Aesthetic Voice of Versified English Poetry in Nepal

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Abstract

The present study posits the teachers' perspectives and experiences in teaching English poetry in Nepal. It aims to reveal the complexities that EFL teachers face when teaching English poetry. Poetry consists of arcane lexicons due to constraints on metrical patterns. To fit into these patterns and create rhythmicity in the lines, verse composers apply pliable meters, which make poetry pedagogy a challenge in the EFL context in Nepal. Based on an interpretive research paradigm, this study used the hermeneutic phenomenological method to conduct fieldwork and data analysis. Seventeen English language teachers were purposively selected from government and private schools in the Rupendehi district of Nepal. In this study, in-depth interviews were used as data collection tools to explore the perspectives and experiences of teachers who taught English poetry as a foreign language.The study disclosed significant challenges regarding the aesthetics of language used in poetry and English-versified poetry recitation in the context of Nepal, owing to linguistic, pedagogical, and cultural aspects. These challenges created problems for the appreciation of this literary genre and the effective pedagogy of poetry.This study highlighted the necessity of curriculum revision to provide teachers with sufficient information about poetic elements such as feet, meter, rhyme, rhythm, caesura, and tempo. Similarly, it emphasized the need for a deeper understanding of poetic forms and recitation art to address the challenges of applying innovative teaching techniques such as the Poetry Box Method.

Keywords: Aesthetics, hermeneutic phenomenology, recitation, prosody, feet, meter

Introduction

Versified Poetry is a genre of recitation and its efficacy depends on performance, whereas, prose is typically a reading genre. For English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, teaching poetry poses unique challenges, particularly in its orchestral dimensions. The sound effects inherent in the versified poetry, should not be underestimated because of musical nature and recitative characteristics (Killander, 2011). Moreover, Pokharel (2020) argued that poetry is inherently an oral performance and effective engagement with it requires recitation. However, recitation remains challenging task in the EFl context in Nepal. As Phyak (2016)

noted, "The majority of teachers were untrained, unqualified, and not competent to teach English" (p.204).

Among the many aspects of English language instruction, versified poetry is a genre that combines both linguistic and artistic genres (Preminger et al., 1993). In the context of Nepal, English was taught as a compulsory aand optional subject in schools and higher educational institutes, and faced a plethora of challenges (Timsina, 2021). A versified poetry is an art of rhythmical presentation. It is presented through an oral recitation which is associated with music (Lerdahl, 2001). Moreover, poetry has a mnemonic quality due to its sound images and phone-aesthetic symbolism, and it contains figurative language, making poetry different from other literary genres (Bibby & McIlroy, 2013). Similarly, teaching approaches of poetry for foreign languages suffer a lot from relegating the literature in foreign language curricula (Sigvardsson, 2020). However, the policies for English language teaching and literature are the same in the context of Nepal, yet the emphasis on aesthetic beauty remains limited.

The Ministry of Education (2008) focused on comprehensive communicative competence, yet there appears limited attention as regards poetry recitation. As a result, poetry teachers and learners face persistent challenges regarding how a piece of literature, especially how to approach poetry- without recitation, or adopting new approach or as usual (Aaron et al., 2021). In the English language curriculum, there are several versified poems, such as 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening', by Robert Frost, (CDC, 2022, pp.8-9)**,** 'Leisure' (CDC, 2022a, p. 115) by W.H Davies 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge', by William Wordsworth (CDC, 2022, p.199) and 'If' by Rudyard Kipling (CDC, 2022b, p. 267). These versified poetry kept in the school-level curriculum, need rhythmical recitation.

By employing a qualitative phenomenological research design, this study offers a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced in EFL poetry pedagogy, informed by semi-structured interviews and a review of an extensive literature. The findings from this research can inform policymakers, curriculum developers, and educators, highlighting the critical areas for improvement in EFL poetry instruction and contributing to more effective and enjoyable poetry education in diverse linguistic contexts.

Literature Review

This section provides an overview of existing research on the aesthetic dimensions and metrical features of poetry, with a particular focus on the challenges faced in teaching English versified poetry in foreign language classrooms. Various scholars have explored the artistic and sensory elements of poetry, emphasizing its rhythmic, phonetic, and metrical structures, which differentiate it from prose. While many studies have examined the general importance of prosody and sound patterns in poetry, the complexities of integrating these features into second or foreign language teaching have been less extensively addressed. This review highlights key findings, identifies gaps in the existing literature, and discusses the implications for teaching versified poetry, especially in the context of Nepal's English education system.

Aesthetic Dimensions and Meter in Poetry

The study of versified poetry in the domain of education, primarily in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) presents significant challenges due to aesthetic of languages used in versified poetry. Unlike prose, versified poetry is often characterized by its artistic attributes with sensory appeal.

One key area of versified poetry is metrical dimensions, distinguishing it from other literary forms. Ribeiro (2007) noticed that poetry is a piece of literature along with some components, such as in abstract level, foot, meter, line structure repetition, form, and stanza, and in concrete level, in phonetic, word-initial and word-terminal as well as lexical or phrasal. In line with this, Simecek and Ellis (2017) revealed that poetry is an aesthetic genre that encompasses prosodic features, but in the context of second language pedagogy, prosodic features are sidelined. Mokhtaria (2012) further argued that reciting verses, special effects created by its rhythms, rhymes, or other sounds must be noted because recitation plays an important role in making sense.

Cuddon (2012);Forde (2011); Lőrincz and Lőrincz (2021);Certo et al. (2012) and Smith (2015) all highlited that poetry possesses aesthetic dimensions which make challengign to fully penetrate and understand.Abrams and Harpham noticed that here are eight meters are commonly exercised in the English poetry tradition (Abrams & Harpham, 2014, p. 162). These findings highlight the complex nature of poetry, where meter, rhythm, and aesthetic elements are key to its meaning. However, these aspects are often overlooked in teaching, especially in second language contexts, making the effective instruction and understanding of poetry more challenging. This suggests a need for further research and enhanced pedagogical strategies, particularly in contexts like Nepal, where cultural and linguistic factors add another layer of difficulty. Building on this, Ferguson et al. (2018) portrayed that six feet are dominantly used to compose versified poetry:

Table 2

Di-syllabic and tri-syllabic feet used in English poetry tradition

Foot	Syllable
Iamb (Two syllabics)	unstressed-stressed
Trochee (Two syllabics)	stressed-unstressed
Spondee (Disyllabics)	stressed-stressed
Pyrrhic (Disyllabics)	unstressed-unstressed
Dactyl (Trisyllabics)	stressed-unstressed-unstressed
Anapestic (Trisyllabics)	unstressed-unstressed-unstressed

Similarly, besides these abovementioned six feet, Agirrezabal et al. (2016) quoted that there are tri-syllabic feet. In a similar situation, Dressman and Faust (2014) argued that teaching classical poetry in high school presents some very real problems with poetic diction. Similarly, linguistic complexity and abstract ideas in poetry make it difficult to understand (Vala et al., 2012). On a similar note, Morley (2007) focused on the importance of rhythm found at the time of recitation. Therefore, in the context of Nepal, incorporating all the elements discussed above appear to be a significant challenge.

The Role of Sound Patterns and Rhythmic Recitation

The aesthetic appeal of poetry is deeply rooted in its sound patterns, including devices like alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme, and internal rhymes. Lohoni and Devekota (2010); Leech (2014), and Yeibo (2012) focused on alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme, and internal rhymes for the understanding of aesthetic appeal of poetry. Gupta et al. (2021); Fraser (2017) and Menninghaus et al. (2018) emphasized rhythmic recitation. However, these aesthetic aspects seem to have been overshadowed while approaching versified poetry in the context of Nepal.

Lengeris (2012) argued that teachers and learners found problems dealing with verified poetry lacking a bundle of knowledge while teaching and learning verses as an English foreign or second language teacher. Fraser (2017) discovered that meters and rhymes are the staple characteristics of poetry that distinguish poetry from other pieces of the prosaic literary genre.

Paramasivan (2015) revealed that the conventional teaching method failed to do justice to the versified poetry teaching phenomena due to aesthetic aspects. Therefore, Carter (2007) noticed that literature has long been rejected as an incompatible with modern language-dealing methodologies. Parkinson and Reid Thomas (2019) contended that poetry needs different techniques to unfold the aesthetics used in the poetry. Mart (2018) reflected that the curriculum designed for EFL learners is no longer justifiable due to the least space for the aesthetic quality of poetry. Therefore, Topping (1968) controversially argued to exclude literature from the foreign language curriculum due to utilitarian stance practiced in EFL territory.

The Curriculum Development Center (CDC, 2021) emphaicizes on the supra-segmental features, such as stress, tone, and intonation for expressing a range of meanings and emotions in speaking skills to empower linguistic competency. However, Timsina (2023) critiques that there seems no appropriate way to include English with its weightage and full marks compared to the past in secondary-level. Therefore, the aesthetic aspects of the languages used in the poetry appear to be marginalized in the context of Nepal.

In essence, these reviews emphasize that the lack of adequate integration of supra-segmental features like stress, tone, and intonation in Nepal's secondary English curriculum results in the marginalization of the aesthetic elements of poetry, limiting its effective teaching and appreciation.

Educational Policy and Curricular Gaps in Nepal

In Nepal, English education has evolved, but there is still a lack of clear policy, especially regarding the teaching of poetry. As a result, the aesthetic aspects of poetry are often overlooked in the curriculum.The narrative by Rana (2018) reflects that there is no clear-cut space and concrete policy for the English language in the context of Nepal despite the fact that English was imported into Nepal over a century ago in Nepal (Giri, 2020). In a similar vein, Shrestha (2008) noticed that the trend of sending children to English medium schools and or colleges has begun as an English mania or a euphoria today in Nepal. Tiwari (2021) points out that Communicative Language Teaching is a popularly practised method in modern times in the English language classrooms of Nepal, yet Shrestha (2013) highlighted the limitations of various forms of pedagogies along with multiple challenges. Therefore, teaching versified poetry should not be overlooked in secondary-level English language classrooms in the Nepalese context (K.C., 2021). Ministry of Education (2019) focused less on the aesthetics of language used in poetry, keeping little space for aesthetic features that deprive the literary genre.

Most existing studies (Paudel, 2021), (Pokharel, 2020) and (Rohmah et al., 2021) predominantly focus on the aesthetic qualities of English poetry, with only a limited number addressing the challenges encountered by teachers of English as a foreign language in teaching this genre. Furthermore, there appears to be a notable gap of research specifically examining versified poetry within the context of English as a foreign language in Nepal, highlighting a significant research gap pointing to a significant research gap in this area.

Methodology

In this study, I employed the phenomenological approach to carry this research which focuses on the life perspectives and experiences of the participants. As a phenomenological research design, this study emphasized revealing an individual's lived experiences (Creswell et al., 2007)**.** The sample consisted of seventeen participants from government and private schools, providing diverse insights.

As data collection tools, I employed in-depth interviews and observation which proved effective in collecting data. These methods allowed participants to share their inner opinions, attitudes, ideas comfortably, and lived experiences in teaching poetry. Similarly, observation enhanced the validity through triangulation. Moreover, in this methodology, homogeneous respondents were chosen to gather their perspectives and experiences to ensure the data's relevance, validity and reliability. This method facilitated unfolding the real problems and challenges in teaching Englishunfolding the real problems and challenges in teaching English-versified poetry as a foreign language teacher in the context of Nepali. As a qualitative study, I followed an analytical framework as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) for thematic analysis. Thus, this study is based on multiple contexts and experiences of the teachers who taught English poetry as English foreign language teachers as emphasized by Killam (2013).

The knowledge that I collected was based on subjective epistemology, and the

source of my epistemology is the interpretation of the lived experience of the teachers. The ontological stance of this study rested on a relativist perspective, aiming to uncover the difficulties encountered by teachers in teaching poetry. Axiological assumption supposes that research does not remain untouched from values in which we have been surrounded (Killam, 2013). Hence, this research is qualitative, so the data of participantsparticipants' data more or less influence the perception at the time of data collection. More specifically, it is the hermeneutic phenomenological methodology in which teachers' lived experiences are shared (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Results and Discussion

The findings highlight key challenges in teaching English poetry, particularly the lack of recitation in the classroom. This absence restricts students' engagement with the phonetic and rhythmic elements essential for appreciating poetry.

Lack of Recitation Tradition

English poetry is not recited but dealt with like a prose genre. It is taught without recitation focusing on linguistic purposes. The lack of recitation means students miss the opportunity to engage with poetry's phonetic and rhythmic elements, which are essential for its appreciation. Sittal stated:

> Students request to go through the poems like Nepali teachers in Nepali subjects but I honestly suggest, "No need". Students teased me saying to read like a Nepali teacher and I said it wouldn't come in for the exam and they became quiet. I don't know how to recite.

Sittal highlights the pragmatic approach to teaching English poetry, which is primarily exam-oriented. While recognizing that students may prefer a more engaging and traditional method akin to how Nepali teachers handle poetry, the teacher chooses to focus solely on exam-related material. This decision could stem from a lack of confidence or expertise in recitation. The teacher's admission of not knowing how to recite poems also points to potential gaps in training or confidence in teaching poetry more interactively and expressively. According to him, poetry was taught without specific strategies, which aligns with Walsh's (2018) findings that highlight the inconsistency in language policy and literature instruction in our academic institutions. In a similar context, Ram shared:

> There are no dedicated poetry teaching materials, and the class sizes are large. Being from the Tharu community, I find myself less skilled in recitation. I am unable to teach them in a more musical and nuanced manner due to my limitations.

Ram's reflection demonstrates a broader issue faced by many teachers in poetry pedagogy.His argument aligns, to some extent, with the observations made by Phyak (2016), who highlights that educators in Nepal lack familiarity with orthographic systems. Research done by Pokharel (2020) in secondary schools in Dang, Nepal, suggested poetry as an oral art

that needs to be performed rhythmically, but teachers were sidelining the aesthetic quality of the poems. The neglect of poetry's oral and performative aspects, along with teachers' limited competency in recitation, creates a significant gap in poetry pedagogy in Nepal. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive approach to teaching poetry that incorporates its aesthetic and rhythmic qualities.

Challenges of Decoding the Archaic Dictions in Poetry

Within the curriculum are some poems in which archaic language can be viewed. This antiquated language poses challenges for learners attempting to comprehend the poetry. Niruja candidly stated:

Truly speaking, the archaic language prevalent in grades -9 and 10 always strikes me. I find it difficult to appreciate poems because of their old-fashioned language and the presence of archaic lexicons, such as 'art, thou,' 'dost thou,' and 'thy.' . Archaic words in poetry often pose significant challenges for both students and teachers. These outdated terms can create barriers to understanding, as they are no longer part of contemporary language usage. As a result, students may struggle to grasp the meaning and context of a poem, limiting their appreciation of its full impact.(Girsang et al., 2023)

The narratives of Niruja explored challenges faced by educators due to the presence of archaic forms of language used in English in poetry. For instance, the poem 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge,' is examined reading aloud rather than attempting recitation. It reveals that a facilitator does not appear to be making efforts to emphasize stressed and unstressed sounds while focusing primarily on the poem's theme. In a related context, Rita encountered difficulties in teaching poetry due to the presence of old fashioned vocabularies:

Poetry is a personal favorite of mine, but I find the use of archaic language in poems complicates the delivery of their underlying messages. Therefore, I focus on reading, writing, speaking, and listening aspects without delving deeply into interpretation.

Rita reflected nuanced perspectives regarding how poetry often incorporates archaic language that lacks modern equivalents, presenting challenges for educators. Furthermore, she expressed discomfort in teaching verses, citing difficulties in making poetry understandable to students due to outdated language. Versified poetry consists of feet and meters with selective dictions, which can complicate poetry pedagogy. Kashima (2017) argued that many specialties of poetic diction must have risen under constant metrical pressure and due to this, archaic dialects are used.

The findings reveal that teachers tend to focus primarily on content exploration, often sidelining the aesthetic and literary dimensions of poetry. This approach reflects both the strengths and limitations of poetry pedagogy, as it creates a gap in students' ability to critically engage with the rhythmic and artistic aspects of versified poetry.

Linguistic Challenges in Teaching Poetry

Poetry is a medium to express that plays with miscellaneous dictionsthat plays with miscellaneous dictionsmusic and miscellaneous diction. As a result, it undoubtedly, becomes a game of words and to make poetry a game, the author may practice distinct dictions. In a comparable way, Deepak opined:

> In the poem, along with figurative language, difficult dictions and poetic expression make me and learners uncomfortable to understand the poems. Hence, I just focused on writing skills because other skills were not asked for in the exam.

Deepak's comment shed light on the challenges created by linguistic density. His admission having limited vocabulary knowledge and the content over the aesthetics of the languages used in poetry. The figurative and abstract expression can alienate the learners due to insufficient information concerning to complex language. Rudwick (2004) noted that English poetry teachers and learners found poetry pedagogy problematic due to English as a foreign or a second language in which teachers and learners have a limited competency. Additionally, Dil shared:

> Poets use many words in poems to show alliterations and assonance. For it, poets use a pile of words that always discomforts me. In the poem, 'IF' there is a phrase " build'em up with" which makes me still discomfort. Therefore, I mainly focus on synonyms and antonyms of the difficult words skipping such items.

Dill's statement reveals typical problems that teachers often experience due to the figurative language found in the poem: alliterations and assonance. His approach to teaching poetry, faces complications in making his students understand the poetry such as " build'em up with" in 'IF' poem by Rudyard Kipling. Overlooking the sound pattern and aesthetic expression, the real flavor of versified poetry remain out of touch. Dill's experiences are, at some level, consistent with Varga who argued that the language of poetry is not static but dynamic because it entails orchestral features (Varga, 1971, p. 22). In a similar situation, Rajkumar uttered:

> I don't feel happy when poems are faced to teach. It is because I am not trained in teaching poems aptly. I teach 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' only for the question's answer.

Rajkumar;s utterances illustrates the common issues in the poetry pedagogy. As he approached poems as a prosaic genre, shows an important gap in poetry pedagogy. Similarly, his limited competency regarding prosody and its application acknowledges that he struggled a lot to identify the elements of versified poetry , such as tone, stress, rhythm, intonation, and chunking; the perception of word groups or chunks based on pausing (Hurley, 2010).

The poem kept in Grade 9, 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' is in iambic tetrameter, follows un-accentuated and accentuated syllables, encompasses figurative expression, provokes challenges as argued by Janina that the use of English as a medium of

instruction requires a high level of language proficiencies on the part of the students, faculty, and administration to deliver quality curricula"(Janina, 2017, p. 3). The observation also revealed that despite teachers' effort, their limited competency led to significant challenges.

Skimpy Information about Prosody

Due to skimpy information, versified poetry approaching act seems to be a challenging. Similarly, with limited competency about prosody and inadequate information about versified poetry, teachers face significant challenges in the pedagogy of versified poetry. Rajan shared:

> Chhanda! I am unaware of it and rhythm and it creates challenges in identifying sound patterns. I read "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" poem at my discretion.

Rajan's narratives simulate a discussion in which teachers faced adversities in identifying the prosodic features while teaching poetry. Chisholm (1977) opined that prosody, in the domain of poetry, refers to the technical aspects of writing poetic verse, includes other uses of sound that make poetry an oral art. However, the perfornmative and auditory characteristics of versified poetry seem remaining unexplored due to common challenges faced by the teachers. In a similar situation, Rajkumar uttered:

> No, I don't have any idea about prosody and its application. I don't teach poems in metrical patterns. But, sometimes I attempt. I don't feel happy when poems are faced to teach. It is because I am not trained in teaching poems aptly. 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening', I teach only for the question's answer.

Rajkumar's straggle revealed a broader issue that he heard the recitation in chhanda in English first time. He did not have any clues about the prosody and its application. However, he made an effort to recite the lyrical poems without knowing the prosodic application. Attridge (2019) emphasized that the necessity of the metrical structure for the poetry in order to understand and to make understand poetry. Furthermore, the observation revealed that the teachers engaged their students only for thematic aspects. Rajan's admission of being unaware noticed a gap in teacher's limited awareness of prosodic knowledge.

Information Deficit as Regard to Feet and Meter

Poetry are composed based on meter and feet which produce rhythmical quality in the poems. Kamal , shared his experiences about the feet and meter used in the poetry, presented here:

> Meter! The meter is quite challenging to know as an English foreign language teacher. I try to imitate to recite based on the meter, like an English native but can't and teach translating English to Nepali focusing on content. I teach how my teacher taught me in school, college, and university.

The above data leads to the discussion that Kamal faced challenges while teaching poetry due to metrical patterns. Adams (1997) stressed that meter and rhyme are two of

poetry's most important and characteristic features. However, Kamal's approach may overlook the artistic essence of poetry as Adam highlighted. Furthermore, in a like context, Hiranya qualified his experiences:

> Sorry sir, I felt uncomfortable with feet and meter. I just heard all these things regarding poems. I don't practice meter and feet while teaching poetry. I just focused on the exam, and I'm unfamiliar with feet and meters. Does it need? I don't think it is needed.

Hiranya's experiences unfolded the critical need for professional development. His decisions to avoid feet and meter associated with versified poetry and focus on meaning based approach created a gap in practices of poetry pedagogy. Additionally, the observation reflects the common trend of educational setting in which teachers seem to be facilitating the content sidelining the aesthetics aspects of poetry.

Conventional Methods of Teaching

Nepalese teachers have been exercising conventional methods while approaching artistic literary genres. In a comparable context, Laxmi shared her experience while teaching English poetry, presented here:

> I generally emphasize the thematic aspects of the poems and provide the background of the poems so that students can understand the general summary of the poem and deal with questions asked in the exams.

Laxmi's focus seems to be on applying cognitive aspects to address the need for the exam. Her accounts noticed that she did not have newly emerged skills to motivate her students, which reflects a gap in teacher training and a dominance of traditional method. Moreover, her attempt to approach poetry is a hackneyed as she deposited information into the minds of the students and she seemed to be withdrawing as Freire criticized as the banking model of education (Freire, 1972). In a matching context, Harikala qualified her experiences:

> I teach poems like other literary genre as our teachers guided us. So, especially I focus on the message of the poems. For example, I taught the poem "Leisure" only from the exam point of view and I focused on difficult words.

Harikala's approach seems to focus on exam-focus on exam-related content and vocabulary comprehension as prosaic genres, overlooking the components of versified poetry. However, Syamsia and Ismail (2021) , Aaron et al. (2021) suggested to apply more comprehensive integrated students centered approach, such as Poetry Box Method. In a similar vein, the observation reflected that teachers primarily focused on exam related content and their attempts revealed a call for thematic exploration and creative interpretation addressing aesthetics of languages used in versified poetry.

Curriculum Oriented Method

Teachers seemed to be pressurizing to accomplish the courses on time. They are

unable to motivate their students in the classes interactively because of the limited hours of the times on the one hand and the English curriculum did not emphasize the aesthetics of the languages used in the poetry nor did pinpoint anatomical features of the poetry on the other hand. As regards dealing with poetry, Suman 's experiences are presented here:

> I hardly go through the verse in a rhythmical way because our curriculum does not focus on it. Regarding your question, I will teach the poem 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' only for the course objectives.

Suman's curriculum driven approach aligned with traditional method which overlooks the sophisticated aspects of versified poetry. The curriculum's lack of emphasis on form confined the learners to meeting only the assignment requirement. Therefore, Topping (1968) and Mulenga (2018) highlighted to exclude due to vagueness and unspecific design of the courses. In a similar situation, Harikala qualified her experiences:

> I teach poetry in the way the curriculum has instructed because I will have to accomplish the course in time. In the demarcated time, I must finish my course. There is limited time, and within that limited period, I should complete the prescribed course as per the curriculum.

Harikala's narratives unfolds that she overlooked the holistic exploration of the poetic form due to the fixed time frame. Besides, our curriculum lacks sufficient information concerning poetry- versified and non-versified. Therefore, Paran (2008) observed that teachers do not prefer literature in their ELT classes because of insufficient time during the classroom period. Similarly, these arguments are aligned with the study of Vural (2013) which argued the impact of the curriculum's time constraints caused teachers uncomfortable to teach literature of a foreign or second language. Similarly, the observation of teaching versified poetry revealed emphasizing on narrow approach to help students perform well on tests ignoring the genre specific characteristic of versified poetry.

Inadequate Praxis

Poetry is an oral genre which demands oral performance. In the lack of performance, teaching poetry, has no meaning because, it becomes a prose genre. Dill shared his experiences:

> I teach from the exam's point of view, getting support for some theories. I won't go into deep thinking does not need, the poem 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge' I teach only to find out the questions answer. I don't have any idea how to recite poems musically.

Dill's focus is shaped by the pressure of the curriculum constraints little attention to the dynamic aspects of the poetry. Freire (1972) argues that teacher's role is to go beyond the delivery of the knowledge highlighting the practicality which is an essential element in the teaching and learning process. Versified, poetry primarily demands an art of performativity and

in a lack of oral presentation, it cannot be constructive and supportive to the students (Roberts et al., 2014).In the similar context, Raj Kumar explored:

> I hardly engage my poetry students in performing poetry recitation acts in pairs. What to engage students practically? We teach all the things given in the curriculum whatever has been suggested to teach. I'm unknown of recitation.

The narratives provided reveal a critical issue in the teaching of poetry, where the performative and expressive potential of versified poetry is often overlooked. Raj Kumar's focus on content delivery, without recognizing poetry as an art form to be expressed through performance, highlights the disconnection from the recitative aspects of poetry. By adhering strictly to the curriculum and prioritizing content, teachers fail to engage students in the emotional and experiential dimensions of poetry. This approach limits students' ability to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of poetry, which are essential for a comprehensive understanding of the genre.

The Impact of an Accent of Native Language

In the area of literature on second language teaching, the first language tone seems to have influenced the second language speakers. In the context of Nepal, teachers are from different cultural backgrounds- Tharu, Gurung, Magar, Newar, Madhasi, Chhetri, Muslim, and Brahmin communities etc. Teachers seem to be facing a challenge due to the impact of the first language accent. In a similar context, Hiranya explored:

> I'm unknown totally about structures of the poems and I have an accetnt problem. I can't go through rhythmically. It is because I have not been trained in meters and foot and my accent is Nepali and it is deeply rooted in my tongue. I can read Nepali poems in rhythm but English does not.

Hiranya's difficulty in teaching poetry rhythmically highlights the challenges posed by linguistic and cultural diversity. His struggle, due to the influence of his Nepali accent, aligns with Tedick and Walker's (1994) observation that the mother tongue affects second language acquisition. Similarly, Derakhshan and Karimi (2015) pointed out that first language structures often interfere with second language learning. This underscores the need to address language barriers in poetry pedagogy to enhance comprehension and performance. Similarly, Niruja depicted:

> I teach poetry translating one line to another. Recitation! I can't do because of my accent and lack of profound craft. Though I try I can't recite because it sounds unmelodic. Students laugh if I recite.

Niruja's statement highlights the lack of professional development in poetry pedagogy, particularly regarding recitation. The focus on linguistic skills in the secondary curriculum (CDC, 2021) has marginalized the aesthetic aspects of poetry, contributing to the rise of 'Nenglish' or 'Nepanglish' (Koirala, 2021). Niruja's reliance on line-by-line translation contrasts with a more

integrated approach that includes both interpretation and oral performance, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive teaching method.

Cultural Sensitivity in Teaching Poetry

Nepalese classrooms are heterogeneous (Subedi, 2010). Similarly, foreign or second language teachers and learners faced problems reciting poetry due to a native accent's issues. In a similar domain, Rameshor revealed:

> There are students from different ethnic groups. I only focused on finding out the meaning of the difficult diction so that students could find easy to grasp the meaning of the given poems and how to create music? No possible.

Rameshor's account highlights the challenges posed by the ethnically diverse nature of classrooms in Nepal. The focus on understanding difficult vocabulary limits the effective use of poetic rhythm and recitation, hindering meaningful engagement with poetry. Nepal's complex socio-religious and linguistic diversity, comprising 103 social groups (Renu et al., 2007), further complicates the teaching of English poetry. This diversity requires teachers to adopt flexible and inclusive teaching methods that address varying levels of proficiency in the target language.Similarly, Rajkumar illustrated:

> In the classes, there are Tharu students, Magar students, Brahmin, Gurung, and Madeshi students. But they speak the Nepali language because their parents speak the Nepali language. Some students don't want to communicate. They speak hesitatingly. Some students who are from the Madhesi community don't even speak Nepali.

Rajkumar's reflections highlight the challenges of teaching English versified poetry in a linguistically diverse classroom, where cultural diversity and local accents play a significant role. Lengeris (2012) notes that many language teachers, as non-native speakers, may lack the confidence to model native-like prosody. During classroom observations, it was evident that students hesitated to speak English, likely due to limited exposure and language anxiety, further complicating effective poetry instruction, as Giri (2020) has debated.

Conclusion

This study offers valuable insights for teachers who engage with poetry through recitation, particularly focusing on stressed and unstressed syllables. This research encourages teachers to adopt more engaging and dynamic methods for teaching poetry, moving beyond traditional approaches to inspire students and improve their linguistic skills. The findings of this study suggest that curriculum developers and policymakers need to emphasize a literature-centered curriculum that includes poetry recitation based on sound patterns. The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) should ensure that poetry courses are designed with clear teacher guidelines, offering sufficient information on recitation techniques, particularly concerning stressed and unstressed syllables. This study opens the door for further research

on the versification of poetry in the context of teaching English in Nepal. The study also calls for deeper investigation into the impact of linguistic challenges, such as multilingualism, on poetry instruction and learning. Future researchers passionate about this field can build upon these findings to contribute to the ongoing development of poetry education in the Nepali curriculum

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