & Basar, 2013). Hence, active learning techniques are the key to a lively classroom wherein learning is not a burden but an interest. Various activities like summarization, dramatization, interaction, project work, recitation, brainstorming etc., are the great source of best idea generation. This helps the students develop the values and skills required to be responsible decision-makers and act according to the need of the situation.

A teacher's response and remarks mean a lot to a student. A teacher should respond quickly and positively to the statement made or an idea shared by a student, probing a penetrating question so that the pupil is bound to think deep and come to a conclusion, activating his/her thinking skill and imaginative power. This sows the seed of critical thinking which is an example of high-order thinking skills which transcends rote learning and memorization (Mastrangelo, 2022). Critical thinking is the key to a strong foundation of knowledge. A well-planned curriculum embraces activities, assignments and assessments, targeting to receive the best outcome for the pupils. Thus, a timely positive push in the form of a response or remarks from a responsible teacher works wonders.

A teacher who can explain the subject matter well, making complex issues simple, does not only explain but expands the mental horizon of learners. Explanation is one of the principal tasks of a teacher. Effective explanation encourages learners to dive deeper into the matter being discussed. Explanation is a teacher's attempt to simplify the complexity of the issues being taught (Khan et al., 2008). This brings a higher level of cognition in students. An explanation that is not effective can even bring boredom or even lead to misunderstanding, misinterpretation or misconception. Thus, an effective explanation and not a tedious lecture, laden with instances, anecdotes and illustrations should be one of the chief elements of active learning curriculum.

Implementation or application of the lessons learnt in a session is the target of teaching-learning process. Application of the knowledge achieved in the periphery of the school as well as outside in the family, society or community is beneficial not only to an individual but to the entire nation and, ultimately, the world. Knowledge that an individual has is utterly significant only when it finds an apt outlet to be utilized (Kapur 2020). Knowledge achieved once in a student's life can come handy in any future situation. Knowledge becomes important when an individual becomes able to make a proper use of it in acquiring his/her personal goal at present as a learner or professional goal when s/he is associated with an organization or a company in the future. Thus, application of the knowledge acquired should be brought into practice everywhere and every time.

"We do not learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on experience".

-(Dewey, 1933)

As quoted by Dewey, reviewing a lesson is always essential for learners to evaluate how much they have understood the lesson and how far they can reach with this understanding. It is important as it improves performance by maximizing the learning span. Learning becomes more effective and fruitful as it ameliorates the comprehensive power of the students, transforming them into better learners. The learners become aware of the facts they have learnt and even understand the importance of mistakes which they take as the stepping stones in the process via review and reflection (Ibrahim, 2016). A lesson can be reviewed before it is started to form a connection between the things learnt in the previous class and the present class; it can even be reviewed while it is ongoing to ensure that the things are falling at the right place and reviewing can even be done at the end to reflect upon what has been done and achieved. Thus, review of a lesson is always helpful for a learner to experience successful learning.

Learning through the deeper involvement of a pupil in the process is what active learning refers to. This technique ensures students' active involvement in the process of meaning making that without being instructed, they find some takeaways for themselves that further raises their interest on the topic. Motivation is the force that drives learners further and farther. Effective teaching motivates the students that they easily find some takeaways from such a teaching. Thus, a take-away technique emphasizes on the learners themselves extracting meanings rather than “zoning out” or being disconnected and passively anticipating the gist and messages of the lesson to be explained or told by their instructor (Carifio 2015). Reflecting on the lesson taught or the issue discussed helps learners to find some takeaways from them. If they trace the takeaways, then one can be certain that a proper teaching-learning process has taken place that creates the situation that is win-win for the instructor as well as the students.

Execution of “WE ARE ART” in Grade 4 “Experience”

While on my field visit to a progressive school in Lalitpur, I found the “WE ARE ART” technique being followed, though they didn't name it this way and it didn't take it in this order. They always began their day with an active learning technique called “The Morning Circle”. The learners, along with the teachers, spread out making a circle in the carpet area and they shared anything that they wanted to in the circle. Sometimes, the sharing would be contextual whereas sometimes, it would even be out of context. The learners were happy to be a part of the circle as they loved sharing their narratives. They all felt listened to and appreciated while sharing their sagas in the circle. It was a sort of warm-up activity for the whole class that gradually, they would fall into the track that would ease the job of the teacher. The morning circle would be followed by an activity and their sharing on the activity. An activity could be anything related to their current lesson. The teacher would start explaining the lesson only after the activity would be done. This would help them to understand the explanation better. Then there would be another activity or an exercise about which the teacher would instruct them beforehand. After the necessary instruction, the learners were provided ample space to brainstorm, interact and discuss so that they could do the activity at hand with ease.

The school maintained a proper activity-based learning approach for grade 4 students which opened the door to experiential learning for the learners. Every Sunday, the students would get a weekly holiday but the teachers had to go to school just to design the activities that would activate their pupils and ensure their direct involvement in learning. Thus, it was made sure that they were ready with enough exercises and activities

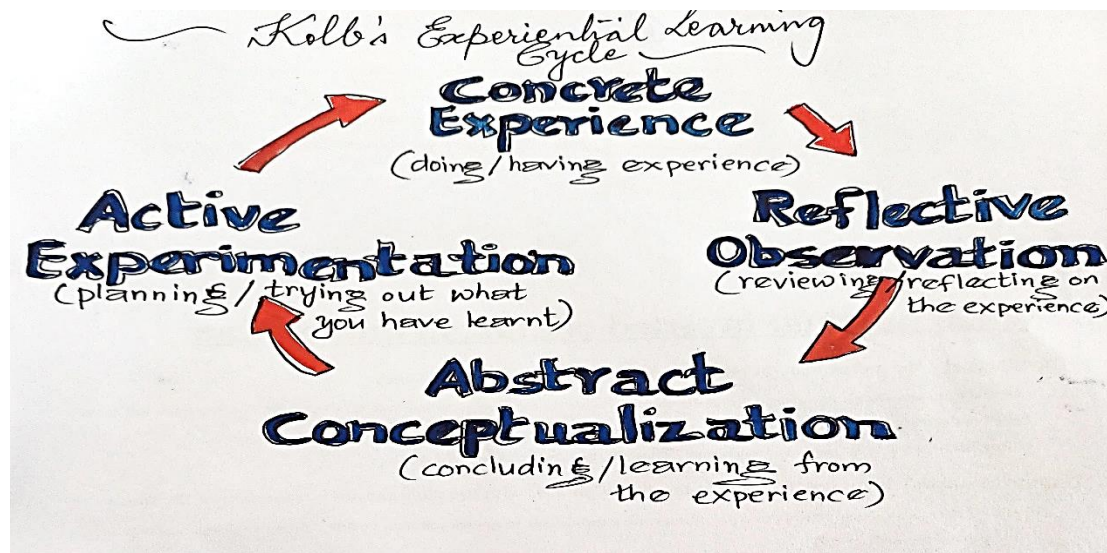
for their students that the learners would experience four different phases of Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, viz.: Concrete Experience (feeling), Reflective Observation (watching), Abstract Conceptualization (thinking) and then Active Experimentation (doing) (Maestro, 2024). The process of learning is incomplete without the aforementioned four phases as learning takes place in a cycle (Kolb, 1984). The teachers made it sure that every activity would provide a takeaway to their students. The most fantastic thing about the school was the sort of liberty they had provided to the students that I could feel an extra ounce of confidence in each one of them whether they were studious or not. Only academic growth is not proper growth because of which educational institutions at present are highly concerned about their pupils' achievement of literacy skills as well as life skills. Ensuring both literacy and life skills for the learners through various activity-based curricula can help the school students feel cognitive and social growth that leads them to live healthy lives (Kauts & Saini, 2022). Hence, the holistic development in learners can be assured through life-skills-based education which I found in the institution where I visited for my research.

Grade 4 “Experience” as a Laboratory to Experience, Reflect, Conceptualize and Experiment

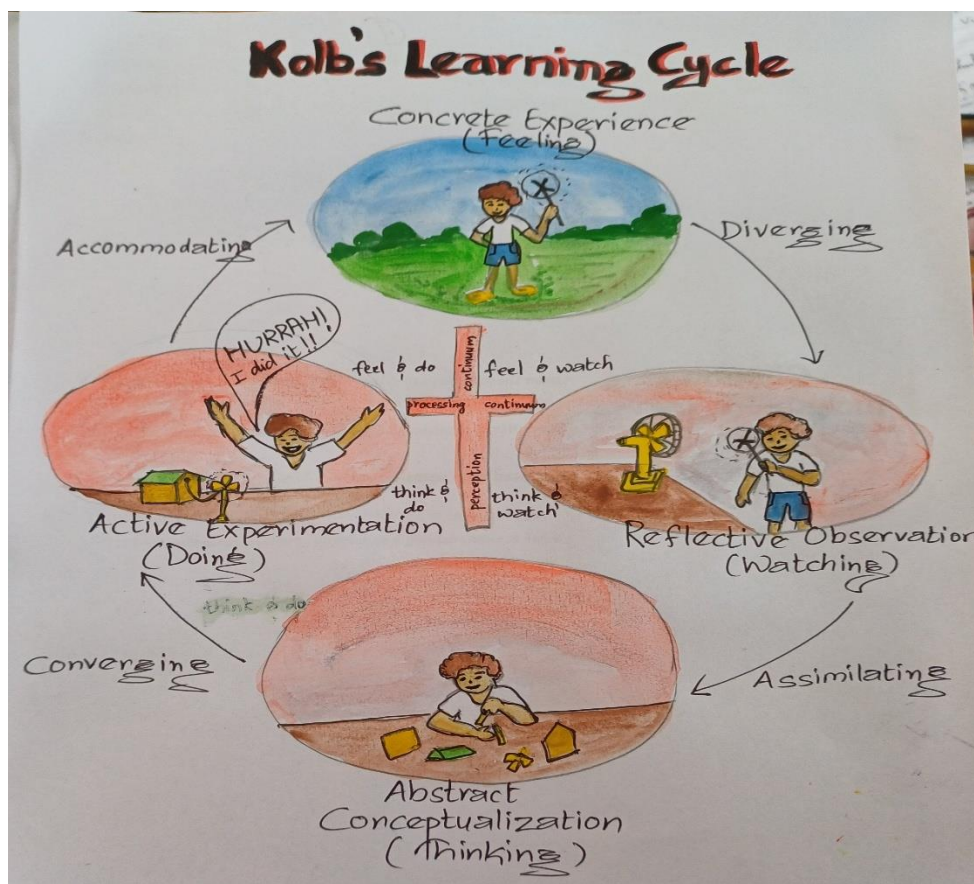
Grade 4 ‘Experience’ was a classroom that was no less than a laboratory where experimentation of ideas took place every time. It was not a science lab but was no less than a lab where various experiments were conducted. By experiments, I mean testing of ideas. Receiving, processing, analyzing and synthesizing of the ideas took place in the classroom. Primarily, I observed the learners going through Kolb's cycle of learning in the following ways:

- 1) They experienced knowledge (seeing/ doing/ feeling)
- 2) They reflected upon the experience gained (reviewing/reflecting/ deep thinking)
- 3) They conceptualized the reflection made (concluding/ learning)
- 4) They experimented with the idea (planning/ implementing the idea/knowledge attained)

This cycle of learning in grade 4 “Experience” aligns well with Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle which goes like this:

Figure 63*Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle**(Based on Kolb, 1984)*

Kolb's experiential learning cycle well demonstrates how perpetual and everlasting learning takes place in learners through the four different phases of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The first phase is all about gathering experience through doing, the second phase is about reviewing or reflecting on that experience, the third phase is forming a concept or idea in the learner's mind and ultimately, the final phase is materializing the abstract concept formed in mind, i.e., actively implementing what is learnt in both private as well as public domains (Egan et al.; 2023). Thus, learning is a continuous process rather than one fixed process which goes on for a lifetime, ingesting in a learner both hard (literacy) as well as soft (life) skills to maintain sustainability in one's life. For instance, my research participants, who were the Pizza Girl, Miss Know-All, Mr. Cool Philosopher and Mr. Loud, were ever-evolving in the classroom. The classroom was not just a setting for the learners; it was a laboratory for seeing, feeling, doing, observing, reviewing, reflecting, thinking and applying the ideas gained, transforming it into a sort of structured knowledge.

Figure 64*Kolb's Learning Cycle Elaborated**(Inspired by Kolb, 1984)*

My research participants always sought a reality that was onion-layered. They were the most inquisitive and positively inclined learners I have ever met in my life. One reason for their ever-curious mindset was that they were small children and the other reason was that various active learning strategies were applied in the classroom. My Pizza Girl was like a hippie, a gypsy who wandered through every nook and corner not only in the classroom but also in the entire school building. No boundaries restricted her from exploring novelty. She was the master of her mind. Miss Know-All was also ever focused and attentive in collecting experiences in any way possible. She was usually an early bird to catch the worm of knowledge. Mr. Cool Philosopher was cool, yet passionate about accepting challenges and experiencing new things. He was a thinker, would listen to everyone quietly and then put forth his opinions. Yes, he always had his own opinions to share in the classroom. Similarly, Mr. Loud was never silent when it came to exploring new knowledge. He would never stop even if the whole class would laugh out loudly at him in the process of experiencing and exploring things that were discussed and taught.

The dissertation is a blueprint about how my participants experienced, reflected, conceptualized and experimented knowledge that each one of them ultimately experienced the positive domino effect in them.

Chapter Encapsulation

In a nutshell, the chapter discusses the acronym “WE ARE ART,” emphasizing on the need of the educational institutions to follow a proper curriculum that fosters critical thinking in students. Also, the chapter is an evidence to the implementation of “WE ARE ART” in grade 4 “Experience” due to which the classroom was a sort of laboratory where experimentation of the students’ ideas took place due to which they had experienced utmost growth. Receiving, processing, analyzing and synthesizing of the ideas took place in the classroom that enabled them to acquire both literary as well as life skills which I have referred to in this dissertation as the domino effect of active learning strategies. Furthermore, Kolb’s theory of experiential learning has been used in order to demonstrate the learning acquired by my participants.

CHAPTER VI

DOMINO EFFECT DETECTED IN THE PARTICIPANTS THROUGH DAVID KOLB'S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY

The crux of the chapter is the process of knowledge acquisition in all my participants. Through the application of Kolb's experiential learning theory, I have demonstrated here how the domino effect of literacy and language skills took place in all four participants. I had noticed that there was an evolution that had taken place in all of my four participants. The Pizza Girl evolved from an introverted lone learner to an autodidactic learner and ultimately to a social learner. Learning, as said by Nabavi and Bijandi (2023), becomes more effective when one learns from his/her interactions with other people in a social setting or context. The Pizza Girl was a member of a team, a social context finally that let her break the glass ceiling and move forward, embracing the values of team spirit. Similarly, Miss Know-All experienced the positive domino effect of active learning that she learnt various life skills such as; critical thinking, communication skill, interpersonal relationship skill, self-awareness building skill and coping with stress skill. Simultaneously, she learnt the life skills literary skills like story writing, narrating a story, enrichment of vocabulary and enrichment of grammar. My third participant Mr. Cool Philosopher also showed some sparks of transformation in him as he acquired the life skills like; self-awareness, critical thinking and creative thinking along with the literacy skills like; eloquence, interplay of words, recitation and enrichment of vocabulary. The other participant Mr. Loud acquired the life skills of being self-aware, resolute and unflustered. He also learnt the literacy skills of speaking independently as well as the skills of writing and listening better

Kolb's Learning Cycle to Fathom My Participant's Learning

Acquisition of knowledge is possible only when experiences transform into experimentation or application through the process of reflection and conceptualization. The modern academia highly demands learning by doing wherein absolute participation of the learners is guaranteed, rather than the lecturing method as in the past that doesn't even ensure if the students have actually understood the issues taught (Bhattarai, 2021). Learners not only attain literary skills but also life skills through experiential learning as it goes hand in hand with active learning. Experiential learning and active learning are two different things, yet there are many things in common between them as the former

directly encourages the latter. Experiential learning allows the theoretical knowledge obtained to transform into practical knowledge, which, in fact, leads to the course of active learning (Chiang et al., 2021). Thus, the four different stages in Kolb's experiential learning cycle can even be different elements of active learning. With the implementation of active learning strategies in a classroom, learners first experience knowledge which is reflected and conceptualized through deeper thoughts in learners that finally leads to implementation of the knowledge acquired in the real world. In order to prove this, I have illustrated below some of the learning instances pertaining to my participants that I observed in the classroom:

Evolution of the Pizza Girl

Figure 65

A Snapshot Taken in the Classroom That Shows the Pizza Girl's World of Creativity

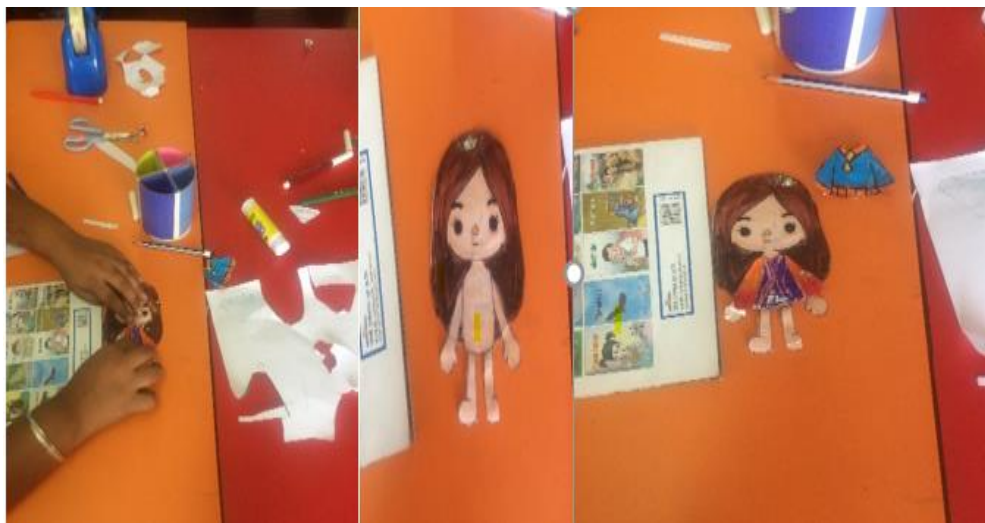


The Pizza Girl, as mentioned earlier, was a master of her will. She would listen and not listen simultaneously to what her teachers would assign her and the class to do. But when it came to creativity, she was always the first one to show her zeal.

Every day I visited the class, she would be busy with something or the other of her own creative tasks like joining triangular shapes to make a pizza, cutting out a sketch of a girl (she called it her Barbie) and designing for it paper clothes, sowing her own gram-seed in a bottle-cap, making a windmill with the simple items she had and so on and so forth. I always found her with something in her hands like colors, sketch pens, crayons, sheets of paper, a glue stick, a pair of scissors, a cello tape etc. She was one of a kind who was self-motivated to work for her own happiness. She was the one who was the smallest in height in the classroom but was a learner with big dreams.

Figure 66

The Pizza Girl Making a Paper Barbie, a Snapshot Taken in the Classroom



As it is said that “Beautiful things come in small packages.”, she was the one who seemed small but would definitely take a great flight in the future because I found her very creative. And the thing that was

Figure 67

The Pizza Girl with Her Creativity, a Snapshot from the Classroom

**Figure 68**

This is the Painting that Illustrates the Pizza Girl, a Free-spirited Learner



(Source: Saatchi Art)

amazing was her teachers never stopped her from doing anything. The class used to have a flow but I found her flowing in the opposite direction. I mean, when others would be doing their assignments or some writing tasks, she would be busy in a craft work with her simple devices; when she would be writing something, others would be busy listening to the teacher in the U-area and she would usually do her writing

tasks in the choice period or whenever she felt like doing them. There were certain responsibilities which the students were aware of; however, she was free-spirited who never gave any importance to the boundaries or the classroom rules. She was a postmodern learner who challenged the modern principles of learning and the established ways of thinking (Tesar et al., 2021). In that sense, she was a hippie when it came to learning. Nothing obstructed her to polish her skills, there were no restrictions that could stop or deviate her.

Experiential Learning Cycle in the Pizza Girl

I could notice a remarkable transformation in her from my first visit till the last. She would not usually laugh or smile in the beginning days but later, she was usually a “happie happie girlie” in the classroom. There were many instances when she had proved that learning takes place through Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle. One such instance is when she made the model of a pizza using the available triangular pieces in the classroom.

Figure 69

Experiential Learning Cycle in the Pizza Girl



(Source: A Self-Sketched Cartoon on Experiential Learning Cycle, Inspired by Kolb, 1984)

She was always playful in the classroom. The process of pizza making was also a light moment as she was doing it just for her own pleasure. It was not a task given by her

teacher. She had proved that all different phases of the cycle, such as concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation take place while acquiring new knowledge. According to Kolb and Kolb (2018), our brain is designed for experiential learning. Thus, experience is a key to learning new knowledge. Learning always takes place in a cycle and is not a linear process which was proved by the Pizza Girl. She self-acquired the knowledge about what a pizza is and how a model of pizza can be formed joining the triangular pieces, the pointed sides at the center and the broader sides at the edge. She might have eaten a pizza at home or a restaurant where she had a concrete experience of what a pizza is like. While eating or before eating the pizza, she might have observed it deeply that helped her make an abstract conceptualization of making the model of a pizza when she found those triangular pieces in the classroom. This abstract conceptualization helped her in making the real model ultimately that exactly resembled the pizza she had eaten in her past. This is how four different phases of experiential learning cycle had taken place in the Pizza Girl that helped her demonstrate her craft easily, acquiring new and self-regulated experiential learning.

Journeying from the Pizza to the Windmill: Breaking the Bubble

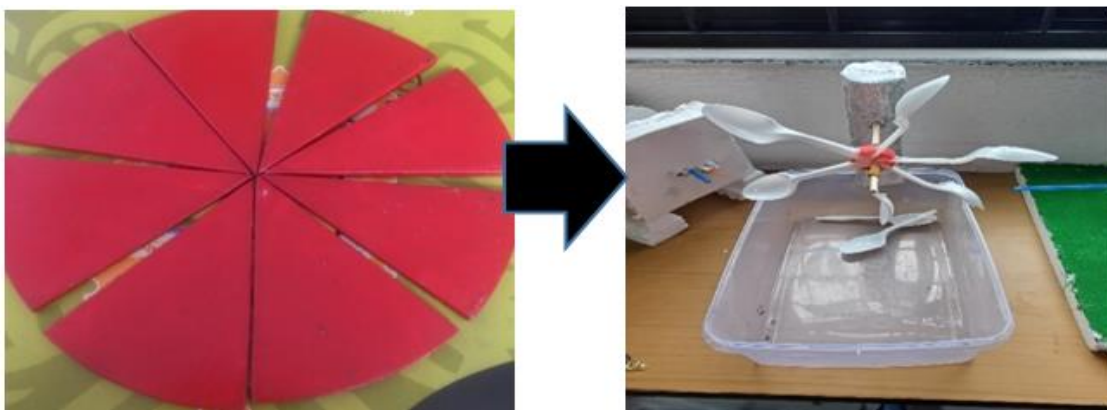
My very first meeting with the Pizza Girl was very heartwarming as she had offered me a pizza, a self-made pizza out of triangular jigsaw pieces. In order to make the pizza, she had seen or eaten it somewhere which made her reflect or think deeper about it. In the process of making a reflective observation, she was able to conceptualize it in her brain that when she found those triangular pieces in the classroom, she immediately started bringing them together giving it a shape like that of a pizza. Had she not seen or eaten pizza before, she would not have been able to review and conceptualize it. Besides, she would not even be able to join the pieces the way she joined, she would play with the pieces and form something else and not pizza if she hadn't had the concrete experience of eating/ seeing a pizza. Though this was not the task given to her by her teacher, learning in one way or the other was ongoing. It was more of a self-directed learning as she did it all by herself. And the strategies of active learning do matter here because if the classroom environment had not been suitable, or let's say if she was forced to listen to the teacher only and do what she was told to do as it happens in our traditional lecturing method, she would not have been that creative. There lies vastness in this simple instance.

I observed that the pupils were always encouraged to be creative and critical no matter what. Active learning promotes creativity and critical thinking in learners and they feel more motivated for collaborative engagement (Tang et al., 2020). The teaching-

learning process was entirely dominated by active learning strategies that the Pizza Girl was free to use her brain that led her to the making of the model of a pizza to a windmill, breaking the bubble, transforming herself from a lone-learner to a social learner.

Figure 70

Snapshot from the Classroom That Illustrates Her Journey from the Making of a Pizza to a Windmill



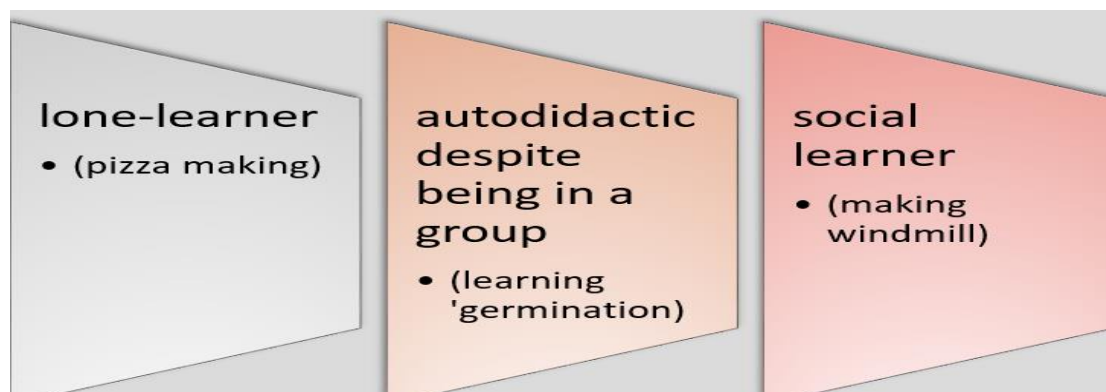
The most important thing is that there was growth in her that was noticeable. She was happier, more focused on what she would be doing, was rigorously into creating new knowledge and experimenting. The day when she came rushing to me with a model of a windmill as soon as I sat at the table in a corner I usually used to, her eyes had a completely different spark. She was satisfied with what she could do, though it was in a team. And again, it was good that she, who was a lone learner usually, had become a part of a team. That was another transformation in her. Even when the whole class was divided into various groups for the project work of ‘germination’, she rejected to be a part of any group despite the teacher keeping her also in one of the groups. All her group members worked together, sowing their gram seeds in the same ice cream container, she had sowed her seed in a small bottle cap. But finally, she was an active member of a team while making the windmill. While learning the process of ‘germination’ through a “gram-seed project work”, she was still reluctant to accept change and didn’t know yet the significance of team spirit. Though it took some time, finally, she showed her transformation from an individual contributor (while making the pizza) to a social contributor (while making the windmill) as she was actively involved in the team now, unlike while making the model of a pizza or learning the process of germination through a group project work.

At first, she had lied to me telling that she made the windmill all by herself; however, she proved that there was yet another positive change in her by confessing that she had told a lie. She admitted that she had made it with her friends in a group. She

didn't even take much time to own up and say 'sorry' for telling a lie that proves that she was decisive now, development of a soft skill called the 'power of decision making' had taken place in her. Thus, her evolution from the making of the model of a pizza to the model of a windmill, learning alone to learning in a group and being able to decide that she had to confess the lie she had told to me, these are the evidences that active learning strategies had helped her learn both literacy as well as life skills. The evolution itself from a pizza girl to the maker of a windmill encompasses various phases of experiential learning that finally reflect the domino effect of active learning that had taken in my pizza girl. This ripple effect that had taken place in her can be displayed through the following figures:

Figure 71

The Pizza Girl: A Lone-learner to a Social Learner



Thus, when she made a pizza, she was a lone –learner who was an individual contributor as she did not belong to a group. While learning the process of 'germination', she was still an autodidact, a self-regulated learner despite being in a group because she had sowed her seed in a bottle cap, unlike the group members who had their seeds in an ice-cream container filled with soil. Ultimately, she was able to be a part of the group while making the windmill, thereby, being a social learner who learnt in a social setting, in a team. She knew the importance of working in a team and team spirit that she couldn't take the credit of making it all alone. That's why though she lied at first, she confessed immediately.

Working in a group to make a windmill, she learnt various soft skills like effective communication, active listening, responsibility, collaboration/teamwork, innovation which are required for the sustainability of her living. Besides, she even learnt literacy skills like defining a windmill, telling how it functions, enrichment of vocabulary etc. These positive or constructive changes that occurred in her can be taken as the

domino effect of active learning which allowed her the taste of experiential learning as well.

Figure 72

Positive Domino Effect in the Pizza Girl

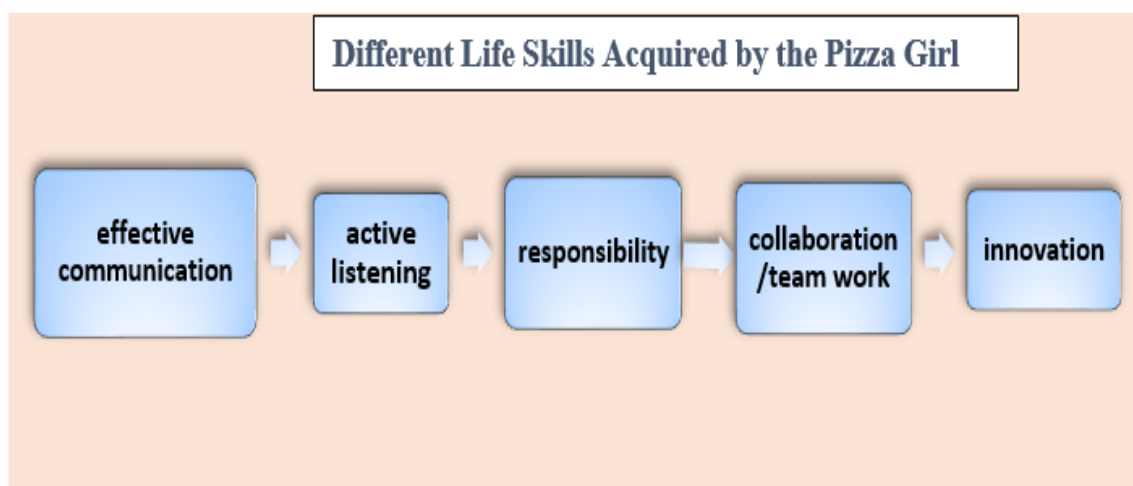
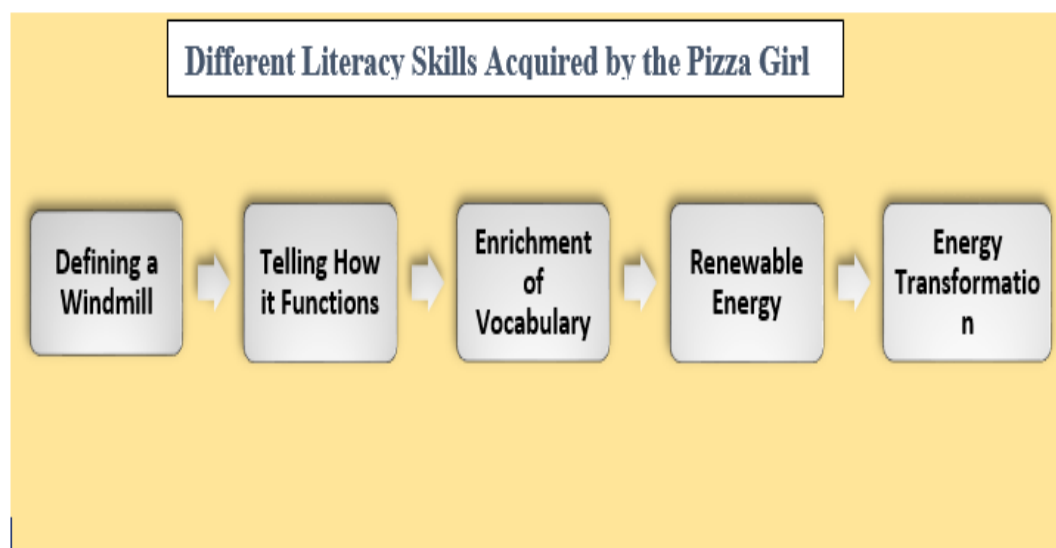


Figure 73

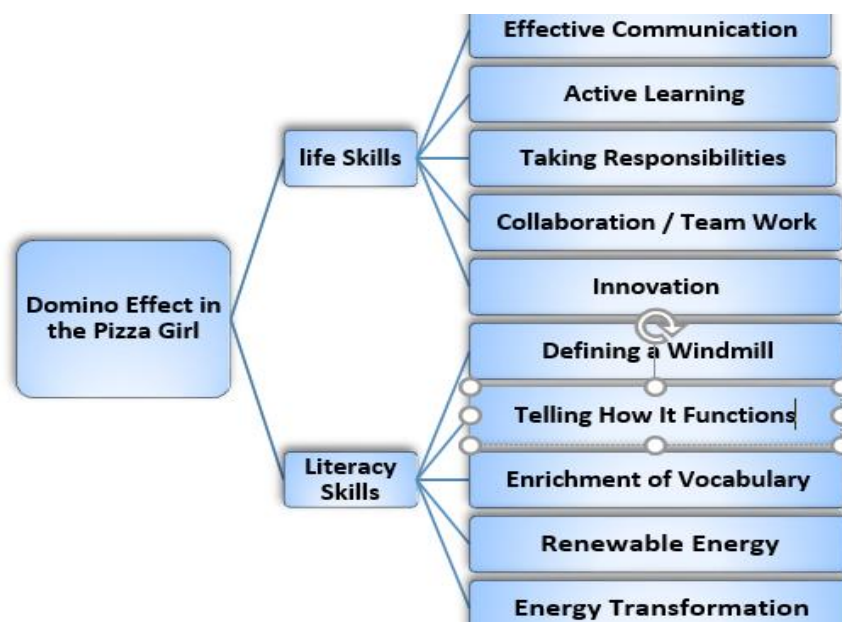
Positive Domino Effect in the Pizza Girl



The aforementioned two figures can be combined in the following way to justify what positive domino effect in the forms of literacy (hard) skills and life (soft) skills the Pizza Girl achieved:

Figure 74

The Positive Domino Effect that Took Place in the Pizza Girl



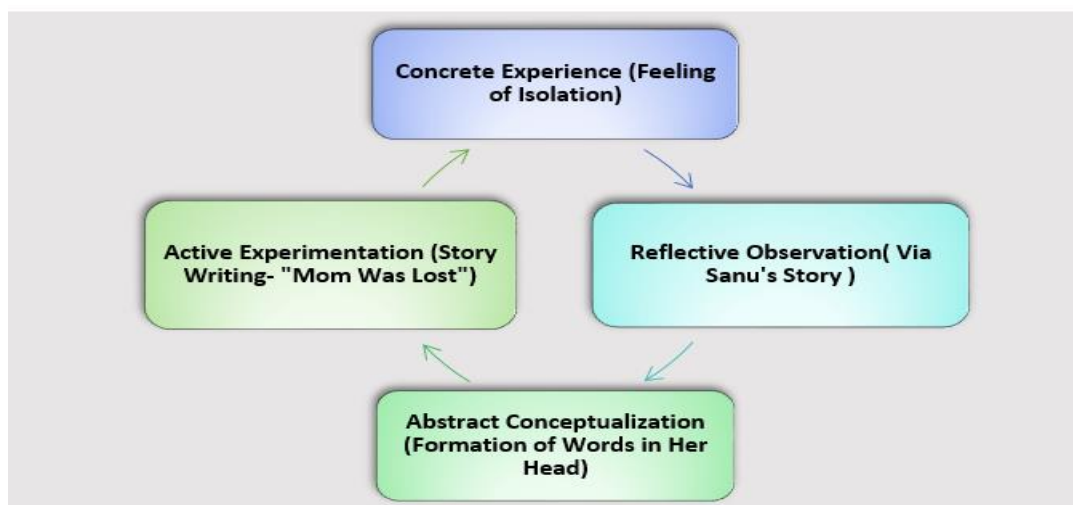
Experiential Learning Cycle in Miss Know –All

The very first time when we met, Miss Know-All was the one who had correctly pronounced my name amongst all the other kids. She was one of those learners who would always be attentive and focused in her work. She was the storehouse of energy that would never drain out, prompt and accurate in giving answers most of the times. She would even be ready to extend her helping hand to her teachers as well as her friends. I could observe a significant transformation that had taken place in her from the time we first met till the last day of my visit. She was the one who was able to relate the story of *Sanu and the Big Storm* in her life which led to the recollection of her past memory. And finally, she was able to document her memory in the form of a story that she wrote on her own, which in fact, was again a self-regulated learning as the task of writing was not actually the assignment given by her teacher. It was the assignment of her choice. The shift in the paradigm of pedagogy highlights the fact that education is a never-ending process of acquiring information and ideas through a massively active and subjective process of making personal meaning from what has been taught (Bhatta, 2015). That was what Miss Know-All was doing. She was actively engaged in the cycle of experiences (Kolb & Kolb, 2018) on her own that took her automatically through the four different phases of the experiential learning cycle, viz: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Finally, she was able to derive her own personal meaning out of the matter taught in her classroom.

The concrete experience she had was that of the feeling of being stranded when her mother had gone for shopping while she was sleeping, at the age of four. This mark of isolation she felt was indelible that when the teacher was teaching them the story, she was able to make a reflective observation, looking at the pictures given in the book while listening to her teacher's explanation. *Sanu and the Big Storm* is a pictorial storybook written by a Nepali writer Bandana Tulachan. Thus, because of the pictures imprinted in the book and the explanation made by her teacher, she could review or revisit the poignant incident that had taken place in her life a long time back that allowed her to relate the plot of the story taught in the classroom with her own painful experience. The painful experience and fear faced by Sanu in the story and Miss Know-All in her real life were very much similar. This reflection led to the abstract conceptualization of forming relatable words and phrases in her head, that finally, she was able to write her own story "Mom Was Lost". The following figure well demonstrates how Miss Know-All went through Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle that helped her to construct new knowledge.

Figure 75

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle in Miss Know-All



(Inspired by Kolb, 1984)

She could connect her feelings with those of Sanu's in the story whose mother was also lost and who had also felt a sharp pang of isolation and fear. This helped her analyze the story and then synthesize her own life experience that took the form of a beautiful story. Thus, knowing about Sanu's pain and restructuring her own pain that was very much similar to Sanu's was possible through the four different phases of the experiential learning cycle. And undergoing the different learning phases of the cycle was possible only through the implementation of active learning in the classroom.

Constructive Effects of Active Learning in Miss Know-All

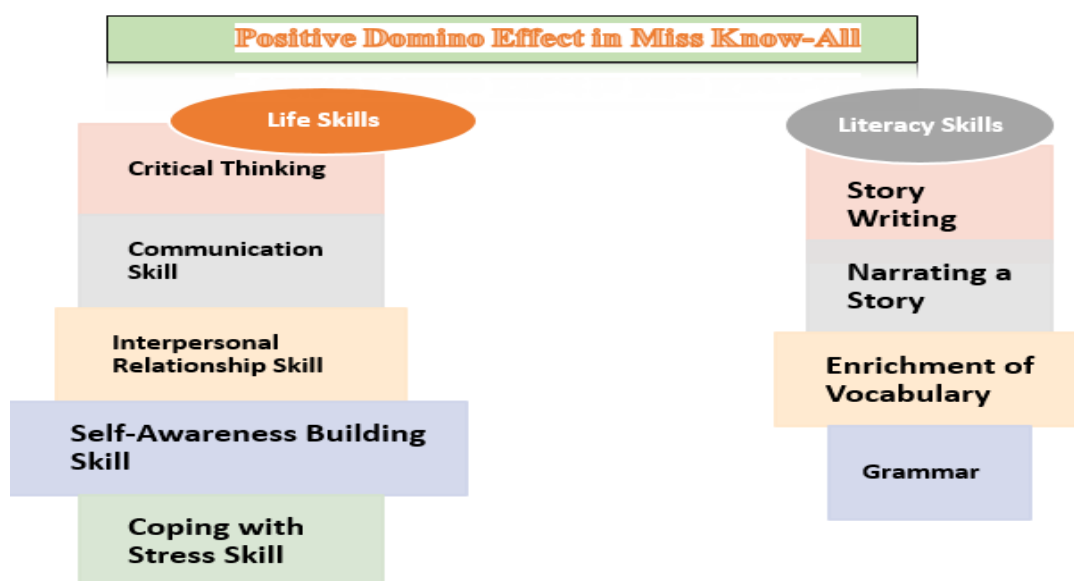
The study is an evidence that there are various constructive effects which can be called the “Positive Domino Effect” that a learner experiences when active learning method is applied while teaching English language. The learners experience significant constructive effects as the outcomes of learning when used active learning strategies in a classroom (Aalto et al., 2023). I was able to trace such a knock-on effect even in my second participant who was Miss Know-All. She was a girl who was ready to answer anything asked in the classroom. She never had any hesitation to share her ideas with the class. She was an active listener and a quick responder. A very noticeable transformation had taken place in her when she could relate her own life incident with the life of the principal character in the story *Sanu and the Big Storm*. The teacher had not even asked her to recollect what had happened in her personal life. She was simply explaining the story that all of a sudden, Miss Know-All expressed her desire to share the incident. She was very good at storytelling, though this was an autobiographical one. The marvel of the moment was that she herself asked the teacher to allow her to write the story she recollected in the classroom. The very next day, she was damn ready with her beautiful story written in her own neat handwriting. Her drawing about she herself and her mother was a cherry on the cake. There was a series of constructive occurrences that took place in her which mark the positive domino effect she had.

Miss Know-All attained both literacy as well as life skills. She could very well recollect and narrate her anecdote relating it to Sanu’s problem, she could write her own story which even added to the enrichment of vocabulary and grammar. I found only one spelling error in her story which was the spelling of “searched”. She had even crafted the plotline pretty well and the title “Mom Was Lost” aligned wonderfully with the storyline. All these were the literacy skills she acquired. Similarly, she even acquired some life skills through this task of story writing which she had chosen for herself. For example: critical thinking as she could analyze the story *Sanu and the Big Storm* herself and consequently, synthesized her own life experience of confronting the similar kind of fear and pain Sanu had faced, communication skill as she confidently stood in front of the class and boldly narrated the tale of her pain, interpersonal skill as she could understand Sanu’s pain and empathize with her, self-awareness building skill as she attained the knowledge of her cognitive and emotional aspects, coping with stress skill as she could understand how Sanu dealt with her fear and what she needed to do when she would be a similar kind of situation etc. These skills were possible for her to achieve only through

active learning method which led her to four different phases of experiential learning. Like the Pizza Girl, she had also gone through the four different phases of the experiential learning cycle before she could actually write her own story. Due to the use of active learning strategies like discussion and anecdotal sharing, she was able to experience the constructive domino effect which can be demonstrated in the following way:

Figure 76

Domino Effect of Active Learning in Miss Know-All



Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle in Mr. Cool Philosopher

Mr. Cool Philosopher, just like the Pizza Girl and Miss Know-All, also went through four different stages of Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle in the process of growing into a creative and critical learner. He was very inquisitive who always had many questions regarding anything. He was the one who came to me and asked what I was doing with my laptop. Even the poems he had composed, entitled "Flowers" and "Nagma Teacher", were full of his juvenile queries. That was one of the reasons why I have given him the pseudonym Mr. Cool Philosopher.

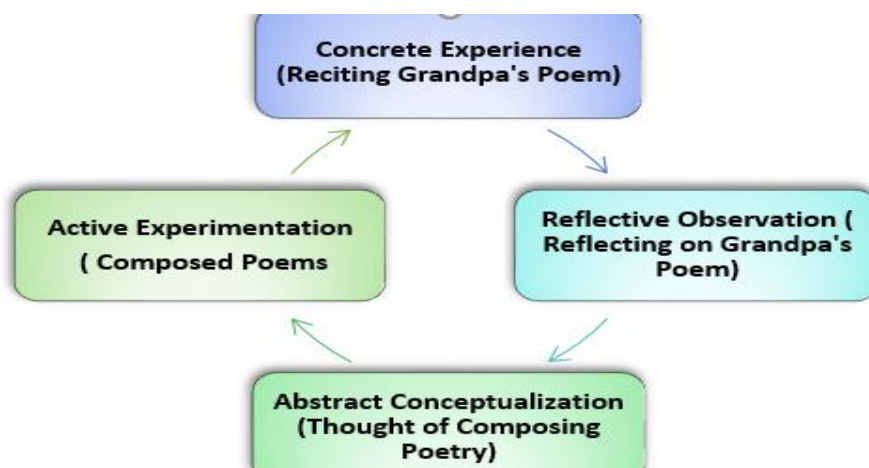
Mr. Cool Philosopher was that pupil who had accepted his teacher's challenge of reflecting on their trip to Nagdaha in only three sentences, summarizing it without excluding important points, when the earlier two students had failed. His family tree was also one of a kind, though he got 75% of help from his family members. In fact, he learnt the significance of family time and collaboration while being involved in this project work. His tree looked like a real tree, standing erect with a robust trunk and green paper leaves. This collaborative work with his family members had brought him very close to

his family. As rightly opined by Raver and Childress (2014), rather than focusing exclusively on the learner, the collaborative involvement of various family members in the learning process of a child is more effective. That was what had happened in case of Mr. Cool Philosopher. The collaborative project work with his family helped him understand the importance of teamwork and the latent talent in him which was poetry writing. He showed me two self-composed poems- “Flowers” and “Nagma Teacher”. He was inspired to write because of experiential learning which is an element of the broader term active learning as affirmed by Chiang, Wells and Xu (2021). First-hand experiences were what my participant students, including Mr. Cool Philosopher, had been gathering in and outside their classroom in the form of acquisition of knowledge. This had made a lasting impact on them that would definitely be more useful in the long run of their lives.

His journey from an inquisitive child to a poet was marvelous. The four phases of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation that he had gone through while composing his own poem can be displayed through the following figure:

Figure 77

Kolb's Experiential Learning in Mr. Cool Philosopher



(Inspired by Kolb, 1984)

Mr. Cool Philosopher had been highly inspired by his grandpa's poetry writing habit that he also wanted to write poems on his own. Reciting his grandpa's poems was the concrete experience he had which led to the reflective observation of reflecting upon his poems. This triggered his brain to compose a poem on his own that made him write down a poem. In fact, poetry writing was not even a task given by his English teacher. It all began with the collaborative work on “my family tree” which he did along with his

family members. While collaborating, his grandfather had told him that he used to write poems and he even let him recite a few of those creations. This worked as the slightest push on the first domino that he was so much inspired to write his own.

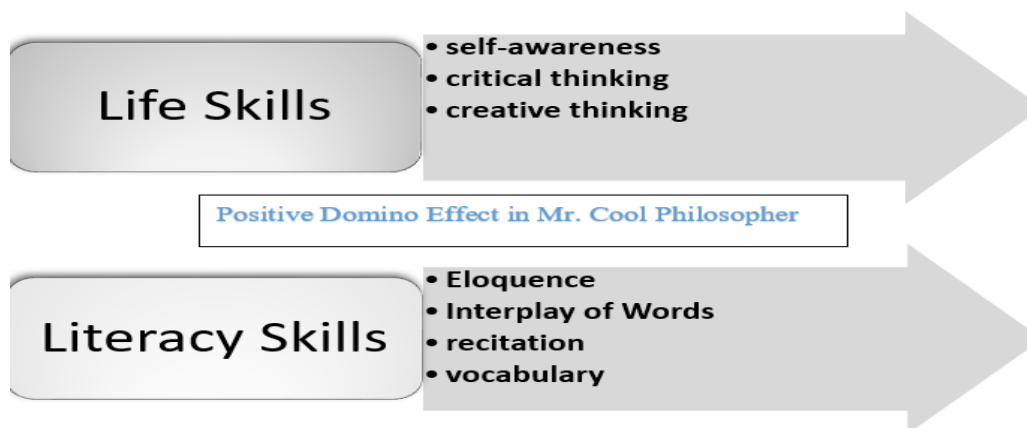
Transformation in Mr. Cool Philosopher

There was a vast transformation in Mr. Cool Philosopher within my observation period of about six months. He did not write poems in the beginning. However, he had a very inquisitive nature when I first met him. He used to come to me and ask me many questions related to what and why I was typing. He had even tried to peek on my laptop screen once or twice that I somehow managed to keep it away from him. It was not only me to whom he would come with a lot of questions, he would almost every day have a lot of queries to ask his lead teacher and assistant teachers. He would even ask a lot of questions to his friends. This very nature of asking questions and thinking deep about them had helped him become more critical and creative that he happened to express his creativity in words writing poetry.

He had achieved both life skills and literacy skills by composing his own poems. Some of the life skills that he had learnt were: self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking etc. Some of the literacy skills that he had learnt were being expressive, interplay of words, vocabulary, recitation etc. His achievements in the form of positive domino effect of active learning can be shown in the following way:

Figure 78

Kolb's Positive Domino Effect in Mr. Cool Philosopher



Self-awareness was the first domino that knocked down other dominoes in the queue bringing a positive ripple effect that ensured in him critical thinking and creative thinking. He was self-aware because he was very inquisitive and had a lot of questions about himself and the world that surrounded him. He was curious, yet nonchalant,

sometimes even very composed and collected as if his thoughts were processing inside him, as if he was introspecting. Introspection is a very deep quality to be used to a little boy like Mr. Cool Philosopher but his calmness at times made me think if he was trying to understand himself, unaware of whatsoever was happening in the classroom. The poet in him came out after he knew that his grandpa used to write poetry. He was so inspired by the poems grandpa shared with him while collaborating on the ‘family-tree project work’ that he also wanted to write poems as his grandpa did; consequently, he had composed the poem “Flowers”. Probably, that was his first poem. Besides, he amazed me by composing a poem on me which was entitled ‘Nagma Teacher’. Thus, the development of some of the significant life skills like self-awareness, critical thinking and creative thinking were quite noticeable.

Furthermore, he was eloquent and pretty convincing when he would speak. He was the one who was able to reflect and summarize the trip to Nagdaha using only three sentences. His poems proved that he could play easily with words. Poetry is a vast genre that only critical and creative people can compose it. He was not only a poet but also a reciter. The other hard skill that he had learnt was the enrichment of vocabulary. I could notice that when he would speak, he was fluent and the words selected for his poetry writing were also impressive. This way, various literacy skills like eloquence, interplay of words, recitation and vocabulary were dominant in him which can be called the positive domino effect of active learning.

Poetry writing was not the part of any assignment given by the teacher. Still he managed time to synthesize his ideas crafting that beautiful piece of his creativity. Thus, through a project work, he learnt the value of teamwork and creativity; additionally, he was able to seek for his interest in writing. In this way, I could trace the constructive effects of active learning approach in Mr. Cool Philosopher. Writing poetry is not merely jotting down some organic lines. It also means the development of creativity and critical thinking besides enrichment of his writing and reciting skills which definitely would bring a lasting impact on the child.

The students had enough liberty to speak, ask questions and move around inside the classroom from one corner to another. Freedom to express varied ideas was the key to the class. They did not hesitate to speak. They were always encouraged to share what was there in their heads as well as in their hearts. But when they were called to the carpet area, where the teacher instructed and explained things, allowed interaction, brainstorming and discussion to the young learners, almost everyone followed what the teacher said, with a

few exceptions like the Pizza Girl, Mr. Loud, Mr. Cool Philosopher and a few more who seemed like hunting for something interesting at the various corners of the classroom.

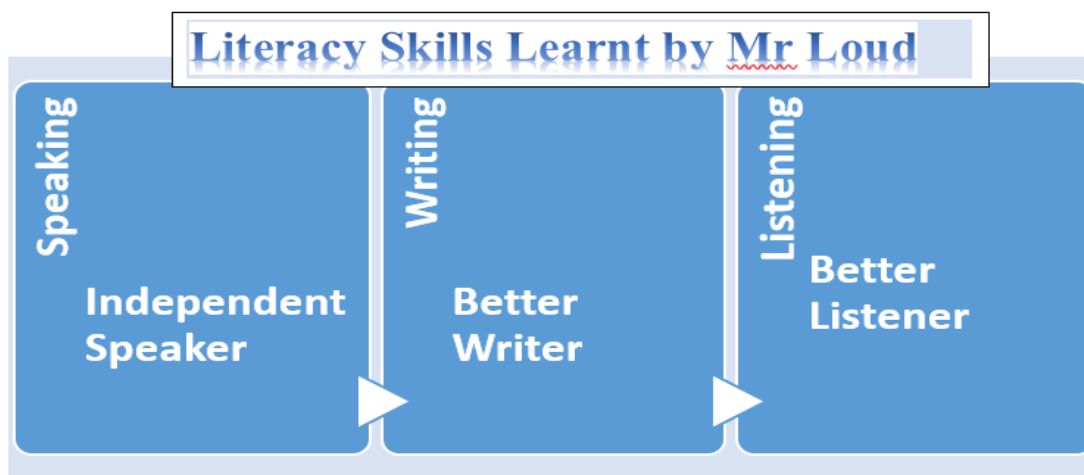
Attitudinal Renewal in Mr. Loud

As in the other three participants, Mr. Loud also had achieved positive domino effect of active learning, though comparatively, the transformation that took place in him did not seem that massive as in others. What I noticed in him was, there was a significant change in his attitude from the time I met him till my last visit. As opined by Kiwelu and Ogbonna (2020), learning does not only mean acquiring knowledge but also acquiring transformation in one's habits, behavior and attitude which I found taking place in Mr. Loud too. In the beginning, I always felt like he was a bit restless and used to distract the class pretty often with his loud voice even when talking was not needed, even when the teacher would be giving some instructions or explaining some lessons. He would hardly listen to her and would usually bother the teacher by asking her to let him read something, almost every day. But later, I could feel through his letter to his future self that a sort of self-awareness and realization had already taken place. He had realized that he was talkative and noisy and had to improve in his listening skill in order to be a better learner. That was the greatest transformation that had undergone in Mr. Loud that I could feel attitudinal renewal in him at the latter phase of my field visit. He had grown more patient.

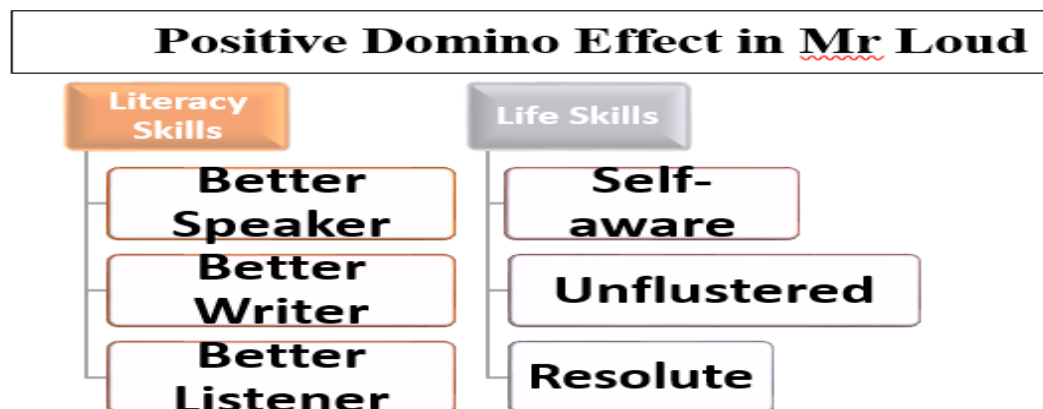
Within the time span of around six months, I observed that he was aware of his weakness and was trying to work on it. He was much unflustered and resolved as he wanted to make his handwriting better, he wanted his behavior to be good and acceptable, take part in all the extra-curricular activities and pay attention to all his teachers and friends. He knew that he had to improve his listening skill. However, one thing that was good about him was, he didn't suppress himself in the process of changing for better. This is proved through how he noticed and immediately warned his Maths teacher using Chat GPT when they were always told by the same teacher not to use it. The achievement in Mr. Loud can be projected in the following way:

Figure 79*Life Skills Learnt by Mr. Loud*

Besides, Mr. Loud had even acquired some literacy skills like the ability to speak independently, writing as is proved by his very moving piece of advice for his future self and he had become a better listener compared to the beginning days in grade 4. Besides, he was always fond of reading.

Figure 80*Literacy Skills Learnt by Mr. Loud*

Mr. Loud was the head honcho in exposing the Maths teacher. He was not just loud but I observed that he had become bold and decisive as well. He could speak against his own teacher when she was wrong and even led the entire mass to shout against her. He was truthful. The domino effect that he experienced can be further displayed through the following figure:

Figure 81*Positive Domino Effect in Mr. Loud***Chapter Encapsulation**

In a nutshell, the chapter authenticates the participants by justifying why and how they were apt for being the researched. It encompasses a few episodic glimpses of every participant's personality and also sheds a huge spectrum of light on how they learnt various life skills and literacy skills going through Kolb's four different stages of learning cycle via the first-hand experiences they achieved through various active learning strategies. Each experienced the positive domino effect of active learning as they all were able to achieve multiple literacy as well as life skills.

The chapter shows the transformation that occurred in my participants. Precisely, it addresses to both my research questions that go like this:

- 1) How does the implementation of active learning in English language classrooms create a positive domino effect?
- 2) How does active learning help students not only in learning English language but also in acquiring life skills?

CHAPTER VII

AN ODYSSEY OF AN ARTISTIC RESEARCHER FROM WINTER TO AUTUMN: IMPRESSION, IMPACTS AND INSIGHTS

The chapter gently unfolds my beautiful journey of the field visit for the purpose of data collection and for the process of meaning making for my research study. It is a reflexive writing on how it all began to how it came to an end, i.e., the impression, impacts and insights of the visit. The process of my data collection and data analysis for the purpose of the derivation of meaning follows a cyclical pattern of four different seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn, to demonstrate what I noticed during the participant observation (impression); how I felt, what I experienced (impacts) and how the process of knowledge building took place (insights), interconnecting my observation and my participants' transformation, the positive domino effect.

The beginning of the chapter is highly connotative to wintry associations as the journey before my field visit was unproductive, bleak, cheerless and cold. It was so because my search for an educational institution for the field visit was perpetual, yet lacked fruition. The search began from the month of January and finally, came to an end on the 11th of May, 2023. With the green ecstasy and blossoms of Spring, I felt rejuvenated and self-motivated as I had started my field visit. I continued visiting the site all throughout the brighter Summer days which lasted till the mid of mature Autumn, the month of October. Autumn is the season of harvesting and I began harvesting what I had sowed in Winter, Spring and Summer, i.e., I started analyzing the data collected in the Autumn, in three earlier seasons. And the harvest took almost ten months which I have defined in this chapter as the gestation period. Thus, the chapter discusses this cycle of impression, impacts and insights that took place with the cycle of four different seasons.

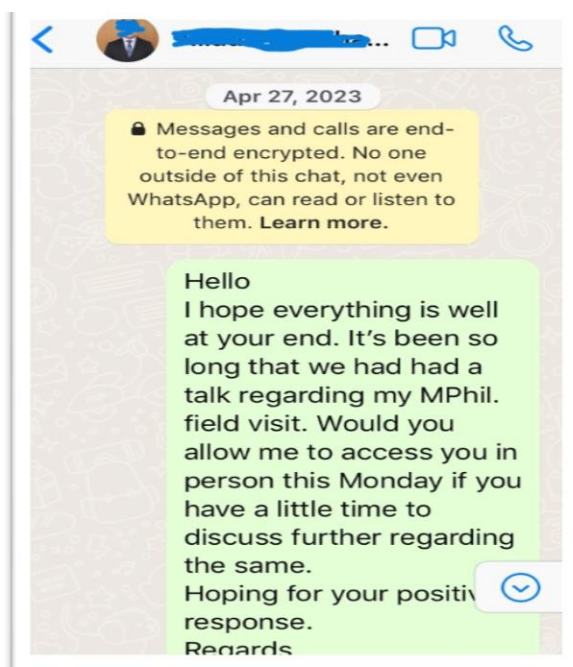
Wintery Mist Inside and Outside

The month of January and a few more following it became a patch of cold sweat and angst for me as my zeal to research had died. Wintry mist had abducted both my head and heart exactly the way it had shrouded mother earth. The feelings of fruitlessness and pointlessness continuously hit my psyche to the point that I was nearly set to surrender myself before the wicked situation. The chills outside had gradually shifted to my heart, the nasty immigrants that bothered me to the marrow. Winter outside and winter

inside....both my body and my mind were numb that I was clueless of what I could do to ease the suffering. The seed of this pain was my perpetual search for a progressive school

Figure 84

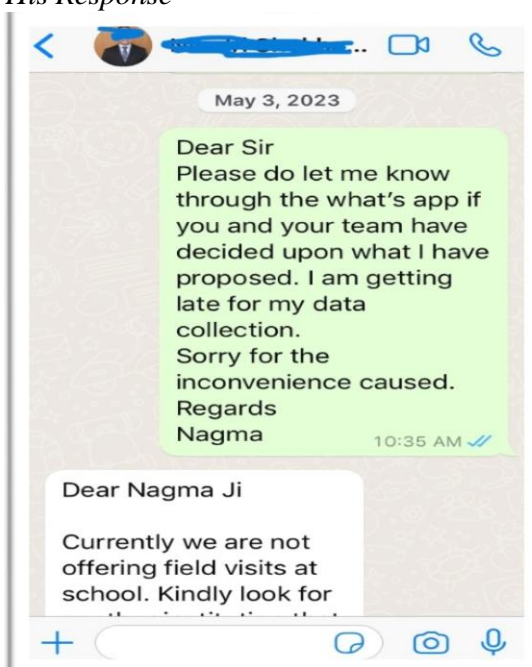
Text Sent to the Head of a Renowned Educational Institution.



(Source: My Mobile Messenger Chat)

Figure 83

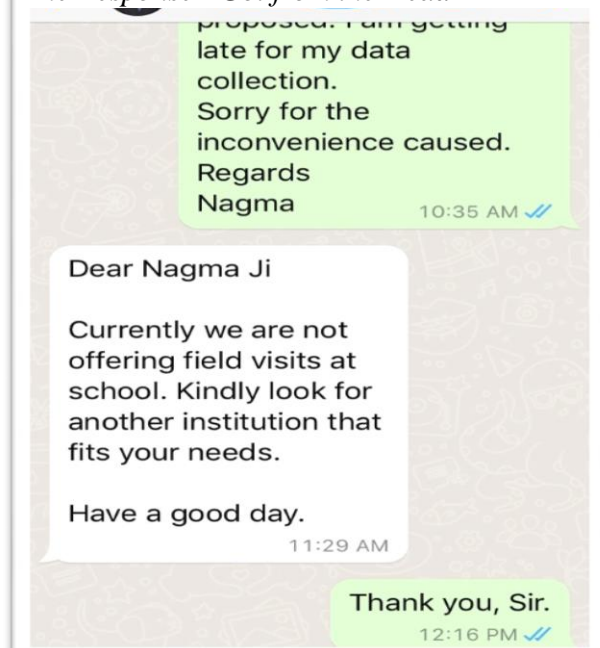
Another Text Sent to the Head Asking for His Response



(Source: My Mobile Messenger Chat)

Figure 82

The Response I Got from the Head



(Source: My Mobile Messenger Chat)

inside the valley for my MPhil. field visit in which I failed badly. I not only failed in this hunt, but also felt like I fell off the steep cliff that my existence as a seeker of knowledge had become a fag end. The search was a mission incomplete for several months, almost four months, from the mid of January to the first week of May. I had found a few schools and even approached them but to no avail as they had their own different reasons not to let me in. I wanted a

few months' visit, not a few days or a few weeks. It would not be possible for me to

detect the domino effect of active learning without a prolonged visit. And that was the reason why my field visit was not allowed by all of them as they didn't have the provision for a prolonged visit by an outsider.

They were four different schools which I approached via various ways like emails, text messages, telephone conversations and I even visited one or two in person. However, they all slammed their metallic doors right on my face which broke me down emotionally that resounded adversely in one of the third-semester classes. I threw up my bitter feelings of angst in the virtual class as most of my cohorts had already started their field visits but me.....I was still on a hamster's wheel, in a pursuit of something that was clad with the attire of impossibility. Oh! How this hounding was stinging me for months that I had nearly given up. I had begun in the month of January and it was already the mid of May and my search had taken a toll on me.

In one of the classes which a PhD candidate from KU also had attended to, I expressed the chills reigning my heart, cursing myself to have begun the Mphil. journey which I referred to then as the opening of the Pandora's Box, when the professor asked me if I had already begun my field visit. The gentle lady overheard my frustrating expression that she pacified my burning spirits immediately by telling me that she could help me if I wanted. All throughout the winter from the month of January to May, I was wandering in the vale in search of a school for my research field visit but failed every time I knocked on someone's door.

Valediction!!!

Vale shrouded with wintry feast

Brimming with fog and mist.

Melancholic tune of the plightful pair

On the bough of deep despair.

A blizzard of bizarre emotions and pain

In the heart and every single vein.

Goddam frost of biting fear

Gradually engulfing my sparkling flair.

*Valediction! Oh Valediction!!
 To my zeal in deep dejection
 Oh! Valediction! Valediction!!
 My spirits slouching with great frustration.*

*This winter is chill and no fun, oh boy!
 The cold is calculative which murdered my joy
 Damn! My desire is a distant cry
 The recurring chill won't let me try.*

*Valediction! Oh Valediction!!
 My dreams of happy hues
 Oh! Valediction! Valediction!!
 My guiding light, my muse.*

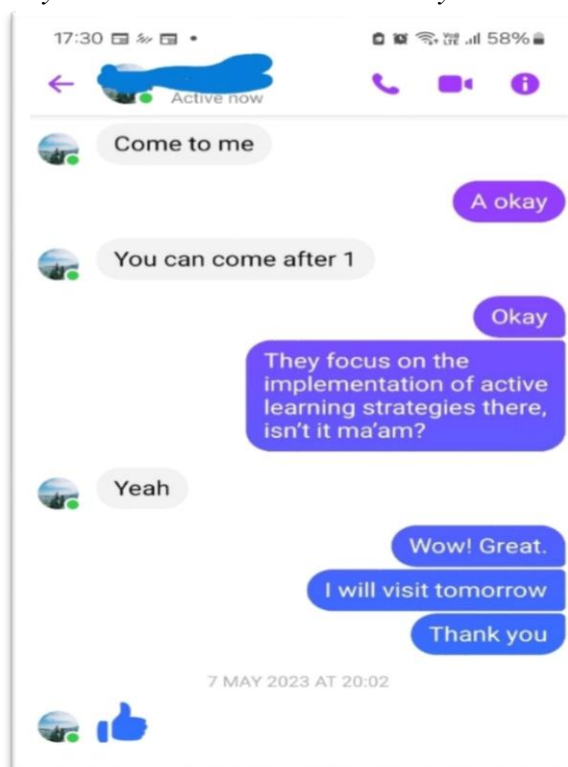
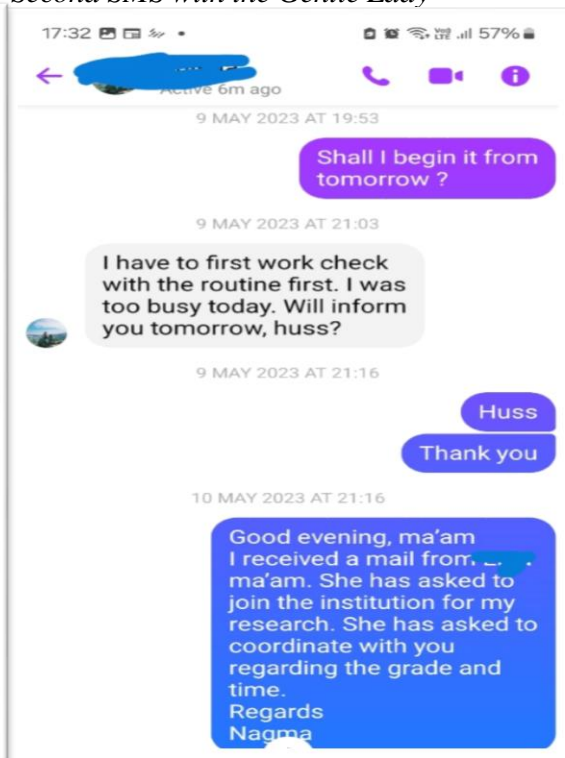
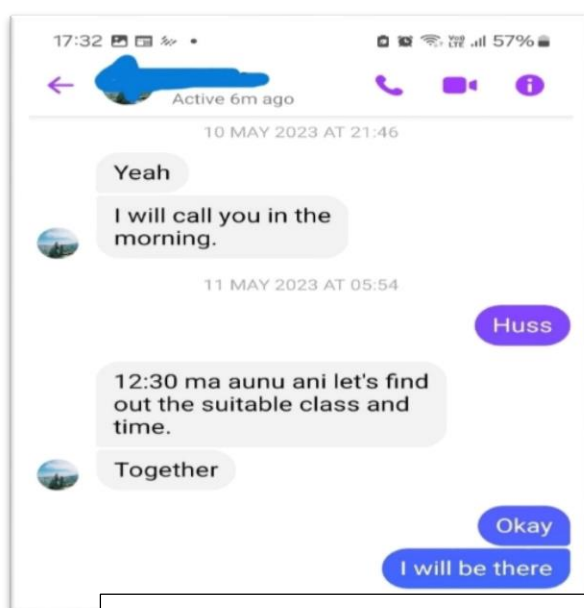
*This nip, that sting
 Oh the reigning chill!
 Ugh! You prick, you bite
 You're in me and outside*

*Freezing fire, numbing goal
 Oh! Ruthless, rigid cold.
 You stripped me of my yearnings old
 Now I can't be that bold*

*Valediction! Oh Valediction!!
 To my longings so vast and sublime
 Oh! Valediction! Valediction!!
 Until the merry sun smiles*

- Nagma Pandey

But lo! The sun actually smiled in the azure of my academics though a bit late,
 and after a little long wait. The chill that resembled the perturbation in my burning heart,

Figure 86*My First SMS with the Gentle Lady**Source: Messenger Chat***Figure 85***Second SMS with the Gentle Lady**Source: Messenger Chat***Figure 87***Third SMS with the Gentle Lady**Source: Messenger Chat*

those pangs of grievances and the pricks of woes vanished as soon as the merciful in the class extended her helping hand towards me. Blessed be the soul who had already invited me to her working place! It is one of the best progressive schools in the district. I was super excited to begin my field visit that I thanked her from the bottom of my heart and promised then and there that I would visit her school the very next day. I went to her school directly after

my school was over and was happy that I did not have to face any difficulty to enter this school. I was allowed to enter the school premises and as soon as I got inside, I met the

gentle lady who took me to the vice-principal's office. We had a talk for about ten minutes; she asked me to write the purpose of my visit, my research topic, which class I wanted to observe, why, how long, how many participants I would be observing, what kind of participants, how would I deal with the participants, so on and so forth. After that, she told me that I could start my participants' observation from that day itself if I wanted. Had I not stopped myself from displaying my vulnerability, I would have shed happy tears any moment inside the office of the Vice-principal. But I controlled myself and followed the gentle lady who took me to class 4 "Experience" from the Vice-principal's chamber. Whew.....!! The epic journey to observe the domino effect of active learning in an English language classroom began from there, 11th May, 2023.

Celebratory Winds of Spring and Summer

It was already the mid of May, the celebratory warmer winds of Spring revived my frozen zeal that I came out of my cocoon with fully rejuvenated spirits. I was a different me, a new "**ME**" at the threshold of her early 40's with the perky energy of her sweet sixteen. Seemed like an ecdysis had undergone in me. I was so much energized that I used to leave home for my workplace at 6 a.m. in the morning and then reach the spot (research site) at around 1 pm. Then, after one hour's class observation that included the jotting down of field notes, field data, light chit-chats, interviews with my participants etc., I would move out of the institution with a brand new smile every day with my laptop laden with newer information and my heart with the sprouts of hope, sometimes, even my bag full of the dainty gifts in the form of juvenile write-ups, sketches, paintings and chocolates offered by the little ones.

My hunger for data collection was unmatched that later, during the time of data analysis, I realized that my collection was overwhelmingly massive. I had a superb collection of field notes, field data, reflections, write-ups, sketches, paintings, interviews etc. Also, I now could understand that simply following Saldana (2013) would not help me in the process of data analysis as various visual art forms were also a part of my massive collection. Thus, this chapter is all about the cyclical pattern that I have used here being inspired by four different seasons of the year for the process of meaning making. I now was pretty accustomed to my messy households as I was more engrossed with my dissertation writing and had no time for them. Yet I was happy that I was moving forward more determined, though bit by bit, I had maintained the momentum for my academics. The more I was into my research journey, the farther I was going away from my family and my house holds. The drift was painful but still the journey was ongoing despite

innumerable challenges and obstacles in the form of familial responsibilities, motherly duties, professional perplexities etc. The process of data collection was protracted from the mid of May till the month of October, the entire Spring, Summer and even the mid of Autumn. There were some breaks in between, otherwise, the process was smooth and patterned.

Rejuvenated Zeal

Warm Spring winds

Winding around the vale

Oh! The velvety touch of the breeze

Evolving out of the dale

Slowly crept onto my terrace

Laden with fragrant florets

Where I reclined pensive

For my vast scholastic project

The zephyr, drunk zephyr

Caressed my creativity

Slowly insinuated in me

The zeal, the hunger

For the pursuit of light

The probing so bright

Never ending notions

The whirlpool of thoughts

Like a ceaseless river

Digging deeper

Depth unfathomable

Prolific profundity!!

Full of fecundity.

Blossoms fragrant

Colours vibrant

Imbided in me the spirits jubilant

Those pure souls

Met while on field visits

*Brought mirth profound
 Along with which
 Dainty gifts and chocolates
 Their write-ups unsophisticated
 Yet unmatched, par excellence*

*The feathered friends
 On the bough of hope
 Brimful of love
 And liking for both
 Resembled my perky spirits
 Ready to rise
 Rejuvenated zeal
 That would surely soar high
 In the azure of academia
 In the bluest skies*

- Nagma Pandey

Ten Months of Incubation

It took so long for me, approximately ten months, i.e.; from the month of October 2023 to the month of August 2024, to muster up my critical and creative thinking to analyze the data collected. Even in the month of March, 2024, I revisited the field for three consecutive days to see for the last time what other positive effects had taken place in my little wonders after the span of five months. Those last visits put a full stop to my MPhil. field visit. Despite my disappearance for a long time, they still treated me in the same way as they used to in the past. In fact, I was bombarded with their innocent questions on my whereabouts and I was loved more which they proved through their tight hugs around me stirring me to the extent of shedding gay tears because of their cute and adorable expressions of genuine love.

I do admit that I had really taken so long for the analysis of data. One reason was because of several other roles and responsibilities in my life and another was that Johnny Saldana's method proved to be inefficacious for my data analysis. The analysis of data was more difficult for me than the collection. Thus, though I had begun following Saldana's procedures of coding and thematizing after the collection of data, I found it difficult to apply due to the all-embracing nature of my methodology, i.e., Arts-based

Inquiry. Also, I believe that in order to create something beautiful, one must take enough time as “haste is waste”. Even a mother-to-be carries her unborn child in her womb for around nine and a half months. I proudly compare my analysis period to a gestation period because I had felt utmost pain tinged with happiness, just like a to-be mother feels, in bringing forth my dissertation because I wanted it to be genuinely original and my greatest asset was authenticity. Thus, I gave up on Saldana’s method and restarted my research analysis, designing my own creative way of the cyclical pattern of the four seasons with the three I’s at the heart of the research analysis. The three steps that comprise the 3 I’s are as follows:

- 1) Impression (What I Noticed/ Observed)
- 2) Impacts (How I Felt)
- 3) Insights. (Knowledge Building/ What I Explored)

Figure 88

Cyclical Pattern of Data Analysis with the Three I’s at the Center



Impression

Impression is all about what I saw or what I noticed when I was observing the English class of grade 4 “Experience”. I was awe-struck on day one itself when I felt the air of liberty for the students in the English language classroom. They had their particular places but still they were freely roaming around in the classroom. They were free to express their ideas, talk regarding any issues and subject matters, wear any kind of dress (they did not have their school uniform), have any sort of hairstyle, sit with anyone they liked to and the enumeration can be longer. Most importantly, they were not scared to go close to their teachers and ask them questions. At times, they were even bold enough to go close to their teachers to chit-chat with them regarding non-textual issues. They were very fluent speakers of English language and some were even great creative writers.

Grammatical errors and spelling errors were the recurring occurrences in their writing; however, the teachers did not poke them much regarding their mistakes; rather, they were always appreciated for their ability and creativity. The level of their energy was so high every single day I visited them. They felt free to talk to anyone, including me. They did not treat me as a stranger. On my very first day, there were a few of the girls who came close to me and showed me the hearts made up of their hands and fingers, expressing their love to me. This made me overwhelmed that I, too made a symbol of a heart using my two fingers and responded to their pure love. This made me feel so comfortable to be there every time I went there. They were always warm and welcoming.

If I would start talking to my participants during the recess, then there would be many others, too who would love to chat with me. In fact, they were the friendliest of the ones I have met on this planet. My overall impression of them was very good and I would have rated them excellent had they not used at times the words which are considered taboo in our society. Not everyone but a few, one or two of the boys, even used to speak about the issues and use the words sometimes which were not appropriate for their age. I am one of the old-school folks and may be, this is the way of the younger generation which I am not aware of. However, I take it lightly as the kids today have a direct accessibility to the most modern of technicalities that there are high chances of its both positive as well as negative effects. Notwithstanding, my concern was the positive domino effect of active learning in an English language classroom and I was able to trace the transformation that took place in my participants chiefly with my prolonged observation, interviews and the artifacts that I collected from them.

Impacts

Impacts were the effects of the impression I had about class 4 “Experience”. Impacts were the feelings I had as a researcher. I always felt the child in my deeper self-popping out time and again when I used to be amidst my participants and their little friends. I felt greatly rejuvenated because their positive energy would directly connect with mine that I used to be so full of life and laden with a different kind of energy that aligned with theirs. Thus, we had been able to befriend each other. And this friendship was beneficial for me as a researcher as they used to share with me almost everything they experienced or they wanted to talk about. This way, I was able to collect organic data from my little participants which is the strongest foundation of this dissertation. Despite a very hectic schedule every single day, I would discover a different me, a bubblier and more inquisitive me in their midst.

I would at times be flooded with strong emotions as those kids were such pure human souls that they had readily accepted me as their good friend. Some even used to ask me to be their teacher. It was not only me who would interview them, even I used to be asked about various things related to my life and living by them. They used to write poems and write-ups for me; sometimes, they would even gift me with their great compositions, drawings, paintings and even chocolates that made me immerse completely into this new relationship that had developed between them and me. Some of the students would even try to peek into my small world of screen, as they would always be curious about what I was typing whereas there were some who did not even give a damn to what I was doing. They always made me feel at home that I owe them for the cooperation and support I got from them.

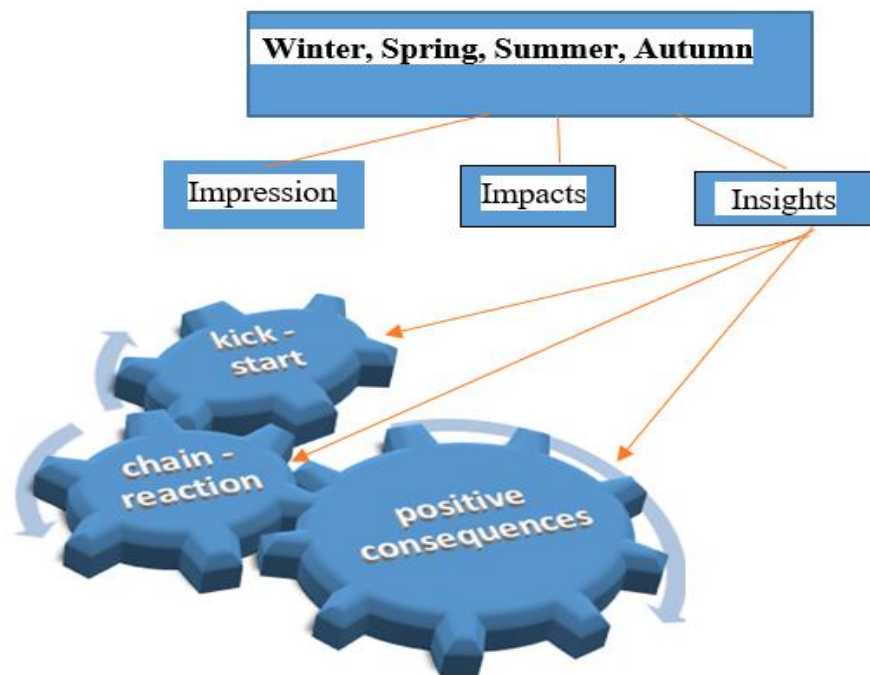
Insights

Insights refer to what knowledge I acquired about the domino effect of active learning in an English language classroom. It is wholly about the knowledge-building process of my research project. The penetration I made through observation, interviews and artifacts contribute to the process of perception-making. After an elongated period of data collection and analysis, I have come to this conclusion that active learning is the best of learner-friendly methods that helps students to acquire knowledge by providing them ample space for testing their level of comprehension and knowledge-building ability through their direct involvement in the process of construction of knowledge. According to Magableh, al-Jamal and Bataineh (2022), learners' academic success is measured through their ability to comprehend, analyze and apply the knowledge they acquired in the social setting inside and outside the classroom. Through a long observation, I could notice the transformation that had taken place in my participants with the application of active learning strategies in an English language classroom. This transformation had a ripple effect not only on their academics but also on their behavioral achievements. The very positive ripple effect that occurred in them can be termed as the positive domino effect of active learning. In order to clarify what insights I gathered from my research, I have further divided this section into three other sub-divisions as:

- i) **kick-start** (the initial activity/event)
- ii) **chain-reaction** (the series of positive effects created by the initial activity or event)
- iii) **positive consequences** (the positive results achieved due to the positive effects)

Figure 89

The Cyclical Research Analysis Pattern with Its Divisions and Sub-divisions



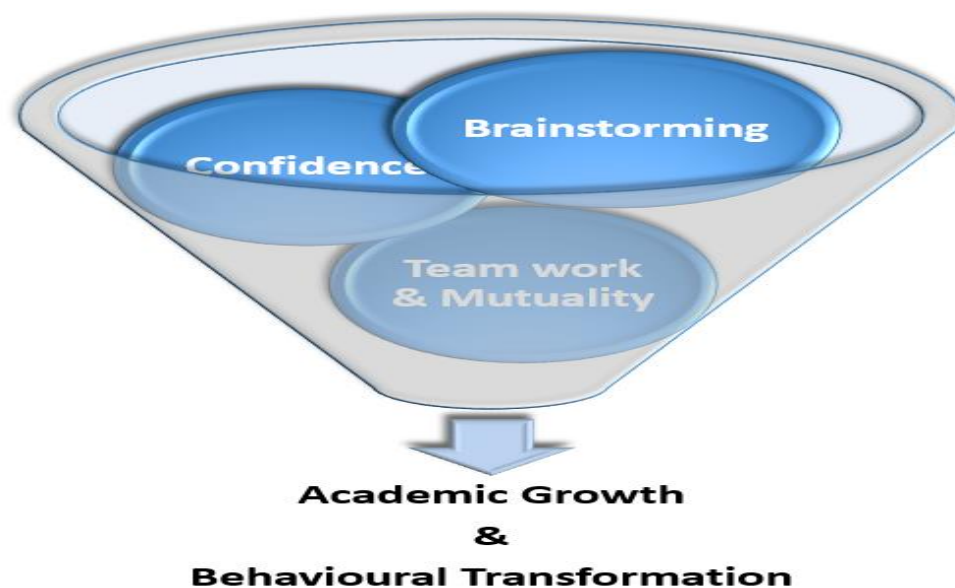
i) **kick-start**: The very beginning action or activity or event that further resulted to a series of positive effects in my participants that finally brought a huge transformation in them is the kick-start. According to (Swuste et al., 2019), the very initial act that is positive in the classroom can lead to a more impactful chain reaction, i.e., in the case of my participants, further other good changes in them that finally helped in the occurrence of positive consequences as a whole academically as well as behavior-wise. Similarly, Mahr (2022) asserts that the domino effect starts with the first event that can also be called a trigger that naturally allows one to experience other beautiful changes in his/her habits. I also noticed that my participants made better academic accomplishments with a better change even in their behavioral aspects.

ii) **chain reaction**: A domino effect cannot be thought of without a ripple effect it creates through the initial event or experience that takes place. Mahr (2022) opines that a domino effect itself can be termed as a chain reaction that takes place when the initial event creates ample space for the occurrence of a chain of similar or related events that ultimately allow greater changes, exactly as a domino topples the next in the domino game symbolizing a cause and effect relationship. All four participants had gone through

several beautiful experiences within the time frame of six months that were triggered by the very first experience which happened to be the “kick start” action or event.

iii) **positive consequences:** All my participants experienced many positive consequences as the result of the chain reaction of the kick-start or trigger or the initial action/ event in the English language classroom which I observed for six months. According to Bose (2021), a special phenomenon that elucidates how one simple and single action activates a ripple effect that allows comparatively more significant changes in the behaviors and experiences of a person can be called a domino effect. Clear (2019) states that all our behaviors are interlinked that the change in one behavior automatically brings a change in all others. A good change propels positive changes whereas a bad change triggers negative changes. With the implementation of various active learning strategies, I noticed good changes in the learning abilities and behaviors of my research participants.

For example, the classes always began with a productive noise as the English teachers allowed the pupils to brainstorm after flinging a question, related to a lesson taught, to them. Brainstorming every time allowed them to put forth their own perceptions and notions pertaining to the issue discussed which further fostered in them confidence to be more expressive. Furthermore, brainstorming knitted them together that led them to the understanding of the importance of team work and mutuality. This way, they grew academically and, simultaneously, behavior-wise too. That is how various positive consequences were achieved either inside or outside the classroom. The figure shown below on “Positive Consequences” better demonstrates how one simple action of brainstorming led to a chain reaction of confidence, teamwork and mutuality, finally resulting to academic growth and behavioral transformation.

Figure 90*Positive Consequences***Chapter Encapsulation**

In a nutshell, the chapter details what impression, impacts and insights I drew through my field visits in the form of a reflection writing. It highlights the cyclical technique I invented for the process of meaning making. The technique encompasses all four seasons, viz: *Winter*, *Spring*, *Summer* and *Autumn*, along with the three I's that refer to the *impression* (what I noticed in my field visits), *impacts* (how I felt) and *insights* (what knowledge I derived). Furthermore, the insights encapsulate the other three steps of *kick start*, *chain reaction* and *positive consequences* that I used for the generation of knowledge as demanded by the entire research project. Different seasons impacted me as a researcher differently, as the Winter only brought hopelessness, whereas the Spring and the Summer were the most productive seasons in terms of data collection. Lastly, the data I collected was well harvested and used for the derivation of insights in the season of the Autumn. The process of meaning making nearly took a period of ten months that I have termed as the period of gestation.

CHAPTER VIII

TYING UP THE LOOSE ENDS: PERSPECTIVES, REFLECTIONS & CONCLUSION

The chapter heralds the full stop for the entire project which marks the culmination of the research. It is all about tying up the loose ends, i.e., giving a final touch to this academic writing, simultaneously zooming in the new knowledge or perspectives developed after the research, reflections on the explorations made and the experiences gained. The research, which opted for the arts-based inquiry as its methodology, proved to come with challenges as well as new avenues for the study of the domino effect of active learning in English language classes in a progressive school in Lalitpur, Nepal. I enjoyed the academic voyage despite a few icebergs which were easily surmounted through the months of painstaking investigation. Hard work, perseverance and determination led the research to the current shape. Though being a lone traveler, I was accompanied by my professors and my cohorts every now and then that took the journey to a different height. And the moral support from my family was the only ointment upon the plight I had to go through.

More specifically, the discernment achieved after a prolonged field visit and exploration brought in me the perspectives that I can share with the world today, the perspectives that echo the insight that the implementation of various active learning strategies does have a domino effect. As stated by Phala and Chamrat (2019), active learning activates the multiple skills in the pupils, letting them have first-hand experiences of knowledge building, introspect their true selves and develop higher-order thinking, sharpen their learning skills, build rapport with their teachers, comprehend what they have learnt merging it with their prior knowledge etcetera. The domino effect of active learning in the process of teaching-learning were the literacy skills (hard skills) and life skills (soft skills) learnt by my four participants who were the Pizza Girl, Ms. Know-All, Mr. Cool Philosopher and Mr. Loud. At length, they proved that there was a transformation in each one of them due to the pedagogical method that had active learning method at heart. The chapter tends to be highly reflexive as it draws out all my emotions, feelings and experiences as a research artist that I gathered ditto as they were in me during the entire process.

Free Writing

23rd August, 2024

10:02 a.m.

Senior Library of a Renowned School at Dhulikhel

*Hello Library! I am back here again, exactly after one year. In fact, after one year and five days as I had visited the venue on the 23rd of August, 2023 last year. Then, it was a day which was downright gloomy and dark, as it rained for the whole day. I was here with my girls for the slam poetry workshop, and again, this year, I am back for the same purpose ...yes, for the slam poetry workshop but with a new set of students. This visit today has made a complete cycle. A cycleI am reminded of, not just this cycle of visit but even the greater cycle of nature: the cycle of life, the cycle of day and night, the cycle of different seasons, oh yea, the “**CYCLE OF SEASONS**,” which, in fact, has inspired me to analyze the data I have collected as Johnny Saldana’s method of data analysis turned out to be a bit impracticable for my research due to its all-embracing nature. The data I have gathered is a collection of literary as well as visual arts. It was difficult for me to analyze the visual data I have collected as Saldana’s method has its own limitations. Thus, the cycle.....the cycle of seasons which inspired me to architect a method relevant to this cycle. It was much much easier for me to use the method that I designed for my academic paper as my research also took place in a cycle, the cycle of four seasons Winter, Autumn, Spring and Summer. And I have well elucidated this cyclic method in one of the later chapters of this dissertation, may be in chapter 5 or 6. Moreover, I have juxtaposed the two cycles, the cycle of four seasons and my methodological cycle of data analysis that have a very close connection with each other.*

In fact, I was very much reluctant to come here today because it’s too far from my place, it almost took two hours for us to reach here today. Secondly, I came here with my kids, I mean my students from the +2 section. I came here last year, too and it had to be someone else this year as a teacher representative. However, the school authority has their own silly logic for sending me here. I am so much pissed off today.....but...oh boy,... the vibe here; I always love this vibe that the periphery provides me. I know things happen for their own reasons and this one is not an exception. It is a bright day today, but it was brighter and sunnier when we arrived here. No worries, I love this energy the place has. I think even a place has its own energy that synergizes with a true nature lover like me. I love nature, I do love nature because it

insinuates in me that glee and optimism that nothing on earth can offer no matter what the hassle I am going through. I am okay now....as I got this opportunity to feel this energy that I have refilled in my veins. This place, more specifically, this library is very special for me as I had written one reflection being inside these four walls one year back. And I am doing the same right now. Those paintings around the wall which are the glory of my mobile gallery today and some are even embedded in my academic paper, are still hanging on the same walls, unaware of the cycle of my visit, and the cycle of my almost culminated research project. My dissertation writing had taken its way then but it was at its infancy and today, it's a fully grown adult with its own hues and form. Hues are here and there and everywhere in nature, in my life and even in my dissertation. That's why, this academic writing, I mean my thesis, is not merely a form of writing but an art in itself which carries its authenticity, which has its own beautiful, yet challenging saga of its genesis and its own glorious meridian. The hues we are, specks of different colors in the process to merge with others. This is what life is, an art, the Lord's masterpiece. Hopefully, my dissertation will also be a masterpiece for the aspiring educators and upcoming researchers as it has art at its bosom.

A Letter to My Researcher- Self

The following letter I wrote to my researcher self after I got a call from my dissertation guide on 1st September, 2024 best pours out my raw feelings and restlessness as a researcher with diverse roles in her life. He had given me a call asking me to wind up the concluding chapter as soon as possible and submit my dissertation to him by 4th September, 2024 so that he could do the proceedings for my viva voce. I was not at home when he called me. As soon as I arrived home, after completing the culinary for that particular evening, I sat at my study table, somewhat around 9:45 in the evening and let the emotions stream out:

Dear researcher-self

Calm down, lady! You are almost there. Who the hell knows you better than me? I have myself felt your plight as a researcher whose patience is on the verge of extinction at present due to the entanglement of the diverse roles you have been playing. Do not panic, your households will be alright, your kids will get the liveliest of you back and both the indoor and outdoor flora in your sweet little home will flourish with your fondle in a couple of weeks, they will revive. Chillax and get focused on your dissertation writing, honey! I know you are completely worn out at this phase of your journey. But you don't need to worry much as your almost three years of hard work has paid off finally as you

are almost 90% done. You are in the last chapter of your narrative that actually proves how far you have reached and how much you have accomplished. All those peaks and valleys you have measured through your untiring efforts and determination is about to reach fruition.

You are a staunch believer of the implementation of active learning techniques for the acquisition of both soft and hard skills in students. Active learning, for you, is the best pedagogical method for the teachers as well as the students. Despite all the hurdles you confronted back then in the year 2013 when you were dealing dubiously with Wilde's "The Canterville Ghost", you boldly overtopped the gloom that had spread in your class and amongst your girls, through a role play of the story which was the very first technique of active learning you had used successfully. You had it taste for the first time lady, am I right? I mean.....the sweet taste of active learning method.

I remember how you struggled then with the implementation of dramatization or role-play while teaching one of the masterpieces of Wilde. Your own colleagues mocked at you, for the method you used was an odd duck for them. You had even overheard one of the female teachers talking to a colleague of yours; "She is quite over-smart. She might have thought that she will win the hearts of the girls by letting them shout and scream in the classroom. I swear to God; her job is done now". Oh....! And the Principal.....how exasperated she was due to the noise in your classroom because she had failed to understand that it was not a frenzy but was the outcome of the excitement they felt through their active involvement in learning. You were called in the Principal's office to justify why the classroom was noisy. She even doubted your capacity to control the class! However, everything happens for a reason, right? You were strong enough to tackle the situation that it's your twelfth year in the same institution and you are thriving every single day with your use of active learning techniques in your classrooms.

Those Goddamn days and these! Yup, you are an advocate of active learning method now who has researched its positive domino effect very minutely through the transformation that took place in your Pizza Girl, Ms. Know-All, Mr. Cool Philosopher and Mr. Loud. The questions you raised to address the issue, i.e.; 1) How does the implementation of active learning in English language classrooms in Nepal create a positive domino effect on the learners? and 2) How active learning helps students not only in learning literacy skills (hard skills) but also in acquiring life skills (soft skills) are addressed well via this academic paper. Hats off, babe! The purpose of your study was to explore the positive domino effect of the implementation of active learning strategies in

English language classrooms and also to traverse how it helps the students in acquiring literacy as well as life skills. With the use of arts-based methodology, you made it happen, lady. Cheers!!!

And lo! You were and are right. You have proved it through your research. All your participants did demonstrate the domino effect of active learning through their evolution. For you, the domino effect of active learning are both the hard as well as soft skills. The Pizza Girl's journey from a pizza to a windmill, a lone learner to a social learner was a breakthrough; Ms. Know All's grand leap from an unhesitant speaker to a writer was a feat, Mr. Cool Philosopher's transformation into a poet and Mr. Loud's self-realization were all the strong instances through which you have been able to prove the domino effect of active learning in English language classrooms. Bravo babe! Keep up your high spirits and keep moving on! The destination is wide open to you.

Rivers never reverse

So are you

Run down the vale and the woods

Forming your own path

Meandering, curving, winding and cutting

Until you boldly break through!!!

-Nagma Pandey

The aforementioned lines are for you, honey, for I know you easily lack motivation and get distracted sometimes. Go through them whenever you lack self-motivation. Do you remember how much you struggled to find a perfect topic for the proposal of your dissertation writing? My goodness!! Those days were the most hectic of your life when you used to return home at around 3:40 from your school and then change fast, go to the kitchen directly to prepare two meals at once, one for the afternoon for your family and one for dinner because you had to attend your MPhil classes from 5 in the evening till 8 every alternate day. Sometimes, the classes exceeded 8 p.m. which made your folks hangry. You used to rush to the kitchen immediately after the class and after pacifying their grumbling stomachs, how you rushed back to the study table. Most of the times, the dining table itself served as the study table. Goodness gracious!! Those assignments, in fact, the heaps of assignments made you always restless and on top of that, the hot, super-hot reflections which made you wake till midnight and sometimes, even beyond that! Did you know that education can take a toll on you both physically and mentally? Relax now! You are on the right track. I am very proud that you are almost

done and dusted. Keep up your high spirits and move further as the journey does not end here. Godspeed!!!!

Yours affectionately,

Nagma

General Perspectives: A Bird's - Eye View

Every research ends with a perspective on the issue addressed as perspectives are important in a research to know the researcher's findings and understanding of the new knowledge. As imparted unanimously by Clarke and Davison (2018), a perspective in a qualitative research is the viewpoint of a researcher or his/her ways of how a phenomenon is perceived or what the researcher's take is on the issue of the thesis. Any research project meets its culmination with the development of a perspective or a bunch of perspectives. Through this project, I have been able to recognize my subjectivity on the domino effect of active learning. The study reveals the perspective that the implementation of active learning techniques in an English language classroom has a positive domino effect, i.e., it helps the learners to acquire not only literacy skills like speaking, listening, reading and writing but also the life skills like critical thinking, time management, decision making, problem solving etc.

A learner acquires both literacy and life skills easily if s/he has various learning skills. As highlighted by Mohamed and Qasaye (2024), the 4'Cs viz; creative thinking, critical thinking, communicating and collaborating are the greatest learning skills in the 21st century which all four of my participants acquired in one way or the other. The entire team of Sekar, Roncalli, Manoj, Raj and Kumar (2022) together focus on the importance of life skills stating that such skills which are the skills for one lifetime can be used in the long run of life as the learners get enabled to cope with any sort of adverse situations and circumstances in their lives if they have acquired such skills. The Pizza Girl learnt the life skills like effective communication, active listening, being responsible, teamwork and innovation. Ms. Know –All learnt critical thinking, communication skill, interpersonal relationship skill, self-awareness building skill, coping with stress skill. Mr. Cool Philosopher learnt self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking whereas Mr. Loud learnt resoluteness, self-awareness and how to be unflustered.

Similarly, all four of my participants learnt literacy skills too. Wibowo (2020) focuses on the importance of literacy skills stating that literacy skills are not merely the assets of a single individual but equally the strength of a nation as literate people can lead a country to the path of prosperity. The Pizza Girl learnt the literacy skills such as

defining a windmill, telling how it functions, vocabulary, renewable energy and energy transformation. Ms. Know – All learnt story writing, narrating a story, grammar and vocabulary. Mr. Cool Philosopher learnt eloquence, interplay of words, recitation and vocabulary whereas Mr. Loud transformed into a better speaker, better listener and better writer. All these skills learnt show how they all evolved. This very evolution through the acquisition of literacy skills and life skills refers to the domino effect of active learning according to my research.

The Epilogue

A lover of art in the endless woods
 Entranced and intoxicated
 As if she is possessed, says- “ *Ah... I love this!*”
 “*WOW...the greens, the blossoms, the fragrance, the breeze, the rivers, the moss,
 the beetles, the.....*”
 “*Hmmmm....*”, says he interrupting her.
 “*Oops...!*”, she interjects and looks around
 With her honey-brown wide eyes
 Slack-jawed and confounded
 “*Hey!*” says she, “*Who are you there?*”
 A rowdy laughter reverberates
 “*Ha...ha....ha....ha.....*
Haa.. haaaa..., haaaaaaa”
 Aghast and dumbfounded
 Yet musters up her courage that lets her speak, “ *Hey you! How dare you...?!*”
 “*It’s not good to scare an aesthete, I love art and I revere nature*”
 “*Really?*” asked him.
 And BOOM....!!! Oh the peculiar mist!
 Oh , the haze, the smog, the fume !!!
 That spread around right before the paragon popped up above
 And SWOOP....!!!
 Plummeted he, from a tall tree
 The bushiest, the greenest, the tallest, the bulkiest, the one with many branches,
 fresh blooms and juicy fruits
 “*BOOH...!*”, she shouted.
 Appalled, yet curious

"I....I... don't.... know... you", screams in her cracked voice.

He still stands still and silent

She is curious to know this gent

So, gradually.....moves closer, yet closer again

Scrutinizes him and loves his mature mien:

Gray tresses, long beard, a pair of golden framed glasses over sunken eyes

What a look! A decent one

A man of an age.

His stare....a far-sighted gaze

With a book in his right hand held close to his heart

A hefty volume that explains "isms" like:

Positivism, Interpretivism, Criticalism, Postmodernism

And "logies" like:

Epistemology, Ontology, Axiology and many greater theories.

The tree, a Bodhi, his shady sanctuary

Stands tall and robust

With enough space underneath for both

The former is inquisitive and the latter is more giving

One is a pail and the other is a fountain

The two befriend each other

And dream together to climb all the mountains

She, *"I am blessed to have thee!"*

He, *"Be serious and study!"*

Weeks and months and years glide by

She is deep engrossed in her project so prime

He helps her, reinforces

Boosts her and braces

Her journey so vast

With innumerable crevasses

She stumbles then staggers

Bumbles, shambles, hobbles and wobbles

He chuckles, cackles, giggles; *"Tee-hee!!"*

But lifts her before she falls down

And gifts her an invisible crown

Positing her on a pedestal
 Even higher than before
 Equips her with all she requires
"I am dog-tired", says she.
 You know how he replies?
"Think out of the box but do not despair"
 And
*"Do not take stress, but do not ever stop,
 as if you keep moving, you will definitely reach your stop".*
 With all his love and care and guidance
 She grows each day, the wildest blossom
 Embraces everything that comes to her bosom
 A connoisseur of ART
 Finds a spark in the dark
 As he points to that portal
 Massive and wide
 She realizes her flair and begins the real affair
 That's laden with adventures and challenges big
 The icebergs surmounted with utmost vigour
 She collects her data demonstrating full rigour
 She still adheres to what she believes in:
"Active Learning Has the Constructive Domino Effect"-
 The stirring and the ripples the techniques of active learning create
 Transform a learner
 Letting one acquire the skills of language and the skills for life
 Which are the only requirements
 For a sober living
 She digs deeper, explores and analyzes
 Her journey so long, tiring and tedious
 Yet she moves on bit by bit
 An academic bricoleur, connecting the dots
 Bringing together the pieces
 Jigsaws of narratives and experiences
 Of herself and her little buddies

Building a rapport, moving further as a researcher

Embracing their diverse personalities and fervor

There she appears with her final stride

Oh boy!

She is triumphant and feverish

With the rendering of her vision and wish

Yes.....she has finally completed her thesis

That explores the issue to reveal the find

That Active Learning has the power to transmogrify young minds.

The woods and the wilds witness her growth

The fruition of her belief brought vim and verve

He smiles on her success

“*Congratulations!!!*”, says he

For the feat she accomplished

He seems more radiant, more gleaming than she is

Looks into the clean water in the nearby flowing stream

SPLASH !!!

Dives into and disappears in no time

Tears of woe roll down her cheeks

That flow rapidly and get mixed with the creek

She cries for hours but he does not show up

And finally wipes her tears

Just to find the bulky book

That he used to hold close to his heart,

Upon the mossy stone by the side of the babbling brook

Oh! Upon that mossy stone by the side of the gurgling brook.

- Nagma Pandey

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