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Teachers' Perceptions and Practices in Using ICT for ELT at the Secondary Level

Raju Yonjan¹

¹Permanent primary teacher at Gaumati Secondary School in Sindhuli

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Corresponding Author:

Raju Yonjan

Email: rajuyonjan2020@gmail.com

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Abstract

Information and Communication Technology is a daily used material across the globe nowadays which has been recognized to be included in Education field. The study aims at teachers' perceptions and practices in using ICTs. This study employed a quantitative research design for Data collection among 40 ELT teachers from 9 different rural/municipalities in Sindhuli. The experiences of using different ICT gadgets and digital tools in the ELT were collected using a questionnaire. The findings of the study are that the students seemed eager to learn from the ICT gadgets and digital tools while integrating it into the teaching pedagogies. I report that the ELT teachers have positive experience on using the ICTs. The study further says that 62% teachers are positive towards ICTs usage in the ELT classroom. This study helps the concerned authorities to think about the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in the ELT classroom. The study recommends that there is

a need of a series of training on how to integrate ICTs into the teaching pedagogies.

Keywords: teachers, ICT tools, digital tools, multimedia, digital literacy

Introduction

Information and communication Technology (ICT) has grown up as a new issue in Nepal. It is an extensional term for information technology that stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals) and computer, as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage and audiovisual system that enable users to access, store, transmit and manipulate information. In addition to, ICTs, the modern technologies for storage, manipulation, and dissemination of information, include both hardware tools such as laptops, smart phones, projectors, and

software tools such as email, Skype, Facebook, and YouTube (Poudel, 2022, p. 104). Actually, technology is the sum of techniques, skills, intellect and method.

ICTs in English Language Teaching and Learning

Development in ICT has become an integral part of our personal and social lives and it influences our professional career as well. With this reference, Gholami et al. (2010) found that investigation in ICT, education, economic and economic literacy can play a significant role in equalizing opportunities for marginalized groups and communities. Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) as the name suggests, is the use of technologies in service of learning. The implementation of technological resources is straightly related to the way teachers perceive their use and functionality (Yunus, 2007)

There is numerous software that can help in teaching English. John (1991) and Dodd (1997) examined the practice with the aid of computer software to understand meaning and grammar. Their studies found that the teacher facilitates students to research into the language without knowing in advance what rules and patterns are used, so students are encouraged to make one up in their own terms. Fernandez- Villanueva (1996) emphasized that concordance program provides more input and motivation than regular classroom exercises in her German Language. Calyani and Cahyono (2012) investigated ICT practices and their attitudes towards ICT among 37 Indonesian teachers teaching English as foreign Language in different level. They believed that use of ICTs in the class help students to learn English better. They argued that teachers did not use ICTs in the class because of lack of ability, exposure and training to devise appropriate pedagogical model.

Information and Technology (ICTs) Teaching and Learning in Nepal

Information and Communication Technology in teaching English seems mandatory to make the classroom effective and meaningful. Yunus et al. (2013) argued that ICT in education as a teaching and learning tool and also emphasizes the use of ICT usage to enhance productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of the management system. (p.1). The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) considers education as a fundamental right of the people. Current national plans on education also emphasize the importance of ICT. For example, the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) (2016-2023) has identified some of the strategies to ensure equitable access to education. The MoE has considered the use of ICTs in education as one of the strategies to achieve the broader goals of education (ICT in the education Master Plan of Nepal 2013). The SSRP has envisioned implementing and expanding the ICT assisted teaching and learning process in all schools. The SSRP further argues that ICTs in education are an innovative and effective teaching and learning tool. ICTs do not only help the urban area students; they also help to remote area students through digital devices. In addition, National Education Policy 2076 has mentioned in its goal that education will be techno-oriented. Similarly, Teacher Competency Framework 2072 has also mentioned that teacher should have the knowledge regarding ICT gadgets and digital tools at eight points with four subpoints.

Connecting it to my classroom, I saw computer for the first time when I was studying in class 8. It was new material for me. I operated knowingly and unknowingly. Later, when I reached class 10, I dreamt to do something different in computer area. I passed SLC. Unfortunately, I could not go for it. Later, I completed I. Ed. with major English in Education Faculty. Then, I started teaching English at Lower Secondary School in Samaya Pathshala. I recognized that they felt boring with the traditional teaching methods that I used. I, later started using ICT tools such as Laptop, smartphones, projector as per need with my lessons to teach them. Students were more excited towards learning. Moreover, it assisted me to show something immediately with the help of internet and then I thought that it might be the best way of teaching for the students. It helps in profusion when you want to impart knowledge to the students. The objectives of the study were to identify the perception of the Secondary level English on the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools and to find out the practice of the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in ELT classroom.

So, I have gone through a number of studies on ICT tools in teaching English language. I found many studies advocating for ICT tools. But I didn't find the studies carried out to explore the perception of use of ICT tools in teaching English. Therefore, I decided to explore the perception of Secondary Level English Teachers using of ICT tools in teaching English. Th study aimed to explore the perceptions of English teachers in ICT tools using in the English Language Classroom. To guide my study on the purposeful manner I set a research questions: How do the Secondary Level English Teachers perceive the use of ICT in teaching English? How do the Secondary Level English Teachers practice ICT tools in ELT classroom? And What types of ICT devices are used by the Secondary Level English Teachers?

Methods

The study employed a quantitative research design, which focused on experiments, correlation, objective surveys etc. And also, quantify information for objective analysis and generalization. The total sampling population of the study was 40 English Teachers from nine rural/municipalities of Sindhuli district following simple random sampling. According to Acharya (2013), "In quantitative method, every individual has an equal chance of being selected in the sample from the population" (p. 330). The area of the study is ICT in teaching English in Nepal and fields were nine rural/municipalities of Sindhuli district. The data which are presented in this paper are first hand data collected in the real field. The primary sources of data were the 40 English Teacher in Sindhuli. Books, reference books, articles, newspapers and, web pages were read to make the paper more and more authentic, reliable and valid as secondary sources.

The only tool for data collection of the study is a closed-ended questionnaire. A questionnaire is the main means of collecting quantitative primary data. In this regard, a questionnaire enables quantitative data to be collected in a standardized way so that the data are internally consistent and coherent for analysis (Roopa and Rani, 2017). For the data

collection, 40 English Teachers were asked various questions regarding use of ICTs in order to obtain fact and reliable data on use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in ELT classroom. A questionnaire tool was designed to collect the data of individual English Teacher. Questionnaire was distributed to each of the 40 English Teachers, and also had informal discussions with the principals of all public schools in order to know whether the English Teachers directly dealt with application of ICTs in the ELT classroom or not.

Ethical Considerations

Ethics is that a researcher has to conduct his/her study without harming respondent's personal matters. According to, Bos (2020) ethics is an inquiry into what is right and wrong, and what researchers ought to do. Further, it is important that researchers usually refer to some ethical guidelines to ensure they have adhered to the principles of good research practice (Judd et al., 1991). During the study, consent was taken from respondents before asking the questions to maintain anonymity the names of the respondent are hidden. Researcher had not tried to go against their scrutiny during the study, rather respondents were seemed happy and glad to be the part of this study. In addition, this paper hasn't been duplicated, rather it's been endorsed by a number of citations to make it more authentic and more reliable.

Results

In this section, the data that I had collected through questionnaire from 40 EL teachers, are analyzed and interpreted. In addition, collected data are analyzed and interpreted with the different sub topics

Practices of ICT tools in ELT in Classroom

I have mentioned here the practices of ICT tools by different English teachers in teaching English. I have tried to clarify it from the below bar diagram.

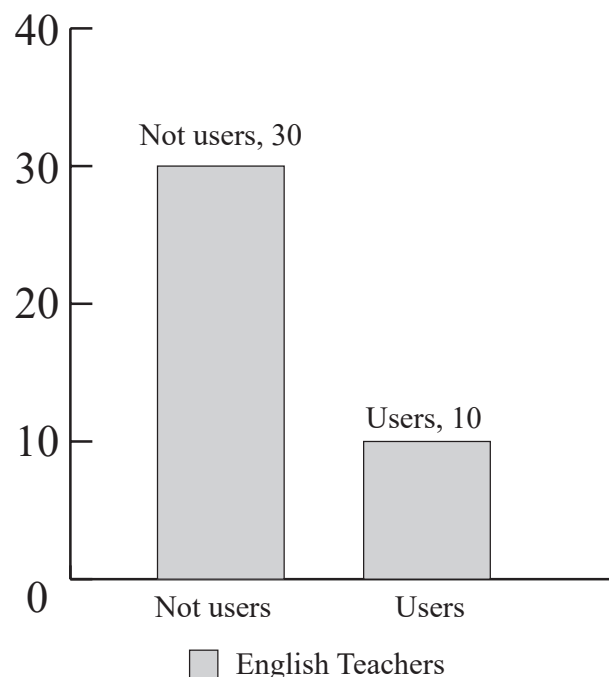


Fig. 1. Practices of ICT tools in ELT in Classroom

The bar diagram points out the practices of ICT tools in ELT classroom by the English teachers. According to figure 1, it looks 30 English teachers do not seem using ICT tools in ELT classroom which is three times more than the teachers who use ICT tools in ELT classroom. So, it indicates that we have very worse condition of use of ICT tools integrated to our pedagogy of teaching. Out of 40 only 10 teachers have confirmed that they use ICT tools in teaching English.

Update on use of ICT tools

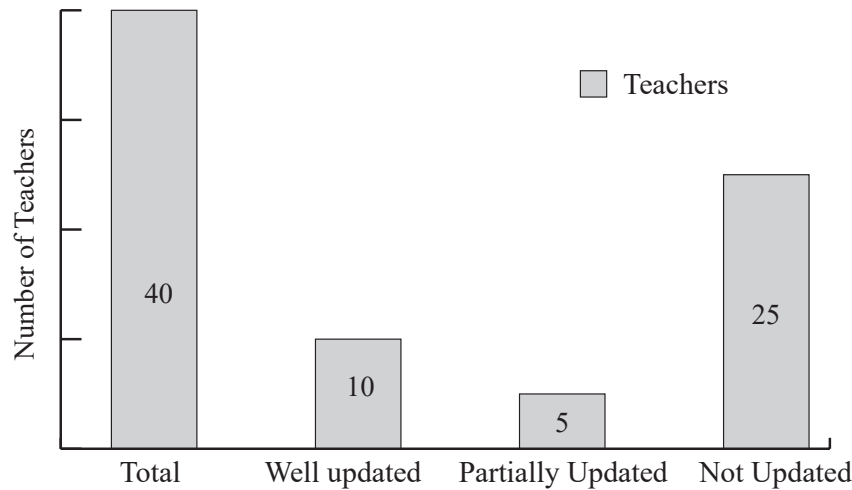


Fig. 2. Update on ICT Tools

The information given in the bar diagram is about the English teachers update on use of ICT tools. Less than 40% teachers are updated and can use ICT tools well. This bar diagram depicts that 10 English Teachers are only well updated in using of Information and Communication Technology and 5 are Partially updated but 25 students are not updated out of 40 English teachers who have been researched by researcher. In summary, it says that more than half English teachers are not good at use of ICT tools dramatically.

Mostly Used ICT Gadgets in the ELT Classroom

In this section, maximum use of electronic tools by English teacher has been attested in the pie chart. It will obviously vivid which material is used most in spite of having challenges in the country like ours.

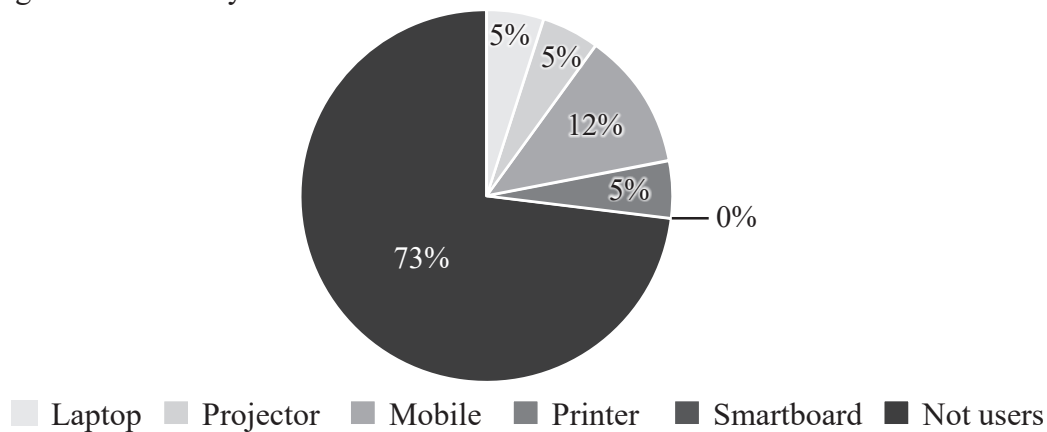


Fig. 3. Mostly used electronic device in the ELT classroom

Figure 3 focuses on use of ICT gadgets by English teachers. It distinguished on percentages. 12% English teachers have used Mobile in the ELT classroom, however, 5% use Laptop. Similarly, 5% has used Printer and Smart board users are 0%. 73% does not seem to have been used any electronic devices and does not seem to have ICT approach in the ELT classroom. It is very lowest percentage of Digital Literacy.

Digital Tools Used by English Teachers.

In this section, I have mentioned the number of English teachers and the types of Digital tools in the Pie chart, whether they use or not, in the English Language Classroom. It describes in detail of raw data which was collected from the respondents about the digital tools used by the English teachers.

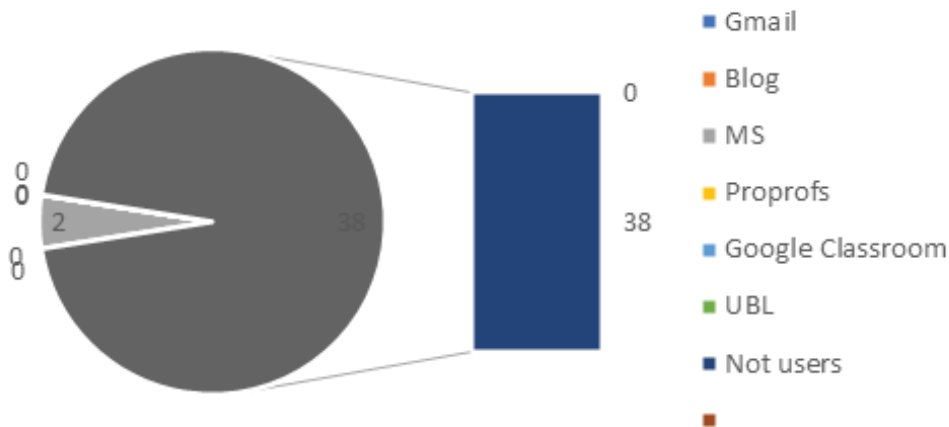


Fig. 4. Digital tools used by English teachers.

Figure 4 indicates that not almost all teachers use digital tools. According to the above pie chart, two English teachers have used Microsoft Office (MS). Likewise, no teachers seemed to have been used Gmail, Blog, Proprofs, Google classroom and UBL in teaching English. It vividly appeals that training in regard to use of ICT gadgets and digital tools are necessary for the professional development of Teachers in Nepal.

Views on Use of ICT Gadgets and Digital Tools

Here, I have tried to draw the views of all the 40 English Teachers of Sindhuli about ICT gadgets and digital tools. They have put their views. I have drawn it accordingly in the pie chart below. The data is interpreted below the pie chart vividly.

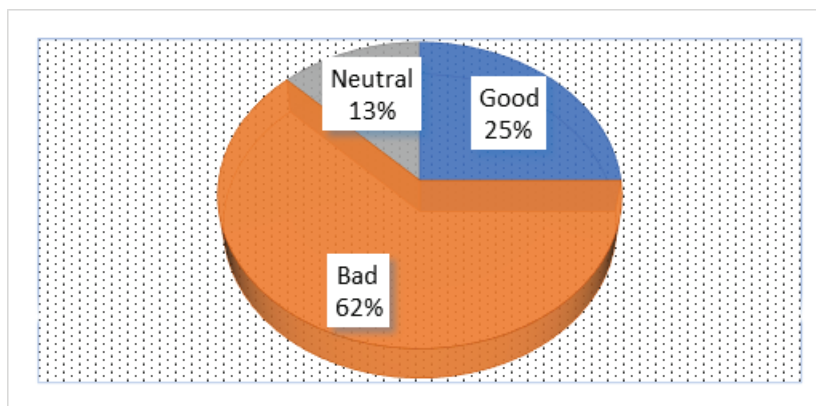


Fig. 5. Views on use of ICT gadgets and digital tools

Figure 5 shows that 25 % English Teachers have a positive response towards use of Information and Communication Technology while still 62% English Teachers have bad response towards Information and Communication Technology and 13% stayed neutral. Although the modern technology is leading the world right now, still 62% of English teachers did not show attest interest and 13% stayed neutral to it. It means they were totally rely on our traditional Teaching method such as GT method, Direct Method.

Willingness in Using ICT Gadgets and Digital Tools

It's been endeavored to identifying the fact that how many English teachers are in which favor out of three criteria. With this regard, I invariably asked to 40 English teachers what they actually feel about.

Table 1. Willingness in using ICT gadgets and digital tools

Teachers	Willingness	Unwillingness	Nothing
Male	30		
Female	10		
Total	40		

According to the table 1, Willingness to get use of ICT gadgets and digital tools trained could be beheld. It indicates that they are very much ready to integrate ICT gadgets and digital tools in the pedagogy to move one-step forth. The above table has pointed all teachers in the favor of use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in teaching English.

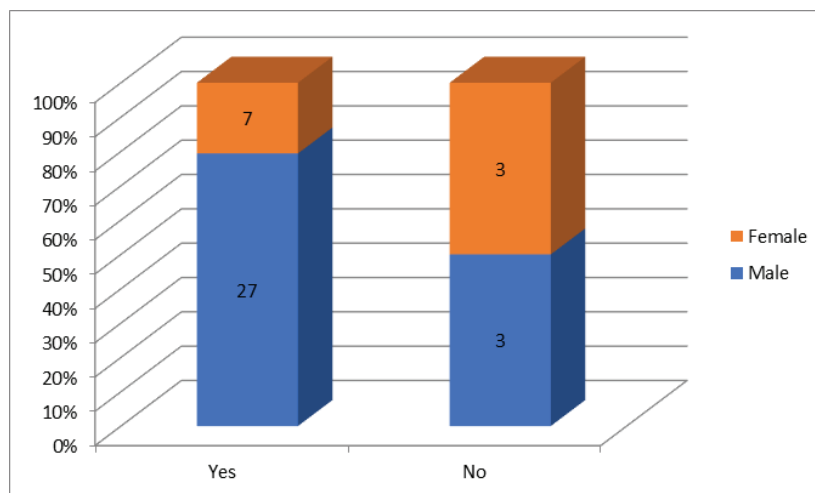


Figure 6. ICT motivates students

The bar diagram shows maximum teachers agree that ICT motivates the students. More than 50% teachers are agreed that ICT motivates their learning. Above bar diagram points out 20 male teachers agree ICT motivates the students but only 10 male teachers ticked on 'No'. Similarly, among 10 female teachers, 7 are positive and 3 are not agreed with ICT motivates the students. On the basis of this bar diagram, it can be said that more than 90% teachers signify that ICT motivates the students in their learning.

Discussion

The study aimed to explore the teacher's perception and practices of ICTs in teaching English language in the classroom. The survey shows that the practice of ICTs in EL classroom is found worse. Most of them were found not updated in the ICTs and can't use it in the classroom. And taking their views through the survey, 62% teachers had negative response to the ICTs despite the fact that students showed the desire to learn English by integrating ICTs into the lesson. It was obvious as they were uncertain about the ICTs. I asked them if they were willing to use it to engage the students. They said that they are ready to use it and they needed training for it. However, they are habitual in using mobile phones in the classroom. Furthermore, the paper draw a conclusion that majority of the English teacher are willing to use ICT in their classroom, however, they still lack sound knowledge of it. Moreover, the paper clearly attests that the ICTs motivate the students to learn more. In this sense, Davis (2007), the incorporation of the technologies into English classroom can help achieve: (i) cognitive gain by providing visual images, (ii) motivational gain providing fun, and (iii) interactional gain by providing convenience sharing.

Moreover, while teaching if teachers use digital tools and gadgets in their classroom, students learn properly, at the same time they also learn how to use it. When they learn to use it, they will use it in their learnings. Meaning that, ICTs provide opportunities for exploring the communicative power of the English learner by engaging them in exploring literary texts and several other interactive activities in exciting ways (Richards, 2007). It cannot be guaranteed that the teacher with only content knowledge can teach better. He or she must have pedagogical and technological knowledge in the same range, as a variety of technology-enhanced gadgets and digital tools can create an interactive learning environment to develop learners' autonomy and meaningful learning, which provides a huge amount of exposure to language (Acevedo, 2016). For this reason, it is important for language teachers to be aware of the latest and best equipment and to have a full knowledge of what is available in any given situation. Teachers can use Multimedia Technology to give more colorful, stimulating lectures (new Horizons).

So, it can also be said that use of ICT gadgets and digital tools in teaching English is problem around Nepal because it is very new to us. The most of the teachers lack digital literacy as I found through the study I did. I didn't see of using digital tools or ICT integrated pedagogy into their content in teaching English. According to Chappelle (2003), the technology-mediated tasks are the means of benefits for the language learners for getting better input, for receiving assistance in knowledge and understanding, and for activating deep processing of input. Therefore, we assure that ICT helps students to learn faster than the traditional teaching approaches. For this, all level of Government has to think in an equal way to uplift digital literacy to make education sector further better as SSRP (2016-2023) have mentioned in their document.

Conclusion

ICTs seem mandatory in teaching and learning process in the school to engage students in massive in Nepal. The teachers can use technologies for collecting teaching-learning resources, motivating the students and making more frequent interaction with quick feedback. ICTs in language teaching can have countless benefits. The development in the use of ICT, like language lab, videos, satellite broadcast, videoconferencing and web seminars can have support the richness and quality of education both on and off campus. Furthermore, Rabah (2015) finds better students' engagement and enhancement of their learning process as the benefits of ICT integration in teaching and learning. It has been the indispensable tools that facilitate the teaching and learning of English Language.

The study therefore, recommends that English teacher need a series of training regarding the use of ICT gadgets and digital tools, and technology based physical infrastructures to yield productive students in the near future with the direct assistance of modern ICTs that is used by English Language Teachers. This study mostly helps to English Language teachers in a way that it arouses and provokes them to attend technology-based training and also, to any concerned authority. Further, it will help to sketch the plan about technology-based learning as well. The conclusive findings of this study have been preceded by some significant recommendations that would be worthy enough for the concerned authorities such Ministry of Science, Education and Technology, Centre for Education and Human Resources Development (CEHRD).

Author's Bio

Raju Yonjan is a permanent primary teacher, who teaches at Gaumati Secondary School in Sindhuli. He pursued M.Ed. in English Language Teaching from Kathmandu University School of Education last year. His interested areas are Multilingualism, and ICT in Education. Similarly he is a life member of NELTA Sindhuli Branch. He has 8 years of teaching experience in different levels primary, secondary and higher level.

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