

## Who is Reading the Texts in Nepalese ELT Classes ? Teachers? Or Students?

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### Abstract

The present paper is a case analysis of four secondary level English teachers teaching in community schools and institutional schools of Butwal Sub-metropolitan city related to the teaching of English reading skills in our secondary schools. With the aim of finding out of the ways and attitudes of English teachers towards teaching English reading skills, the interview and class observation techniques were employed after developing an interview guideline and a class observation checklist. The purposively selected teachers expressed their views on different issues of teaching reading in the ELT classes. They presented many problems of teaching reading and suggested ways of making the teaching of reading skills more effective. The common points to improve they suggested include restructuring the curricula, incorporating the technology in teaching and learning of reading skills and selecting culturally relevant and useful texts for the students to read. They also recommended that the teaching of reading can not be improved until we move away from the exam centered teaching of reading and if we cannot stop teachers from paraphrasing the texts to the students and not encouraging them to read the texts, we cannot expect any change in the ways of teaching English reading in Nepal.

**Keywords** : Cultural linkage, Digital reading resources, Guided reading, Receptive skills, Skimming and scanning.

### Introduction

Language is nothing but just a means of communication which is the most common description and definition of language that only focuses on the use of language for communication purpose. Language is far more than a means of communication; it is a means of cultural transformation and a great means of linguistic imperialism as well as a means of social identity and matter of personality. The practice of English language

shows the better personality in the non-English speaking cultures and communities. Thus the teaching and learning of English language is getting more emphasis in the education systems of the non-English speaking countries. The teaching and learning of English language has been made more systematic and easier by dividing the language skills into four basic skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading skills are categorized as receptive skills which are also called passive skills whereas writing and speaking skills are productive skills and thus the active skills. The categorization of active and passive skills is not reasonable in language teaching and learning as we need to remain active while reading something written or listening someone speaking.

Reading is one of the foundational skills in English language learning, playing a pivotal role in academic success and personal development. In Nepal, teaching English reading has evolved from traditional grammar-translation methods to more learner-centered approaches, reflecting global shifts in pedagogical practices (Bhattarai, 2017). However, the transition remains uneven, with rural and urban schools experiencing disparate access to resources and training. This article explores the theoretical underpinnings of teaching reading in English and examines how these are applied in the Nepali context. Effective English reading instruction is grounded in theories such as the interactive model, schema theory, and sociocultural theory. The interactive model emphasizes the dynamic interplay between bottom-up (decoding) and top-down (contextual understanding) processes (Goodman, 1967). Schema theory, proposed by Bartlett (1932), underscores the importance of prior knowledge in interpreting texts, suggesting that comprehension improves when students relate new information to existing cognitive frameworks. In the Nepali classroom, teachers often struggle to activate students' schemata due to limited exposure to diverse reading materials in English. Sociocultural theory, advanced by Vygotsky (1978), highlights the role of social interaction and scaffolding in language learning, advocating for collaborative activities to enhance reading skills.

The reality of teaching English reading in Nepal varies significantly based on geographical, institutional, and economic factors. Urban schools with better resources often employ modern practices like guided reading, where teachers provide structured support to small groups of students, fostering both fluency and comprehension. Conversely, many rural schools still rely on rote learning and teacher-centered instruction due to resource constraints and lack of training (Subedi, 2020). The use of textbooks as the primary teaching material further limits exposure to authentic reading texts, hindering students' ability to engage with real-world language use. Despite these challenges, recent initiatives, such as the implementation of the National Curriculum Framework 2076 (BS), have attempted to bridge the gap by emphasizing communicative language teaching (CLT) and integrating technology into classrooms (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MoEST], 2019). However, teachers often face difficulties adapting these methodologies to local contexts, highlighting the need for targeted professional development programs.

### Teaching English Reading Skills in Nepal

The teaching of English reading skills in Nepal is supposed to follow a structured process that includes pre-reading activities, reading strategies and post-reading activities including assessment. However, this process is influenced by various contextual factors, including limited resources and multilingual settings. The common practice of teaching reading in Nepal is far different from what is commonly expected in the academia where the teachers themselves read the reading texts, stories, essays, poems, plays or novels and they just describe what is there in the text mostly giving the summary of those texts to the students and the students do not read the original text but just depend on the summary of the texts given by the teacher. Thus the ones who need to learn language never read the texts but the one who has already passed different levels keeps reading the texts which the students have to read and discourages the students from reading. The teachers make the students parasites in learning English reading. In fact the teachers need to follow the following pattern of teaching reading making students read the texts to read.

#### Pre-reading Activities

Effective reading instruction begins with pre-reading activities, which aim to prepare students for the text. Teachers activate prior knowledge and introduce key vocabulary to facilitate comprehension (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Predicting content through visual aids, titles, and headings is also a common practice (Brown, 2007) in most parts of the world.

#### While Reading: Techniques and Strategies

While reading, students are engaged in techniques such as:

**Guided Reading:** Nuttall, (2005) describes that the teachers generally guide students by explaining difficult sections of the texts.

**Skimming and Scanning:** Harmer (2007) mentions that the students are taught to skim for the main idea and scan for specific information, which helps develop essential reading skills.

**Annotation and Questioning:** Annotating the text and answering comprehension questions during reading keep students engaged and aid understanding (Nation, 2009).

#### Post-reading Activities

The post-reading tasks consolidate the understanding of the students and extend learning after the reading which has some activities as below:

**Discussion and Summarizing:** Grabe and Stoller (2019) are in the view that the students discuss the text's themes and main ideas and practice summarizing to improve comprehension after they read any text in the class or anywhere.

**Critical Thinking Tasks:** There can be a variety of kinds of critical thinking tasks for the students after they read any text. McLaughlin (2015) claim that the activities like analyzing the author's perspective or evaluating textual arguments are introduced to develop higher-order thinking skills.

*Assessment and Feedback:* Brookhart (2017) writes that assessment often involves comprehension tests or open-ended questions to evaluate students' reading proficiency. Feedback is a crucial component, in helping learners identify strengths and areas for improvement.

### **Importance of Teaching and Learning English Reading**

In a globalized world, teaching and learning English reading hold significant importance, particularly in developing countries like Nepal. As English serves as a gateway to academic, professional, and social opportunities, developing proficiency in reading skills is crucial. Recent research underscores the multifaceted importance of teaching English reading in the Nepalese context.

#### **Academic Advancement**

Reading is a foundational skill for academic success. English, being the medium of instruction in many private schools and higher education institutions in Nepal, necessitates strong reading skills. Students must comprehend academic texts, research papers, and textbooks in English to excel. According to Bhattarai (2017), English reading proficiency enables students to access global knowledge and perform better in examinations, which are often designed to test reading comprehension.

#### **Access to Global Information and Resources**

English is the dominant language of the internet, scientific research, and international media. Proficiency in English reading allows Nepalese students and professionals to access a wealth of online information and resources. Giri (2020) emphasizes that reading skills are critical for engaging with global developments in education, technology, and innovation. This access is particularly significant for a developing country like Nepal, where local resources may be limited.

#### **Economic and Professional Opportunities**

English reading skills are vital for economic mobility and professional growth. Many job opportunities in Nepal, especially in the tourism, IT, and education sectors, require English proficiency. Poudel (2018) highlights that employees with strong English reading skills can better understand technical documents, contracts, and international correspondence, giving them a competitive edge in the job market.

#### **Facilitating Lifelong Learning**

Reading fosters lifelong learning by enabling individuals to acquire new knowledge independently. Dhungana (2019) notes that developing strong English reading skills helps students transition from teacher-dependent learning to autonomous learning. This shift is essential for students in Nepal, where access to formal education is often interrupted due to economic or geographical challenges.

#### **Promoting Social and Cultural Awareness**

Reading English texts, particularly literature and global media, exposes students to diverse cultures, ideas, and perspectives. Subedi (2020) argues that this exposure helps

students develop critical thinking and cultural sensitivity, which are essential for navigating an interconnected world. For Nepal, a country with diverse linguistic and cultural groups, such awareness can also promote unity and mutual respect.

### **Supporting National Development Goals**

English reading proficiency aligns with Nepal's development goals, particularly in education and workforce development. The National Education Policy (MoEST, 2019) identifies English as a key competency for equipping students to contribute to the country's socio-economic development. Enhancing reading skills ensures that Nepalese students can participate in international collaborations and contribute to global discourses.

### **Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide**

English reading skills can help bridge the educational gap between urban and rural areas in Nepal. Giri (2020) points out that while urban schools have more resources and trained teachers, rural schools often struggle to meet educational standards. By focusing on developing reading skills, rural students can gain access to quality education and information through digital platforms and self-learning tools.

Thus, teaching and learning English reading skills is very important in Nepal due to their impact on academic success, professional opportunities and access to global resources. Moreover, reading skills promote lifelong learning, cultural awareness and national development. Addressing the challenges in teaching reading, such as resource scarcity and lack of trained teachers, can unlock the potential benefits for students and the nation. So it is very important to systematize the teaching and learning of English reading skills and it is necessary to systematically study how reading skills are developed in school level children. Thus the present study of the ways of teaching reading in the secondary schools in Butwal was planned and the study was accomplished with the presentation of the findings and conclusions in this paper.

### **Literature Review**

Reading skill is very important in Nepal and everywhere in the world as the definition of being educated depends on the ability to read and write. In ELT as well the teaching and learning of reading is highly focused in the Nepalese classes. But the outcome is not satisfactory as many of the research works conclude. Many research works have been accomplished in Nepal and around the world. Bhattarai, (2017), in his book *English Language Teaching in Nepal: Research, Reflection, and Practice* presents a comprehensive overview of English teaching practices in Nepal, including reading instruction. The book discusses the evolution of teaching methods and emphasizes the need for contextualized pedagogies to address diverse learner needs. It also identifies gaps in resource availability and teacher training as barriers to effective reading instruction. Likewise, in a study on teacher training and its impact on English language teaching, Dhungana, (2019), highlights the lack of specialized training for teaching reading skills in Nepalese secondary schools. The research underscores the need for targeted professional development programs to equip teachers with the skills necessary for effective reading instruction. In a research paper by Giri (2020) work, published in

*Asian Englishes*, examines the policies and practices of English language education in Nepal. The study identifies systemic issues, such as an exam-oriented approach and resource constraints, as major hindrances to developing students' reading skills. It advocates for a paradigm shift toward learner-centered and skills-based instruction.

In the same way, Poudel (2018) critically analyzes the exam-oriented education system in Nepal and its impact on skill development, including reading. His research highlights how rote memorization undermines students' ability to comprehend and analyze texts, calling for reforms to prioritize skill acquisition over test preparation. On the other hand, **Subedi (2020)** investigates the challenges of teaching English in rural Nepal, focusing on teachers' perspectives. His findings indicate that limited access to resources and large class sizes hinder effective reading instruction. He also explores potential solutions, such as leveraging community resources and integrating locally relevant materials. **Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) (2019)** produced the *National Curriculum Framework 2076 BS* which outlines the government's approach to improve English language instruction, including reading. It emphasizes the integration of communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning while addressing systemic barriers like resource shortages and untrained teachers.

Thus, there are many research works accomplished in Nepal but few of them have focused on the actual situation of the ELT classes of Nepal. So the study of the English classes to teach reading texts to the secondary level (Grade XI and XII) can be slightly different and worth studying and publishing.

### **Methodology**

This paper is based on the case study research method in which we studied the process, techniques and problems as well as the prospects of teaching English reading in the secondary schools of Nepal. Two secondary level English teachers of community schools and two English teachers of institutional schools of Butwal Sub-metropolitan city were studied for the purpose of studying how the teachers in good schools (as they are called by the public) teach reading in the English classes and their views regarding teaching English reading in Nepal. The interviews and class observations of those four teachers gave us many ideas related to the teaching of reading skills in the Nepalese ELT classes.

### **Issues Related to Teaching English Reading in Nepal**

The teaching of English reading in Nepal faces several critical challenges, as identified by recent research works accomplished. These challenges stem from systemic, pedagogical, and resource-related issues, significantly impacting the effectiveness of English reading instruction at the secondary level schools in Nepal. The participant teachers were found to be in the views that there are some serious issues that impact the teaching and learning of English reading in Nepal. The common issues raised during the interviews are presented here first.

### **Exam-Oriented Education System**

The informant teachers expressed that the Nepali education system prioritizes exam preparation over skill development, leading to a lack of emphasis on reading comprehension and critical thinking. They said that they were compelled to often focus on preparing students for rote memorization and answering questions rather than fostering deeper engagement with texts. Observing their classes as well it was seen that the teaching was completely exam-oriented and in a class a student asked the teacher whether the text the teacher wanted to teach asked in the exam. Another teacher also tried to skip a text telling them that it was not important for the exam. Poudel (2018) critically describes this approach, arguing that it stifles creativity and undermines the development of essential reading skills.

### **Lack of Teacher Training**

The informant teachers were found to be in the view that there was no proper training to teach reading skills. The training programs were often the simple rituals of calling the teachers and discussing about different general things related to teaching English. The teachers from the institutional schools said that they have never been to any teacher training programs except one of them had attended the NELTA conference three years before. Thus many teachers in Nepal lack specialized training in teaching reading skills. Research by Dhungana (2019) also highlights that secondary school teachers often rely on traditional, grammar-translation methods, which fail to engage students in meaningful reading practices. The absence of professional development programs focusing on reading pedagogy exacerbates this issue.

### **Resource Scarcity**

The informant teachers said that the reading culture in Nepal is decreasing as there is serious lack of reading materials. The lack of diverse and engaging reading materials is a significant barrier, particularly in rural schools. Textbooks are the primary resource, but they are often outdated and do not cater to students' varied interests or levels. Subedi (2020) notes that the unavailability of supplementary materials, such as storybooks, newspapers, or digital resources, limits students' exposure to authentic texts. A teacher was in different view that the students can have different kinds of texts to read as there are many things available in the online resources which they can get in their cell phones or laptops.

### **Large Class Sizes**

The informant teachers expressed their concerns about the size of the classes or the number of students in the classes. They said that the large class sizes in the community schools make it difficult for teachers to provide individual attention and implement interactive reading activities however this problem is not faced by the institutional schools where they keep limitations on the number of students. In this regard Giri (2020) also points out that overcrowded classrooms hinder the use of techniques like guided reading, group discussions, and peer collaboration, which are essential for effective reading instruction.

### **Linguistic and Cultural Disconnect**

Three out of four informant teachers were in the view that the texts they had to teach in the ELT classes were not connected vertically with what they studied in the lower levels and most of the texts were completely different from the culture the students have. The content of English reading materials used in Nepal often fails to reflect the students' cultural and linguistic context. According to Bartlett's (1932) schema theory, students comprehend texts better when they can relate them to their existing knowledge. Giri (2020) emphasizes that using culturally irrelevant texts alienates students and reduces their motivation to engage with reading.

### **Ineffective Reading Strategies**

The teachers were found to be in the view that most of the teachers often lack awareness of effective reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and making inferences. Without explicit instruction in these strategies, students struggle to navigate and comprehend texts independently. Bhattarai (2017) notes that traditional methods do not equip students with the skills required for active and critical reading. Not only this, they also said that the teachers had too little idea about the extensive reading, which involves reading for pleasure and building fluency, and it is rarely promoted in Nepalese schools. Day and Bamford (2002) argue that extensive reading is vital for developing language skills, but limited resources and a focus on exams prevent its integration into classroom practices in Nepal.

### **Inequitable Access to Technology**

The use of technology can support reading instruction by providing access to a wide range of texts and interactive tools, its use is limited in Nepal due to infrastructural and financial constraints. The informant teachers expressed their view that the schools normally do not like to invest in the technologies for developing the reading skills of the students and not just the students but the teachers also do not have access to proper technologies. In this regard, Subedi (2020) also highlights that rural schools, in particular, lack access to basic technological tools, creating a digital divide that exacerbates existing inequalities.

### **Challenges of Teaching Reading Skills in Nepal**

The teaching of reading skills in Nepal faces several critical challenges that stem from systemic, pedagogical, and contextual shortcomings. These issues hinder the development of effective reading instruction and prevent students from acquiring the necessary reading skills for academic and personal growth in their future careers. The informant teachers have different ideas regarding the challenges of teaching reading skills in Nepalese ELT classes, some of which are presented here.

### **Overemphasis on exam-focused teaching**

The informant teachers accepted that the education system of Nepal is heavily focused on preparing students for examinations rather than fostering practical language skills. They reported that they are often compelled to prioritize rote learning and memorization



over activities that promote reading comprehension and critical thinking like what Poudel, (2018)concludes. This kind of teaching and learning of reading skills encourage students to develop superficial reading habits, focusing on answering exam questions rather than engaging with texts meaningfully.

### **Lack of diverse reading materials**

Due to the economic situation of the Nepalese students and the lack of reading culture,the scarcity of reading materials for the students is a pervasive issue, particularly in rural schools. Many classrooms in even the good schools of Nepal rely solely on the given textbooks, which are often outdated and fail to provide engaging or contextually relevant content. The informants of the present study were convinced in the fact that the lack of supplementary materials, such as storybooks, newspapers, or digital texts, limits students' exposure to different genres and levels of difficulty as Subedi (2020) also concludes in a research paper. They also said that most of the schools do not have sufficient books of students' interest and whatever they have also are not used by not just the students but by the teachers themselves.

### **Teacher-centered pedagogy**

The teaching methods in Nepal often remain traditional and teacher-centered, leaving little room for interactive or student-centered practices. The informant teachers said that most of the teachers frequently dominate classroom discourse, providing direct instruction rather than facilitating activities like group discussions or collaborative reading tasks. Bhattarai (2017) writes that such approach of teaching reading skills undermines the development of independent reading skills and critical thinking.

### **Inadequate focus on reading strategies**

Another challenge of teaching reading skills in Nepal is the insufficient emphasis on teaching specific reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, predicting, and inferring although the teaching of reading and writing is very important in Nepali ELT. Many teachers are not trained in these techniques and thus fail to incorporate them into their instruction. Without guidance on these strategies, students struggle to navigate complex texts or improve their reading fluency and comprehension as Dhungana (2019) concludes. The teachers teach reading and writing emphasizing these skills but the way of teaching is not appropriate. Not only this, the teacher training programs for the English teachers also are not useful to make teachers competent in properly teaching reading skills, two of the teachers said. They were in the view that the training were unable to equip them with good reading teaching activities. Subedi (2020)mentions that the lack of specialized training for English teachers exacerbates these issues. Many teachers lack awareness of modern pedagogical approaches and rely on outdated methods, such as translation and rote learning. Professional development opportunities focusing on teaching reading skills are limited, particularly in rural areas .

Thus, the major faults in teaching reading skills in Nepal stem from systemic issues, resource limitations, and outdated pedagogical practices. The informant teachers stated that addressing these shortcomings requires a multifaceted approach that includes curriculum reform, increased access to diverse reading materials, teacher training in

modern reading strategies, and the creation of a more student-friendly situation in the ELT classes.

### **Improving the Teaching of English Reading Skills**

As a part of the study, there were some questions for the teachers regarding the ways of improving the teaching and learning of the reading skills. Improving the teaching of English reading skills in Nepal's secondary schools requires targeted interventions based on research findings and the ideas given by the informant teachers. These interventions should address systemic challenges, enhance pedagogical practices, and create an enabling environment for both teachers and students.

### **Reforming the Curriculum**

The informant teachers were very found to be negative towards the existing curriculum and its testing system. They said that the existing curriculum needs restructuring and reforming according to the established norms of teaching reading skills. Poudel (2018) in this regard writes that a significant step toward improving reading skills is reforming the curriculum to emphasize reading comprehension and critical thinking rather than rote memorization. Research suggests that integrating skill-based assessments into the curriculum can encourage teachers to focus on developing students' reading proficiency. The National Curriculum Framework (MoEST, 2019) highlights the need for communicative language teaching, which should be effectively implemented across schools.

### **Providing Access to Diverse Reading Material**

The informant teachers suggested that expanding access to diverse and engaging reading materials is crucial. Subedi (2020) mentions that many studies show that the students benefit from exposure to a variety of texts, including storybooks, newspapers, and digital resources. Schools can collaborate with local libraries, NGOs, and community organizations to establish resource centers. Additionally, digital platforms can provide low-cost access to extensive reading materials for both teachers and students. The teachers also suggested that the schools can get support from varieties of donor agencies to establish libraries for providing access to the diverse reading materials.

### **Enhancing Teacher Training**

The informant teachers demanded that the specialized training programs focusing on reading instruction are essential for equipping teachers with modern pedagogical strategies as the present teacher training programs are just the ritual-based and not effective. They further criticized that the training programs do not provide specialized skills to teach English reading skills in schools and just based on simply continuing the traditional ways of teaching reading and explaining or summarizing the content to the students. In this issue, Dhungana (2019) also highlights the need for professional development initiatives that train teachers in techniques like guided reading, extensive reading, and the use of reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and

summarizing. Continuous training and mentoring programs can help teachers implement these strategies effectively.

### **Promoting Student-Centered Learning**

A very important way of improving the teaching of English reading skills suggested by the informant teachers is transitioning from teacher-centered to student-centered learning environments which can significantly enhance reading skills. Activities like group reading, peer discussions, and task-based learning engage students actively and improve comprehension. Bhattarai (2017) advocates for collaborative activities that encourage students to share insights, predict outcomes, and relate texts to their personal experiences.

### **Incorporating Technology**

The teachers recommended to integrate technology into reading instruction to provide innovative solutions to existing challenges and shortcoming of the teaching reading skills in ELT classes. Simple and free-of-cost mobile apps, online reading platforms, and interactive tools can make reading lessons more engaging and accessible to the students and the students can read the necessary texts at their appropriate time, the teachers suggested. Giri (2020) also emphasizes the potential of technology to address resource gaps, particularly in rural areas. Teachers should be trained to effectively use technology to complement traditional teaching methods.

### **Providing Culturally Relevant Materials**

The informant teachers blamed the concerned authority that the texts provided to the students were not culturally relevant nor these are giving good moral lessons useful for the life of the students. Bartlett (1932) suggests that culturally relevant and context-specific reading materials can bridge the gap between students' prior knowledge and the content of the texts. Schema theory suggests that students comprehend texts better when they can relate them to their experiences. In this regard Subedi (2020) also suggested that developing materials that incorporate Nepalese culture, traditions, and contemporary issues can improve engagement and comprehension.

### **Shifting away from Exam Centered Practices**

The informant teachers said that the Nepali education system is highly guided by the examinations and the students are always worried about securing higher scores in the decisive exams as the decisions about the students depend on the exam scores. The students and parents are normally not worried about the skills developed in the schools due to exam centered culture and practices. Thus moving away from exam-centered teaching to process-oriented learning is critical for fostering genuine reading skills. Formative assessments that evaluate reading comprehension, fluency, and critical thinking should be prioritized over traditional summative assessments. A research by Poudel (2018) shows that students perform better in language skills when they are assessed through projects and discussions rather than exams.

In this way improving the teaching of English reading skills in Nepali secondary schools requires a comprehensive approach involving curriculum reform, access to

resources, teacher training, and the integration of technology. Collaborative efforts among policymakers, educators, and communities can create an environment that supports meaningful and effective reading instruction. By adopting evidence-based strategies, Nepal can ensure that students develop strong reading skills essential for their academic and professional success.

### **Role of Technology in Improving English Reading Skills**

In Nepal, where access to traditional educational resources is often limited, technology such as cell phones and television presents an innovative way to enhance English reading skills. In the present study, the informant teachers expressed their views about using the potential importance of these tools to bridge gaps in education and make learning more engaging and accessible.

#### **Cell Phones and Mobile Learning**

Cell phones have revolutionized education by enabling access to a wide range of learning materials. Mobile applications, e-books, and online resources offer interactive and personalized reading experiences. Giri (2020) notes that mobile devices can provide students in rural areas with access to English texts and interactive apps like Duolingo or British Council Learn English, which include reading activities tailored to different proficiency levels.

Additionally, mobile devices support extensive reading through e-books and digital libraries. Subedi (2020) found that students who used mobile devices for reading demonstrated improved vocabulary and comprehension skills, particularly when guided by teachers. Mobile apps also allow for features like text-to-speech and translations, which aid struggling readers in understanding complex texts.

#### **Television as a Learning Medium**

Television can serve as a powerful tool for improving English reading skills by providing audiovisual support. Programs with subtitles in English expose learners to both spoken and written forms of the language. According to Dhungana (2019), the use of English-subtitled shows, such as documentaries and news programs, helps students connect spoken language to its written form, improving both listening and reading comprehension. Educational programs on television specifically designed for language learning, such as BBC Learning English or other locally produced content, offer structured lessons that include reading activities. Giri (2020) highlights that integrating television into classroom instruction can make learning engaging, especially for students with limited exposure to English in their daily lives.

#### **Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide**

Cell phones and television are particularly valuable in rural areas of Nepal, where access to qualified teachers and physical libraries is often limited. Mobile learning and televised programs can provide alternative educational opportunities. Subedi (2020) emphasizes that in schools with minimal resources, technology can democratize access to quality English learning materials.

### **Encouraging Collaborative Learning**

Technology fosters collaborative learning through platforms like WhatsApp or online discussion forums. Students can participate in group reading activities, share summaries, and discuss texts via these platforms. Bhattarai (2017) suggests that mobile technology can complement classroom learning by enabling peer-to-peer interaction, which enhances engagement and comprehension.

### **Effective Ways of Teaching English Reading**

All four informant teachers in the present study were found to have a common consensus that teaching English reading effectively in Nepal requires approaches tailored to the country's linguistic diversity, resource constraints, and educational practices. Recent research and theories in second language acquisition (SLA) and reading pedagogy provide insights into practical and effective strategies. The teachers suggested following easiest and best ways of teaching English reading effectively in the Nepali ELT classes.

### **Using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)**

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emphasizes meaningful communication through tasks that mimic real-world activities. For reading, this approach involves tasks such as identifying key information in a passage, summarizing, or inferring meaning from context. Research shows that TBLT enhances student engagement and improves comprehension by focusing on purposeful language use (Ellis, 2020). In Nepal, TBLT can be adapted using locally relevant reading materials to make lessons more relatable.

### **Integrating Extensive Reading (ER)**

Extensive Reading involves encouraging students to read large amounts of material at their level for pleasure. This approach builds vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills over time (Day & Bamford, 2002). Subedi (2020) notes that while schools in Nepal often lack diverse resources, even simple storybooks or online reading platforms can provide opportunities for extensive reading. Teachers can motivate students by allowing them to select texts based on their interests.

### **Using the Interactive Reading Model**

The Interactive Reading Model integrates both top-down (prior knowledge, predictions) and bottom-up (decoding words and sentences) processes to enhance comprehension. Teachers can guide students in activating their schema by connecting new texts to familiar concepts (Bartlett, 1932). Giri (2020) emphasizes the importance of using culturally relevant materials in Nepal to make texts relatable and support the top-down processes of the Interactive Model.

### **Scaffolding through Guided Reading**

Guided Reading involves small-group instruction where teachers support students in navigating challenging texts. This approach is especially useful for mixed-ability

classrooms, common in Nepalese schools. Teachers can scaffold the reading process by modeling strategies like skimming, summarizing, and questioning (Vygotsky, 1978). Research by Dhungana (2019) suggests that guided reading fosters independence and critical thinking.

### **Utilizing Phonics-Based Instruction**

Phonics instruction focuses on teaching students the relationship between sounds and letters, a foundational skill for early readers. While this approach is more common for beginners, it can also be beneficial for secondary-level students struggling with decoding and pronunciation. Bhattarai (2017) highlights the effectiveness of integrating phonics into remedial reading lessons in Nepalese schools.

### **Incorporating Technology**

Technology offers innovative ways to teach reading. Mobile apps, e-books, and online platforms can provide access to diverse texts and interactive tools for comprehension. Research shows that digital resources can make reading engaging and accessible, particularly for schools with limited physical materials (Giri, 2020). Teachers can use platforms like Project Gutenberg or locally developed apps to supplement classroom instruction.

### **Promoting Collaborative Learning**

Collaborative learning strategies, such as peer reading and group discussions, can enhance reading skills by allowing students to share ideas and clarify understanding. Bhattarai (2017) advocates for activities like pair reading or group discussions, which foster cooperative skills while improving comprehension. These activities are particularly effective in large classrooms, where individual attention is challenging.

### **Focusing on Vocabulary Development**

Building a robust vocabulary is essential for reading proficiency. Teachers can use explicit vocabulary instruction techniques, such as word maps, flashcards, and context-based learning, to support students. Research by Subedi (2020) indicates that vocabulary-focused activities significantly improve comprehension among Nepalese learners.

### **Shifting to Formative Assessments**

Formative assessments, such as reading journals, comprehension quizzes, and group projects, help teachers monitor progress and provide immediate feedback. These assessments shift the focus from exam preparation to skill development, aligning with Poudel's (2018) critique of Nepal's exam-oriented education system.

In this way, the best way to teach English reading in Nepal is through a combination of evidence-based strategies, such as Task-Based Language Teaching, Extensive Reading, and guided instruction. By integrating culturally relevant materials, leveraging technology, and focusing on vocabulary development, teachers can create engaging and effective reading lessons. Tailoring these approaches to the local context ensures that

students not only improve their reading skills but also develop a lifelong appreciation for language learning.

### Conclusions

In this paper, the actual practices of the teaching and learning of English reading have been studied and analyzed based on the case analysis of the four purposively selected English teachers teaching in community and institutional secondary schools of Butwal Sub-metropolitan city. They described various aspects of teaching English reading skills and problems as well as solutions to make the teaching of reading skills effective. The most important things they suggested were related to the restructuring of the curricula, redefining the teacher training programs focusing student centered practices as well as technology to help students more skillful in reading. The teachers also suggested that we need to move away from the exam centered teaching and learning of English reading texts that hamper the future of the student's performance and competence. Moreover the teachers also suggested the concerned authority to restructure the reading materials selecting culturally relevant texts that have messages for the students to make life easier.

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