

Application of Multiliteracies Pedagogy in Teaching English at Early Grades in Nepal

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore practices of the teachers in teaching English at early grade through multiliteracies pedagogy in Nepal. The study was conducted in a community school in the central hilly district by adopting a critical ethnography research design in order to capture the rich and in-depth ideas of three teachers at early grade through 'in-depth interviewing'. Interviews were audio-recorded, recorded data were transcribed assigning codes and three main themes were developed in terms of the codes during the data analysis process. The findings exposed that the teachers have engaged in bilingual practice using Nepali and English languages instead of creating multilingual space using students' home language even if they belong to various ethnic groups such as Majhi, Danuwar, Tamang, Magar, and Newar. They have been adopting print literacy as teaching-learning practice such as reading the textbooks and asking the students to write the exercises of the textbook but they rarely use modern technology based multi-modal literacy. The school administration needs to be conscious to apply multiliteracies pedagogy by strengthening the capacity of the teachers on it. Likewise, the school has to establish a basic ICT lab with an internet facility enhancing teachers' skills to use it appropriately.

Keywords: *Multiliteracies pedagogy, early grade, bilingual practice, print literacy, multimodal learning*

Introduction

Globalization and digitization have reshaped the communication landscape, affecting how and with whom we communicate, and deeply altering the terrain of language and literacy education (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011, p. 226). New and innovative technologies in today's digital era have created changes in education and these innovations now suggest the possibilities of using new ways of teaching and learning (Navehebrahim, 2011, p. 865). To address this need, educators, researchers, and policymakers have been engaged in an ongoing dialogue about the need for students to develop a broad repertoire of literacy practices that are not confined to traditional views

of literacy and traditional approaches of literacy instruction (Rajendram, 2015, p.1). Our classrooms have become more diverse by virtue of students' social roles, gender, ethnic differences, life experiences, and cultural settings that essentials the teachers to take account of varied meaning-making patterns and practices in terms of the modes and social diversity of learning and communicating (Kulju, Kupiainen, Wiseman, Jyrkiainen, Koskinen-Sinisalo, & Makinen, 2018, p.81). In this sense, Eaton (2010) asserts that the focus on language education in the 21st century is no longer on grammar, memorization, and learning from rote, but rather using language and cultural knowledge as a means to communicate and connect to others around the globe. Likewise, the rapid advances in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), accompanied with increased access to information and the emergence of global communities, have impacted on teachers' pedagogical repertoires to move beyond traditional 'literacy' skills towards a comprehensive set of "Multiliteracies" (Ganapathy, 2015, p. 1). Regarding this aspect, New London Group (1996) has proposed the concept of Multiliteracies, which views literacy as continual, supplemental, and enhancing or modifying established literacy teaching and learning rather than replacing traditional practices (Rowell, Kosnik, & Beck, 2008).

Nepal has been a multilingual country since the pre-modern era (Ghimire, 2011, p. 2) because the people of Nepal speak different languages that belong to various ethnic groups (Tobin, 2011). Explaining the diverse situation of Nepal, Ghimire (2012) says that the linguistic diversity and multilingualism of the country has been represented in the schools. Most schools have students from diverse language backgrounds, usually a language with a majority number of students and many languages with few numbers of students. The dominant language of the majority of students usually dominates the languages of a few students in the classroom. Malone (2005) suggests that the use of mother tongues during the early basic level can improve the quality of education as it bridges the homeworld to the outer world and the prior knowledge of children can become instrumental for learning.

In this context, the learners in Nepal need to be able to cope with different kind of texts, including multimodal, interactive, linear, and nonlinear texts, texts in different languages, texts with several possible meanings, texts being delivered on paper, screens, or live, and texts that comprise one or more semiotic system because as Elsner (2011, p.28) delivers that "monolingual children live and learn together with children of other languages in kindergarten and get into contact with many different languages and cultures from a very early age". Multiliteracies pedagogy can support children in developing a strong sense of identity and well-being; feeling connected to their world; and becoming confident and involved learners who can communicate effectively using their preferred 'languages' of communication (Mills, 2009).

Although there is a growing use of multiliteracies pedagogy through the use of multimode and digital devices/ strategies in the world, very little practice has been done in Nepal. In this context, this study tried to explore the practices of multiliteracies

pedagogy in early grade in teaching English. The research questions of this study were as follows:

- How do the early grade teachers regard multiliteracy pedagogy in teaching English in Nepal?
- How do they practice multiliteracy pedagogy in teaching English at early grade in Nepal?

Theoretical and Empirical Background to the Study

Multiliteracies is a pedagogical approach developed in 1994 by the New London Group (NLG) that aims to make classroom teaching more inclusive of cultural, linguistic, communicative, and technological diversity. New London Group (1996) announces that multiliteracies pedagogy accepts and encourages a wide range of linguistic, cultural, communicative, and technological perspectives and tools being used to help students better prepare for a rapidly changing, globalized world. In order to continue helping students have the widest range of opportunities possible in creating their lives and contributing to their community and their future, the school must now adapt to the growing availability of new technologies for teaching and learning, communication channels, and increased access to cultural and linguistic diversity. Mills (2007) appends that:

Multiliteracies are built on two key propositions. The first is the increasing importance of cultural and linguistic diversity as a consequence of migration and globally marketed services. The second is the multiplicity of communications channels and media tied to the expansion of mass media, multimedia, and the Internet. (p. 222)

Breidbach and Kuster (2014, p.136) describe multiliteracies as “the capacity of learners to negotiate and generate (new) meaning in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous lifeworlds, using ‘old’ and ‘new’ media and adopting responsibility for themselves as well as for the community”. Multiliteracies are also related to multimodality, as many modes are encouraged to be used in different forms of expression (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). The integration of teaching multiliteracies has the potential to adopt new ideas and overcome the limitations of traditional learning approaches in the 21st-century literacies. According to Cloonan (2008, p. 159), “becoming ‘multiliterate’ would require students to develop proficiency in meaning-making in linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial, and multimodal designs; with multimodal being a combination of the other modes”. The use of multiple versions of literacy in classroom pedagogy against only print pedagogy can be referred to as multiliteracies pedagogy.

The Multiliteracies pedagogy envisages teachers as facilitators in classrooms that are rich with student-mediated collaborative learning activities (McClay, 2006). According to O’Rourke (2005, p. 10), multiliteracies pedagogy “encourages a broader perspective

of the student as a learner and values diverse ways of knowing, thinking, doing and being". Moreover, Biswas (n. d.) adds that students learn to collaborate by sharing their thoughts with others in online spaces where they can engage in different forms or modes (texts, video, image, rhymes, and poetry) of learning processes. Today's students must possess multiple literacy skills that can enable them to utilize the potential of the diverse modes of communication offered by new technologies (Chatel, 2002). In multiliteracy pedagogy teaching and learning involves drawing on a range of student-centered, active principles in the classroom.

Regarding the need for multiliteracies pedagogy in the classroom Rowsell and Walsh (2011, p.60) have reviewed it as is essential that educators learn to use digital communications technology for classroom learning. Rajendram (2015, p. 9) demonstrates that the potential of the multiliteracies pedagogy to equip students with multiple literacy skills is enormous because of the opportunities it provides for multimodal forms of expression through technology-based interdisciplinary explorations of texts. Puteh-Behak, Darmi, and Mohamad (2015, p.16) have suggested that the process of implementing western multiliteracies pedagogy in a Malaysian learning context requires deep deliberation and consideration of the students socio-cultural practices and cultures of learning to ensure that optimum result could be achieved from the introduction of the new pedagogy.

Navehebrahim (2011, p. 866) has concluded that as students become multiliterate, constructing meaning as they simultaneously draw on experiential, contextual, and disciplinary knowledge they have developed about the world, they enhance their ability to shape their own futures. Tan and Guo (2010) have investigated the experiences of a Singaporean teacher in implementing a multiliteracies approach in a Singaporean learning context where learning was still based on print literacies. Although the students were showing evidence of new literacies learning, the teacher expressed that it was quite challenging to implement the multiliteracies approach in Singaporean learning contexts as the emphasis on using multiple literacies contradicted the focus of the national assessment that was still based on print literacies.

In the same vein, talking about the shortcomings of implementing multiliteracies pedagogy, Rowsell, Kosnik, and Beck (2008, p. 121) have mentioned that there was a lack of clarity about the nature of the approach, still too narrow a range of literacy forms being fostered, insufficient explicit discussion of inclusion and critique, lack of attention to differences within groups and similarities across groups, and insufficient focus on the individual lifeworlds of pupils. Hesterman (2013) has found that each individual case study provided insight into a unique school context and classroom culture, factors which had a significant impact on ICT integration and its potential to support multiliteracies learning (p. 165).

The major theoretical foundation for this study comes from the theory of multiliteracies first introduced by the New London Group. Regarding the multiliteracy pedagogy, they have uttered that monolingual and monomodal strategies are not enough for

the proper mental and cognitive development of children for effective learning. For this, the emphasis should be given on multilingual and multimodality practice in the classroom. They asserted that the teachers have to focus on the following factors for effective learning:

- Written: before writing and reading, handwriting, the printed page and screen
- Oral: live or recorded speech, listening
- Visual: still or moving image (representing meaning to another); view, vista, scene, perspective (representing meaning to oneself)
- Audio: music, ambient sounds, noises, alerts (representing meaning to another); hearing, listening (representing meaning to oneself)
- Tactile: touch, smell, and taste. Kinaesthesia, physical contact, skin sensations (heat/cold, texture, pressure), grasp, manipulable objects, artifacts, cooking and eating, aromas.
- Gestural: movements of the hands and arms, expressions of the face, eye movements and gaze, demeanours of the body, gait, clothing and fashion, hairstyle, dance, action sequences, timing, frequency, ceremony and ritual
- Spatial: proximity, spacing, layout, interpersonal distance, territoriality, architecture/ building, streetscape, cityscape, landscape.

I have observed and analysed the ideas of my participants regarding practices of multiliteracies pedagogy on the basis of these factors in this study. Likewise, the New London Group (1996) advocated for multiliteracies pedagogy that includes four components: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice. Situated practice depicts immersion in experience and the utilization of available discourses including those from the students' varied lifeworlds. Overt instruction widens the systematic, analytic, and conscious understanding of the introduction of an explicit language to describe the design of meaning. Critical framing refers to interpreting the social and cultural context of particular designs of meaning; standing back from meanings and viewing them critically in relation to their purposes and cultural context. Transformed practice transfers in meaning-making practice, which puts the transformed meaning to work in other contexts or cultural sites. I have employed these theoretical thoughts in course of analyzing the ideas of my participants in this study. Thus, for the current study, I have conceptualized the practice of multiliteracies pedagogy in teaching English in early grade as shown in Figure 1 in this study.

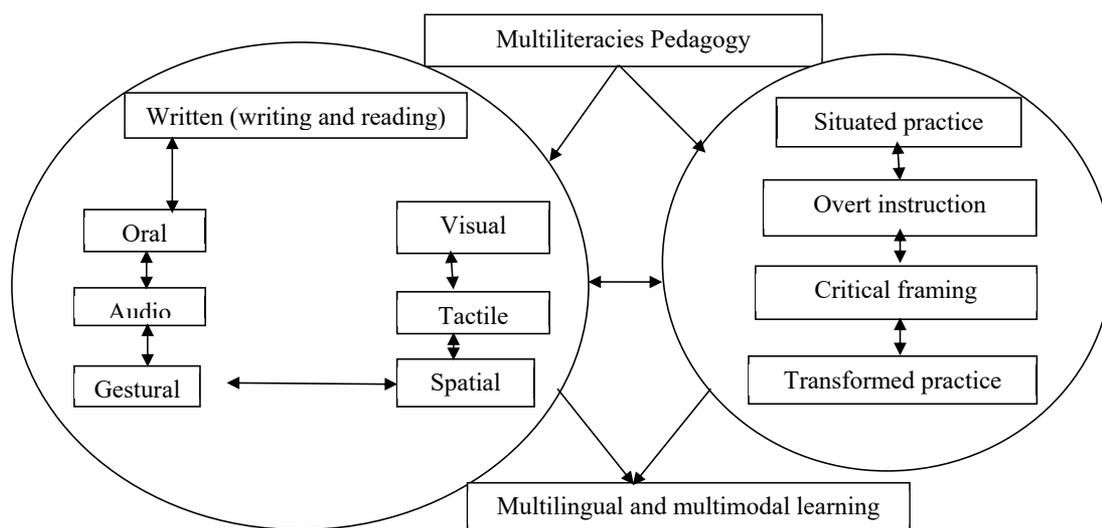


Figure 1. The conceptualization of multilingual and multimodal learning

The review of the literature above shows that there is a primary and urgent need to bridge the large gap between the theories of multiliteracies and their practices in the context of the classroom. There is a dearth of studies on multiliteracies pedagogy in Nepal. Some scholars have researched multilingualism, diverse classroom, translanguaging, translingual practice in classroom pedagogy, but very limited studies have done regarding multiliteracies pedagogy in the Nepalese context. The policy documents of the Nepalese government have given the emphasis on the use of learners' mother tongue in early grade but Nepali and English language are used as classroom pedagogy without paying attention to learners' cognitive development. Monolingual classroom practice without using multimodal learning is the problem in the application of teaching-learning activities in teaching English at early grade in Nepal. Thus, I tried to explore the application of multiliteracies pedagogies in teaching English at an early grade in Nepal.

Methodology

I adopted a critical ethnography research design of qualitative research approach to capture the complexities of perspectives and experiences of teachers in the application of multiliteracies pedagogy in teaching English at the early grade because Rapport (2000) has emphasized that ethnographic studies normally concentrate on the routine, daily lives of people, allowing for a number of views to be examined at the same time. Harrowing, Mill, Spiers, Kulig, and Kipp (2010, p. 240) have opined that critical qualitative methodology provides a strategy to examine the human experience and its relationship to power and truth. It emphasises holistic human experience and closely

examines the educational challenges from the perspective of those who live with them daily.

The educational context of this critical ethnographic study is “Shree Himalaya Secondary School (HSS) (pseudonym) which is situated in Central Hills in Nepal. The demographic landscape for this school involves upper-class community e.g. *Brahmin*, *Kshetri*, tribal community (Janajati) e.g. *Danuwar*, *Majhi*, *Tamang*, *Magar*, and lower class community (*Dalit*) e.g. *Kami*, *Damai*, *Sarki*. At the time of this research, HSS had approximately 500 students from multilingual, multiracial, and multicultural backgrounds. Most children enrolled in the school were from Janajati and Dalit. The school consisted of about 30 teachers who were predominantly of upper class such as *Brahmin* and *Kshetri* and of whom 8 were racial and/or linguistic minority teachers. The linguistic landscape of the school was diverse, with the four common home languages being Nepali, Danuar, Majhi, and Tamang. Students brought to school diverse cultures, religions and varying degrees of their first language literacies and English language skills.

I solicited volunteer teacher participation (Cakmak, 2013) for the study. As mentioned by Creswell (2012, p. 206), “in purposeful sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon”, among 30, three teachers – one female, one janajati, and one Brahmin – who had been teaching English for at least five years in early grade at HSS, were selected as participants for this study. To maintain privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms as Devraj, Harikala and Makarlal were used for all participants involved in this study.

I had adopted a single-method and single sited ethnographic approach (McCarty, 2011) to collect data from teachers. The ‘in-depth interviewing’ enabled me to capture different sides and forms of participants’ multiliteracies practices in early grade. Two in-depth interviews were conducted with each teacher participant based on the 9 open-ended and semi-structured guideline questions in order to elicit in-depth data on their ideas on the practice of multiliteracy pedagogy in their class. The first interview was taken in the month of January and the second interview was conducted in March 2020 in the academic session of 2019/2020. These interviews provided me a more complete picture of their understandings and applications of multiliteracies pedagogy in early grade classroom. I also observed two classes (grades one and two) of my two participants for data triangulation purposes.

All interviews were audio-recorded after taking the participants’ permission. The audio-recorded data was transcribed using a play-script transcription approach (Midgley, 2010) because the participants said the current study focused on what rather than how they said it. I developed the codes to match the text segment for describing information based on transcribed data and generated codes were clustered into categories according to similarity and regularity. The main three themes such as ‘bilingual practice in the linguistically diverse classroom’, ‘maximum print literacy with visual and gestural practice’ and ‘little practice of technology-based multimodal learning’ were coined

following the clustered categories during data processing and they were analysed and interpreted with the help of participants' claim that they had expressed in the in-depth interview. The participants' ideas were also analysed reflecting my own experiences in teaching and research and the opinion expressed by different scholars in related literature found in digital sources.

Findings and Discussion

I have explored the practice of multiliteracies pedagogy in teaching English in early grade classroom in Nepal in the following three themes based on an in-depth interview of the participants:

Bilingual Practice in Linguistically Diverse Classroom

In a single society, various tribes of people live together and they speak separate languages in Nepal. As school is a unit of society, the same situation happens in HSS. The children from different languages and castes such as Brahmin, Kshetri, Dnuwar, Majhi, Tamang, and Magar come to school to study. They bring to school diverse cultures, religions, and varying degrees of their mother tongue literacies. According to Danzak (2011, p. 189), "Schools continue to become more and more diverse and, consequently, have a responsibility to provide inclusive, multicultural and multilingual contexts that support multiliteracies pedagogy". In such situation, teachers need to be much more conscious to apply this pedagogy. For it, Devraj articulated as:

The students of ethnic groups such as Majhi, Danuwar, Tamang, Magar, Newar come to our school to study. Danuwar children speak their native language at home; the children of other ethnic groups speak their mother tongue neither at home nor at school. Almost all students understand the Nepali language and I feel comfortable teaching in it. I occasionally use the English language because I myself am not competent in English. (Interview, 22 January 2020)

Addressing the multilingual issues in the classroom is one of the agenda of multiliteracies pedagogy. The learners cannot understand if the teachers speak a language other than their home language. But, in HSS the situation is different. Most of the students of ethnic groups (janajati) do not know their own native language. Danuwar children can speak their mother language but they do not speak their language at school because school is not creating such space in the classroom. In this regard, SkutnabbKangas (2000) argued that schools are committing linguistic genocide every day. In this circumstance, UN (1948, as cited in Phillipson & Skutnabb Kangas, 1994) clarifies linguistic genocide as "Prohibition of the use of the language of the group in daily intercourse or in the language of the group in daily intercourse or in schools, or the printing and circulation of publications in the language of the group". However, not paying attention to it, the teachers are using Nepali (the most dominant language of Nepal) and the English language as classroom language because almost all students understand Nepali and

some students understand the English language. In fact, the teachers are doing bilingual practice in the classroom. Jhingran (2009) asserted that primary education through the medium of a dominant foreign language could encourage language shift, triggering language attrition at the group level as well as at the individual level. The school needs to be sensitive in case of the use of language that the language of the learners is to be practised in the classroom. Likewise, Giampapa (2010) noted that the multiliteracies teachers need to bring students' linguistic and cultural identities to their classrooms through multiliteracies pedagogy. Concerning this aspect Makarlal alleged:

Different ethnic children come to our school but they speak only Nepali language at school premises. The parents of ethnic children (Majhi, Newar, Magar, Tamang) who have been living in this village for a long time have forgotten their native language because of the influence of the Nepali language and who have just migrated here speak their native language, but their children do not speak their mother tongue at school. I myself belong to the Majhi community but I cannot speak the Majhi language. (Interview, 10 March, 2020)

Even Nepalese society is multilingual; in some parts of the country, indigenous people have forgotten their native language because of the domination of the Nepali language. Indigenous people are not desired to speak their own mother tongue in the sense that they cannot get any opportunity in their own language. It is leading towards the extinction of their mother tongue/first language. Alternatively, Skutnabb-Kangas (2000, p. 311) mentioned that if a minority group or an indigenous people are allowed to learn and transmit further their own language, they also reproduce themselves as a minority group or an indigenous people. Conversing in the language of minority groups using them as classroom pedagogy is one of the goals of multiliteracies pedagogy. Making discussion on the same concern Harikala uttered:

Our school has kept optional English as (a) course (instead) of (choosing a) local subject. The children do not speak their mother tongue and thus I do not use their native language during teaching. I use English and Nepali language in my class. (Interview, 22 January, 2020)

There is a provision for schools to select a "local" subject/ course in the primary level that can include local culture, local agriculture, local language, etc. But HSS has taught optional English as a course instead of selecting a "local" subject/ course to the students. It shows that the school administration has a dominant feeling towards the English language instead of local interests. The school has not made any plan to create a space for the use of all native languages of the indigenous children in school. Exploring this context Dunbar and Skutnab - Kangas (2008) has declared that education through the medium of a dominant language can have very serious mental harm: social dislocation; psychological, cognitive, linguistic, and educational harm; and, partially through its economic, social and political marginalization. To reduce the domination of powerful language, shrink mental and educational, and create multilingual space in the classroom

multiliteracies pedagogy need to be applied in early grade because in Kalantzis and Cope's (2008, p. 197) words, "Multiliteracies describe growing significance of cultural and linguistic diversity".

The society is multilingual and multicultural because the children from the diverse community such as Brahmin, Kshetri, Damai, Kami, Sarki, Danuwar, Majhi, Taman and Magar come to school, they follow their own cultures and Danuwar and some old Majhi people speak their mother tongue at home. Unfortunately, on the one hand, their children do not use their mother tongue at school premises and on the other hand, the teachers cannot speak the native languages of the children at school. Therefore, the teachers use the Nepali and English language in the classroom practice that I call, here, bilingual practice, an aspect of multiliteracies pedagogy. However, the school needs to create an environment to use mother tongues in the classroom, but, it is not found and this practice may lead to the demise of the mother tongue of a minority group in the future.

Maximum Print Literacy with Visual and Gestural practice

Print literacy is a traditional version of literacy, which includes mostly reading and writing. According to Cloonan (2008, p. 162), "Becoming 'multiliterate' would require students to develop proficiency in meaning-making in linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial and multimodal designs; with multimodal being a combination of the other modes". But in the Nepalese context, the scenario is different as many schools have been practicing print literacy rather than digital literacy. Concerning the practice of multiliteracies pedagogy in teaching English in early grade a participant of this study, Devraj exposed, "Primarily, I teach my students through print literacy (reading and writing practice). I read the books and ask the students to write the answers of the exercise that are given in the textbooks". (Interview, 22 January 2020)

The remarks affirmed by Devraj show that the teachers are practicing print literacy focusing on reading and writing in Nepalese community schools because they do not have the skills to use the modern technology and the schools lack the proper equipment to implement technology-based teaching in the classroom. The ideas shared by Makarlal in this concern are similar to Devraj as he has also used print literacy except for other literacies in the classroom. When I observed a class of Makarlal I found that he had used only reading and writing strategies in teaching English in grade two. He used neither gestural activities nor visual practice in the class. He read the text and asked the students to write the text. He used both Nepali and English language while delivering the contents in the class. It is believed that print literacy alone cannot assist the students to construct meaning according to the context. For it, they need various modes of communication that need to be practiced in the classroom. According to Angay-Crowder, Choi, and Yi (2013, p.37), "New London Group claims that meanings are constructed through multiple representational and communicational modes and resources and further calls for the inclusion of multiple literacies and modes for making

meaning". After clarifying the concept of multiliteracies pedagogy to Harikala I made a conversation with her as:

Researcher : How do you teach your students in the class?

Harikala : Most of the time I teach my students using reading and writing strategies. I teach the text and they solve the problems based on the text.

Researcher : Beyond it what strategies do you obtain in classroom teaching?

Harikala : I make picture to introduce the lesson in the beginning and I also get students to draw pictures related to the lesson. I make students prepare the rules of classroom in the chart paper. They discuss in the group and do the task.

Researcher : Is there any gestural practice in your class?

Harikala : Certainly, I ask the students to clap during teaching chant. I encourage the students do different gestures during teaching action verbs.

(Interview, 22 January 2020)

The thoughts expressed by Harikala demonstrate that the teacher's focus is on text-based literacy for the children of early grade in Nepal. They also apply picture-based literacy practice, which supports the students to develop a concept on different objects that are related to visual literacy. New London Group (1996) claimed that visual literacies relate to learning of one of the modes of meaning from the Multiliteracies 'multimodal schema'. Harikala engaged the students in a groupwork for making classroom rules and she also involved the students to draw colourful pictures of objects and animals according to the context as collaborative work. Ganapathy (2015) reported that the collaborative activities that integrate with visual mode as a pedagogical supplement can serve for teachers to promote students' engagement and creativity and thus positively impact their learning outcomes. Harikala emphasized that she also applied gestural and body movement activities during teaching-learning activities in early grade, especially, to teach chant and action verbs in English. Gestural meaning-making embedded in visual resources, or gestural representations (Cloonan, 2008) helps the children to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from the images in the books, especially when reading in an unknown language (Elsner, 2011). Collaborative activities and visual and gestural practice enhance the learning achievement of the learners but the teachers have given much more focus on print literacy. The remarks made by my three participants denote that there is maximum use of print literacy in comparison to visual and gestural practice in teaching English in early grade.

Little Practice of Technology-based Multimodal Learning

The use of technology in teaching is also an important aspect of multiliteracies pedagogy. Hesterman (2013) argued that utilizing multiliteracies pedagogy is considered the

most effective way to integrate Information communication technology (ICT) in early childhood education in the sense that it seeks to create a more productive, relevant, innovative, creative, and even perhaps emancipatory, pedagogy. Devraj expressed his opinion on the use of technology in early grade in teaching English as:

There is the use of technology in Grade one through television. The Grade teacher, Susmita (pseudonym) plays rhymes, songs, short stories and cartoon stories for students with the technical help of one of our friends, Umesh (pseudonym). I cannot involve my students in technology-based multimodal learning because there is not a well-facilitated and equipped computer lab in our school. In the absence of computer, how can I apply Multiliteracies pedagogy? (Interview, 10 March 2020)

The observation made by Devraj shows that there is a use of technology-based teaching-learning practice for beginners through television. Cloonan (2008) remarked that the interplay of audio with visual meaning including speech, music, and sound effects in interplay with visual animation makes clear to the students to understand the teaching content through multimodal learning. Devraj regrets that he cannot involve his students in technology-based learning because the school lacks a well-equipped computer lab with a nice seating arrangement for students and a strong internet facility. I observed a class of Susmita at grade one in which there was a television. On that day, she did not use television and said to me that she could not operate herself. When another teacher assists, then she can use television. It shows that teachers are not technically trained to use multimodal activities in the class. In a study, Boche (2014, p. 123) pointed out that the school computer labs were too small to let every student have a computer, there was no wireless access in the classroom, and in general, the old school building was not equipped to handle new technologies or large amounts of students on the network at any given time. The same situation is found in HSS. There is no well-equipped computer lab with a sufficient number of computers for the students. There is only one teacher, Umesh (pseudonym) who has obtained training in ICT at school. He handles all the activities related to ICT either administrative work or pedagogical aspect at school. Concerning on the same aspect Harikala viewed as:

I have heard that many things are available on 'Google' and 'youtube' but I do not collect any things from there for teaching and learning purposes because I have no skill to do it. But one of our friends, Umesh (pseudonym) teaches using a laptop to present powerpoint through multimedia projector because he has received training of U-learning. But sometimes I play children's songs through a speaker in early grades to entertain them. (Interview, 10 March, 2020)

The version of Harikala made it clear that she has only heard about modern ICT but is unable to use it in the classroom. She said the Umesh (pseudonym) usually teaches using ICT in school because he has trained in U-learning which is based on ICT. She

sometimes plays songs and rhymes through a portable speaker which an electronic device. Technology-based multimodal learning enhances the capacity of the students in learning contents and use of technology as Alghamdi and Hassan (2016) informed that there is the value of using new classroom technology, such as Smartboard, and computer software applications, such as PowerPoint, which gives affordance to students to produce multimedia presentations. Paying attention to it, I talked with Makarlal. The following is a transcription of the interaction:

Researcher : How do you use technology-based multimodal learning in the early grade?

Makarlal : Actually I am an old teacher. Neither I studied technology in my student life nor am I using modern technology in my class during teaching.

Researcher : Why? What do you think about it?

Makarlal : If I were well known about application of technology in classroom pedagogy, I would use it in the class but I have not any idea about it. Though my friend Umesh (pseudonym) assists me by bringing multimdi projector and laptop to my class to teach the lesson which is related to technology. In my opinion, technology-based multimodal learning is essential and we need to apply in the class for effective teaching and learning purpose.

(Interview, 10 March 2020)

The interaction with Makarlal justifies that the teachers in HSS at early grade are old and not updated and trained on the use of ICT to apply multiliteracies pedagogy in the classroom. They can apply print, visual, audio, and gestural literacy but not modern technology-based multimodal literacy. But, Borsheim, Merritt, and Reed (2008, p. 90) insisted that “The ultimate goal of any literacy teacher is to —guide students to sophisticated engagement with a variety of technologies, literacies, and pedagogies”.

Conclusion

This study explored the teachers’ ideas on the practices of multiliteracy pedagogy at early grade in teaching English in Nepal on the basis of their understandings and experiences in teaching. The teachers are doing bilingual practice using the Nepali and English language even if the students of various ethnic groups such as Majhi, Danuwar, Tamang, Magar, Newar come to study in the classroom. Except for Danuwar children, no one speaks their native language at home. The teachers use most of the time Nepali and occasionally English language for teaching-learning purposes because they feel comfortable teaching in Nepali and they are not competent in English and they do not know other languages. But the theories of multiliteracies pedagogy tell that the teachers need to create multilingual space in the classroom in which all children can use their

own language to learn a second language. It is found that the parents of ethnic children (Majhi, Newar, Magar, Tamang) who have been living in this village for a long time have forgotten their native language because of the influence of the Nepali language and also their children cannot speak their mother tongue at school. This type of practice leads the language to diminish. In very simple words, languages cannot exist in society because of such trends. The school has also given priority to the English language by keeping it as an optional subject in the place of "local" subject/course instead of promoting linguistically and culturally diverse situations through the use of different local languages adopting multiple modes of learning based on modern technology.

It is found that there is maximum use of print literacy with visual and gestural activities as multiliteracies pedagogy in classroom practice. The teachers teach their students through print literacy by reading books and asking the students to write the answers to the exercise that are given in the textbooks. Concerning the use of multimodal technology I found that the teachers rarely use television, laptop, and multimedia projector for teaching purposes. The television is used to play rhymes, songs, short stories, and cartoon stories for small kids. The teachers cannot involve their students in technology-based multimodal learning because there is not a well-facilitated computer lab in the school. They have heard about Google and youtube but they cannot utilize them because they do not have the skill. Practically they are unable to apply technology-based pedagogy in the classroom but they believed that technology-based multimodal learning is essential for effective teaching and learning.

The teachers in a community school who are teaching English at early grade in Nepal are experienced having a long practice of teaching. They are much more familiar with print literacy rather than digital literacy. They have been adopting traditional teaching-learning practices such as reading the textbooks and asking the students to write the exercises of the textbook but they rarely use modern technology based multimodal literacy. They do not have the ideas and skills to apply modern technology in the classroom. They believe that they can do it if they are involved in the training of multiliteracies pedagogy. I think that the new and currently appointed teachers can apply multiliteracies pedagogy in the classroom but the old teachers cannot do it because they cannot handle modern technology because of their age. Although the teachers do not have knowledge and skills of digital literacy, they are positive to the application of multiliteracies pedagogy in early grade in teaching English.

Pedagogical Implications

In the context of Nepal multiliteracies pedagogy is not implemented exceedingly in school educations, especially at early grade. The responsibility to advocate for change to apply multiliteracies pedagogy lies not only with teachers and students but also with their families, headteachers, administrators, school supervisors, schools and governments, local, provincial, and federal. To properly implement this new pedagogy of literacy education, the collaboration should extend to families and communities too.

Some of the things that the School Administration can do are:

- Becoming more conscious and well equipped to apply it in the early grades.
- Providing training to the teachers about multiliteracies pedagogy, keeping in mind the classroom diversity, multilingualism, multiculturalism, rapid development of ICT and its connection to the classroom teaching.
- Encouraging teachers to create multilingual space in the classroom in which the students can use their home language and learn a second language by using their linguistic repertoire.
- Establishing basic ICT lab with internet facility by arranging technological devices such as computers, multimedia projector, laptop, smart television, video camera, pointer, and pen drive to deliver the contents with the modern technology.
- Developing the technical abilities and skills of the teachers on the use of ICT so that multiliteracies pedagogy can be easily applied at the early grade in teaching English.

Moreover, the central level government needs to revise the curriculum, textbooks, assessment system, teaching-learning methodology, strategies and techniques that are practiced in teaching English at early grade in Nepal to suit the multiliteracies pedagogy. This study would attract the attention of the teacher trainers, syllabus designers, and material developers, to build up materials for multiliteracies pedagogy that can assist to implement it effectively. Much of this study centered on unpacking the existing situation of multiliteracies pedagogy including the practice of multilingual teaching and the use of multimodal technology in teaching English at early grade in the community school of Nepal. Continued research is needed to see how many teachers practice multiliteracies pedagogy in secondary education in the Nepalese context. Further, the researchers can also unpack the provision of multiliteracies pedagogy in a pre-service teacher education course and its implementation during teaching practice as further study.

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Appendix I

Guideline Questions

1. Please tell me your name and experience of involving in teaching profession.
2. How do you perceive Multiliteracies pedagogy? Have you idea about it?
3. How many students use their mother tongue in school? Do you use learners' mother tongue in the classroom?
4. If yes, why? If not, what circumstances hinder you to use learners' mother tongue in classroom teaching.
5. Do you use only print literacy (reading and writing) or multimodes during teaching in the classroom?
6. Do you use oral, visual, audio, gestural, tactile, and spatial modes in teaching?
7. What is the condition of the use of ICT or modern technology in classroom in your school?
8. How do the students take part in learning via multimodal technology?
9. What activities do the students have performed using multimodal technology?

Appendix II

Transcription of the Interview

Interview with Devraj (22 January, 2020)

Researcher : Hajurko parichaya dinuna.

Devraj : My name is Devraj (pseudo name).

Researcher : Sirle padhauna thaleko kati barsha bhayo?

Devraj : 29 barsha, from 2049 BS (1993AD)

Researcher : yahi school maa maatra padhaunu bhayo ki anta pani?

Devraj : Maile amarpur (pseudo name) ma 17 barsha padhae ani yahoo ho.

Researcher : (haamile Nepalakaa schoolko early gradema padhaune teachers laai sahabhagiko rupamaa lier Multiliteracies pedagogy ko baarem wahako dhaaranaa, bujhaai, yasko laagi sipako bikas ra pryogako baastbik abasthaa bare bujhna research garna laageko ho) aba ma sirilai kehi prashna sodhchhu, hunch ni?

- Devraj : hunch sir.
- Researcher : Yas school maa kun kun jatikaa bachcha padhna aauchhan?
- Devraj : Danuwar, Majhi, Magar, Newar, Bramhan and kshetri
- Researcher : Tiniharule aafno matri bhaasa bolchhan?
- Devraj : Danuwarle bachchale aafno bhaasa gharama bolchhan, arulai ta aafno bhaasa bolna aaudauna. Schoolama ta kasaile pani matribhaasa boldaina.
- Researcher : bhane pchhi school maa vidhyarthiko matribhasa prayog hudaina?
- Devraj : ho sir hudaina. Ma ta Nepalima padauchhu. Malai anya matribhaasa pani aaudaina ra English pani aaudaina.
- Researcher : Classroomma linguistic diversity huda pani vidhyarthiko bhaasa kina prayog nabheko holaa?
- Devraj : Matri bhaasa kasailai pani na aarer ho bhanne laagchh. Yaha ta sabai Nepli matra bolchhan.
- Researcher : sirilai Multiliteracies pedagogyko barema kehi jaankari chha?
- Devraj : yahi ho bhaner ta ma pribhasa nai bhanna sakdina tara pani literacy bhaneko padhna ra lekhnasakne kshamata ho. yastai dherau bidhi jastai chitra sanket, haaubhaau garer siknu multiliteracie ho ki jasto laagchh.
- Researcher : Tapaile bhane jasto garer padhaune garieko chh ta?
- Devraj : ma ta reading ra writing laai badhi focus garer padhauchhu. Vidhyarthilaa padhna lagauchhu, aafu padhchhu ani lekhnagauchhu. Dherai abhyas ta padhai ra lekhaaimai hunch. Chitra dekhaaune, chitra banaauna lagaune, samuh chhalfal garne kaam kamai hunch, kahilekahi garchhu.
- (10 March, 2020)**
- Researcher : Sir aaja hami classroom teaching ma multimodal teaching kaa lagi technology ko prayogakaa baarema kura garchhau. Siler mera prashna ka uttar dinu nuechh bhanne aasa gareko chhu.
- Devraj : hunchh sir sodhnu na.
- Researcher : Multiliteracy pedagogy bhane pacchhi bibidh bhaasako prayog, multi modes prayog ra technology ko prayog bhanne ho? Ke yasko abhyas bhaeko chha ta yahale padhune class maa?
- Devraj : bhaasako kuro ta maile aghinai bhani hale. multi modes ko kuro pani maile aghinai bhane jasto laagchh. Yo technology proga chai maile garne gareko chhaina.
- Researcher : kina hola?

Devraj : pahilo kuro tam alai yasako pryog garna pani aaudaina ra haamro school ma subidha sampanna computer lab pani chhaina. Saamgri abhaabale pani ra sip ra dakshataako kamile pani technology prayoga garer padhaaun sokieko chhaina?

Researcher : mukhya samsya ke hola? sip wa saamriko abhab?

Devraj : Mukhya ta sipa nai ho. Kasaile pani hamilai technology prayog sambandhi talima dieko chain. ysa barem sikaet haami pani prayog garna sakne thiyau jasto lagchh.ra multi mode tathaa technology prayog garer padhauda vidhyarthilaaai bujhna sajilo pani hunchh r uni harule aadhunik prabidhi prayog sambandhi gyan ra sipa pani hasil garchhan ni.

Researcher : sadhan ra samagri ni?

Devraj : samanya khalakaa samagri t hamro school ko head sirle lyaanu hunchh tara dherai computers, Multimedia projector (MMP), laptop, internet ra ICT devices ta jutauna samasyaa nai hunchh ni. Ani kasari hamile prayog garna sakachhu ra ?

Researcher : Internet ko prog kattko hunchh i?

Devraj : hamro school ma internet jadan bhaeko chha tar power kam chh. mathillo kakshamaa sirharule kahile kahi youtube baat video lyaae MMP baat dekhaune gareko dekheko chhu. Sano kakshaama yasko prayog chhaina. Kakshaa 1 ma TV rakhieko chh tyah proga garer padhainchh.

Researcher : sana kakshaama yaslai proga garna sakidaina ra?

Devraj : sakinchh sir tar haamro sip ra dakshaata bika s sangai aadhunik prabidhika samagri ko prabandha garnu paryo.

Researcher : tapai ta purano sikshak, budho huna lagiyo aba talip paudaimaa aadhunik prabidhi prayog gerer padhuna sakinchh ta?

Devraj : sakinchh ni . sip sike pachhi ta padhi halinchhan . Hami pani samaya anusar update hunu paryo ni.

Interview with Harikala (22 January, 2020)

Researcher : hajurko introduction ra experience bhani dinun.

Harikala : mero nam Harikala (pseudo name) ho. maile padhaun thaleko 30 baesha bho. Yahi school ma suru dekhai nai.

Researcher : Kun kun bisaya padhaaunu hunchh?

Harikala : English, sthniya subject ko rupama rakheko English.

Researcher : (haamile Nepalakaa schoolko early gradema padhaune teachers laai sahabhagiko rupamaa lier Multiliteracies pedagogy ko baarem wahako dhaaranaa, bujhaai, yasko laagi sipako bikas ra pryogako

baastbik abasthaa bare bujhna research garna laageko ho) aba ma madam lai kehi prashan garchhu hai?

Harikala : hunchh sir.

Researcher : English padhauchhu bhannu bho, yahao kakshaama dherai bhasabhasika vidhyarthi aaudaa rahechhan tini harulaai English kasari padhaunu hunchh?

Harikala : hamro school ma dherai jatjatikaa balbalika aae pani tiniharulai aafno matri bhasa bolna aaudaina. Danuwarl blabalikale aafno bhasa jane pani school ma boldainan. Uniharu Nepali nai bolchhna. Tyaskaran ma pani Nepali bhasa proga garer English padhauchhu. English padhaune bhaekole English pani prayog garchhu.

Researcher : Vidhyarthi laai uniharuko bhasa kin bolna naaeko holaa?

Harikala : Uni harule gharam pani afno bhasa bldainan sir. Danuwarle gharam bole pani yaha boldainan.

Researcher : Danuwar vidhyarthilai uniharuko bhasa prayog gardai padhaun sakidain ra?

Harikala : khai sir tyasto garne garieko chain. Feri alai Danuwar bhasa pani audain. Tyasaile ma ta Nepali ra English bhasa prayog garer padhaune garchhu.

Researcher : Bibidh bhasa lai kakshaa kothama prayog gardai English padhaun sakidaina ra?

Harikala : Malai ta aaudain sir. Yasa sambandhi talim paaiema padhuna sakiela. tyasai padhauda bhaasa pani lop hune thiena hola.

Researcher : Vidhyarthilai kasari sakriya banaubu hunchh ni?

Harikala : Mukhya ta Padhna, lekhna lagauchhu. Tyastai chant padhauda taali bajauna lagauchhu. Colour pens prayog garaer chitra banauna lagauchh. Vidhyarthilai group ma chalfal garaer classroom ko rule banauna lagauchhu.

Researcher : Yo local subject ma English bhaeko chai ke ho ni?

Harikala : Hamro school le local curriculum ko thauma English rakheko chha, tyahi ho

Researcher : Kin yaso gareko yasma local language padhauda hunthyo hola ni?

Harikala : English sike value hunchh bhaner ra abhibhawakle pani English mai jod garekole yaso bhaeko ho. hunt a local language padhaunu parne ho.

(10 March, 2020)

Researcher : Madam aaja hami classroom teaching technology ko prayogakaa baarema kura garchhau. Madamle mera prashna ko uttar dinu dinu hai ta.

Devraj : hunchh sir bhannu.

Researcher : Pathan Pathan maa prabidhiko prayog kattko hunchh ni?

Harikala : maile flash cards, pictures, word cards ko prayog garer padhaune gareko chhu. Prabidhi ko ta pragog garne gareko chhaina.

Researcher : Visual aids ko prayog kattiko hunchh ni?

Harikala : tyahi ho chitra dekhaune, cards haru dekhaune, hunchh ICT based visual t dekhune gareko chain.

Researcher : kina thaso nabheko hola?

Harikala : hami sikshak ma yas sambandhi sip ra dakshata nabhaer ho. yasa sambandhi hamro dakshaata badhaema hamile pryog garna sakchhau. Sathai haro school ma ek jana sir le U-learning ko talim linu bheko chha wahale mathillo kakshama laptop prayog garer MMP marphat kahile kahi social issues maa class linu hunchh. Bivinna videos dekhaunu hunchha.

Researcher : vidhyarthilai khel, geet, nach ko maadhyam le padhaune chal chha ki chhaina?

Harikala : Cssette prayoga garer rhyme sunaune garieko chha. Pathama die anusar khel pani khelaune garieko chha. Chant padhauda tali bajauna ra nachna lagaune gariko pani chh. Tara yasta abhyas kahile kahi matra hunchh badhi jaso ta reading ra writing mai dhyan diinchh. Class 1 ma TV bhaekole bal geet, alphabet songs bajaer padhune garieko chh. Cartoon chitra pa I dekhainchh. tara yas sambandi prog garn pani hamilai Umesh (Pseudo name) sirle saghanu hunchh.

Researcher : ICT ko prayog, youtube, Gogle ko prayog garer padhuna sakidaina?

Harikala : yasko barem suneko chhu tara prayog gareko chain. Yasa sambandhi prayog garne sip sikae garn sakine thiyo.

Interview with Makarlal (22 January, 2020)

Researcher : Hajurko prichaya ra anubhab bhani dinu na.

Makaralal : Mero nam Makarlal (Pseudo name) ho. Maile padhuna thaleko 30 barsha bhayo. 12 barsha Amarpur ma padhae ani ta yahi padhai raheko chhu.

Researcher : (haamile Nepalakaa schoolko early gradema padhaune teachers laai sahabhagiko rupamaa lier Multiliteracies pedagogy ko baarem wahako dhaaranaa, bujhaai, yasko laagi sipako bikas ra pryogako

baastbik abasthaa bare bujhna research garna laageko ho) aba ma sir laai kehi prashna sodhchhu, hai?

Makarlal : bhailchh sir.

Researcher : Yo schoolma aaune bivinna bhasabhasika vidhyarthilai kasri padhinchh?

Makarlal : sir huna ta yaha Danuwar, Majhi, Magar, Tamang lagaetma janajatika bachchaa aauchhan tara Danuwaar bahek kasailai pani afno matri bhasa aaudaina. ma pai Majhi hu tara malai Majhi bhasa aaudaina. Vidhyarthimatra haina uniharuka abhibhawakalai pani aaafno matri bhasa bolna aaudaina.

Researcher : kin hola?

Makarlal : khai sir yaha dherai lamo samaya dekhi basdai aak Majhi, Tamang, Magar samudayaka manisale Nepali bhasako prabhwale hola aafno bhasa prayog nagarekole birsiekaa. Yah naya basai sarer aaune le majhi bhasa boleko sune ko thie ahile t tyo pani sunidaina. Jaba abhibhawakale nai aafno bhasa nabole pachhi ta kasari balbalikale bolchhan ra?

Researcher : Danuwarle ta bolchhan ni?

Makarlal : khai sabaile Nepali boleka hola Danuwar balbalikale pani school ma Danuwar boldainan.

Researcher : Uni harulai sikn ta kathin hunchh hola ni?

Makarlal : khai tyo tyo ta yad garieko chain. Ma pani Nepali bhasa nai prayog garer padhuchhu. Hamro school bibid bhasa prayog garer padhune abhyas chhaina. Garn pa eta raamro hunthyo hola.

Researcher : tapaille kakshaa ma padhauda chai ke garnu hunchh ni?

Makarlal : puranai tarika ho sir. reading ra writing nai badhi garainchh. Padhne, padhaune, lekhne lekhune abhyas badhi hunchh.

Researcher : Aru ke garnu hunchh?

Makarlal : Readymade saikshik samagri pni prayog garchhu.

(10 March, 2020)

Researcher : Sir aaja haami classroom teaching maa multimodal waa ICT ko prayogako baremaa kuraa garchhau, hunchh ni?

Makarlal : sodhnu na sir, janeko ra anubhab bhaeko kura bhani halchhu ni.

Researcher : Ahileo yug ta ICT ko ho, yasko prayog garer padhune garieko chha ki chhaina?

Makarlal : ICT ko barema suneko chhu ra kahikahi ta parayog pani bhaeko dekheko chhu tara hamro ma prayog bhaeko chain bhanda pani

hunchha.

Researcher : Kin tha yasto?

Makarlal : Yamaa 2 ta kura chh. Pahilo ICT tools ra lab ko abha ani kakshaa kothma yasko byabsthapan nanuhu. dosro hami sikshakharuma ICT ka sambandhamaa gyan nahunu. Hami dharai pura ra budha sikshak chhau, haami nai ICT maa update chhainanu ani kasari padhunu?

Researcher : ICT tools ko abhab kin bhaeko hola?

Makarlal : schoolko aarthik abastha kamjor chha. Kumai nikaele pani sahayog gareko chain. Tyasaile hola.

Researcher : ICT saamgri ko prabandha bhayo bhane yasko prayog garer padhaun sakinchh ta?

Makarlal : sakinchh tara yaskaa barem talim aayojana gari sikaunu paryo. Hun ta hami budh sikshaklaai yasko prayogma samasyaa huna pani sakchh tara abhyas gardai janu parch.

Researcher : yas sambandhama ke saamgri chh ta school maa?

Makarlal : chha ni sir, 1 laptop, 1 MMP chha. Ekjana Umesh (Pseudo name) sir hunuhunchh wahale U-learning ko talim linu bhaeko chh waahale prayog garer kahile kahi mathillo kakshaama padhunu hunchh. Niyamit prayog chhaina.

Researcher : Sana kakshaama yaslai kasari pryog garne hola?

Makarlal : khai sir pathyapustak pani tyahi khalko hunu parch holaa. ani haamro kshamata badhaiyo bhane ra saamgri bhema prayog garchhau ni. Umesh (Pseudo name) sir le kahile kahi 1-5 sammaka balbalika ekai thauma jamma parer MMP marphat ramaila videos dekhaune garnu hunchh. Tyastai class 1 ma TV chh tyasma pani balbalikalai bivinna balkathaa, baal geet ra cartoon chitra dekhaune garieko chh.

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