



FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

SECONDARY LEVEL EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS, PRACTICES, AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING CAS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEPAL

A Narrative Inquiry

Dil Kumar Sijali Magar

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Examiner:	Dawn Sanders

Abstract

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- Aim:** The objective of my study was to explore the EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences of using CAS in Nepalese public schools. It was further aimed to explore their current practice of CAS and the potential challenges they have faced in implementing CAS in language teaching.
- Theory:** The study adopted the theory of social constructivism that addresses how social interaction in language classrooms using CAS creates knowledge and fosters their learning. It recognizes the social aspects of learning, such as conversation, interaction, and application of knowledge to real-life situations.
- Method:** It is a qualitative research study that adopted Narrative inquiry as a research method. The interview was used to collect data. Narrative analysis was done by extracting different sections of text from the verbatim data, classifying, and categorizing them by generating different themes.
- Results:** Based on the narratives shared by EFL teachers, it was found that the teachers have a positive mindset toward implementing CAS as it reflects the true picture of what students have learned so far and the need to make further improvements. CAS also contributes to an improved and fair evaluation in language learning, whereas homework and classwork have been found to be practised as a tool of CAS in language classrooms. Furthermore, teachers at the secondary level use CAS as an umbrella term consisting of a range of assessment tools such as portfolios, project work, homework, self-assessment, peer review, project work, poster presentation, maintaining rubrics, etc. The study revealed that large classroom sizes, lack of resources, learning materials, school infrastructure, excessive workload, language barriers, students with mixed ability groups and lack of training for them are major challenges in implementing CAS. The study suggests that EFL teachers employ tools of CAS to lead to more effective teaching and learning practices and benefit students' learning outcomes.

Foreword

I am sincerely grateful to Senior Lecturer. Dr. Adrianna Nizinska, my tutor, for providing me with her intensive guidance, time, and constructive feedback throughout my research project. She has been passionate and enthusiastic about this project since my proposal. I would also sincerely thank Dr. Ernst Thoutenhoofd, Reader in Education of the Department of Education and Special Education, for supporting and guiding my research journey here at the IMER. He has always encouraged and motivated me to accomplish my project.

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List of Abbreviations

CAS	Continuous Assessment System
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
DEO	District Education Office
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
GON	The Government of Nepal
GPA	Grade Point Average
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
IMER	International Master's Program in Education Research
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NEB	National Board of Examination
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEE	Secondary Education Examination
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with my personal narratives of how I experienced assessment in my EFL classroom. I have briefly presented the research background and issue statement where assessment practices in Swedish university education prompted me to critically think and examine if similar assessment practices are in operation in my secondary-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. After that, I articulated the problem and stated the justification for why the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) is one of the possible areas of research studies. After that, I presented a valid reason for conducting this study with research questions and discussed the significance of it with relevant literature.

My Experiences of Assessment in EFL Classrooms

I could not comprehend the English lesson well until I was at the secondary level. We were not instructed to learn the functions of English and how we can use them in our practical life. It was considered the best way of learning English, memorizing, and reciting them to the class or in the test. Teachers awarded the students who could recite and memorize the information. I did not understand that learning English was a means of communication. I still remember my teacher, who never talked in English or gave us much exposure to learning English. Even though it was my best subject, I could never obtain a good grade in it, and it remained one of the most challenging subjects. As soon as we had mastered the meaning of vocabulary, our teacher used to teach us English with sentence-to-sentence translation into Nepali.

We were taught about English Grammar for the first time. We have been introduced to the content of Grammar as article, voice, narrative, preposition, tag question, causative verbs, etc. The teacher said he could not teach the individual lesson because we had a large classroom size with more than 120 students in a single class. Therefore, he used to choose the critical lesson for the examination. At the plus two levels after my school education, too, we studied English from the examination point of view, and he would skip the lessons that were not asked for in the examination. I remember that we studied English and other subjects for examinations. We used to be assessed only with the summative test.

In our every annual examination of English subjects, we were required to take the practical test of English. The external examiner played an audio tape and distributed the sheet of paper to answer the questions based on the audio he played. We had to answer questions based on a long text for our reading comprehension and produce a text for our writing skills. We were finally asked questions that we had to answer the examiner. I now understood that all four language learning skills are equally important, which were all missing until I took that examination. All years of my school education were spent memorizing vocabulary, translating word meanings, and copying what we have

memorized in the classroom. None of them helped me to comprehend the audio tape. As a result, I struggled heavily to answer throughout the practical test. Had my teacher administered a continuous assessment to evaluate our language learning progress, I could have performed better.

The same practice of teaching English continued until I attended bachelors in education. I was not motivated to learn English with the classroom instructional practices of my teacher either. The teacher here, too, was exam-oriented and authoritative. We were instructed to answer the same responses in the textbook. The teacher used the grammar-translation method for most of his lessons. The teacher had an old notebook where he had made a note of lessons, and we were obliged to copy them as he dictated his note in the class. Unfortunately, we have still been adopting the same practices of teaching English. I assert that many students, particularly those who attended public schools and universities from my home country, have similar experiences of learning English.

Attending the IMER program has changed my mindset of how classroom teaching practices and assessing individual students should look like. I observed the teachers equipped with learning resources. I observed the teachers engaging us in classroom activities, group work, and seminar presentations for classroom discussion and administering many other forms of formative assessment. My tutor on research education motivated us to demonstrate our critical perspective while introducing some research journals and encouraged us to participate in the groups to analyse and present it to the class. Working in a group of students with diverse backgrounds, relating the text with our individual life experiences while analysing the text and locating the self in a broader sociocultural context, was an awesome experience. Using this assessment form also informed me where I am and what I need to improve further in my learning. It reminded me of my Nepalese classrooms, where we were hardly encouraged for these classroom activities and assessed with continuous assessment in my language learning classroom. It triggered me to study teachers' understanding, practices, and challenges of using continuous assessment systems (CAS) in Nepalese EFL classrooms.

Background of the Study

The English language has a significant role in almost every field. Uses of this language, like in international business, education, communication, politics, technology etc., are massive. It plays a major role in institutions, especially in education in developing countries like Nepal. Its application is dominant in business sectors, financial institutions, private companies, NGOs, and INGOs. Furthermore, the use of the English language has been growing in school education too.

However, the use of the English language in school education is given a high priority, and students' proficiency level is not considered satisfactory (T. Poudel, 2019). Several factors affect the student's overall performance in the English language. As Awasthi (2004) stated that students' academic performance is affected by several reasons, including teachers' use of teaching instructions, the quality and appropriateness of teaching materials, the evaluation process, and of course, the mindset of both the teachers and, the students for using English as a foreign language.

One of the influencing factors of the teaching-learning process is the assessment method teachers use to evaluate their students' language proficiency. Bista (2011) furthermore argues that assessment considerably impacts teaching-learning activities. Therefore, it is necessary to use assessment tools to improve the students learning. It has a wide discussion when discussing the use of assessment in language classrooms. Some argue that the final term examination has nothing to do with the overall performance of learning the English language because it focuses on specific parts of the unit or the course, which doesn't give students more opportunities to demonstrate their language skills. A continuous Assessment System (CAS) has been brought into teaching practices to address the challenges raised by annual examinations for assessing students' overall learning of a particular subject.

A continuous Assessment System (CAS) is a method for evaluating students' entire learning. It focuses on several areas of the students learning, is continuous, consists of various assessment tools, including projects, self-assessment, and observation, and offers students numerous chances to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. CAS enables teachers to continually collect data about students' performance and improvement in learning. It helps the teachers to make an informed decision about their student's progress and to use their teaching techniques to improve the students learning. Shrestha and Gautam (2022) support using CAS in school education to ensure all students can achieve the learning goal. While learners are from different backgrounds and learning levels in the classroom, the teacher determines teaching methods to ensure all learners learn using CAS.

According to Sabarwal (2017), the primary purpose of continuous assessment is to enhance student learning and determine the teachers' teaching-learning activities. Teachers need to explore the strengths and weaknesses of their students and provide remedial teaching to develop student learning. Neupane (2020) also states that it is extremely important for teachers to use CAS to enhance students learning. It is not enough to just take a final examination at the end of a term and evaluate the students learning. Instead, they are urged to take CAS to achieve the student's learning goal, which needs to be aligned with the learning activities.

It is also important that the uses of CAS and the result with them often informs the teachers about their student's learning progress and the appropriateness of their teaching-learning activities. After the duties of the District Education Office (DEO) have been transferred to the local government in Nepal since 2015, the use of CAS in classroom teaching has been made compulsory. Their uses in the classroom have been satisfactory; however, it has been a long since the policy was implemented, from elementary to high school (Neupane, 2020).

It requires a sound theoretical understanding and abilities for the teachers to execute CAS properly. According to several researchers, Shrestha and Gautam (2022), if CAS is not adequately planned, designed, examined, and employed for its primary purpose, it may provide several challenges in teaching. Therefore, it is visible that the application of CAS in school education has been a major challenge. Schools and higher education institutions are obliged to use CAS for the formative

evaluation of the students learning. However, most schools use it as a summative evaluation (P. Shrestha & Gautam, 2022a).

Gyawali (2021) in his studies states that most school education teachers concentrate on the summative features of CAS. As a result, they have neglected to implement and instruct formative assessment. He furthermore suggests that by focusing solely on the summative part of continuous evaluation, teachers in school education don't improve their teaching-learning practices to achieve the students' learning goals. Failure to use CAS for its primary purposes for school education has negative effects on students' learning.

According to Shrestha and Gautam (2022), language testing in Nepal does not assess language abilities but the ability to recall test material based on the textbook. They further emphasize that the other issues with Nepal's assessment system are a lack of training, and resources, teachers' willingness to administer them and less monitoring by the school authority. Being one of the former EFL teachers in a community school, I considered understanding, practices, and challenges of EFL teachers in using CAS as one of my emerging issues that brought me to this research study.

Problem Statement

Evaluating students' performance and improving their learning is challenging. Teachers need to constantly attempt to identify the issues their students are experiencing and ensure that they are learning. English is a foreign language in multilingual countries like Nepal, which has a classroom with students from diverse mother tongues. As a result, both teachers and students encounter a great deal of difficulty in the language classroom. Due to having a large classroom size, lack of proper classroom management for enhancing communication skills to the students, confusing government policy on the application of CAS, challenges to manage heterogeneous classes, insufficient knowledge of continuous assessment system (CAS) etc., are the major challenges of CAS in Nepalese public-school education. In addition to the lack of proper tools for testing language classrooms, teachers' perceptions of CAS as an additional burden and insufficient time for teaching English as a second language in school education are other significant challenges in Nepalese public schools.

After the country moved to federalism, the District Education Office (DEO)'s roles for the operation and supervision of school education have now been transferred to local governments, working through their Education Officers and education departments (Dhungana et al., 2022). The local governments have made a special provision for using CAS in school education, and they spend a large sum of their budget on training the teachers on CAS. According to them, all working teachers are subject to using CAS in their classroom teaching practice. However, studies show that they are not visible in executing them.

When I once was invited to share my experiences teaching English at a public school with their working teachers in a public school, I observed a teacher using an evaluation form to mark the student's overall achievement. In response to my curiosity, when I asked what it was and why he was

filling this rubric, his answer surprised me that it was a means of employing CAS for his class. So, I, as one of the EFL practitioners in a community school, the understanding and practice of continuous assessment contradicted my understanding of it.

Purpose of the Study

The objectives of my study were to explore how secondary-level EFL teachers understand and experience implementing CAS and how they practice for their language teaching. Similarly, this study also aimed to explore the challenges in administering CAS. So, the objective of this study was to explore secondary-level EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of CAS and their challenges while implementing CAS in their classrooms.

Research Questions

These are the following research questions for my proposed research study,

- i. How do Secondary Level EFL teachers at Nepalese public schools perceive and experience the Continuous Assessment System (CAS)?
- ii. How do they practice CAS in their classrooms?
- iii. What are the challenges of implementing CAS in their language classrooms?

Significance/Relevance of the Study

The implementation of letter grading in the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination in Nepal commenced in 2015. According to Dawadi (2018), the execution of a grading system as a means of evaluation was proposed by CAS. She further argued that CAS had been argued that it had left some significant pitfalls. Categorizing high-performing students into the same basket as average-performing students certainly discourages them from learning. Besides, the students with poor performance are also promoted to high school, where they do not perform well. The teachers are using the rubrics of CAS to complete formality in the school education (Gyawali, 2021). It was, therefore, necessary to review the effectiveness of CAS in school education. In addition, as a research student, I felt it was imperative for me to conduct studies on how secondary-level EFL teachers perceived CAS, its application in their teaching practices, and their challenges.

The study's implications would also benefit the EFL and other working teachers to improve and implement their teaching practices concerning CAS. They would also benefit from applying improved assessment practices in school education. Since the study explored on various teacher implementation challenges related to CAS, the teachers would learn how to improve their teaching-learning practices when conducting CAS using multiple tools and techniques. Furthermore, the study discussed EFL teachers' understanding of using CAS abundantly and offered suggestions for improving assessment practices, particularly for teaching secondary-level EFL classrooms. The subject experts would surely benefit from using this study's findings to standardize the use of tools and techniques for using CAS in Secondary Level EFL classrooms.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Relevance

My studies looked at the perspectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Four for quality education. I have examined how Secondary Level EFL teachers' practices of implementing Continuous Assessment in their classroom contribute to achieving SDG for quality education. Since this present study was concerned with finding the perception, practices, and challenges of implementing CAS in secondary-level EFL classrooms, it, on the other hand, attempted to assess and conclude the practical tools of CAS to enhance and promote quality education in second language learning. Different CAS applications aim to foster creativity, leadership abilities, and life skills for both existing EFL teachers and students. Identifying the critical issues in language learning at public schools and recommending appropriate forms of formative assessment using CAS was expected for the teachers with improved teaching practices that ensured the learners received a quality education.

Even though having a huge disparity in public-private school education in the country, stakeholders at public schools are taking great initiatives to use CAS in classroom practices to bridge the gap between public-private school education to ensure the quality of education. Therefore, the SDG Goal FOUR of quality education fully informs my present research study. Since the implementation of CAS in language classrooms aid in providing inclusive and equitable quality education, EFL teachers can keep track of the progress of their students and identify their strengths and weaknesses. This would allow teachers to make plans for individualized instruction and support to ensure that all students have an equal chance of succeeding in attaining language proficiency. CAS on the other hand promotes a culture of lifelong learning as assessing the progress of students over time encourages self-reflection and self-improvement. Students become more engrossed in their learning process and are motivated to improve their English language skills outside the classroom.

Besides, implementing CAS in teaching English as a foreign language contribute to enhancing learning outcomes, and regular assessments identifies areas in which students may be struggling and enable instructors to provide individualized interventions and support. This improves students' language skills, communication abilities, and overall academic performance.

Implementing CAS requires the development of assessment strategies, the evaluation of student performance, and the provision of constructive feedback, all of which contribute to teacher professional development. Therefore, the use of effective CAS practices in language classrooms, thereby contributing to the professional growth of English language teachers in Nepal. In addition to that, using CAS in language classrooms also ensures the students receive a higher-quality education.

The findings from this study can be utilized for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of implementation of CAS in public schools, pertaining challenges of using them in language classrooms, and EFL teachers' practices. It enables education stakeholders, policymakers, school administrations and EFL teachers as an individual to make informed decisions of using CAS, allocate resources effectively, and identify enhancement opportunities in the field of English language teaching in public

schools in the country. Therefore, the present study on EFL teacher's perception, practices and challenges on implementing CAS in language classrooms contributes to the overall objective of attaining quality education in Nepal, in line with SDG of Quality Education. It addresses crucial aspects of inclusive education, lifelong learning, enhanced learning outcomes, teacher professional development, and effective monitoring and evaluation by implementing constant CAS, all of which are equally important for SDG Four of attaining quality education.

Chapter Summary

This chapter commenced with my brief narratives of how I experienced my EFL classroom learning atmosphere in relation to assessment practices. Then, I articulated my research problem, followed by the research purpose, research questions, and the significance of the study. I also stated my study's sustainable development goal of quality relevance with pertinent literature.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Continuous assessment is administered to determine whether students have learned the subject matter and their level. The teachers support continuous assessment in classroom practices; students are evaluated using a continuous assessment system (CAS). The current education policy in the country also states that using CAS is extremely important in school education since it determines that the quality of education is reflected in actual and practical abilities (CDC, 2005; MOE, 2016). Most of the papers indicate that the large classroom size, subject matter, and the teachers' training and skills on CAS in terms of using continuous assessment in the EFL classroom have a significant role. Besides, they also identify that the willingness of the teachers to use CAS, the availability of the resources, and the status of school infrastructure are other unavoidable factors in implementing CAS.

Some research studies contend that the country's public schools perform less than private schools despite the government's massive investment in quality education. According to Dhakal (2020), the reason for not correctly implementing CAS and the concerned authority did not make any regulations to monitor them (p. 36). It is further recommended that Nepalese public schools urgently need to improve their quality of education, and they must regulate to implement the idea of CAS in all classroom practices. However, having well-qualified and trained teachers in secondary-level public schools whose annual performance is below average caught my attention to undertake the present study on secondary-level EFL teachers' understanding of CAS, their classroom practices, and their challenges in implementing them. I went through several studies and reports on CAS to review EFL teachers' knowledge of CAS, classroom practices, and implementation challenges.

General Background

People in certain countries or regions use a particular language for daily communication. Language is a means of communication, either in spoken or written form. They exchange their ideas, opinions, feelings, or certain emotions by using them, which we call language. Language is transmitted from one discourse to another, from one generation to another, etc. Therefore, the major events in history, any piece of literary works, major inventions etc., all are recorded in written language. Human interaction without a means of language is not possible. Therefore, language has always played an inseparable role in human communication. And language, thus, has a significant role in classroom teaching activities and in assessing the learners equally.

Assessment of language learners is done to evaluate students' linguistic proficiency. In other words, language testing assesses students' linguistic ability. Language learning is further improved by means of using assessment. Therefore, assessment in a language classroom is an integral part of learning. Dendrinis (2006) stated that testing conducted to get information about what the learners

have learned is one of the means of assessment and can incorporate various means of formative evaluation to know students' learning progress.

On the other hand, Fulcher (2013) has defined the term assessment as an umbrella term for assessing students' linguistic ability. In contrast, testing is done to obtain information about the test takers. So, assessment and language learning are integral parts of each other.

Testing and assessment are conducted to gather information, particularly in language classrooms, to determine if they have learned specific skills. Testing and assessment are both essential components of evaluating classroom teaching activities.

According to Gilkerson et al. (2017), CAS is an assessment strategy where the students are assessed frequently throughout the course instead of taking a final assessment (p. 13). Continuous assessment refers to the regular and constant administration of formal and informal evaluations. Thus, multiple assessment instruments are administered to evaluate students' progress and overall learning achievement, including their behaviors, personality traits etc. Several studies and reports in the country have emphasized the strict implementation of CAS in classroom teaching. However, it is often reported that the use of CAS is largely neglected.

I gathered and discussed relevant literature concerning teachers' understanding of CAS, their practices, and their significant challenges while implementing CAS in teaching-learning activities in the Nepalese context. I reviewed the scholarly articles, reports, unpublished thesis, and policy documents related to implementing CAS in the EFL context and discussed them below.

Definition and Categories of Assessment

Test, measurement, assessment, teaching, and evaluation are interrelated in the teaching-learning environment, where we use them to evaluate students' knowledge, skills, and abilities. These three terms are frequently used interchangeably, despite their distinct meanings and functions. Hughes (2003) states that a test measures a particular set of abilities or knowledge in a specific subject or topic. Students' understanding of a particular concept, ability to apply it, and problem-solving skills can be evaluated using subjective and objective tests. In addition, examinations are formal assessments encompassing many subject matter topics (Fulcher, 2013; Gilkerson et al., 2017). Examinations are typically administered after a course or program and are used to evaluate a student's overall subject knowledge. They are frequently used to determine a student's grade or eligibility to advance to the next educational level.

Assessment is a more inclusive term that encompasses both tests and exams. Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) define the term assessment as it collects information on students' knowledge, skills, and abilities to evaluate their learning progress. Formal tests, classroom observations, group projects, and self-evaluation are all ways of assessing students learning. The assessment aims to provide students, teachers, and administrators with feedback on how well students are learning and

where they can progress. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), measurement quantifies the students' abilities and knowledge in language learning.

The introduction of tests, examinations, and assessments in education is essential to evaluate students' learning progress and determine the effectiveness of teaching activities (Hughes, 2003). It also assists in identifying the areas in which the pupil requires additional support and attention. These evaluations enable educators to modify their teaching activities to improve student learning. On the other hand, teaching provides opportunities for students to listen, think, engage, set goals, and process teacher feedback to improve their language learning skills.

However, tests, exams, and assessments do not solely determine a student's knowledge and abilities; tools of continuous evaluation and formative assessments like participation in classroom activities, group projects, and extracurricular activities are administered to assess the student's overall achievement in learning. Therefore, Bachman and Palmer (2022) suggest that teachers employ continuous assessment and a combination of them to evaluate students' learning progress and provide a more comprehensive evaluation of their learning.

In conclusion, tests, examinations, and assessments are essential for evaluating students' knowledge, skills, and abilities. Bachman and Palmer (2022) assert that evaluation is necessary for making decisions based on students' performance on the test result. These evaluations assist teachers, students, and administrators in identifying learning process strengths and weaknesses and implementing possible interventions to improve learning outcomes.

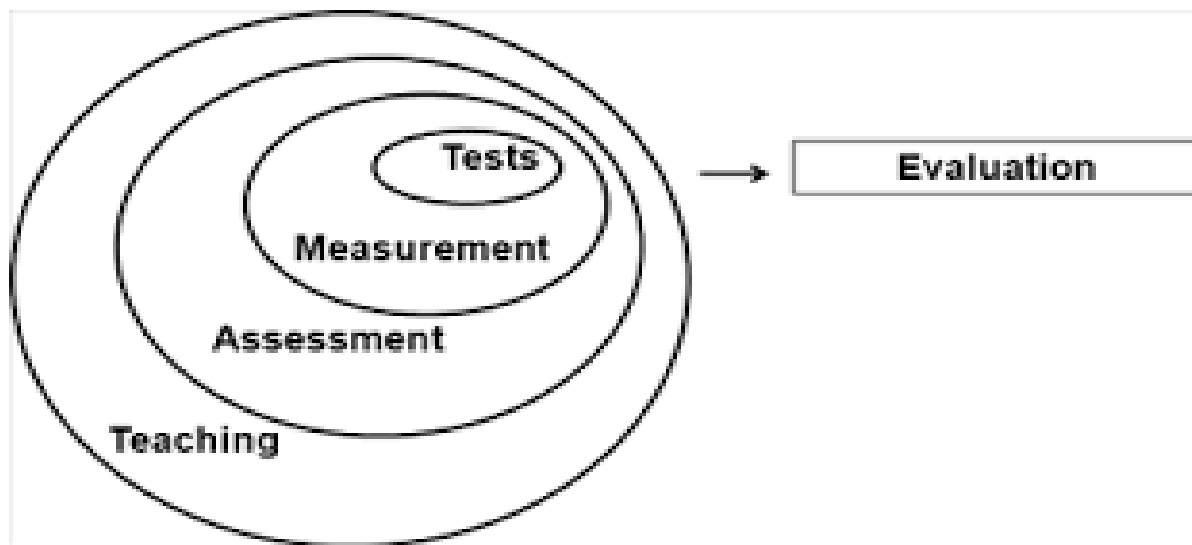


Figure: I Test, measurement, assessment, teaching and evaluation (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010, p. 6)

Language Assessment in EFL Class

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, language assessment is essential in assessing students' proficiency and ability to use language. The introduction of language testing can provide teachers with a clear comprehension of their student's language skills and progress, which can inform

their instructional decisions and assist them in designing effective classroom teaching activities. In language teaching and learning, assessment is a system for measuring and enhancing the performance and progress of the students in achieving them. The assessment incorporates the entire teaching and learning activities and evaluates the progress of students learning (Hedge, 2001, p. 53). Similarly, Tsagari and Banerjee (2016) assert that the second language assessment is a procedure for determining language proficiency in using it, where Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) stated that an assessment is a tool for assessing a student's ability to use language in daily life.

In the EFL classroom in Nepal, language testing can also assist students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses and setting objectives for language development (Hughes, 2003). As students become aware that their language proficiency is evaluated, they are more motivated to work harder and consider their language learning more seriously.

According to Mody (2022), the lack of resources and trained teachers to administer practical language exams is a significant obstacle to implementing language testing tools in EFL classrooms in Nepal. Therefore, it is essential to develop appropriate language testing materials and teacher training programs to ensure teachers have the skills and knowledge to accurately administer and interpret language tests. Besides, Poudel (2016) asserts that the need to align language testing with the local context and the requirements of Nepalese students is an additional challenge. It involves considering cultural, linguistic, and educational differences and designing language tests sensitive to local norms and values and culturally pertinent.

Implementing language testing in EFL classrooms in Nepal can have substantial advantages for both students and teachers. It determines the actual level of students' learning and helps them improve better. However, Shrestha and Gautam (2022) emphasize that language testing must be carefully designed, administered, and interpreted to be effective, considering local contexts and requirements.

Additionally, language testing can be used to evaluate the efficacy of language instruction and learning programs in Nepal. By assessing students' language proficiency before and after a language program, teachers determine the program's effectiveness and make any necessary adjustments to enhance its quality. Furthermore, language assessment can provide valuable insights for the close stakeholders of EFL education in the country, who can make informed decisions about language education policies and allocate resources to enhance language education in Nepal (Paudel & Panday, 2018). In the EFL classroom, assessment should not be the only means of assessing students' language proficiency.

Language testing should be supplemented with other assessment forms, such as classroom observation, project-based assessments, and self-assessment, to provide a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of students' language skills. To introduce language testing into the EFL classroom in Nepal, teachers can create and administer brief, basic language tests that focus on all four language learning skills. Sapkota (2016) states that these assessments can identify areas of strength

and weakness, guiding teachers in developing appropriate language learning activities (47). As Nepalese EFL teachers gain experience with language assessment, they can create tests that measure a broader range of language skills. Therefore, implementing CAS in language classrooms in Nepal benefits every stakeholder of EFL education.

Significance of CAS in Classroom Teaching

In contrast to summative evaluation, the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) evaluates students' progress throughout a course. CAS is considered to assess students' progress or learning achievement more comprehensively, considering not only their subject matter knowledge but also their skills, attitudes, and behaviors (Prouty & George, 2013; Sapkota, 2016). In today's fast-paced and competitive learning environments, where students are expected to achieve the overall learning goal of language learning, using CAS is often considered essential.

Kellaghan and Greaney (2001) support using CAS as it provides immediate feedback, which is highly beneficial for students to identify areas where they need to make improvements. By assessing students using CAS, teachers can tailor their teaching methods and materials to individual students' requirements, strengths, and weaknesses (Prouty & George, 2013). It is particularly significant in classrooms where students have different proficiency levels of language learning. According to Coombe (2010), as CAS provide detailed information about an individual learner with improved learning opportunities for them, teachers can assist students in reaching their full potential and achieving a learning goal.

Teachers can identify areas where they need to improve their teaching methods or materials while assessing the students often. Using CAS results in a more effective and efficient teaching and learning environment for teachers and students. Besides, CAS can reduce the stress and anxiety of attending final examinations. When assessing students using the CAS throughout the year, they can continuously work towards their learning objectives without pressure from annual exams.

Kellaghan and Greaney (2001) claim that CAS contributes to learners achieving learning outcomes with a more relaxed, creative, and supportive learning environment for improved learning outcomes. CAS assists students in enhancing their learning achievement by providing a more comprehensive, individualized, and supportive learning environment. It also helps the teachers assess their teaching practices that direct effective and efficient classroom teaching and learning activities.

Types of Assessment in Language Class

Assessments in education are categorized differently by different scholars. For instance, Mc McAlpine (2002) distinguishes dichotomies of assessment as formative and summative, formal and informal, final and continuous, and process and product. In contrast, Hughes (2003) classifies them into formative, summative, norm-referenced, and criterion-referenced. Apart from both, Fulcher (2013) concludes that administering assessment aims at determining their learning and providing feedback for improvement. Hughes (2003) suggests a classification of assessment in general with formative and

summative assessments based on the assessment frequency looks ideal in assessing language. Therefore, it is essential to understand these terms as they are essential and frequently used for evaluating language learning.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is administered at the end of the course or end term to evaluate students learning for the whole course or subject matter. Summative assessment is a lengthy traditional test, which the students perceive as a burden (Alderson, 2005; Hughes, 2003). It lacks additional feedback, mainly used to collect the scores from the students in their learning. According to the definition, the summative assessment focuses primarily on grading students rather than providing corrective feedback. The teacher cannot evaluate all student performance aspects, such as creativity, innovation, and critical thinking if they focus solely on summative assessment. Assessing a student's proficiency solely through summative classroom assessments or final exams is impossible. Everhard and Murphy (2015) state summative assessment is a judgment of student competence (p.73). They emphasize an end-of-session evaluation of overall competence. It does not provide students with feedback or another chance to improve their performance but rather determines whether the student has mastered the required skills over the subject matter.

The most visible assessment in Nepalese schools is a summative assessment to decide what students have learned at the end of the academic year (L. N. Poudel, 2016; Thapa, 2021). Summative assessment, therefore, is used for promotion, certification, grades, and admission to higher-level study. Yet, it is equally essential for recommending institutions to students for specific courses. Summative assessment summarizes the performance or learning achievement of the students. One of the major goals of this assessment is to measure and decide what the students have learned at end term examination. Annual examination administered in schools is an example of it which informs the teachers about the effectiveness of their teaching activities.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is used to evaluate students learning achievement and improve learning based on the information given. Using the information to guide, enhance, and make corrections in the education and teaching process is possible. Still, it doesn't assign the final grade or decision over the learning achievement. Formative assessment is integral to instructional activities; it provides the information necessary to adjust or improve teaching and learning. Formative assessment implies real-time classroom learning activities and is intended to aid instruction and learning by providing appropriate feedback.

In language classroom teaching, formative assessment is the most significant measure of student performance and learning achievement (Hughes, 2003). Everhard and Murphy (2015) define it as an assessment that offers feedback on learning achievement to improve learning (p.79). Formative assessment is administered to evaluate the overall learning achievements of the students throughout a course and provides corrective feedback for further improvement.

According to Lewy (1990), formative assessment is an ongoing and concurrent process with teaching-learning activities to provide teachers and students feedback and improve teaching and learning. During the instructional process and as learning occurs, formative assessment provides feedback and information. Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) referred to formative assessment as an evaluation of students in developing their competencies and skills to assist them in continuing this development process (p.7). Consequently, formative assessment is a significant means of modifying teaching methods, techniques, materials, and procedures, mainly based on information from past experiences and outcomes. Therefore, formative assessment in the language classroom is practiced to evaluate and improve language proficiency.

	Formative	Summative
Time	During a learning activity/unit	At the conclusion of a learning activity/unit
Goal	To improve learning	To make a decision
Feedback	Return to material/ learning issues	Final judgement
Frame of reference	Always criterion (evaluating all students according to the same criteria)	Sometimes normative (comparing each student against the others) Sometimes criterion (evaluating each student according to the same criteria)

Figure: II Difference between Formative and Summative Assessment (Harlen & James, 1997)

Continuous Assessment

CAS is a way of evaluating students learning. It is an ongoing process of collecting information on the progress of students' learning time and again and making an informed decision about what the students have learned so far, followed by immediate feedback to improve their learning ability. Continuous assessment, according to Garrison and Ehringhaus, (2007), refers to the practice of evaluating a learner's proficiency to enhance learning with the help of instant feedback. The CAS in education is administered in real-time classroom teaching by which the students perform better in acquiring targeted learning skills. Therefore, continuous assessment is implemented throughout the course over a period to enhance learning skills (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007; Tsagari & Banerjee, 2016). It provides information on learning achievement and determines other classroom teaching activities to improve learning.

Prouty and George (2013) state that continuous assessment aids teachers and students with appropriate feedback for their learning process to make further improvements.

Continuous assessment is employed to describe each student's progress for their continued learning. CAS in a language classroom focuses on testing, measuring, or evaluating the learner's language proficiency (Sapkota, 2016, p. 27). CAS is a highly effective tool for assessing learners. It helps the teachers to determine what the students have learned and need to work out further to achieve more in an organized way. Continuous assessment consists of assigning specific learning activities for the

learners based on what the students were taught before with the help of standards set by the teachers to evaluate their performance. CAS employs several assessment strategies that utilize a variety of assessment instruments, such as observation and project work, portfolio, classroom participation and so on, to evaluate learners' performance regularly over a period.

Proficiency Test

In language classrooms, proficiency tests are essential for assessing students' language skills. The purpose of these assessments is to evaluate students' ability to use a language effectively. In most language classrooms, proficiency tests are a tool for assessing students' language proficiency. Hughes (2003) states that proficiency tests aim to evaluate all four language learning skills, i.e., reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities (p. 13). These exams objectively assess students' ability to comprehend and communicate in the target language. In addition, they aid in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses in the subject matter, which helps them employ other tools and techniques to improve their language learning. In addition, Hughes (2003) also states that the benefit of proficiency tests is that they provide a standard measure of language proficiency (p. 13).

Proficiency exams can encourage students to enhance their language skills. Students are more likely to take their language learning seriously if defined objectives and performance feedback are established. Proficiency tests can effectively demonstrate their language-learning progression to students (H. D. Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). However, proficiency tests do have some limitations.

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), one of the most significant difficulties with proficiency tests is that they do not always reflect students' capacity to use the language in daily activities. A learner may, for instance, perform well on a test of written proficiency but struggle to communicate effectively in conversation. Therefore, it is essential to supplement language proficiency tests with other evaluation forms, such as oral examinations and practical language assignments.

Achievement Test

Achievement tests are used in language classrooms to assess students' ability to use language. Hughes (2003) states that these tests evaluate students' ability to employ their language skills in various contexts, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening (p. 14). Achievement tests are an essential tool in language classrooms because they help teachers evaluate the efficacy of their classroom teaching activities and identify areas in which students may require additional assistance to improve their learning.

A benefit of achievement tests in language classrooms is that they comprehensively evaluate a student's language proficiency. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), achievement tests provide information about the students as they assess their ability to use specific grammar structures, vocabulary, and language functions. This information can identify areas where students may require additional support or modify teaching methods to meet their requirements better.

Achievement tests provide a consistent and reliable measure of student performance that can be used to evaluate the efficacy of instructional methods and to compare student performance over

time. However, achievement tests have limitations as well. For instance, because they are designed to evaluate specific skills and concepts rather than overall language ability, they may not comprehensively measure a student's language proficiency. In addition, achievement tests may not accurately reflect a student's ability to use the language in daily communication. Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) suggest that achievement tests provide a comprehensive measure of students' overall language proficiency and ensure that students acquire the learning skills.

Class Progress Achievement Test

Class progress tests are used in language classrooms to evaluate students' learning progress regularly over a period of time. These tests are designed to measure the student's understanding and mastery of language concepts and skills taught during a particular period, for instance, in unit tests, class tests, monthly tests, and lesson tests etc. Hughes (2003) points out the significance of class progress achievement tests as a major tool in language classrooms, providing teachers with information about how well students learn and where they may need additional support (p. 14).

Class progress achievement tests are administered to inform teachers about students' learning progress. By evaluating students' understanding and ability to use language concepts and skills, teachers can identify areas where the learners excel and struggle (Hughes, 2003). With the help of this test, the evaluation can be used to adjust teaching methods to meet students' needs better and provide additional support where necessary.

A purpose of using class progress achievement tests is that they encourage students to stay on track with their learning goals based on their assessment records. By providing regular assessments of learning progress, students are motivated to stay engaged and focused on their language learning journey (H. D. Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). They determine how they have learned and identify areas where they need to improve, which can help them set realistic learning goals and work towards achieving them.

However, class progress tests also have some limitations. For example, they may not provide a comprehensive measure of a student's language proficiency, as they are designed to evaluate specific skills and concepts taught during a particular period. Additionally, class progress tests may not accurately reflect a student's ability to use the language in everyday life, as they typically do not test social and cultural competence skills.

Final Achievement Test

Final achievement tests in language classrooms are essential tools for assessing students' language proficiency and progress throughout the course. In connection to it, Hughes (2003) states that the tests administered at the end of the course or studies are final achievement tests (p. 15). These tests are typically administered at the end of the term or session and are designed to evaluate students' language skills taught throughout the course. Tests in the context of Nepalese education, administered at the end of the academic year by schools themselves, National Board of Examination (NEB), Secondary Education Examination (SEE), Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB), university examinations

etc., are examples of them. The students are placed or promoted to higher classes if they meet satisfactory standards set by the final achievement tests.

One of the primary goals of final achievement tests is to measure students' language proficiency in language learning skills. These skills are essential components of language learning and are necessary for effective communication in real-life situations. Therefore, final achievement tests are designed to assess these skills equally. In addition to assessing language skills, final achievement tests can evaluate students' progress throughout the course. By comparing their performance on the final achievement test to their performance on earlier assessments, teachers can determine whether students have significantly improved their language skills.

Diagnostic Tests

Diagnostic tests are an essential tool for teachers in language classrooms. Hughes (2003), these tests are designed to determine and understand the student's learning level at the beginning of a course or term. They identify areas of strength and weakness that can guide teachers in their lesson planning and instruction. The primary goal of diagnostic tests is to assess students' language skills across the four main language domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. By evaluating students' performance using the diagnostic test, teachers recognize the learners' language abilities and identify the areas where they need additional support for learning.

Once the diagnostic test results have been analyzed, teachers can use the information to identify areas where students need additional support or instruction (H. D. Brown, 2003). For example, if a student is diagnosed as weak in reading comprehension, the teacher may provide extra reading assignments and strategies to help them improve their reading skills. In addition to guiding instruction, diagnostic tests can also be used to set realistic student goals and expectations. By providing a clear picture of students' language abilities at the beginning of a course or term, teachers can set achievable goals and track their learning progress throughout the course. A diagnostic test aims to understand the exact level of the student's learning and determine the type of remedial teaching required. The information received from this test is important before the start of the course. Diagnostic tests in language classrooms are conducted for remedial teaching.

Placement Tests

Hughes (2003) states that placement tests are an essential tool to determine the level of their students. These tests help teachers understand students' strengths and weaknesses and create tailored lessons to meet their needs. Placement tests are crucial because they accurately measure a student's language proficiency. This knowledge enables language teachers to determine the level of each student. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each student, teachers design lesson plans that are relevant and engaging for the students for better learning.

Placement tests aim to place students into specific levels or sections of a language program or school (Brown, 2003). These tests are mainly conducted at the beginning of the course or the program to understand their exact level. One example of a placement test is an entrance appearing test for any

course or program. This information can be used to identify where the learners have difficulties and enable them to decide to choose teaching classroom teaching activities and teaching materials to improve the student's learning. Another important aspect of placement tests is that they help students to set realistic language learning goals. Understanding their proficiency level and what they need to achieve to reach the next level can motivate students to work harder and stay committed to language learning. Using placement tests improves language learning outcomes for both students and teachers.

Placement tests also provide teachers with valuable insights into the materials and teaching approaches most effective for each student. For example, a student who struggles with grammar may need more explicit instruction and practice exercises. In contrast, students who excel at reading comprehension may benefit from more extensive reading assignments. By identifying each student's unique learning needs, teachers can provide more personalized instruction, making the language learning process more effective and enjoyable.

Tools and techniques of CAS

Continuous Assessment System (CAS) assesses a student's performance throughout the academic year rather than just at the end of the year through final exams. Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007) assert that these tools are adequate for measuring a student's growth and development, as they provide feedback on their progress and help them improve their performance. The implementation of CAS has become increasingly popular in recent years due to its positive impact on student learning. To facilitate the implementation of CAS, various tools, i.e., portfolio, observation, peer assessment, project work etc., in language classrooms are practiced.

A number of different tools are used to assess the students for their needs, interests, and learning preferences. These tools are used as a formative assessment, and the teachers determine the most effective choice of the appropriate tool to assess the students learning. It is also considered that these tools are meaningful in giving teachers the information they need to know about the student's language abilities. Using these tools informs the teachers about how well the students learn the lesson.

Portfolio

Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007) state that portfolios effectively assess student learning in various subject areas, including language classrooms. In language learning classrooms, portfolios provide brief information about the student's progress in language skills. One of the primary benefits of using portfolios in language classrooms is that they provide a more holistic view of student learning. Instead of relying solely on exams and quizzes, portfolios allow teachers to assess student progress in a range of language skills. For example, portfolios include written assignments, audio or video recordings of student conversations, self-evaluations, and reflections on language learning.

Similarly, maintaining portfolios in the language classroom can encourage students to review and reflect on their learning. According to Bolkan and Goodboy (2019), when students collect and review their work for the portfolio, they can reflect on their language skills, identify improvement

areas, and set future learning goals (p. 19). Since portfolios are an ongoing assessment throughout the language learning process, portfolios allow teachers to monitor student progress over time. This allows for more timely feedback and enables teachers to identify and address language learning challenges as they arise. To create an effective language portfolio, students are encouraged to include samples of their work that demonstrate their language skills, such as writing samples, audio or video recordings of conversations, and presentations. They can also reflect on their language learning experience, including their strengths, areas for improvement, and goals for future learning. In addition to serving as an assessment tool, portfolios are used for collaborative learning in language classrooms where the students review each other's portfolios and provide feedback on language skills and areas for improvement.

Project Work

Project work is an effective language-learning tool that allows students to apply language skills in real-life situations (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007). Project work promotes language acquisition, enhances communication skills, and fosters creativity in the language-learning classroom. Project work in language classrooms provides students with fun while learning. Students can apply language skills in real-world contexts by working on a project, such as conducting research, writing reports, and presenting findings. This allows students to practice language skills in a meaningful and relevant way, which can improve language acquisition.

Bolkan and Goodboy (2019) state that project work can also enhance communication skills in language learning. When working on a project, students often need to work collaboratively to accomplish the tasks. This can improve their speaking and listening skills and their ability to express ideas and opinions in a group setting. Furthermore, project work can provide opportunities for students to engage in peer review and feedback, which can improve their language accuracy and fluency. Project work in language classrooms fosters creativity and critical thinking skills. When working on a project, students need to think creatively to generate ideas and solve problems. This can improve their critical thinking skills as they learn to analyze and evaluate information to make informed decisions.

Moreover, project work can create learning opportunities for students to explore their interests, motivating them to learn and improve their language skills. To implement project work in language learning, teachers should design relevant and meaningful projects for students. According to Coombe (2010), projects should align with the learning objectives and provide learning opportunities in natural contexts (p. 37). Teachers should also guide and support students throughout the project to ensure they are on track and meeting learning objectives.

Peer Assessment

Another tool of CAS peer assessment in language classrooms is where the students evaluate and provide feedback on one another's work. Edwards (2013) states that peer assessment fosters critical thinking, active learning, and language skill development in language classrooms. Students become more actively engaged in the learning process as they evaluate the work of their peers and receive

feedback from their peers. This increases their motivation and encourages them to assume responsibility for their education.

Peer assessment helps students observe the task of their peers critically. Students are required to evaluate the content, organization, and language use of their classmates' work. The act of peer assessment helps them to look at their work critically to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their work and provide constructive feedback to enhance it. The act of peer assessment benefits both learners who are being assessed and the learners providing feedback on language learning (Edwards, 2013).

Peer assessment provides students with multiple perspectives on a lesson. In traditional teaching methods, only the instructor provides students with feedback. On the other hand, peer assessment provides students with feedback from multiple sources, including their peers, allowing them to acquire broader insights and perspectives. This is especially advantageous in language classrooms, where students can learn from their peers' diverse cultural backgrounds and language experiences. But, the problem with peer assessment in the classroom sometimes is the students do not always receive accurate and constructive feedback from their peers (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007). Students may have personal preferences or biases that influence their evaluation of the work of their colleagues. Therefore, it is essential to provide students with distinct assessment criteria and guidelines to assist them in giving feedback to their peers. Thus, the teachers must monitor and keep track of the process and peer assessment activities.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is another essential instrument that is frequently used in CAS. Like formal examination, it does not cause students stress or anxiety. Instead, it encourages students to reflect on their learning. According to Jamrus and Razali (2019), self-assessment allows students to evaluate their own learning and development without the burden of external evaluation. Wanner and Palmer (2018) assert that self-assessment makes students more conscious of their learning processes.

Students can conduct practical self-assessments by asking themselves critical inquiries encouraging them to reflect critically and in-depth on their own learning. Self-assessment allows students to consider and decide about their learning before their teachers, increasing their motivation and self-assurance as learners (Jamrus & Razali, 2019; Wanner & Palmer, 2018). Self-assessment as a tool of CAS allows language learners to review and evaluate their language skills and reflect on their learning processes. However, the teachers must introduce and guide the students to be aware and mindful of the self-assessment process.

Rubrics

Rubrics is an important tool in the language classroom because they provide students with precise information for their performance on assignments, projects, and tests (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007). A rubric is a scoring guide that specifies the criteria and requirements for a particular assignment or task. It provides a detailed description of what a student needs to earn a specific grade, number or a

proficiency level. The purpose of using rubrics is that they provide students with detailed feedback for their learning and performance. Using rubrics enables the students not only to receive the grade or marks, but also help them find their strengths and areas for improvement.

According to Buttner (2013), rubrics in language classrooms can be used to promote self-reflection and self-evaluation. Rubrics can assist students in evaluating their own work and identifying areas for improvement by providing them with a clear comprehension of what is expected of them. This can result in increased motivation and engagement in their learning.

Buttner (2013) suggests different kinds of rubrics that can be used in language classrooms based on the nature of the assignment or tasks, i.e., a rubric for writing assignments can include criteria such as grammar, vocabulary, organization, and coherence (p. 23).

CAS in Nepal

CAS has been considered an integral part of classroom teaching. Most research studies focus on implementing assessments repeatedly, and the teacher gives feedback to improve the student's learning. The use of CAS helps the students attain an understanding of goals. According to Rai (2019), CAS is administered and keeps track of student's progress in learning regularly. She further states that CAS informs the teachers about how well the students have achieved and what content to teach them. It contradicts the idea of administering the summative test, which takes place at the end of the academic year. Thus, Coombe (2010) states that teachers are encouraged to conduct as many tests as possible and as frequently as possible to assess students' overall learning. It is implemented to enhance students' learning activities and classroom participation. Most of the time, the students are either appreciated for their work or given remedial feedback to improve their learning.

Dhakal (2020) mentions that CAS is an effective tool for attaining learning outcomes. He further supports the idea of using continuous assessment to record students' progress in their learning. However, several studies suggest implementing continuous assessment to improve student learning; Metsamuuronen (2016) and K. Shrestha et al. (2017) argue that implementing continuous assessment is considered one of the most challenging tasks. Mohammedseid (2018) studied the challenges of implementing constant assessment and concluded that large classroom sizes, lack of resources, and untrained teachers are significant challenges for CAS.

A continuous assessment system was initially brought into practice to assist the approach of liberal promotion policy as the public schools had higher failure rates and absenteeism. According to the National Curriculum Framework (2005), public school education has included the CAS for the evaluation system. CAS effectively lowers student failure, dropout, and class repetition rates for public school students. School Sector Development Plan (2016) states that using CAS in school education is crucial and emphasizes the urgency of implementing it.

Bhandari (2017) asserts that continuous assessment helps teachers decide what the students are learning and what to teach them next. It also assists the learners in making some improvement in

their learning if they need to with the help of teachers' remedial action. School Sector Development Plan (2016) has therefore proposed a policy provision for the implementation of the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) from primary to secondary levels of school education (p. 23). However, the policy has mandated to use of CAS compulsorily in the school education (Mody, 2022); in his reflective journal confesses that the implementational part of CAS is weak and the formative purpose of CAS is negligible. As a result, the use of assessment for productive purposes is insignificant.

Similarly, Poudel (2016) also claims that CAS is often neglected in classroom teaching. The teachers, however, fill the students' rubrics, considering that they have implemented CAS with that. With the argument of these studies, it seems that the teachers in public schools are still confused about the notion of CAS, and they lack clarity on how effectively CAS can be administered for their improved teaching-learning practices.

Teachers' Understanding of CAS

Most of the available literature shows how teachers understand CAS in school education. Rai (2019) articulates that the teachers in her studies favored using CAS. They have a positive attitude toward implementing CAS to obtain accurate information about students' learning through their classroom teaching activities.

Similarly, Paudel and Panday (2018) marked Nepalese teachers' perspectives on using CAS as they believe CAS helps them identify problems and improve students' learning. According to them, using CAS informs teachers and students about the data for their performance in education. In addition, Shrestha and Gautam (2022) opine that teachers support using portfolios, project work, field visits, and other forms of CAS to present student learning data consistently. It contrasts a finding from what Paudel and Panday (2018) conducted in a study where it was concluded that the teachers lack some theoretical understanding of CAS.

Shrestha and Gautam (2022) state that teachers have a positive attitude toward using the portfolio to keep track of each minute detail of students' learning. According to them, using the different forms of CAS significantly enhances students' performance. Most of the research studies come up with the findings of teachers' positive attitudes on using various instruments of CAS, which keep records of students' overall learning.

CAS informs teachers and students how much they have learned from teaching activities and guides them to improve. But Gyawali (2021) stated that teachers in his research studies have an unfavorable opinion towards using CAS as they consider it increases work pressure (p.60). He explored the fact that using CAS is a constant process and time-consuming. The teachers are drained by the additional stress of activities that develop negative attitudes towards using CAS.

However, the literature has mixed teachers' attitudes toward using CAS; Thapa (2021) discussed some teachers' opinions critically, stating that CAS demotivates students from learning. His stance is firm because CAS categorically groups the students of high achievers and average achievers

into the same group, and the students from the former group lose interest in learning. Besides that, Rai (2019) marked the views of some teachers who articulated that copying homework from friends and asking parents or elders to complete assignments are shortcomings that arise from CAS.

Teachers' Practices of CAS

The literature on how teachers practice CAS in their classrooms reveals that some teachers use the instruments of CAS to assess students learning. Lamichhane (2019) states that teachers use portfolios followed by other classroom dynamics such as group work, pair work, classroom participation, creativity, etc. Furthermore, he says that some teachers in his studies found that they were using students' presentations and cocurricular activities as a means of CAS. Neupane (2020) asserts that the curriculum doesn't specify how to use resources and other teaching materials for CAS. Still, the teachers are knowingly or unknowingly adopting CAS with the help of administering the class test, unit test, and weekly test in the classroom.

Khadka (2017) explores that the teachers in her case study use the portfolio as an instrument of CAS to keep progress reports of the students, but sometimes they do not bring it into the classroom. It was also discovered that the teachers did not maintain the CAS report because it was too difficult to cover all these records and the classroom teaching as the classroom size was too large.

Challenges of Implementing CAS

Several research studies point out that teachers have challenges in implementing CAS. It assists the teachers in understanding the actual standard/level of their students in their learning. Mohammedseid (2018) states that the CAS policies are ambitious, and the teachers confront several challenges in implementing them.

Large Classroom Size

According to Mohammedseid (2018), one of the significant challenges for teachers to implement CAS in classroom teaching is the large classroom size, which largely influences student learning outcomes. The teachers find it difficult to assess, make records of each student and find some remedial teaching for the improvement of students learning.

Teachers' Mindset and Commitment

Rana (2016) concluded that the teachers are not well prepared to adopt and utilize the practices of CAS in the classroom. According to him, the teachers perceive that keeping a frequent record of each student is tedious.

Course Content in the Textbook

The course content is a lot compared to the level of students' understanding, and the teachers are constantly under pressure to complete them by the assigned period. So, the teachers are in the race to meet the course content, making it complicated to implement CAS.

Inappropriate Policy

Some scholars argue that applying the same policy for using CAS across the country is not considerable. Rana (2016) and Poudel (2017) pointed out other challenges for students across the country; with vast geographical and socio-cultural diversity, policymakers envision and introduce the same principles of CAS without differentiating them.

The Teacher Workload

The teachers are assigned to teach at least six periods a day. Besides a break for half an hour, they get too little time to think about CAS and other activities. The pressure of their work already makes them so stressed and exhausted. Chaudhary (2021) asserts that teachers receive the idea of implementing CAS as an additional burden when they do not have to manage individual student portfolios.

Lack of skill in using CAS

In studies, Rana (2016) and Chaudhary (2021) pointed out that an unavoidable challenge of using CAS in school education is the lack of proper skills for handling CAS. They conclude that the teachers are unaware of how to track individual students' progress.

Lack of resources and materials

Most of the public schools in the country do not have a solid financial foundation. Therefore, affording other resources to maintain the record of CAS for these schools is beyond their capacity, which made the adoption of CAS more challenging. In the light of under-resourced schools, Dhakal (2020) stated that implementing CAS is a challenge due to the inadequacy of technical and financial support from the District Education Office (DEO), Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), and school division from the local governance. He has also suggested that these concerned authorities provide sufficient budget and technical support to implement CAS effectively.

Social-Constructivism

Social constructivism addresses how social interaction assists learning (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). This theory has gained significant attention in education and its application in the continuous assessment system in language classrooms. Students engage in collaborative learning using social constructivism in the continuous assessment system (Simina & Hamel, 2005). This approach recognizes the social aspects of learning, such as conversation, interaction, and application of knowledge to real-life situations. As a result, students learn from each other and develop problem-solving skills and the ability to work effectively in teams.

Similarly, social constructivism emphasizes the importance of the teacher-student relationship, where the teacher is not just a source of information but a facilitator of learning (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). The teacher encourages students to ask questions, explore ideas, and share their thoughts with their peers to help them create a more interactive learning atmosphere. It is also worth mentioning that social constructivism recognizes the importance of the individual learner's needs and background in learning. Students come from diverse backgrounds in language classrooms, and their learning needs

may vary. The continuous assessment system based on social constructivism allows the teacher to tailor the assessment to meet the needs of individual learners to help them improve their learning (Simina & Hamel, 2005).

As social constructivism recognizes that learning is not just about acquiring knowledge but also developing learning skills. The continuous assessment system based on social constructivism allows the teachers to assess the student's language proficiency and ability to use the language in real-life situations. Kerwin-Boudreau and Butler-Kisber, (2016) argue that the social constructionist approach to learning and assessment emphasizes dialogue between teachers and students to provide feedback for better learning and performance. CAS should be seen as a tool of learning and a tool for learning. Teachers can use feedback during and after language assessments to create a learning environment and promote student-teacher interaction. The social constructivist theory emphasizes the role of culture and context in shaping knowledge, which is generated through meaningful interactions with the community (Jia, 2010; Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

Social constructivism highlights the importance of context and situation in shaping knowledge. Vygotsky and Cole (2018) suggest that learning involves the creation of meaning, with the learner playing a critical role in actively constructing ideas through interaction with their teacher. In this regard, teachers should be well-equipped to create a learning environment for the students. This means that teachers facilitate language learning in the English language classroom. In social constructivist classrooms, teachers and students recognize that the world is complex, with multiple perspectives and interpretations (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). This approach involved questioning, exploring, and reflecting, which enables learners to engage in the evaluation process. Therefore, I have used this theory of social constructivism that guided me with a theoretical foundation for carrying out my study.

The theory of social constructivism supported me in examining my research questions regarding the use of the CAS in English language classrooms in Nepal. According to this theory, knowledge and comprehension are actively constructed via social interactions and cultural contexts (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). It emphasises the influence of social factors on individuals' perceptions, interpretations, and meanings of the world. By employing the social constructivist theory, I was able to examine my research questions through a lens that acknowledged the social and cultural dimensions inherent in language teaching and assessing them.

The social constructivist theory enabled me to recognise the impact of cultural, social, and educational contexts on the implementation of CAS in English language classrooms in Nepal. It allowed me to investigate how social cultural factors, educational policies, and social interactions in language classrooms influence the use and efficacy of CAS. This knowledge helped me situate my research questions within the educational landscape of Nepal. The theory prompted me to examine how my research participants designed and administered CAS and tools of CAS to create an engaging classroom dynamic and, through their narratives, to comprehend on how their students interacted to

these CAS practices in the language classroom. Based on the narratives shared by my research participants, I investigated how the social interactions between instructors and students influence the implementation and results of CAS in language learning classroom. This allowed me to investigate the collaborative and co-constructive nature of assessment practises and their impact on language teaching and learning experiences of my research participants.

Using social constructivism emphasised the variety of perspectives and the significance of multiple voices in knowledge construction (Shah, 2019a; Watson, 2001). I actively sought to include the perspectives of my five research participants and considering multiple perspectives, I gained the rich understanding of the complexities of the implementation of CAS in English language classrooms in public schools in Nepal. The social constructivist lens facilitated the analysis of how social and cultural factors influence the interpretation and application of CAS. I investigated how cultural and language background of my participants and students, school environment, and policies of using CAS in secondary education influence on EFL teacher's perceptions and practices implementing CAS. This analysis helped me identify the sociocultural factors that influence the adoption and efficacy of CAS in Nepal.

As the theory of social constructivism highlights the value of collaborative learning and knowledge construction, my study investigated how EFL teachers implemented CAS to facilitate collaborative learning environments in Nepalese English language classrooms. I analysed how implementing CAS facilitated group interaction and the classroom participation, feedback, and reflection to support students' language proficiency and promote a sense of shared learning among them. Using social constructivism, I was able to examine my research questions from a perspective that acknowledged the social, cultural, and collaborative aspects of language teaching and assessment. This strategy assisted me in gaining a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the use of CAS in English language classrooms in Nepalese public schools and enriched my analysis of the research findings.

Policy Review

The implementation of summative assessment dominates formative assessment in Nepalese school education. As formative assessment is administered to assess the student's overall learning progress with additional remedial teaching, it is considered a form of CAS. The country commenced using CAS in 2006 AD to enhance their learning for quality education and to reduce their dropout rates from early grades. CDC (2011) states that CAS is administered regularly over time to improve the students' learning. CAS, when started to employ from the primary level, it was expected that the teachers assess the students repeatedly, keep a regular track of them and significantly improve their learning.

Since the purpose of CAS is not only to assess student's knowledge and skills on the subject but also to facilitate their learning CDC (2011) recommended implementing CAS in secondary-level school education. CAS at the secondary level also suggests that education stakeholders address

alternative assessments to make the classroom inclusive. The teachers, when integrating every learner in the school using CAS, receive the information of the learners and the effectiveness of their classroom teaching strategies.

CAS, including the English education curriculum, is integral to the Nepalese education system. Rather than relying solely on a final exam of the academic year, students progress in CAS is evaluated more frequently. The primary purpose of the continuous assessment system is to provide a thorough comprehension of students' learning strengths and weaknesses and to assist teachers and students in identifying improvement areas.

CAS in Nepal's English education adheres to a standard grading system in which students are evaluated based on their skills and performance in the subject. The grading system incorporates grades for homework, exams, projects, and other assessments throughout the academic year. The grading system is intended to give students a fair evaluation of their performance and encourage them to progress over time.

One of the strengths of the continuous assessment system is that it identifies pupils who may be having difficulty with English language acquisition. Early identification of these students allows instructors to provide them with additional assistance so they can catch up to their peers. In addition, the continuous assessment system encourages students to engage in active learning for better academic performance and learning.

However, CAS in English education in Nepal also faces some potential difficulties. The effectiveness of CAS depends on the quality of the tests the teachers have designed and how they are administered in the classrooms. To ensure that the CAS is standardized, reliable, and legitimate, teacher training and support are essential, which many public schools lack. It is also considered important that teachers and students have access to the necessary learning resources, such as textbooks, online materials, and instructional support, to achieve academic success.

CDC (2011) points out that all learners from early grade to the secondary level learn English as a Foreign Language teaching English due to the growing significance of the English language. One of the major objectives of teaching English as a foreign language from early grade in school education is to enable the students to use all four language learning skills so that CAS has a significant role in assessing the effectiveness of teaching-learning activities in language classrooms.

The CDC (2015) has mandated that students have at least 75% classroom attendance to participate in the annual examinations. One of the significant recommendations the CDC (2015) made was introducing a letter grading system in Secondary Education Examination (SEE). This Later Grading System is comprised of nine letter grades: A+ (90 & 90+%), A (80-below 90%), B+ (70-below 80%), B (60-below 70%), C+ (50-below 60%), C (40-below 50%), D+ (30-below 40), D (20-below 30), and E (below 20%) (Basaula & Sharma, 2022; CDC, 2011). The students in all subjects are graded based on the marks they receive in both theory and practical examinations (CDC, 2015). The

introduction of a grading system in the SEE eliminated the system of pass and failure in the board examination.

This system allows students to improve their grades if they receive a grade of 'C' or less in two subjects or are absent in two subjects on the SEE within three years (CDC, 2015). However, Nepal has adopted a grading system to mitigate negative backwash effects on learning, but the students still fear examinations. The letter grading system is finally converted into a numeric grade point average (GPA) to evaluate the student's performance. The grading system secondary education examination reveals that CAS has been adopted. However, the result in Grading System in SEE doesn't reflect actual performance and the use of the student's language skills.

According to the CDC (2019), the final evaluation for the students at the higher secondary level comprises both practical and theoretical examinations. It has clearly stated that 25 marks in the subject of English are for practical examination, whereas 75 marks are left for the theoretical examination. Based on the CAS practices at the higher secondary level, the grading system still prioritizes summative assessment. The use of summative assessment in secondary-level education reveals the fact that CAS in the policy is alluring but widely neglected in terms of implementation of them in English language education.

The report from the Ministry of Education (2016) concluded that most assessment practices at the secondary level are summative assessments. This may be the primary cause of the disparity between policy and practice in Nepal's assessment system. The policies of using CAS in school education are ambitious yet achievable for developing students learning in English language education. It is, however, weak at the implementational level resulting from prioritizing summative assessment. Thus, the study has assisted me in exploring the gap in policies and practices of using CAS in language classrooms in Nepal.

Previous Research Studies and the Gap I Noticed

Every research study demands the proper theoretical and empirical understanding of context, which aids the research study in exploring their concept and practices of them. Several research studies on the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) were carried out in Nepalese education that I have gone through to collect rich literature on how much studies have been carried out on the area of CAS and CAS implementation in language classrooms. Studying these literatures also helped me to find the gap on CAS and its implementation.

Khanal (1997) conducted a case study on research on 'The Effectiveness of Close Test over Conversational Objective Test in Evaluating English Comprehension.' The study's goal was to examine the effectiveness of the close test over the objective test in terms of students' assessing reading comprehension. The study indicated that the performance of private school students was higher than that of public-school students on closed and open-ended tests for evaluating students' comprehension of the English language.

Chapagain (2005) conducted a case study on Grade VI students on 'The effectiveness of continuous assessment in enhancing students' achievement in English. The study concluded that using CAS in English language learning classrooms was more successful and efficient than conventional assessment tools. The other study Ghimire (2010) conducted on 'Effectiveness of continuous assessment in enhancing pupil's achievement in grammar' has also revealed that using CAS in language learning classrooms is highly successful in enhancing students learning achievement on grammar.

KC (2011) conducted 'A Study on Continuous Assessment System (CAS) of Primary Level English', which suggests that using primary level education is beneficial and has further recommended using CAS from the elementary level for teaching English as a foreign language. Similarly, Khadka (2017) conducted a case study on 'Practices of Formative Assessment in Public Schools: A Case of Bardiya District'. The study's objective was to explore formative assessment practices in public schools. She used both closed and open-ended questions to collect data for the study. The study concluded that public schools have several concerns while implying CAS as its large classroom size, lack of materials for assessing the student's inadequate school environment etc.

Sah (2021) conducted a study on 'Teacher attitudes on using formative assessment at the secondary level'. Her research aimed to determine teachers' perspectives on using formative assessment at the secondary level. She has purposefully chosen thirty teachers in the Arghakhanchi district of western Nepal. She used a questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The outcomes of her study indicated that using formative assessment is helpful for both students and teachers at the secondary level.

Similarly, Chaudhary (2021) conducted survey research on 'Basic Level English Teacher's Perceptions Towards Continuous Assessment Systems'. This study explored how teachers at the basic level understand using CAS. The study revealed that the teachers are somehow using CAS. Yet, it is extremely difficult for them to implement them in schools due to inappropriate policies and the lack of skills and resources.

These studies so far have been carried out on the issues of CAS in Nepalese education. No study has been conducted on secondary-level EFL teachers' understanding of CAS, its application of them and the challenges they have faced while applying CAS. My focus for the study is on understanding secondary-level EFL teachers' preconceived notions on CAS, exploring their current practices and major challenges while applying CAS in Nepalese public schools. Therefore, my study differs from other research studies conducted earlier. It is distinctive since it has been conducted on Secondary Level EFL teachers' understanding and challenges in implementing CAS based on their individual narratives. Therefore, as a researcher, I believe this narrative study on secondary-level EFL teachers' understanding and experiences in implementing CAS in their classrooms and the findings will be critical and determining in implementing CAS in the country.

Structure of the Study

This framework presented below in Fig. No.3 shows the structure of the study. It is a brief road map of how I carried out the research. It illustrates the procedures and steps I took for this research study. It presents how my experiences using CAS inspired me to conduct this study. The problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the research questions guided me in finding relevant literature. The theory I have chosen provided me with a lens to look at the narratives and experiences of secondary-level EFL teachers on using CAS.

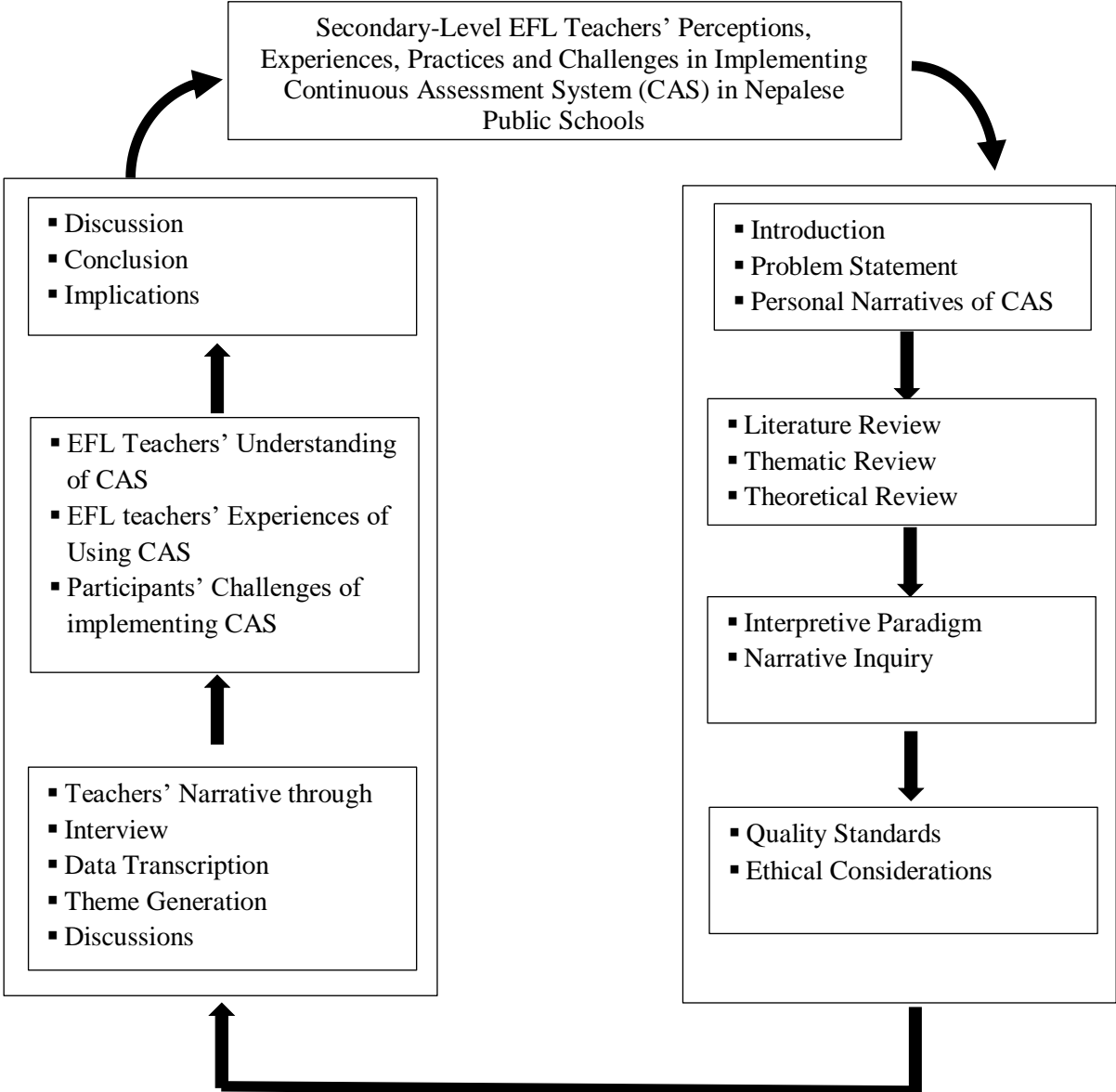


Figure: III Structure of the study

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with an introduction and the general background of my studies. For thematic review, the concept of assessment, continuous assessment and assessment in the language classroom, and types of assessment were discussed with relevant literature. I also discussed social constructivism as a theory for my studies and briefly described how this theory facilitates a philosophical

understanding of the research participants' experiences and narratives. I further discussed an overview of the previous research studies. I briefly discussed their research purpose, the nature of their studies, methodologies, and findings to present the research gap in using CAS in Secondary level EFL classrooms.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the suitable methodological foundations for this research. It begins with philosophical considerations and the research paradigm I chose for my study. I have also discussed narrative inquiry as a qualitative research design method. Then, it describes the research sites, participants, and the procedure for data collection for the study. The chapter also describes the process I have employed for data analysis. Finally, the chapter concludes with the quality standards and the ethical considerations I have considered to validate my research study.

Philosophical Considerations

In this section, I explored my belief system in terms of my foundational assumptions regarding the nature of reality, the sources of knowledge, and the methods I used to generate meaning. These philosophical assumptions have enabled me to gain greater clarity on my research issue on secondary-level EFL teachers' understanding and experiences of CAS and implementing them in classrooms. I sought three main areas of philosophical considerations ontology, epistemology, and axiology, to get closer to the essence of my problem areas. They have further assisted me in determining my research paradigm and formulating my research design.

Ontological Assumptions

Ontology is the philosophical study of the essence of existence and reality. In any research study, ontological assumptions refer to the researcher's beliefs regarding what exists and what can be known (Patton, 2023). These assumptions can significantly affect the study's design, discussion, and analysis. Therefore, as a researcher, my ontological assumption for implementing CAS in language classrooms in the country like Nepal is based on the notion that reality is multifaceted and socially constructed. I understand that the using CAS in language classrooms in Nepal is influenced by a number of reasons including social, cultural, geographical, language itself, limited resources, and other numerous challenges faced by the EFL teachers. Consequently, my ontological assumption recognises that the implementation of CAS should be tailored to the specific cultural, social, educational, and moreover contextual situations.

I am aware that the reality of language teaching and assessing them using variost CAS tools is not fixed or universal, but rather open to interpret further and influenced by sociocultural factors. Consequently, my ontological assumption acknowledges that the success of CAS in language classrooms in Nepal depends on its alignment with the local context, which includes language policies, curriculum frameworks, and the requirements and expectations of students and teachers at the ground level. In addition to that, the implementation of CAS should be a collaborative and participatory effort involving instructors, students, and other stakeholders. I believe that the assessment process should be

centred on the individual progress of students in attaining language proficiency. By adopting this ontological assumption, I value the diverse perspectives and experiences of my participants, recognising that their practices of using CAS, offering feedback for improved learning that best support their students achieve language proficiency and the challenges that they have faced while implementing CAS in language classrooms.

I acknowledge that the realities of language classrooms are dynamic and evolving, and that assessment practises must reflect the changing requirements and conditions of students and the educational system in Nepal. My ontological assumption for implementing CAS in Nepalese language classrooms is based on the notion that reality is socially constructed and context based. It emphasises the importance of locally relevant and culturally sensitive assessment practises, student-centered approaches, collaboration, active engagement which is focused and directed for students' language learning. As a narrative researcher, I viewed the reality of the study is socially constructed and contextual nature. Therefore, I treated each participant's narratives or experiences as if it were my own stories, and I analysed the information with the understanding that it has multiple meanings depending on its context. Therefore, my ontological assumption is that the nature of the world is socially constructed, and it is embedded in my participants' everyday experiences and narratives. For my study, I maintained my ontological assumptions of multiple realities and the experiences of the EFL teachers understanding and the challenges of implementing CAS in EFL classrooms.

Epistemological Assumptions

Patton (2023) states that epistemology is concerned with what constitutes knowledge and how it can be obtained. It discusses the reality of society to understand the world. The study of how and what we know includes epistemology. The in-depth interview I took with my participants allowed them to recount their life experiences as a narrative. In response to my questions, my research participants were active narrators. I generated the knowledge for the study through my own experiences, the relevant available literature, and the participants' experiences that helped me shape my perspectives and beliefs concerning my research (Patton, 2023). My epistemological beliefs are subjective. Participants narrated their distinct real-life experiences with using CAS in their EFL classrooms. While I probed them with various inquiries based on the interview guidelines, they described their lived experiences and the challenges of using CAS in their classrooms.

Axiological Assumptions

Axiology in my research study is values and beliefs about right or wrong, just or unjust, and ethical or unethical. According to Patton (2023), axiology in the research study includes beliefs about the importance of certain research questions or topics, the ethical treatment of study participants, and the responsibility of the researcher to produce accurate, reliable, and valuable findings (p. 31). As a narrative researcher, my axiological stance is value-laden. Since the values in a narrative inquiry are multiple and of equal importance, I valued each story narrated by my research participants with much attention and respect. My interest in multiple values assisted me in capturing the detailed descriptions

of the narratives my participants shared. As an interpretive researcher, I also valued the knowledge generated from my experiences and exposures (Neuman & Robson, 2014). It motivated me to advance my philosophical understanding. Therefore, I greatly valued the experience and narratives shared during the interview. The subjective values were given much attention and appreciation during the study so that each participant was respected when interpreting their narratives on their experiences and the challenges of using CAS in EFL classrooms. My axiology for the study is essential because it guided me in analysing and interpreting participants' narratives throughout the research process.

Interpretive Research Paradigm

An interpretive research paradigm can provide a valuable approach to understanding the experiences and challenges of using CAS in EFL classrooms. By focusing on teachers' subjective experiences and interpretations, this paradigm can provide insights into how EFL teachers perceive CAS, their experiences, and the challenges of implementing CAS in classrooms. According to Willis (2007), while defining paradigm is a belief system or worldview that governs study and practice in a study. It serves as a guide for any inquiry since it discusses the existence of knowledge, its nature, and how we might obtain it. Guba and Lincoln (1994; Richards & Morse, 2012) define the interpretive research paradigm as a qualitative research strategy concerned with comprehending and interpreting the meanings of individual and group experiences. According to this paradigm, the reality is socially created and subjective; researchers are interested in how people interpret and make sense of their experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

I, as a researcher on experiences and the challenges of using CAS in EFL classrooms, would like to make my standpoint an interpretative paradigm that believes reality is socially constructed rather than a single and objective truth. This paradigm believes that multiple realities or perceptions of a single event exist. My research subjects are conscious of making meanings by interpreting narrative experiences (Cohen et al., 2008). This paradigm provides thick data on my research issue by focusing on the subjective experiences and interpretations of the secondary-level EFL teachers' experiences and challenges of using CAS.

I, as a researcher, attempt to make meaning through their narratives and interactions of their narratives with a more extensive social systems study to derive the meaning (Cresswell, 2014). As a result, based on the interpretative paradigm, I comprehend and interpret the reality of my study area with the help of my participant's narratives. In other words, as an interpretive researcher, I am concerned with generating a context-based understanding of my informants' thoughts, beliefs, and values about their perception and understanding of research issues (Creswell, 2014).

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a research method that focuses on collecting and analyzing personal stories to understand individuals' experiences better (Barkhuizen et al., 2013; Barrett & Stauffer, 2009). It studies stories or narratives, rich and multifaceted details of people's lived experiences. It is a way of

understanding how people understand lived stories, make meaning from their practices, and communicate these meanings to others through stories.

This research method asserts that humans are storytellers, and each has personal narratives (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009, p. 43). The narrative research method is a study of how humans perceive the world. I collected data through stories through a narrative inquiry to learn more about my research participants' culture, historical experiences, identity, and lifestyle; as stated by Clandinin and Caine (2013). This involved conducting open-ended interviews that solicited narratives from my five EFL teachers from the Nepalese community schools. The stories were collected as raw data and transcribed their narrative stories that I took over Zoom interviews, which I used to understand their perceptions, practices, and challenges of implementing CAS in EFL classrooms.

The narrative inquiry method allowed me to explore the personal narratives of my participants and develop an understanding of their lived experiences on using CAS and their challenges while implementing it in EFL classrooms. Employing narrative inquiry in my research to capture my research participants' cultural and contextual stories and experiences provided me with a framework through which I attempted to structure them more systematically.

Mertova and Webster (2019) suggest that narratives offer a better understanding of teaching and learning. In contrast, Clandinin and Caine (2013) encourage researchers to explore the meaning of their stories and lived experiences. I, as a researcher, was interested in exploring the meaning of each experience to generate ideas and insights for personal transformation and to encourage others to transform their practices. According to Savin-Baden and Niekerk (2007), narratives are easily retained in our minds and can change our thoughts even if we are uninterested. Therefore, the narrative inquiry was the best method to generate meaning from the teachers' interpretations and explanations of experiences, understanding, and the challenges of using CAS in EFL classrooms.

Selection of Research Site and the Participants

I initially planned to take interviews with six participants from four provinces in the country but later lowered them to five participants from three provinces. This research focused on EFL teachers working in community schools irrespective of how long the teaching experiences they have. I made a purposive sampling based on my personal and professional connection to those working in five different districts, namely Bara, Parsa, Makwanpur and Lalitpur and Dang, which represent three provinces in the country. I also made an online meeting with each of them before the actual interview took place to make them feel convenient to interact and to narrate their experiences and stories with me.

After selecting my research participants, I also mailed them a copy of the consent letter to participate in the study. I began a Zoom meeting with my first participant in the Bara district, listened to his narrative attentively, noted his narratives during the interview, later transcribed it and ensured to

include any hidden meanings he shared. I changed the interview guidelines with additional probing questions before moving on to my second participant.

However, the data from the second participant was still insufficient to analyze and interpret; I kept taking online interviews on until my fifth research participant. Since I took an interview with just a female teacher, I could not make the balance of gender representation. However, meeting them in person was cancelled at the last minute due to my problems; I remained in frequent contact with them until my queries for my study were complete.

Participant's Profile and Their Narratives

My research participants were chosen from three provinces and five districts of Nepal. All my participants have been working as secondary-level EFL teachers in Nepalese public schools. To provide readers with a thorough grasp of the backgrounds and experiences of each participant, I present a brief profile with their narratives of each of them. Pseudonyms have been employed in place of their real identities to maintain their anonymity and safeguard their confidentiality. It is crucial to remember that these descriptions are based on my understanding of the participants from the in-depth interview sessions. The objective of including an individual profile and their narratives is to offer insights into their unique personalities and how they create narratives to share their experiences. They are important in this study because they represent various social, cultural, geographical, and family backgrounds and personality types and because they have different viewpoints on their experiences.

Krishna's Narratives

Krishna represents Kaski District of the Gandaki Province of Nepal. He has a Master's Degree in Arts in English Literature and a One Year Bachelor's Degree in English Language Teaching. He has more than seven years of teaching experience and has a good theoretical understanding of methods and techniques of teaching English. He is quite interested in using CAS in English language instruction. He admits that using CAS encourages participation, active learning, and a thorough understanding of students' development. His teaching methods actively utilize a variety of assessment instruments, such as rubrics, self-assessment, project work, and peer assessment. He acknowledges that CAS gives students immediate feedback that helps identify their areas of strength and needs for development.

Additionally, as he shared in his narratives that CAS enables him to make plans and execute individualized teaching instructions to improve each of his learners. Krishna shares that training for professional development is important for him to stay updated on the most recent findings on the best practices of CAS. He collaborates with other teachers and shares how students' learning can be fostered through interaction with colleagues. Krishna constantly looks for ways to improve his use of CAS in the English language classroom. He considers that using

CAS promotes students' critical thinking, creativity, and general personal development in addition to improving their language skills.

In Krishna's understanding, CAS is crucial in promoting holistic language learning. He views CAS as an opportunity to move beyond formal assessments and foster an environment where students can engage in various language-related activities. His perspective emphasizes the importance of practical language use and active participation. Krishna's enthusiasm for CAS is rooted in its potential to push students forward in language learning. He believes various CAS tools and techniques can address language skills, including speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Krishna mentions using project work, role-play, rubrics, peer work, group work, and field visits to engage his students in meaningful language activities.

The core of Krishna's understanding revolves around the idea that CAS facilitates language learning by providing students with opportunities to communicate with each other and actively use the language. He notes that students sharing their thoughts and ideas in the target language catalyzes progress. Krishna elaborates on his methods for enhancing reading skills in students. He encourages students to read aloud and interact with each other while reading. His approach addresses punctuation and gives students a comfortable space to practice reading. Krishna's dedication to creating an engaging and supportive environment for his students is evident.

Regarding other language learning skills, Krishna adopts varied CAS tools depending on the specific skill for language teaching. He uses dialogues, music, songs, and videos to foster listening skills. Krishna believes in leveraging different resources to cater to his students' diverse language learning needs. However, Krishna is not blind to the challenges he faces. He candidly discusses the limitations imposed by the size of the classroom and the lack of resources and technology. These issues can hinder the effective implementation of CAS. Still, Krishna shares how he overcomes these obstacles through creative solutions. He sometimes takes his students outside the classroom for group activities and adapts materials to suit the resources available. Despite the challenges, Krishna's commitment to CAS remains unwavering. He emphasizes its benefits, particularly for weaker students benefitting from CAS's additional support. Krishna sees CAS as a natural and effective way for students to progress in language learning.

Krishna's positivity extends to the support he receives from his school administration. He notes that the school is taking initiatives to equip classrooms with modern technology and materials to enhance language teaching. Krishna's narrative emphasizes the potential of CAS to transform language classrooms. Despite challenges, his commitment to his students' progress showcases the dedication of educators like him. His positive attitude towards CAS inspires fellow educators seeking to empower their students through effective language learning.

Satya's Narratives

Satya is an English language teacher in a public school in central Nepal, Parsa District of Province No 2. He holds a Master's Degree in English Education and is passionate about making a difference in the lives of his students. Satya has been teaching for four years as a secondary-level English teacher and is dedicated to providing quality education to students in his community. Teaching in a public-school setting in Nepal comes with challenges, but Satya recognizes the importance of the continuous assessment system (CAS) in facilitating effective teaching and learning. He believes CAS promotes student engagement, allows targeted instruction, and provides valuable feedback.

Satya incorporates various assessment tools and techniques in his English language classroom. As a duty of the school coordinator, he designs rubrics that align with the curriculum objectives and uses them to assess students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. These rubrics enable him to provide information about his students and to keep regular track of his students' language learning. In addition to rubrics, Satya tries to use various tools of CAS in his classrooms to promote student involvement in their learning process. He believes that involving students in evaluating their work and giving feedback to their peers fosters a sense of responsibility and ownership in their learning journey. Despite resource constraints, large class sizes, and lack of training, he remains committed to providing the best quality education possible. He firmly believes that the CAS in EFL classrooms is instrumental in nurturing students' language skills and overall academic growth.

As Satya begins to recount his teaching journey, he expresses how the implementation of CAS in Nepalese public schools has been a burden rather than a blessing. He highlights the lack of support and training provided to educators, which leaves them struggling with the application of CAS in classroom teaching practices. Instead of nurturing growth, CAS often feels like an additional task. Despite these challenges, Satya acknowledges the importance of CAS in comprehensively understanding students' strengths and weaknesses. He believes implementing CAS effectively and wholeheartedly can benefit students' learning outcomes.

Satya's perception of CAS underscores the need for teachers to go beyond mere ticks and superficial assessments. He emphasizes that CAS can only yield positive results when educators genuinely engage with it, actively participating in the process and understanding its significance. While discussing his practical experiences with CAS, Satya points out that the lack of formal training and guidance has left many teachers, including himself, to navigate the system through self-study and personal research. The absence of comprehensive training contributes to many teachers' struggle to integrate CAS effectively into their classrooms.

Satya recalls when CAS was limited to grade seven, reflecting on the disparity between the initial implementation and the present situation where CAS is extended to secondary levels. He highlights the prevailing emphasis on traditional exams and rote learning, which often overshadows the potential benefits of CAS. Despite the challenges, Satya believes that CAS has

the power to make a difference in the education system. He notes that when teachers take the initiative to create and implement their systems, such as student portfolios, they can gain deeper insights into their students' progress. Satya's experiences with CAS reveal that a good learning environment is created when teachers have a closer connection with their students through initiatives like portfolios and project work. Using CAS in classroom teaching fosters caring and sharing among them to ultimately enhance language learning.

Anusha's Narratives

A Secondary-level English language teacher Anusha teaches in a remote village of Nepal. She belongs to an urban city called Lubhoo, quite close to Kathmandu, but currently works as an English teacher in the Dhading District of Bagmati Province. She is devoted to raising the standard of education in her placement community school. She has a Bachelor's in both Management and English Education. She has finished her all-regular coursework for her Master's Degree and has rigorously been working on her Dissertation Project. Anusha has been a teacher for over ten years in private schools. She was recently appointed as a secondary-level teacher after passing her Teacher Service Commission Examination (TSC). She is dedicated to giving her children the best learning opportunities.

Anusha's academic path began after completing her schooling, where she pursued the management faculty at the plus-two level. However, a unique opportunity presented itself during her studies in Grade XI when she was offered a teaching position in a private school to teach English. Managing her education and teaching career posed a considerable challenge, but Anusha's determination and hard work led her to complete her plus-two studies. Despite her initial interest in pursuing an education faculty degree, she found it impractical due to the distance to the colleges from her locality. Consequently, she pursued her bachelor's degree in the management faculty. Anusha's dedication to both her education and her teaching career persisted as she simultaneously completed her bachelor's degree majoring in English from the education faculty. This demonstrated her unwavering commitment to advancing her skills as an educator.

As her journey continued, Anusha enrolled in a master's program, and at the time of the interview, she was well into her fourth semester, actively working on her dissertation. Her relentless pursuit of academic and professional growth paid off, as she had recently been appointed as a permanent English teacher by the government of Nepal. Anusha's understanding of the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) revealed her awareness of its importance in evaluating students' learning outcomes. She emphasized CAS as a formative evaluation method contributing to a holistic assessment of learners. In the context of Nepal, where CAS is a relatively recent introduction, Anusha recognized its significance in shifting the focus from rote learning to a more practical and skill-based approach.

In her role as an English teacher, Anusha actively implements CAS techniques in her language classroom. She emphasizes the importance of assessing the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Anusha employs various tools for CAS, including class and homework

assignments, project work, demonstrations, questionnaires, observations, and storytelling. This multifaceted approach allows her to comprehensively evaluate her students' language abilities. Anusha believes that CAS plays a vital role in language learning by providing regular practice and allowing for the measurement of students' improvement. She views language not as a mere subject but as a skill to be developed through consistent practice and assessment. CAS supports the ongoing assessment of students' daily behaviour, communication skills, and interaction abilities, contributing significantly to their language development.

While Anusha effectively uses CAS, she acknowledges the challenges it presents. Managing many students, ensuring individual participation, and lacking teacher training and resources in deprived areas pose difficulties. Additionally, the mood of teachers during evaluation can sometimes influence outcomes. To overcome these challenges, Anusha has adopted strategies such as time management, group work, and a more integrated approach to align CAS with the regular curriculum. These interventions help her ensure that CAS enhances rather than hinders the learning process. Anusha has observed a positive transformation in her students' behaviour and engagement since the implementation of CAS. Students have become more conscious of their daily progress, emphasizing the value of continuous assessment beyond final grades. Anusha's story embodies the spirit of dedication and perseverance. Her journey from a student to an educator, balancing education and ambition, reflects her commitment to personal and professional growth. Her insights into CAS shed light on the transformation it brings to the learning process and the challenges educators face in integrating it effectively into their classrooms. Anusha's passion for teaching and her innovative approach to CAS exemplify the potential for positive change in Nepal's education system.

Binod's Narratives

As a secondary-level English teacher, Binod is strongly committed to improving his pupils' lives and has a profound passion for education. Born and raised in Bara District of Province No. 2 of southern Nepal, Binod has taught English as a Foreign Language since 2075 BS (Nepali Calendar Year). Having a Master's Degree in English Education from Tribhuvan University, Binod started his teaching career as a primary-level teacher. He has worked as a secondary and higher secondary-level English teacher for the last few years. His experiences working in an under-resourced public school using CAS have taught him to endure and cope with all kinds of difficulties to ensure quality education for his students. While studying in the capital city of Nepal, Binod wanted to make a difference in school education. Leaving all his comfort, he returned to his village to pursue his dream of making a change in the lives of his students through public school education in the country.

Binod begins by introducing himself and his teaching background. He highlights the importance of CAS, a relatively new concept in Nepal, which he defines as a continuous evaluation aligned with students' needs and interests, integrated within daily teaching activities. Binod acknowledges the significance of CAS in language education. He emphasizes its

relevance in assessing learners continuously throughout the course and providing results based on ongoing evaluations. However, he also reveals his challenges in a community-based school with mixed-ability students, limited infrastructure, and linguistic diversity. Binod particularly underscores the difficulties of providing individualized instruction to a large class and the dominance of the mother tongue in the classroom due to limited exposure to English. Despite these challenges, Binod remains committed to using CAS tools to enhance language skills. He employs various reading, writing, speaking, and listening techniques. To foster language development, he employs English newspapers, magazines, textbooks, reference books, guided writing, discussion methods, vocabulary games, and audio recordings. Binod believes these tools empower students, making them more confident and skilful communicators.

Binod acknowledges that CAS has produced positive outcomes in his classroom. He observes improved student engagement, demonstration skills, leadership abilities, and enhanced social skills. While acknowledging the obstacles, he advocates for broader awareness of CAS among teachers across all education levels. Binod views CAS as a catalyst for improving learning standards, fostering interactive learning, and addressing student challenges. Binod expresses gratitude for the opportunity to share his experiences and insights regarding CAS. He views the interview as a motivating factor to continue refining his approach to language teaching by adopting CAS. Binod's dedication to addressing challenges and fostering effective language education underscores the value of embracing innovative assessment methods in the classroom.

Anil's Narratives

Anil has been teaching English as a Foreign Language in a public school in the rural Makwanpur District of Bagmati Province. Anil, himself from a remote village, understood the potential of education to break the cycle of poverty and create opportunities for his community. Motivated by his personal experiences, he pursued his career in school education. After completing his Bachelor's in English Education, Anil began teaching at a private school. After working for several years, he returned to Kathmandu to complete his Master's in English Education. He also prepared for the examination of TSC while he was studying, and his placement after he passed the exam was in a public school in Makwanpur, where he has been serving as a secondary-level English teacher for the last four years. Anil practices CAS in his language classrooms with different CAS tools, where he finds them engaged and motivated in learning, reflects on their strengths and shortcomings, and sets improvement goals using CAS.

When asked about his understanding of using the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) in language classrooms, Anil emphasized its dependence on the content. He understood that the choice of assessment tools depended on the specific content, be it communication, language functions, directions, paragraphs, or reading passages. Anil favoured various techniques for teaching communication and language functions, including dialogues, role-plays, situational analyses, and testing based on different scenarios. He challenged his students to plan routes and find destinations

when focusing on teaching directions, encouraging practical application. He exposed his students to diverse content for teaching paragraphs, including societal issues, problems, and family dynamics.

Anil believed in assessing students' knowledge and their ability to apply it. He valued real-world relevance, often introducing unseen texts and encouraging comprehension exercises that required critical thinking and analysis. When asked about his experiences using CAS in the language classroom, Anil highlighted its effectiveness in assessing individual language skills. He explained that it allowed him to evaluate not just the overall proficiency of the language used by his learners but also helped him to evaluate his students with other language components like spelling, dictation, sentence structure, and grammar.

As an educator, Anil was keenly aware of his students' diverse backgrounds and abilities. With classes often numbering around fifty, he understood the importance of flexibility. He would create smaller groups, allowing students to collaborate and learn from each other. Team leaders were chosen to help manage these groups, with Anil overseeing and guiding them. This approach ensured students could support one another and provided a more personalized teaching experience.

Creating a conducive learning environment was a priority for Anil. He believed that exposure was key to enhancing language skills. He would engage students by making lessons relatable, sharing anecdotes, and sometimes even using himself as an example to illustrate concepts. Anil also advocated for vocabulary development and dictionary usage. He encouraged students to find word meanings and explore various definitions. He believed that fostering curiosity and self-reliance in learning was essential.

Anil shared a candid perspective when questioned about the prevalent challenges of implementing CAS in language classrooms. He mentioned several obstacles, including students' differing linguistic abilities and backgrounds, the overcrowded classrooms with sometimes up to seventy-eight students, and the lack of learning materials and library resources. He also highlighted that English is the medium of instruction in theory but not in practice in many government schools. To overcome these challenges, Anil implemented a variety of teaching techniques. He emphasized student-centred methods, dividing students into groups and assigning them responsibilities and tasks. He encouraged peer learning and participation, using lectures, role-plays, and group discussions to enhance language skills. When asked if he had noticed improvements in students' language proficiency after implementing CAS, Anil shared that he had observed positive changes. However, he also acknowledged that challenges persisted, such as students' busy schedules, the lack of individual counselling, and teacher fatigue.

Anil reflected on the importance of keeping records of assessments, individual counselling, and understanding teachers' challenges. He stressed the need for better

communication between teachers and administrators to improve the overall quality of education. Anil's journey as an English teacher in Nepal is a testament to the dedication and resilience of educators in the face of challenges. His commitment to continuous assessment and student-centred learning has left an indelible mark on the students he has taught, shaping their language skills and features.

Interview as Data Collection Method

I conducted online interviews with my participants to gather information for this study. As a researcher, I was responsible for encouraging the participants to share their stories in their own words since this was a narrative study. I focused on the content and context of the stories shared by the participants during the interviews to conduct a narrative analysis. I provided responsive feedback during the interviews to make the participants comfortable and open to sharing their experiences. As McCormack (2004, p. 7) stated, open-ended, in-depth interview questions were asked to allow them to narrate their stories independently. I also used probing questions to gather detailed information and make the narratives more realistic. The aim was to create a natural setting where the participants could share their experiences and invite me into their lives.

To make the interview process more natural, I attempted to make my participants ease and comfortable to share their stories freely. I used responsive enforcement, such as nodding and saying yes and ok, to show that I was listening and interested in their narratives. This helped establish a rapport with the participants and made them feel more comfortable sharing their experiences.

Using in-depth open-ended questions allowed my participants to share their experience and stories in depth, detailed and thick (Braun & Clarke, 2006a; Mertova & Webster, 2019b). I also used probing questions to gather more detailed information and to encourage participants to elaborate on their stories. I looked at the narratives' content, structure, and context to analyse the data. This involved examining the participants' ideas, thoughts, and views based on their experiences. I also looked for patterns and issues of potential interest in the data that I collected from the interviews.

Data Analysis Process

Generating meaning from narratives proved to be a challenging task. Although I initially thought it would be easy, it was more complicated than expected. While there are no standard procedures for representing the method of narrative analysis, I followed Braun and Clarke (2006), which involved a six-step procedure for performing thematic analysis. For thematic analysis, I undertook the following procedure to comprehensively comprehend the data and generate themes that capture its essence meaningfully,

- i. The first and foremost step I took to analyse my data after having a verbal transcription, I immersed into my data. I listened to their audio interviews and interview transcriptions several times to familiarize myself with the data and its content and comprehensively

understand how my research participants understand, experience, practice, and challenges while implementing CAS in their language classrooms.

- ii. I highlighted key terms and ideas, which helped me find common patterns from their interview transcriptions to create and identify initial codes. Codes helped me identify that convey the essential nature of the content from the narratives of my participants. I generated initial codes from interview transcripts to encompass their perceptions, experiences, and challenges in using CAS in EFL classrooms.
- iii. After creating initial codes, I organised these codes into prospective themes while searching for themes. I closely examined the codes for patterns, connections, and relationships of participants' words and experiences to find the overarching meaning patterns in the narratives.
- iv. After that, I examined the generated themes and refined them by compiling related codes and ensuring that they captured the essence of the data. I clearly defined each theme and provided a label that accurately reflected the gist that my participants shared in their narratives.
- v. I tried to make sure that the themes that I generated were distinct, internally consistent, and relevant to the research questions to revise my themes. From the narratives of my participants, I considered if they were interconnected to between or among the themes. Therefore, I made all necessary adjustments to examine the data for patterns and contemplate alternative interpretations.
- vi. Finally, I wrote narratives that describe the themes and their supporting data evidence for writing up the analysis. I provided detailed descriptions and quotations to demonstrate the relevance and significance of each theme. I gave my optimum effort to ensure the analysis was consistent, logical, and clear.

Thematic Analysis

A thematic analysis was done to analyze the narratives I received from my participants. As Braun and Clarke (2006) defined, thematic analysis is for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data as it minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail (2006, p. 79). The application of thematic analysis in this study consisted of transcription, coding, and generating themes from the narratives of my participants. In analyzing the qualitative data collected, I followed the phases of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), which are presented in the following section.

Data Transcribing

Initially, I transcribed the audio-recorded data from the Zoom interviews verbatim. I then began actively immersing myself in the data by re-listening to audio recordings and re-reading interview transcription to understand the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), this is a crucial stage for the researcher to become acquainted with verbal data to search for meaning and patterns that will serve as a foundation for subsequent analysis. All audio narratives from my research participants were transcribed to conduct a thematic analysis.

Coding and Generating Themes

A general concept and several intriguing points were initially generated after the familiarization phase with the data. When manually completing the coding process, I extracted key phrases from the text, determined as many potential codes as possible from the data extracts, and highlighted interesting aspects of the participant narratives. After the initial coding and aggregation of all data, a list of codes recognized in the data sets was compiled. At this point, I began analyzing all codes and combining them to identify emergent themes. After evaluating major themes and eliminating unnecessary ones, a table of emerging themes was compiled.

Theme No.	Emergent Themes	Initial Codes
	EFL Teacher's Experiences of CAS	
Theme 1	CAS Helps Teachers Reflect Teaching Learning Activities	Teaching and learning assessment, Ongoing assessment, enhancing teaching-learning outcomes, Tracking Progress, identification of areas of improvement
Theme 2	Teachers Find the Use of CAS Motivating and Engaging	Student motivation, excitement in learning, active participation, peer interaction, students self-directed learning, engagement in group work, collaborative learning, enhanced performance
Theme 3	CAS Helps Teachers for Uniform, Transparent, and Fair Grading of Their Students	Uniform in grading criteria, consistent assessment, fair evaluation, informed assessment, transparent in grading and evaluation, reduction of bias
Theme 4	Positive Mindset Towards Implementing CAS	Beneficial in teaching, effective teaching activities, and positive attitudes, CAS encourages learning, individualized learning plans, and goal-oriented learning
	EFL Teacher's Practices of CAS	
Theme 1	CAS as a Primary Assessment Tool for Teaching English	Multiple language skills assessment tools, class tests, unit tests, homework, proficiency tests, achievement tests, rubrics, project work, role play, group work, pair work, presentation work, fieldwork, questionnaire, feedback,

		observation, classroom participation, self-correction
Theme 2	Homework and Classwork of CAS are regularly used for student engagement and learning	Homework as CAS, Classwork as CAS, efficiency of them, motivating and engaging with them, commonly used CAS tools, Regular practice
	EFL Teachers' Challenges in Implementing CAS	
Theme 1	Lack of Resources, Teaching Materials, and Infrastructure	Resource scarcity, Inadequate teaching materials, limited budget allocation, outdated materials, infrastructure issues, space and technological constraints, challenges in seating arrangement
Theme 2	Inadequate Support and Monitoring from the School Authority	Lack of administrative support, negligence of school authority, lack of monitoring for the effective implementation of CAS, accountability concerns
Theme 3	Excessive Workload in Limited Time for the Teachers	Increased workload, time constraints, multiple teaching periods, overloaded duties, pressure to complete the course, short teaching period
Theme 4	Language Barrier and the Students with Mixed Ability Groups	Language barrier, classrooms with language diversity, students with mixed ability groups, misinterpretation and miscommunication, difficulties in using CAS for the students of different learning ability groups
Theme 5	Lack of Training for EFL Teachers on Implementing CAS	Lack of training, lack of opportunity for professional development, Need for orientation and training

Figure No. IV on Emergent themes in the coding of the interview transcripts

While in-depth, open-ended Zoom interviews with my participants served as a resource to document teachers' perceptions, practices, and challenges of implementing CAS in their EFL classrooms, even though conducting a thematic analysis looked simple and straightforward, I, however, encountered challenges due to their lack of experience. When I started analysing the data, I had difficulty comprehending it, which led to an incomplete analysis (i.e., I did not completely grasp the essence of the data to make justice for them). I also committed a second mistake by attempting to directly incorporate interview queries into the major themes. In addition to these two major challenges, Braun and Clarke's (2006) study identifies three others: having themes that do not make sense together, failing to connect the data to the analysis, and failing to align the thematic analysis method with the research questions. I consulted with my tutor to resolve these challenges and discussed my initial themes before finalizing them. As a useful resource, I also referenced Braun and Clarke's '15-point checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis' (2006, p. 96).

Quality Standards

When I did my research, I learned that it needed to be of good quality to be helpful to the community. I followed some parameters of quality standards to ensure my research was of good quality. These trends or parameters for the study are quality standards. Different research has different quality standards depending on the situation and the kind of research being done. I followed quality standards for my research, which are described below.

Trustworthy

Positivist researchers often question the trustworthiness of qualitative research because it does not follow the same quality standards of validity and reliability as in quantitative research (Cresswell, 2014a; P. Poudel, 2022). However, I maintained quality standards in my research by having the participants verify the information they shared through storytelling (credibility). I also internalized their thoughts, added, and modified them without changing their meaning, and used literature to help interpret their stories (transferability). To establish credibility, I engaged with the participants frequently over a long period of time. I compared the similarities between their lived experiences and the reconstructed attributions to ensure quality standards (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Authenticity

To ensure authenticity in this study, I collected the lived experiences of secondary-level EFL teachers from community schools. I established a close relationship with the participants to ensure trust and prolonged engagement with them (Taylor & Medina, 2011). I was in frequent touch and have had a regular talk using social sites, too, apart from having a Zoom meeting. I included the original voices of the participants without making any changes to their intended meanings. An in-depth interview was conducted to generate information from the participants.

Verisimilitude

As a narrative researcher, I aimed to present the experiences and stories of the research participants realistically and authentically, which led to maintaining verisimilitude. To achieve this, I followed Denzin & Lincoln (2011), which suggested a thick description of the participants' experiences, ensuring that the narratives I presented in this study accurately reflected their context and embedded meaning.

Cresswell (2014a) defines verisimilitude in research as a criterion for an excellent literary study, where the writer makes the study seem real and alive, immersing the reader in the world of reading. Through my writing, I aimed to create a natural and realistic setting that would allow readers to connect with the stories and experiences of the research participants. To ensure that I accurately captured the experiences and stories of the research participants, I analyzed their narratives in detail. I highlighted every minor detail of their experiences and challenges of using CAS in EFL classrooms that impact their assessment practices. I focused on all the minute detail of their narratives to provide a comprehensive and authentic portrayal of their experiences.

The quality standards of research study, verisimilitude, is extremely concern in narrative inquiry to ensure that the study findings accurately reflect the reality of the research participants. Through my writing, I aimed to achieve verisimilitude by presenting the experiences and stories of the participants realistically and authentically, providing readers with a proper understanding of the actual context of CAS practices and their embedded meaning.

Ethical Considerations

In all types of study, ethics in research is necessary. The respect and concern we offer people participating in research studies are crucial. The subjects and sources for data generation are our research participants. All professionals are led by a code of ethics that has evolved through the year to meet the changing ethos, values, requirements, and expectations of people with a stake in the professions (Arifin, 2018; Clandinin et al., 2016). It demands that inquiries, particularly in qualitative research requiring extended observation and interviews on-site, be aware of their influence and avoid disruption of the physical environment (Brownlow & O'Dell, 2002). These remarks show how critical it is to consider ethical considerations while conducting a research study. Therefore, I was aware of and mindful of maintaining ethical issues throughout my study.

I maintained ethical issues from the perspective of my respondents without causing physical or psychological injury to them (Clandinin et al., 2016). I did not engage in any activities that could have caused psychological or emotional damage to my participants. I was conscious of obtaining the participants' permission to begin a Zoom interview with them. Before conducting interviews with them, I clarified the purpose of my study and kept everything private. In addition to that, I maintained the following ethical considerations with my research participants.

Informed Consent

Before agreeing to participate, I informed my participants about the study's purpose and procedures. I gave them a detailed description of my study during an information online meeting, including its purpose, procedures, and expected duration. After that, I sent a consent form for them to obtain voluntary consent from my research participants. They were allowed to make an informed decision about whether or not they wanted to participate in my study. I also told them they could withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable participating.

Privacy

As a researcher, I have understood the significance of maintaining the confidentiality of the sensitive information shared by my participants. I told them that their information would only be used for research purposes and that their identities and the information they shared in the narrative interview would not be disclosed for any other reason. I ensured them that the information I got from the interview would not be shared with anyone else before the final submission of my research study. To protect their privacy, the participants were informed that the use of pseudo names for them and the schools they work in would not be disclosed by any means (Brownlow & O'Dell, 2002; Cresswell,

2014a). During the Zoom meeting, I learned that my participants might pose risk of being threatened by school administrations and their colleagues if their identities were disclosed. Therefore, I was aware and mindful of maintaining their privacy throughout the study.

Anonymity

Since the research study involved personal experiences concerning using CAS, the information they shared in the narrative interview was sensitive and private, which I, as a researcher, should protect. To anonymize my research participant for the study, I gave them pseudonyms and did not include any identifying information from the transcripts. My optimal attempt to maintain the anonymity of my participants was to make them feel more comfortable and safe sharing their stories and experiences without fear of judgment or negative consequences. This led to more in-depth and honest narratives that provided me detailed and rich data for my research. Ethical issues of the privacy and confidentiality of participants are well maintained if their identities are anonymized.

Confidentiality

I tried to keep the identity and information of my research participants confidential by protecting participants' privacy and personal data. I was responsible for protecting the confidentiality of participants' data, including identifying information and personal data. I thoroughly followed the interview protocol to keep their information confidential to build trust between us by protecting their identity. I kept my participant's information confidential by using pseudonyms, removing any identifying information from transcripts, and protecting all the information.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I adopted an interpretive paradigm to analyze ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions as my philosophical considerations. I used narrative inquiry as the research method for my study. My participants' narratives in the Zoom meeting served me as the primary source of data generation. I generated themes and subthemes based on the research questions and the participant's narratives. I selected my participants from five districts of three provinces in Nepal. I described how I maintained quality standards and the ethical issues such as informed consent, privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality for my study.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

In this chapter, I aimed to answer all three of my research questions of the study, which are how EFL teachers perceived and experienced CAS, how they practiced it, and what their potential challenges were while implementing CAS in their language classrooms. To achieve this, I discussed and interpreted the participants' responses I collected during the interview. Since thematic analysis is a valuable qualitative research technique that provides rich and detailed insights from the shared narratives, I identified common patterns within their shared narratives to generate the themes. Therefore, I developed themes from the data I collected and discussed them from the findings. In this chapter, I have discussed and explored the findings related to all three research questions of the study, which I discussed under different themes. These themes for each research question are developed based on the analysis of the narratives of my participants. I have provided a detailed account of the English language teachers' perceptions and experiences of CAS, how they practice it, and their challenges in implementing CAS in language classrooms under different themes.

EFL Teachers' Perceptions of CAS

This section focuses on English language teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding using CAS in language classrooms. This chapter discusses and gains insights by analyzing the participants' narratives on their perceptions and experiences of using CAS in English language classrooms. When asked how he understands implementing CAS in classroom teaching, one of my participants, Krishna, narrated,

'Yea, well, in the context of Nepal ur..I, as as teacher of English language, umm.. I have been using it to umm.. okay how to progress the that overall progress of the student in the classroom besides umm.. the formal and that what we call it that assessment , ya? So, umm... as a language teacher, I want them to do other that activities in the classroom so that that will help them umm to progress in learning that in English language. I think that the that CAS will help a lot to students in learning that the language okay? And we teacher should practice it in the classroom rather than only formal examination and help a lot to students to make a progress by learning the that language in the classroom yeah?' [16 March 2023]

He stressed how CAS significantly for his teaching. He found it helpful to understand the level of the students, which allowed him to use suitable teaching activities to improve their learners significantly. Using CAS also progress for their their learning, which led to increased engagement and better outcomes. He realized that CAS is a powerful tool for promoting student progress.

To answer the question of how he perceived CAS, Satya responded,

“Oh, as far as I am concerned sir, CAS is umm much important for the students for overall umm..recognition and overall umm, you know, we just, if we have to have comprehensible knowledge about all the students and, then, CAS is very much important. Um, apart from their studies, um, it supports in their studies, not apart from, their studies. If the CAS is implemented umm, well, it will support their learning weakness, as fas as I am concerned. Um, in language classrooms umm, for example, there might be, in CAS there might be the things like attendance, homework and um.. other things like the regularity um.. Whatever there is if it is implemented, then if the teacher is really laborious, and if he implements it by his heart, then it will be very fruitful, sir. But in case of our existing scenario shows um, you know sir, existing scenario shows, teachers only put ticks. There are in our context CAS, there are tick system. Um in CAS, three ticks, two ticks and one tick for ah.. there are certain parameters and accordance to that parameters, um..ticks are given but the teachers do not access to the students. They only provide ticks as per their calculation. They do not um do so. And, If the teacher is really labourious, then the CAS is very much fruitful in my perspective sir.” [21 March 2023]

From the narrative of Satya, CAS is a process that aims to foster creativity and check students' understanding of knowledge. He believes that CAS should repeatedly evaluate students' skills and comprehension of subject matter and find ways to improve their knowledge and skills of language (Baniya, 2015). It is also equally important when assessing the students. That's why Satya pointed out the significance of administering CAS using a mark or tick for the assessment of his learners. Teachers should not just complete the course and test their students. Their main role is to help students learn. Everyone involved in education should focus on helping students learn and improve their language skills.

Another participant, Binod, was also in favor of using CAS. He excerpts,

“Um, CAS is an exam. Let’s say a kind of exam because it is also done to assess learners. Homework, classwork, and project, I think, are CAS. It is used to evaluate not one time like a final exam. But it is used frequently. But I have noticed that most of the teachers use final exams. CAS is used to identify the problems and progress of students. Um... it also aims to make improvements for learning. Because there are achievement tests, proficiency tests that aim to improve their learners. Well, umm..in course of my teaching, I uh..sometimes I use CAS uh..thought I have ah..a little concept about it. Uh..and ah..CAS, actually, it is ah..a quite new concept to us in the context of Nepal. Um.. in my understanding, ah..so far my knowledge is concerned, CAS was ah..firstly introduced in Nepal in 2063 BS. Ah..it was first implemented for class one, and gradually it was implemented to class two, class three, class four and class five, likewise. So, ah..after 2067 BS, of the CAS was implemented up to the class seven, I guess. And, in my understanding, um..ah..as you have asked the question to me, ah..what do you understand by CAS, so, addressing to your question, I will try my best, sir. CAS is a continuous evaluation, done for the students ah..according for their needs, ah..according to their interest, level, and

ah..also it is ah..done along with our teaching-learning activities. So, in other words, okay, its lets be very short and let's say to be very specific, maybe it is compared with producing the final results, okay? Or, its been, lets say, its been comparing with summative evaluation from the assessment done every day ah..on the everyday basis in our each and every classes. ” [3 April 2023]

According to Binod, the use of CAS has to be focused on the process of teaching activities that lead to improved learning. He acknowledges that assessment practices and perceptions in the country need reformation, as learning is not only about passing or failing exams. Therefore, he states that CAS should be administered in language classes to know the level of students learning and enhance their skills and knowledge. Besides, CAS helped teachers identify issues early on and adjust their teaching strategies accordingly (Parajuli, 2003; Prouty & George, 2013). The progress record of the students after the implementation of CAS was beneficial for subject teachers and school administrators. Furthermore, CAS also helped the teacher identify their students' strengths and weaknesses in language learning. Using CAS, they can also set goals and track their progress over time, which assists the learners to be engaged and motivated for learning.

Similarly, I asked Anusha about her perceptions of using CAS in the English language classroom. Here's what she said,

“For me, I personally like to use CAS. You know? I notice my students are afraid of exams. They are scared of exams. The reason they are scared is because we don't use the forms of CAS so often. Our education is more focused on board exams. We are more concerned to grades. Therefore, we ignore the process of learning and assessment. CAS for me, is a way to, to assess students and help them to learn more. I am in favour of it, But you understand? We have so much problems of CAS. I cannot use it every day. I need to do a lot of things at the same time. I will see if I can manage to use CAS. I would like to share my personal perspective and my understanding regarding CAS, a continuous assessment system. Actually, in other parts of the world, this continuous assessment system, I think, not new but talking about Nepal context, its quite new. It has been just a few years that the government has made it compulsory. Um.. ah..both private as well as community based schools. So, according to my understanding, just CAS system, continuous assessment system means, you know that it is a part of ah.. or mode of evaluation for the students, for the learners to evaluate their learning efficiencies. And, it is a practical based mode so they are, we can you know that categorize learning evaluation into two parts ah.. Um..ah..so formative and summative. And this goes under formative evaluation method. ” [27 March 2023]

Based on Anusha's narratives, she considers that the CAS in the language classroom is severe and stressful, putting learners in a frightening situation. She believes teachers are using CAS too seriously, not helping the learners learn better in a traumatic classroom situation. The students are already in psychological distress. She further opines that teachers, students, parents, and education

stakeholders are causing the problem of making CAS frightening. Her perception towards the use of CAS in language classrooms is welcoming since it is quite new practice in context of Nepal and suggests the narratives that the teachers are making CAS a trauma; teachers instead should make a good relationship between teaching and learning with CAS. She considers that using CAS should be process-oriented, not result-oriented, to enhance the student's language skills.

In the same way, when asked how my fifth and the last participant perceived using CAS in the language classroom, Anil narrated,

“Ah, CAS in teaching-learning activities has great importance. It is, well, used to assess the learners. CAS informs the performance of my students. I also find ways to improve them using CAS. I can check my students. I also learn how effective my teaching is with it. continuous assessment system depends on the content, sir. So, in which content you are teaching actually. So, ah..the content if I teaching communication like ah..language function, then I use ah..the dialogue, sometimes role play, yes, sometimes giving the situation and analyse it, yes? And, sometimes I will make them giving the different situations, and they will do ahh..do the ah..they will do the test also. Similarly, some, sometimes ah..if I am teaching them the direction, then I will, if you were, then find out the which, where, how will you reach that destination, I will tell them. If I am teaching them the paragraph, I will give them the different contents, yes, different situations, the burning situations of our society, sometimes the burning situations of our schools, the problems and the issues, ah..their families, no? And, these things I can give them as an assessment and I will collect all of them and their test papers and I will give them ah..according to feedback of each. If I am teaching the reading passage, suppose if I am teaching, just, ah..authentic or non-authentic, some, most of time I use the book, actually. Sometimes, if I have taught, they became familier, they became authentic. Sometimes, ah..suppose as seen and unseen text, you can say, because, sometimes there, I will ask them I will ask them from the back of the side (Lesson) which I have not taught them. Okay, this is unseen text for you, and do the other activities as per your compre.. comprehension. So, this is the way I can choose the different assessment for evaluating them or the students.” [9 April 2023]

Based on the narrative Anil and other participants shared, it is inferred that CAS has a larger concept than any other forms of standard examination, like summative assessment. They emphasized that most of the teachers, parents, and other education stakeholders consider CAS as of examination. The idea of CAS as a formative assessment is a learning and improvement process. So, they support the implementation of CAS in a language class to prioritize the learning process instead of examining what the students have learned. The use of CAS in language classes enhances better learning.

EFL Teacher's Experiences of Implementing CAS in Language Classrooms

As a formative assessment in language classrooms, CAS evaluates the student's proficiency level in language learning. During the learning process, teachers can assess what their students already know. As Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007) noted, formative assessment is important for encouraging students to progress toward their academic goals. Feedback is provided to students during the learning process for further improvement in language learning. Based on the interview narratives of my participants, I found that Anusha, Binod, and Anil were aware of formative assessment. At the same time, Krishna and Satya were less when they started teaching at their school.

According to Binod, CAS consists of different types, tools, and instructions to gather and analyze data on student learning. CAS occurs before or during the teaching, provides feedback on homework, and is critical in improving student performance daily. Using CAS determines the success or failure of a teaching-learning process and ensures the students improve their learning. He narrated,

'Um, I think CAS has a lot of benefits. I can find my student, you know, they have understood my lesson. They have progressed. I would say it helps me to choose right method, method of teaching. And, I can also find the gaps in my students' learning, you know. And it can, of course help them to identify their level and make improvement, if I am right.' [3 April 2023]

Moreover, CAS promotes active learning and student engagement in the classroom. Students are encouraged to participate more actively in class discussions and activities by regularly assessing their understanding. This can lead to a more dynamic and collaborative learning environment where students can take ownership of their learning and contribute to the learning process. Therefore, Anusha experienced CAS as,

"Of course, CAS in my class helps me to understand my students. I sometimes use it. I don't know if it is CAS or not because I group work and homework quite many times. Um, I know my students and their language level in their tests. And I use class tests and unit tests. Overall, I know them well when I test them. So, I was saying, that CAS also support students know their level. It helps them to learn better with using CAS. In language teaching, I have been practising ah..different techniques of CAS. Ah..like..umm.. So, in English, it comprises four parts listening, speaking, reading and writing. So, for continuous assessment, I have been going through their class and home assignments and sometimes I am keeping the records of CAS regarding continuous their home and class assignments. Um. sometimes I am giving them project work, sometimes demonstration activity, so sometimes doing questionnaire, regular type of questionnaire, so sometimes engaging them in observation activities, some sort of observation activities, story telling." [27 March 2023]

In addition to its benefits for teachers and students, CAS can also help schools and education systems to monitor and improve overall all four skills of language learning. By analyzing the data received from CAS at the school or district level, teachers can identify the strengths and weaknesses of

their students. This can inform decision-making about teacher professional development opportunities, targeted interventions for struggling students, and curriculum and instructional materials adjustments.

It is worth noting that practical CAS requires careful planning and implementation. Teachers must design assessment tasks that align with their learning objectives and provide meaningful feedback to students. They must also use assessment results to inform their teaching practices and adjust their instruction. In addition, schools and districts need to provide adequate support and resources to help teachers implement formative assessment effectively. In response to how they experience CAS, Anil responded,

“Oh, wait for a while; let me think about that first, okay? Yes, In my point of view, I think CAS is very, very powerful test to test the students. It is not only in my English class. It is in other subjects also. What I was telling you before, Oh, yes, CAS gives me the detailed picture of them, my students, and me also about our teaching activities and about their learning also. If I use CAS well in my classes, it helps my students understand my lesson. It is very exciting. And my students are also enjoying when I make teaching material for test. I mean for Continuous Assessment”. [9 April 2023]

In the narratives of my research participants, they have frequently stated that formative assessment in CAS demands financial resources and time. As Lewy (1990) stated that additional worksheets, extra effort, and more time must be dedicated to the process, which may discourage teachers from utilizing it. However, all my participants in the study recognized that the CAS in language classrooms is a valuable tool to evaluate students' learning and enhance their weaknesses to improve their learning.

The analysis of how teachers perceive and experience implementing CAS for language classrooms at secondary-level public schools in Nepal is based on their narratives. The focus is on how secondary-level EFL teachers use CAS and its tools to enhance language skills. The teachers' perceptions and experiences are presented below under different themes,

Theme 1: CAS Helps Teachers to Reflect Teaching Learning Activities

The experiences of my research participants stated the significance of implementing CAS in language classrooms. Krishna, Anusha, Binod and Anil favored using CAS and its various tools to assess students' progress and determine effective teaching to ensure enhanced language learning skills. Krishna and Anusha shared their experiences of using portfolios and project work to assess knowledge and skills in writing skills of language. Making the students participate and contribute to the project work in groups was helpful to both students and teachers understand the student's actual performance. It also helped them identify areas needing improvement for enhanced language learning. In addition, Anusha also supported using CAS to collectively reinforce language learning in the class. To align the theme of understanding the real picture of what the students are learning and the effectiveness her classroom teaching activities so far using CAS, Anusha narrated her story,

“Well, I try to use CAS as much as I can. If I tell what I feel when I use it, my students, you know, they know their grades. I make criteria for their grade and assessment, and they understand it about, uh... their learning. So, I find that CAS helps my students reflect about their learning just like mirror, you know? And one more thing, I also plan my teaching activities based on the result from CAS because I know their weak points in CAS. So that, I plan to use CAS to address their challenges. So, you understand? I use almost all kinds of activities in my teaching. They are like classwork, peer work and group work. Because learning a language need a lot of exposure. The more you get exposed, the more you learn. So, I use group work because my students get chance to talk to each other. I observe my class and ask them to talk in my group activities. So, this encourages them to learn language. This is what I do for teaching language.” [27 March 2023]

Based on the personal narrative of Anusha, it is evident that CAS, along with its other tools of CAS, reflects students' progress in learning. In addition, feedback from these tools plays a vital role in assisting learners to enhance their language skills. These experiences demonstrate that implementing CAS and its tools accurately reflects students' performance and enables them to make significant improvements. Implementing CAS in language classrooms has played a significant role in alternative assessment, allowing more flexibility and a more comprehensive assessment of the student's language learning (S. Brown & Knight, 1994).

In addition to that, some participants narrated that the CAS replaced end term examination. The use of CAS in language classrooms enables the learners to understand the actual level of their learning and reflects on what they have learned so far. However, Anil narrated that the use of individual portfolios, a tool of CAS, enhances students' language learning skills,

“In my experience project work, group work and portfolio are, I think, useful to develop language of my students. I find it the most effective tool for my teaching and to understand if it was effective. Portfolio. I have used in my class in grade nine. I can't use it in ten class because I have to finish the course before, because they have board exam in Magh (March). So, portfolio in my class was sort of helpful for developing language skills because I record everything, their grades, their performance and their writings, everything, I record in a file. So, it is helpful for them to understand their learning. So, I find it useful”. [9 April 2023]

In the narrative of Anil on using portfolios in a language class, he finds CAS helpful for the students to enhance their language skills. It is a creative idea to use the portfolio where the students make a record of everything to track their progress and a further improvement in language class. The narratives shared by all the research participants support the theme of reflecting their real understanding and knowledge with the help of CAS. Using various tools of CAS homework, classwork, classroom participation, and portfolio helps teachers assess students' learning of a language (Hausfather, 1996). They enable students to clearly understand their progress and help the teacher find suitable teaching strategies to improve their skills.

Theme 2: Teachers Find the use of CAS Motivating and Engaging

This theme is generated based on the narratives shared by the teachers regarding how they perceive and experience the use of CAS in their language classrooms. The majority of my participants experienced that using CAS has motivated and engaged their students in learning. I asked the teachers about their experiences of using CAS in language classrooms, and although their individual experiences are slightly varied, I found several similarities in their narratives. Therefore, this theme analyses the commonalities among teachers' experiences with CAS and how it motivates for both the teachers and the students for language teaching in the classrooms. Krishna shared how using CAS has motivated them,

“Oh, yea, when I spot mistakes from CAS, I try to correct my students quickly. I give them feedback orally. Actually, it depends. I write feedback on their copies when I check their homework and classwork. So, for me, it is absolutely helpful to find their mistakes and, you know, to allow them to improve their language. This is quite exciting, you know? My students are super excited when they know that they are doing well with the help of my teaching activities. I create such a task where they are motivated to learn. Like, I use group work, projects, and sometimes bring a newspaper and ask my students to work in groups. They make a collage from the newspaper. Actually, they cut the pictures from the newspaper and stuck these cut-outs in the drawing paper. It is very fun. Each is engaged in my activity. I think this works for them to learn faster.” [16 March 2023]

Based on his experiences, Binod often provides feedback after implementing CAS that helps learners identify their mistakes and focus on areas that need improvement. They are motivated and engaged in learning when they notice they are significantly improving their learning. CAS promotes peer interaction and collaboration among students to co-construct knowledge. Through discussions and interactions, students gain knowledge and ideas from one another. This collaborative learning approach emphasizes the importance of pair and group work and highlights that students can learn from their classmates (Hausfather, 1996). Since CAS includes various types of learning activities such as project work, class discussions, and presentations where the students are encouraged to participate in learning. When students actively engage in the learning process, they are more likely to improve language learning.

Satya, another participant, has also had similar experiences of how using CAS motivated him and his students in language learning,

“Um-hm, that’s interesting question! I have very good experience of using continuous assessment. When I have group work, I ask my students to work in the group. I give them different activities for different group. Sometimes, I ask my students to involve in project work. I give them project work about writing a biography of a famous person they know in their community. They went to a serial actor and interviewed him. They also presented about him. I did not know that this actor was from their community. It was quite exciting to know that.

Um.. and another group brought a piece of writing for their project work. That was so impressive. Their group presented a biography of an old man from Newar caste. This man has a big contribution to promote Newar culture. So, I did not believe that they could come with that much. So, it was very exciting that they worked together for that.” [21 March 2023]

The experiences mentioned above highlight that the teachers find implementing CAS in the language classroom engaging and motivating. The fact that sometimes students propose the teacher use CAS in the class proves their self-directed approach towards CAS and its tools for language learning. Using CAS tools such as class tests, homework, and self-correction grab students' attention and motivate them to practice more in language learning.

EFL teachers experienced and shared that using CAS to assess students' learning was fun and exciting. Their narratives also indicate that the students are not bored and hesitant to participate in group work, poster presentation and project work classroom dynamics. The students encourage some of my participants to administer a class test, demonstrating that learners are self-motivated to use CAS and its tools to improve language learning. Anusha also narrated her experience that using tools of CAS and class tests, homework, and self-assessment grabbed their attention and encouraged them to practice the language in the class enthusiastically (Hausfather, 1996).

Likewise, Anil also experienced that the students participated actively in various tools of CAS as he narrated,

“I ah..try to ah.. engage them to promote the learning level of my students. And, so far the tools for teaching reading skills is concerned, I have been using some tools, I am going to mention, going to tell you that tools what I exactly use in the classrooms. So, ah..reading...for enhancing reading skills ah..the tools I use are the English related newspapers, magazines, text book itself, different types of reference books related to the difference topics while we go on teaching, okay? We give them lets say we have different reference books and those reference books also can be utilized as tool of CAS for reading and ah..for many more. And, similarly, as the tool for writing is concerned, we can assign different types of tasks. So, in a very ah.. basic level, okay, we use or ah..I have been using different types of tasks, lets say, the guided writing, parallel writing, and copying similarly and different others. Apart from these, ah..whenever ah..their writing ability will be developed, and I also practice some problem solving activities, some creative works, some project works to carry out so that again their writing skills will be developed. Ah..finally ah..we can also do the written test, okay written examination, okay, that will be conducted by any formal institutions. And, as tools for teaching speaking is concerned, in my experience and what I have been using this ah..the discussion method. One of the important tool or that we interact with the students. We held the discussion among the students themselves by into groups, into pair, into group work and also asking question answers in the same way dividing them into different groups or doing some pair works. And, we also ask them about let's say for describing the the picture itself.

Describing the pictures to find the similarities and differences in the set of the pictures and interviews, ah..these are some common let's say interview questions, the common questions that can be asked to enhance their speaking skills. And, we can use ah..we can exploit a lots of such audio video materials or to facilitate them. Finally, the highest level, ah..tools like speech, like debate contest can be held ah..for their let's say for enhancing their speaking skills. And finally, tools for CAS for teaching listening, so far that I have my experience is concerned, that that tools I have been using in the classrooms, ah.. may be tradition and and ah..I maynot have adequate knowledge regarding for, to use for this skills, actually it's a basic skill and it's the receptive skill and it's the prerequisite or let's say ah..for all the skills. It is base for all the skills.Without this listening skills, other skills can not be expected. Uh..so far okay, lets say, my experience and the CAS, ah..tools of the CAS for listening that I have been using inside the classrooms are quite simple I use the tape recorder, recording of the audio text, and I make them listen through the recorder. Ah..similarly ah..I also ask the students ah..to play games, different guessing games, and different vocabulary games to draw their attention ah..to trick their brain so that they are fully concentrated towards the audio text. I also outline to discriminate the sounds of males, females, what different roles they are playing through this audio ah..text. So, that all about the ways I use for CAS for teaching different language skills, sir..” [9 April 2023]

Anil discovered that the students were engaged and excited in classroom activities while using CAS. Similarly, he also noticed the students were doing their work independently while engaging them in various activities for enhancing all four skills of language learning. The experiences of all my participants are largely consistent with each other in terms of how using CAS in language classrooms is engaging and motivating for the students. He also found that CAS brings diversity to learning. Engaging learners in different tasks and activities of CAS tools, such as project work, poster presentation, rubrics, portfolio maintenance, group work, peer work and self-assessment etc., the teachers experienced these tools of CAS raised their curiosity and encouraged them to participate more actively, resulting in improved performance for language learning. Based on the experiences shared by my participants suggest that using CAS in language classrooms has engaged and motivated them in language learning and knowledge construction (Jia, 2010).

Theme 3: CAS Helps Teachers for Uniform, Transparent, and Fair Grading of Their Students

After analyzing interview narratives from my research participants, it was found that using CAS in language classrooms helps students to ensure uniform, consistent, and fair grading. Furthermore, tools of CAS, including rubrics and portfolios, inform the teachers about their student's understanding and skill level and the areas where they require further improvement. The result of using CAS tools is transparent to the teachers to report to the school authority and the parents in explaining why a student received a particular score or grade. Simina & Hamel (2005), CAS increases transparency, improving

student performance and satisfaction. Using CAS also helps students understand their learning level clearly and fosters accountability and ownership of their work (Alderson, 2005). Therefore, CAS is a valuable tool for promoting fair assessment and improving student performance. All my participants advocated using CAS for transparent and fair grading. To support this theme, I excerpt the narratives of Satya,

“Well, so far, I have experienced CAS in my class; I always set clear criteria and rubrics for grading my student. It is definitely helpful for me and my students to assess them. As I said that before, that it gives a fair result because they know these criteria. Because I have a large classroom size with more than sixty students, I cannot assess the classwork of all of them in one period. So, what I do is I collect copies of my students, and I give them to other students. What they do here is they check copies of each other, and they check and give marks. It is easier for them because I have answer keys and assessment criteria that I write on the board. I find it is good to assess them fairly. I don’t think there are any issues of personal biases with this kind of techniques and activities.” [21 March 2023]

Based on his experiences, CAS provides more transparency in the grading process. When the teacher makes clear grading criteria, students can see how they are being evaluated and understand what is expected of them regarding their language proficiency. Therefore, Gilkerson et al. (2017) stated that using CAS in language class ensures uniform, consistent, and fair grading in language learning by providing regular feedback, clear assessment criteria, reducing bias, providing an opportunity for improvement, and increasing transparency in the grading process. Another participant, Binod, has had a similar experience using CAS to make grading transparent and fair. He shared his narratives as,

“Oh, I see that. I am not sure about that, but I make my CAS to assess students fairly. This also depends on course content and class. In place of taking only annual examinations, the reason I take CAS so often is because assessment should be regular. You know, when I take the test regularly, I know my students better. It is, at the same time, good to check my students fairly. One of the most important things about CAS is I have my full confidence in talking about my learners to other teachers and their parents. So in CAS, all of us are involved in the learning process to know whether our students are learning or not making any good progress.” [3 April 2023]

Based on the narratives from all of my participants concerning if CAS promotes transparency and fairness, it is conferred that by using evaluation criteria such as rubrics reduces subjective bias in language learning contexts when having good communication among the school stakeholders about the progress of their students in language learning.

Theme 4: Positive Mindset Towards Implementing CAS

Continuous Assessment System (CAS) evaluates students learning throughout the course just at the end of a semester or year. However, based on my research studies, it is generally believed that teachers

who use CAS in their language classrooms have found it helpful. Teachers who use CAS in their language classrooms have narrated that it helped them to identify areas of strength and weakness in individual students' language learning progress, which also helped them to employ effective teaching activities. Additionally, CAS helped students develop a deeper understanding of the language and build a stronger foundation for future learning. Besides, using CAS, teachers can provide ongoing feedback to students, which helps them stay on track with their learning goals. Students can also benefit from the immediate feedback provided by the teacher, which helps them to identify areas of improvement and make changes to their learning strategies accordingly.

All my participants had positive attitudes toward using CAS in language class. In response to how it was helpful for them in their teaching, Krishna narrated,

“Oh, yea. I am very positive about CAS. I think other teachers in the school are also positive about it. I have studied it in my teaching course that the use of CAS for classroom teaching is beneficial. It has a lot of benefits. So, our school is also using CAS. It is, you know, compulsory for the primary section, but at the secondary level, it is a little bit difficult to use every day. Though, I try to use to in most of my classes when I have to take a test of them. CAS, honestly speaking to you, has good learning outcomes, but I cannot use it every day, you know, due to my class in grade 10. I must finish my course. I cannot finish it on time if I only focus on CAS activities, but I like that all CAS activities.” [16 March 2023]

According to him, using CAS in language classrooms has helped him improve their learning by providing a supportive learning environment. Using CAS informs the teachers about their student's progress and regularly tracks each. Similarly, Anusha and Anil also had positive attitudes towards using CAS in their language classroom as the tools of CAS help them achieve better language proficiency. Anusha shared her narratives,

“Of course, I support the idea of using CAS, especially for the classes in language teaching. When I get the result from CAS, I comment my students to do better. I point out mistakes and suggest that they do well. So, I think CAS also encourage them to learn better. I don't know it right. Maybe I am wrong. When I came to this school, even the students of classes nine and ten did not have good English. I used to bring questions from Old is Gold Module Questions to practice them. In the beginning, it was too difficult for me. You know, they did not do well. After that I taught the lesson. I took the text after each lesson. This way, it helped. Now, I take test from module question mostly of the time on Friday. It looks like they are familiar with assessment, and they don't have any fear of it. They have done a lot of progress. They can talk to each other now. They understand the lesson, you know. They can now write also. So, suggest everyone to use CAS. It is very helpful” [27 March 2023]

Based on her narratives, I learned that teachers along with her have grown positive attitudes towards using CAS in language class due to the nature of CAS, as students are constantly being evaluated. This helps students stay engaged in the learning process and helps teachers identify areas where students

may need additional support. Besides, teachers have noticed that the students are improving in speaking and writing skills when they are exposed to a learning atmosphere for productive skills of language learning with the help of CAS tools. My participants have narrated an important issue of providing feedback based on the grade she received from CAS that helped the learners to make individualized learning plans (Prouty & George, 2013). They have said that it helped students work towards their individual learning goals and ensured no student was left behind.

EFL Teacher's Practices of CAS in Language Classrooms

To explore how secondary-level EFL teachers practice CAS in their language classrooms, these themes are generated based on the narratives shared by my participants. I focus on how secondary-level EFL teachers practice CAS in their classes. After rigorous analysis and interpretation of their interview narratives, I have presented the following themes.

Themes 1: CAS as a Primary Assessment Tool for Teaching English

This theme is generated based on the similar narratives shared by my participants on how they practice CAS in their language classroom. CAS involves the ongoing evaluation of a student's progress throughout a course, not at one time in the final exams. According to my participants, CAS has been used as a tool for assessing various language skills with the help of the class test, unit test, homework, proficiency test, achievement test, etc.

Krishna narrated how CAS in his classroom is practiced,

“Oh, yea, I mostly use CAS. It has been okay, you know? That CAS helps my students identify their progress. They also know what they need to work more because of CAS. So, I keep on using CAS to assess them. Sometimes I also plan to use my teaching strategies based on the result from CAS. I sometimes use different-different activities, but it is feasible for me to use homework and classwork. Yea, I often use it in different classes and, ya mostly I use it like in different skills speaking reading or writing okay or that listening, different type of CAS, okay? I often use it that like for project work and then project work, then role play okay? Like this and like that, providing them rubric so that they can practice under the given instructions and guidelines. Sometimes, I take them like outside the classroom for field work and do group work to practice that other activities in which students are given project work, okay? That is like group work or pair work, okay? Ya, these are the ways I use CAS for my students.” [16 March 2023]

Anusha also shared that CAS in general is used as a primary tool for her language classroom. She shared in her narratives,

“Talking about the tools, generally, the ah.. providing them regular home and class assignment and marking them accordingly. Ah..sometimes engaging them in regular presentation work so that it is generally used for the speaking skill, for developing their speaking skill. And, sometimes I also take their written test, written test, like listening test, so...Sometimes, I also

engage them for some sort of project work, pair work so these are the major parts. And, sometimes sir, just giving them chance to read. So, continuously taking the reading test, ah.. letting them to read, or recite poem, engaging them to recite poem. So, these are the major tools. Like question answer sometime, sometimes preparing questionnaire, sometimes going through home and class assignments, project work. These are the frequently and primarily used tools.” [27 March 2023]

From this narrative, it can be asserted that the teachers at the secondary level use CAS as the primary tool for assessing students. According to him, the teachers use rubrics, project work, group work, presentation etc. depending upon the nature of the content, as CAS to assess language competency. They are the most common and regular tools of CAS for assessing students to their language proficiency. It has also been narrated that the teachers in EFL classes use CAS and its tools as observation and classwork to assess students' language skills for speaking and writing. Similarly, Anusha has also had a similar experience with how she practices CAS,

“Not so often, you know, I don't use all activities to test my students. I can't do that even though I want because I have so much to do every day. Honestly speaking, I use all kinds of activities to assess them. I often use classwork. I know them well with classwork, but I prefer using other activities like project work, group work if I have time. CAS in my teaching has been a very powerful way to assess them. In fact, I also give them feedback to perform better. I am sure that CAS certainly helps learners better in language class.” [27 March 2023]

The narratives found that CAS and its various tools, including homework, observation, classroom participation, and self-correction, are frequently employed in EFL classrooms. The majority of the teachers found that CAS and its tools, including homework, classwork, and peer assessment, were mostly practiced for assessing their students. It can be concluded that these CAS tools are not solely means of evaluation but also represent essential activities and tasks for teaching language functions, as narrated by them in the interview. Therefore, CAS and its tools, such as classwork, homework, and self-assessment, are frequently used in EFL classrooms.

Theme 2: Homework and Classwork of CAS are regularly used for student engagement and learning

All of my participants narrated that they implement various CAS tools to monitor student learning and provide feedback for improvement. They articulated that they use quizzes, class discussions, group work, pair work, projects, rubrics, portfolios, poster design etc., for their classroom practices of language learning. I noticed that all of them had similar practices of CAS. Still, I noticed that they frequently narrated and gave a little bit more stress when they narrated their CAS practices as homework and class work to engage and assess, even though they implemented various tools of CAS. To support this theme, my participant Krishna narrated,

“If you ask me about what tools of CAS I mostly use, it is for sure, you know, classwork and homework. I use CAS knowingly or unknowingly. You know that learning a language requires

a lot of practice and repetition. Because of my classroom size and the learning culture where I am growing, I often use homework and classwork because it creates learning opportunities for them. Similarly, both homework and classwork let them work at their own learning pace. I mean, they also engage them for active learning.” [16 March 2023]

Despite the fact that my participants use various tools of CAS such as self-assessment, portfolio, project work, creating a scoring guide of rubrics, group work, etc., I found that they practice homework and classwork as CAS tools more frequently. Binod also narrated his similar experiences with CAS practices,

“That’s a different thing, actually. It depends on the class and lesson that I teach. The students in grade nine have sixty-three students. Because of this big classroom, I have very limited time to do teaching and check homework, and sometimes my teacher in charge sends me to other classes also when the teacher is absent. I am always full of my duties. Can you imagine? I have to do so much. So, for me, I find it so efficient and easy to do with classwork and homework. Because I can check their homework after class time.” [3 April 2023]

Based on the narratives shared by EFL teachers, homework and classwork are frequently practiced as a means CAS tools because they are found to be efficient due to the size and the context of the classrooms. Due to time constraints, homework and classwork also provide opportunities for the students to practice, assess, and promote active and individualized learning (Prouty & George, 2013). In addition to that, both homework and classwork are considered valuable tools for teaching and assessing students’ language skills.

In addition to that, Anusha also narrated that she used homework and classwork as CAS tools, *“Well, I try to use different classroom activities for CAS, but I don’t always use it because of my time. I don’t have enough time to design, and the school also doesn’t help. So, honestly speaking, I mostly assign homework. Oh, yeah, I also take classwork. I know what they have learned and need to learn with classwork and homework. They are often helpful for self-assessment of them.” [27 March 2023]*

Based on her narrative, Anusha administers all the tools of CAS. She, however, regularly incorporates homework and classwork for the language classroom. She finds it useful and effective due to various time constraints, class size and resources. The student's response to homework and classwork is also incredibly motivating and engaging for language classrooms. After analyzing the narratives of my participants, it is evident that the majority of teachers tend to utilize homework and classwork as tools of CAS (P. Shrestha & Gautam, 2022b). They were found to use homework and classwork as the most frequently used tools for teaching punctuation, spelling, grammar, and writing. All five teachers said they use homework and classwork as CAS tools to enhance their student's learning. Based on this analysis, it can be inferred that classwork and homework are the most commonly used and regularly practiced tools within the CAS for language teaching and language assessment.

EFL Teachers' Challenges in Implementing CAS in Language Classrooms

I have examined secondary-level EFL teachers' major challenges while implementing CAS in their classes. To identify these challenges, I have generated and presented the themes based on the interview narratives I received from my participants. Through their narratives, I have developed several themes and sub-themes on the challenges of implementing CAS in EFL classrooms.

Theme 1: Lack of Resources, Teaching Materials, and Infrastructure

This theme is developed based on similar narratives from my research participants on potential challenges they have faced while implementing CAS in language class. According to them, the lack of resources and materials poses challenges in implementing CAS.

Without adequate resources, it is often considered challenging for teachers to design and administer CAS tools that are valid and reliable. Especially in language assessments, in their narratives, they often shared that they require a range of materials such as audio and video resources, flashcards, cardboard paper, and other instruments. It was narrated that the school administrations do not allocate a separate budget for the arrangement of these resources and materials, which direct the teachers to use limited and potentially outdated materials, which leads to poor assessment quality and unfair evaluation of the student's language learning. Without access to these resources, teachers may be forced to rely on limited and potentially outdated materials, leading to poor assessment quality and unfair evaluation of student performance. For this, Krishna shared how a lack of resources, materials and infrastructure pose a challenge in implementing CAS,

“Oh my God! you can't just imagine the situation! I have always been going through a hard time here. We are always out of resources and materials when talking to CAS. I sometimes ask my school to find fund for CAS instruments and materials, but don't have enough materials and resources. You don't believe we don't even have small things like coloured shine pens and white card, board papers, and scissors for designing CAS. I have to manage everything. I have that from challenges like in the Nepalese context, okay in the classroom, okay? Like we have like the one of the biggest challenges the size of the class okay, where we have many students, and it is quite difficult, umm while practising this CAS in the class. Sometimes, you know, we don't have that much space in the classroom, so it is difficult to do that group work and other things okay? Then we don't have that material like we should use for the CAS, okay because that type of technology also, we don't have them in our class, so we have to face some problems. Okay, so I face these problems” [16 March 2023]

In the same way, my participant Anusha also had similar challenges caused by lack of resources in her classrooms. She excerpts,

“Sometimes due to ah.. the deprived area where I am teaching, due to in this remote area, of course the reference materials, the technologies, multimedia, they are not available. So, because of which, it is challenging to lead continuous assessment system.” [27 March 2023]

It is found that based on his experience, the lack of resources and materials for the large classroom size impacts teachers' ability to support their students in learning. Teachers struggle to provide timely and constructive feedback to students without adequate resources and materials that heavily impact the learning and motivation of the students (Mohammedseid, 2018). Therefore, the lack of resources and materials significantly challenges implementing CAS in language classrooms. It impacts the quality of assessments, limits the types of assessments to implement, and hinders teachers' ability to provide students with feedback and support. Every single participant narrated more or less similar experiences of how under-resourced classrooms are a challenge for them in implementing CAS, and another participant, Satya, shared,

“Yes, for sure. I have a big issue with teaching materials and resources for using CAS in my class. Resources here, I meant to tell you about technologies and technical devices. I have my two teaching periods at nine and ten. I sometimes feel like taking some learning materials for my teaching, but my school does not have a computer and printer. So, it is very challenging for me to make teaching materials without a computer and printer. I also don't find suitable learning materials for my students here. Last month I bought some when I came back from my home, but I can't always afford to buy it. Maybe I will show you some other time. The classrooms at nine and ten are too congested for doing group activities, and desks and benches are fixed. I cannot make any seating arrangements for doing group work that requires physical movements. We have a lot of problems in school”. [21 March 2023]

The lack of resources, learning materials, and infrastructure greatly impacts implementing CAS, limiting its effectiveness in promoting students' language learning. So, based on the narratives, it is conferred that teachers at secondary-level public schools have issues with access to resources like technology, instructional materials, and classroom space for implementing CAS. In the same way, Anil also had similar experiences of how the lack of resources and infrastructures in implementing CAS is a challenge for him too,

“Haha, nothing is in order here. We don't have enough teaching materials. We don't have enough learning resources in our school. We have to depend on NGOs and other donor organizations to donate them to us My classroom space and school infrastructure are not CAS-friendly at all. However, I try to use them, but I am not happy with them. We are struggling with basic learning materials, you know. We don't even have forms, files, cards, white paper, and so on. We don't have them. Our school doesn't provide anything. The resource person wants to know how effective CAS is for our classes. How do they even think of we use CAS without anything” [9 April 2023]

Based on the narratives of my participants, it is concluded that a lack of resources, teaching materials, and infrastructure are major challenges in implementing CAS in language teaching. The teachers cannot successfully administer CAS and CAS tools when seating arrangement in the classroom is not adequately organized due to the lack of physical infrastructure (Mohammedseid,

2018). Many Nepalese public schools lack proper management of seating arrangements, so the teacher finds it difficult to conduct project work, group work, and other CAS tools when these activities require physical movement. My participants also mentioned that their school did not have sufficient space in the classroom, and their desks and benches were fixed, which did not allow them to conduct collaborative activities for implementing CAS. Therefore, it is concluded that the lack of proper resources and infrastructure in Nepalese public schools is a major challenge for successfully implementing CAS in language teaching.

Theme 2: Inadequate Support and Monitoring from the School Authority

This theme is developed based on the similar narratives that my participants had about the challenges of implementing CAS in language teaching. My participants shared that they lack support from the school authority, including the principal, co-ordinator, subject-in-charge, resource person, and officers from the local authority to handle the school department. They narrated that the negligence of the school authority in implementing CAS is another significant challenge for language classrooms. Implementing a successful CAS in language teaching widely depends on how the teacher gets support from the administration. But, due to their negligence, the teachers have a big issue implementing CAS in language teaching. Teachers need support from the school authority to successfully implement CAS in their language classrooms. However, my participants shared in their narratives that they do not receive the necessary support in a reasonable amount from their school families. Satya shared his narratives,

“Oh, in my view, sir. Regarding support, I think they are not doing it deliberately. I, um.. as far as I am concerned, they, themselves are unconcerned about those things what is CAS, what does it like and that’s why they are not paying their any hint upon it.” [21March 2023]

Based on his experience, it is conferred that public school teachers do not get proper support to execute CAS in language classes successfully. Besides, having limited opportunities for their professional development also affect the implementation of CAS. So, the lack of support makes it difficult for teachers to effectively incorporate CAS in their language teaching practice (Bachman & Palmer, 2022b). Therefore, inadequate support from school authorities is a significant challenge in implementing CAS in language classrooms in Nepal. Teachers struggle to use CAS effectively when they do not receive support from the school families for the best possible use of CAS implementation.

In addition to what Krishna shared in his narratives, Binod faced challenges when he did not receive support from the school authority for implementing CAS. He excerpts,

“Uh-hm, I am always having difficulties with them. I have told my school to manage them, but these people don’t care, you understand? They are so not concerned! They know that we have a problem. We don’t have enough materials. We don’t have enough learning resources..” [3 April 2023]

Besides stating the lack of proper support from the school authority for implementing CAS in the language classroom, the teacher also articulated another extremely crucial issue of resistance from

other teachers, which is raised from the ignorance of the school authority. Resistance from other teachers pose a crucial challenge in implementing CAS in language classrooms.

Teachers who are resistant to change and to the practice of CAS in language classrooms have serious consequences. The teachers tend to refuse to use CAS and CAS tools when they undermine the application of CAS and tempt other teachers to use CAS. It is a serious issue that resistance from other teachers creates a negative classroom culture toward using CAS (Sithole et al., 2021). Resistant teachers spread negative messages about CAS to other teachers, students, and parents. This leads to a lack of trust in implementing CAS, and the students hesitate to participate in CAS tools. If not provided administrative support and take action against the culture of resistance from other teachers, it gives additional mental stress to teachers who are committed to using CAS. They do not tend to implement CAS when they feel isolated and are not supported by it the school authority on time.

Anusha and Anil had similar experiences of why lack of monitoring and supervision from the school authority a challenge in is implementing CAS. Both of them, in their narratives, shared that without proper monitoring and supervision, teachers generally do not feel accountable for the implementation of CAS. The teachers lose their interest and effort in using CAS when the school authority does not supervise and make them aware of using CAS. Anil shared his narratives,

“I don’t know so much, but I will share. Um..we don’t have regular support and monitoring from school administration. They asks everyone to use CAS but um.. it ha no monitoring.” [9 April 2023]

From the narratives of my participants, it is conferred that the lack of support and lack of monitoring and supervision from the school authority is a crucial challenge in implementing CAS in language classrooms. The teachers, in general, lack proper knowledge and skills in handling CAS and are less aware of implementing CAS; however, it has a strict policy for compulsory use for language teaching (CDC, 2015). It is because lack of support and necessary training from the school authority. Therefore, narratives suggest that inadequate support and lack of monitoring and supervision from the school authority have significant challenges in implementing CAS in language teaching.

Theme 3: Excessive Workload in Limited Time for the Teachers

My participants often articulate the workload for the teachers in limited time as a challenge for implementing CAS in a language class. Implementing CAS requires additional tasks such as designing assessment criteria, developing assessment tools, grading assessments, and analyzing data based on their performance in CAS. CAS increases the demands on teachers' time, making it more challenging to complete all their responsibilities within a limited time. All five participants shared similar challenges of workload for them in implementing CAS. Therefore, Satya echoed,

“I have faced challenges because in our context, teachers have been provided much periods, sir during the day. They have to do five periods, six periods in a the day out of seven periods. Um.CAS along with such periods and other activities, the teacher has to perform, the single teacher has to perform different kinds of the thing in a day. That’s why, he doesn’t like the CAS,

actually in our context. That's the main challenges. The overburden, the teachers with overloaded activities, overloaded duties is the main problem to implement CAS effectively, sir.. we have to just assign extra time or extra period, but if the teachers are overburden with periods, then, ah..they have to spend most of their times in checking copies, or providing them homework, checking copies and many more things. And, in our context, the parents, even the school, management committee, principal, everybody wants homework, and only copies should be checked and homework should be corrected and homework must be checked. That's why, it is very hard to make them understand umm..what is CAS, and umm how it should be implemented." [21 March 2021]

My other participant, Binod, also had a similar experience as,

"I have faced challenges because in our context, teachers have been provided much periods, sir during the day. They have to do five periods, six periods in a the day out of seven periods. Um.CAS along with such periods and other activities, the teacher has to perform, the single teacher has to perform different kinds of the thing in a day. That's why, he doesn't like the CAS, actually in our context. That's the main challenges. The overburden, the teachers with overloaded activities, overloaded duties is the main problem to implement CAS effectively." [3 April 2023]

From the narratives, my participants shared the challenges teachers face when implementing CAS in language teaching. The excessive workload and limited time constraints are other major challenges of implementing CAS Mohammedseid (2018). The participants articulated that most teachers in Nepal are scheduled with at least five teaching periods a day. This leaves them with no time to practice CAS in their classes as CAS and its tools demand excessive time besides their regular teaching schedule.

In addition, teachers in public schools are allocated forty-five minutes for each teaching period which is insufficient to implement CAS and its tools like project work and presentation. Therefore, teachers are always in a hurry to complete the course because the secondary level examination is administered by National Examination Board (NEB) and Secondary Education Examination (SEE)(CDC, 2005). So, the constant worry about completing the course rather than improving students' language skills gives them pressure on their work. Therefore, teachers' workload and limited time are major obstacles to implementing CAS in teaching language.

Theme 4: Language Barrier and the Students with Mixed Ability Groups

This theme focuses on the narratives shared by two participants Anil, regarding the challenges of implementing CAS in language classrooms. The theme explores the challenge of using CAS, highlighting that the teachers find students from different language backgrounds, and their language barrier is considered one of the challenges of implementing CAS in their language classrooms. Anil expresses his thoughts on this matter as,

'Ah..each student has different linguistic background as well as the different linguistic several understanding (learning ability). So, sometimes there, we need to be very flexible. So, what the students require, what is the demand of them, we will go according to it. But, what I prefer sometimes that have, suppose, if there are fifty students, I will make team of four group each. Suppose, if I have ten groups, I will just divide ten groups and tell ah..team leaders ah..along with four friends. And, these groups are not based on their abilities and their capacities, okay? So, how they are cooperated them, then, the monitor them to maintain comprehend to make them understand, to produce it in English, and I will monitor the each group separately. First, I will prepare just the group leaders, and the group leaders will just prepare them, prepare all the candidates After, I will ask the questions, they will answer it. Sometimes, I will ask them to make sentences, sometimes I will ask the questions, they will answer it. Sometimes, I will check the homework related to the exercise. No? If there is any mistakes, I need to cross checking. First, that goes to the monitor sides, then after I finalize, this right or wrong, actually. So, this what the multi or bilingual way of I go through the test, actually.' [9 April 2023]

Based on the narratives of my participant, when students from various linguistic contexts and limited knowledge of their language are brought together in a language classroom, it is challenging for teachers to effectively communicate instructions, explanations, and grading criteria to students with limited proficiency in the instructional language. In Nepal, English is frequently the language of instruction in language classrooms, particularly for subjects such as English language classrooms. Many pupils, particularly those whose native language is not English, may have limited English proficiency. This can hinder their ability to comprehend instructions, comprehend reading materials, communicate effectively, and participate in classroom discussions. It becomes difficult to evaluate their language skills using CAS in their classrooms effectively.

Language barriers can result in misinterpretation and miscommunication between instructors and students. Students may misinterpret instructions or assessment requirements, resulting in insufficient or incorrect responses. Similarly, instructors may misunderstand their students' written or spoken language due to linguistic errors or cultural expressions. This can affect the accuracy and impartiality of using CAS in language classrooms.

Besides, another participant Binod, shared that the students from different or mixed ability groups his is a challenge as he shared his narratives,

"So, so far my experience is concerned, I find quite difficulty level in using this CAS or implantation of it in government schools. Um..there are different reasons behind this. One of the major reasons is the students are of with the mixed abilities. There are heterogeneous learners. They come from the different linguistic backgrounds ah..having different learning abilities, and ah.. also ah..there are not a very good infrastructures in the classroom. That cannot be, ah..we cannot motivate the students towards learning ah..and we cannot do ah..whatever we expected to do or ah.. what the plan we do to conduct in the classroom, there comes some sort of

differences or obstacles, okay, while carrying out. And, umm..there are also so many others ah..because of the students do not have such a power in order to do CAS in the foreign language, let's say in English, the target language, that we use in the class. And, uh..at the situations, ah. a teacher, a teacher, okay, while handling the class overall fifty-sixty students in this community-based schools. Uh..it is quite difficult for us to give them individual instructions. So, we cannot do, carry out, uh... let's say, many things in common. Though, there are learning, let's say differences, because there are mixed-ability students, so, in my opinion, so what I am trying to clarify is that we need to give some individual instructions for the students. And, this can be very much challenging and very difficult task to conduct for a single teacher. And, ah..there is, to sum up about the experience of my using CAS, ah..there is a particular difficulty okay, ah..of using the CAS ah..in the large size class in the government school, likewise. Ah.. it is also equally difficult ah..okay to conduct quite smoothly due to mixed ability students, sir” [3 April 2023]

Regarding the challenge due to the students with mixed ability groups in the classroom, in addition to language barrier Anil also shared,

“The situation is like that. I told you that different linguistic abilities and linguistic background, because if class ten, class nine, they are coming from class eight, and they have, even them know the rules, even they know the structure they feel difficulty to be expressive. Because of the lack of exposure, actually. And, next thing, I feel is the most challenging is that, ah..because the different abilities of the students, because the differences in the learners, no? If you find Section A, Section B, Section C and Section D, few students, they are very good in writing, sir, very good in writing, but they are very shy in speaking. Speaking part is very poor. Even they know how to speak, but they don't want to speak. But, if you ask the question, they will answer you this. If you let them to talk for five minutes or ten minutes, they cant. And, sometimes, what I found the students, about the students, some of them are very quick, they speak with you, and they interact you but they are not able to write very well. What to write, how to write and where to write, so there is no systematization over there. So, this one of the challenges, that's the environment factor also. Another is the learner's factor also, the differences in the learner's situations also. Learners also one of the situation.” [9 April 2023]

According to my participants, implementing CAS in Nepalese language classrooms with diverse ability groups is another pertaining challenge. The students in mixed-ability groups pose obstacles to implementing CAS as varying levels of language proficiency are found in mixed-ability groups. Some students may be more proficient and advanced in the target language, while others struggle with fundamental language abilities. When students' proficiency levels vary considerably, it is difficult to evaluate their development and growth consistently using by means of CAS tools.

In order to meet the diverse requirements of students, CAS necessitates individualised instruction. However, students in mixed-ability groups can be challenging for teachers to provide

individualised instruction based on each student's unique language requirements and abilities (Dhakal, 2020). Using CAS for students' diverse abilities can be difficult and challenging for teachers.

Designing assessments that accommodate students with varying language abilities is essential for an equitable and accurate assessment. However, it can be difficult to create assessments that accurately measure the progress of both high-achieving and low-proficiency students. In addition to that, students with varying language skills may require additional learning resources. Some students may benefit from more difficult materials or activities, whereas others may require remedial assistance. It can be challenging to effectively allocate resources to meet the diverse needs of students in mixed-ability groups, particularly when resources are limited.

Yigzaw (2013) also points out that language barriers limit students' access to teaching instructions and learning resources while implementing CAS in language classrooms. Language barriers hinder their ability to study effectively and perform well when the teachers use various tools of CAS. The teachers have difficulty using CAS when the students are already struggling with a basic understanding of language use. In addition, as the research participant shared, the students with mixed-ability groups are another challenge for the EFL teachers to implement CAS in language classrooms. Students with higher language proficiency may become disinterested or tired if the instruction or assessment is too simple. However, if the materials or tasks are too challenging, students with lower language proficiency may feel overburdened or discouraged. Ensuring consistent grading across students with varying language abilities is challenging for teachers. Maintaining the motivation and engagement of all pupils, regardless of their varying abilities, is extremely challenging for teachers in EFL classes in Nepalese public schools.

Theme 5: Lack of Training for EFL Teachers on Implementing CAS

This is derived from two narratives of my participants concerning the challenges of implementing CAS in language classrooms. The teachers identified the lack of training on handling CAS for them is considered as a significant obstacle to the effective use of CAS in language classrooms. Teachers emphasised that without training and skill development workshop or seminars for them, of CAS in their classroom is challenging. Anusha reiterated this challenge in her narrative,

“I would like to share something that I just have been exercising this CAS system for past few months till now. So, what complications that I have faced is that one, this CAS system is too much effective system. It helps to make this learning, you know, increase the learning efficiency. But, however, there is problem, the main issue is that the teachers do not know how to keep the continuous assessment of the students, how to record the continuous assessment and what are the, the teachers are still unknown that what are the tools they have to use, what are the techniques they have to lead, how can they introduce more and more innovative techniques, they are lacking skills and training. To lead the continuous assessment system before the beginning of the year, before beginning of the academic system, academic sessions, if they are provided

orientation of regarding CAS system, then, they could lead the whole session the same way. So, I think that is the main necessity, the training is main necessity for the teachers as well as the students, also should be aware regarding it. The teachers should be aware. The teachers should be provided skills and knowledge and then after, of course, if a teacher is aware, then, of course, shares the idea, the teacher shares about how their marks are allocated to their students. Teachers can throw the message to the students, So, I think, that is the most important requirement.” [27 March 2023]

Based on the narratives of my participant, when implementing CAS in language classrooms, the teachers face significant obstacles due to a lack of training on how CAS is handled in language classrooms. A limited understanding and lack of skills in using CAS are one of the most significant obstacles English language teachers confront. Teachers do not comprehend the fundamental principles, purpose, and benefits of continuous assessment in the absence of appropriate training. This lack of comprehension hinders their ability to implement the system effectively and design assessments that align with its goals.

Similarly, another participant Satya also shared that lack of training for him is a major challenge in implementing CAS in his language classrooms,

“Ah, nowadays, nowadays, ah.. CAS in our school ah.. even no any stakeholders like principal and and no any person concerned has even given us training or any perspective about CAS. I only learned some of the things about CAS from my only self-study while preparing for services for teacher commission, and I have been given any training on how to implement it, and umm.. and um.. how to just utilize it inside the classrooms. I think umm the government of Nepal has introduced CAS but ah.. even myself just I have been teaching in secondary level students as secondary level of English language teacher in one of the cities of Nepal and if I am am unaware of these things, and what may be the condition of those teachers who are in Himalayas? And, I, I think um..if something is implemented, then, some kinds of training or some kind of development of some kind of things should be introduced to the teachers for the effective implementation and ah..so that the teachers can enjoy it instead of taking it as burden ah.. in my view.” [21 March 2023]

Teachers lack the skills necessary to design and implement CAS regularly when they are not given any skill-oriented training on using CAS for language classrooms. It is difficult for them to develop diverse and authentic assessment tasks that accurately assess students' language proficiency and development over time. Dhakal (2020) opines that in the absence of training in assessment design and administration, teachers face difficulties in their classrooms.

English language teachers in Nepal have limited exposure training on using CAS in their language classrooms. It directly impacts teachers' capacity to implement formative assessments effectively. They rely primarily on conventional methods, such as examinations and quizzes, which offer limited insight into students' ongoing progress and language development. Without proper

training, teachers struggle to provide students with constructive feedback. Effective feedback is essential to continuous assessment, enabling students to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and advancement opportunities. However, without training on feedback strategies, teachers provide generic or ineffective feedback that hinders their students' language development (Basaula & Sharma, 2022).

Insufficient training on the CAS for EFL teachers carries significant implications. It leads to inconsistent assessment practices, limited student feedback opportunities, and an overemphasis on summative assessments that fail to capture students' ongoing progress accurately. Prioritizing professional development initiatives and training programs is crucial for English language teachers in Nepal. These programs should enhance teachers' understanding of continuous assessment, equipping them with CAS design and implementation skills, introducing various CAS tools, and providing guidance on delivering constructive feedback. Additionally, fostering teacher collaboration and knowledge-sharing platforms can create a supportive environment where educators exchange experiences and best practices and learn from one another. Adopting this collaborative approach can mitigate the challenges of the lack of CAS training for EFL teachers. It offers opportunities for continuous professional development and facilitates the effective implementation of continuous assessment in English language classrooms. Consequently, this will improve learning outcomes and a student-centred approach to English language education in Nepal.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings derived from analyzing and interpreting the teacher narratives. After finding similar patterns and coding them from the teachers' narratives, the themes were generated and discussed them with relevant literature. The findings indicate that most EFL teachers have a positive mindset of using CAS in their language teaching. In addition, EFL teachers at the secondary level perceive CAS as an umbrella term encompassing various tools, such as portfolios, projects, assignments, self-assessment, peer review, etc., for teaching. However, it was discovered that homework and classwork are the most often used CAS tools for their language classrooms due to classroom size, workload, and time constrain. The findings also indicated that teachers found their students were engaged and motivated for language learning while implementing CAS. The chapter also discussed the findings on the challenges of using CAS. The major challenges they shared in their narratives are lack of resources, infrastructure, and learning materials, inadequate support from the educational stakeholders and school authorities, excessive workload within a limited period of time, language barrier and the students with mixed ability groups in language classrooms. After presenting the findings thematically in this chapter, the following chapter provides a theoretical analysis of these results, concludes the findings, and suggests pedagogical implications.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND REFLECTION

Discussion

The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions, practices, and challenges of Secondary Level EFL teachers in implementing CAS in language classrooms. The study adopted narrative inquiry as a research method from five different secondary-level EFL teachers. This chapter provides an overview and analysis of the research findings presented in chapter four in relation to the theoretical concepts and the relevant literature. These findings were based on the narratives from Secondary Level EFL teachers during the interview. The study aimed to address the research question of how secondary-level EFL teachers perceive and experience CAS, how they practice it, and their challenges in implementing CAS for teaching language in their classrooms.

EFL Teacher's Narratives on Perceptions and Experiences of CAS

One of my study's objectives was to explore EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences in using CAS in language classrooms. I carefully analyzed the teachers' narratives and identified several themes to achieve this objective. Each of the five participants in my study narrated that they have a very positive mindset toward using CAS in their classes. According to their narratives, CAS is an ongoing evaluation process that they administer to assess the students about what they have learned in their classroom. It was narrated that my participants decide to use the appropriate classroom teaching techniques based on the student's performance in CAS. Besides that, all the teachers experienced the use of CAS, and its tools allow them to understand the real picture of what their students have learned so far and help them find ways to improve their learner's language proficiency.

My participants said their students are motivated and engaged in language learning after implementing CAS. Therefore, all my participants shared their experiences of using CAS in their language classrooms helped develop the language proficiency of their learners. However, my other participants, Krishna and Anil, shared that preparing CAS tools requires considerable time and energy and that they need to arrange it apart from their regular teaching duties. So, they perceived that using CAS besides their regular teaching was a hectic job for them.

Another important finding from the narratives of my participants on how they experienced implementing CAS was to grade their students transparently. According to Binod, using CAS offered them greater transparency in the grading process. Since CAS holds clear assessment criteria, it helped their students comprehend how they were being evaluated and what they were expected to enhance their language proficiency (Parajuli, 2003). EFL teachers were found be positive in terms of implementing CAS in language classes as it promotes transparent assessment criteria, reduces

subjective biases, and provides opportunities for improvement in language learning. Teachers believed that using CAS tools for their students encourages social engagement and helps students understand and improve learning goals through social interaction that align with the theory of social constructivism (Hausfather, 1996; Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

Similarly, they shared their narrative that using CAS tools in a language class was helpful for students to enhance their language skills. According to them, using project work, group work, classroom presentations, etc., in a language classroom is such a creative and fun way to learn the language, whereas utilizing a portfolio helped their learners could track their progress and improved their language skills further using CAS. Through the narratives from the research participants utilizing various CAS tools such as homework, classwork, classroom participation, and portfolios, they could assess students' language learning and help them develop language proficiency (Kellaghan & Greaney, 2001). Therefore, all my participants experienced that using CAS helped them assess their students over time to understand their student's progress and make necessary improvements for their learning.

Alderson (2005) opines that CAS, besides assessing students for their language performance, offers various other benefits as CAS engages and motivates students to improve their performance and provides useful information on student abilities and weaknesses. Moreover, CAS is found to be helpful in assessing student performance or failures and providing diagnostic information to teachers about their language learning. Simina and Hamel (2005) stated that the teachers who consider using CAS effectively ensure their students achieve language proficiency. Since CAS employs various activities such as group work, pair work, project work, portfolios, etc., the theory of socio-constructivism supports a collaborative approach for their learners to create knowledge with teacher feedback and work together with their friends and interact with each other in classes (Jie et al., 2020a; Watson, 2001).

EFL Teacher's Narratives on Their Practices of CAS in Language Classrooms

Since my other objective of the study was to explore how Nepalese EFL teachers practice CAS, from the analysis of their narratives, it was discovered that all teachers at the secondary level using CAS and its various tools, including homework, classwork, group work, project work, and portfolios, etc. However, based on narratives shared by the participants, teachers practice classwork and project work as CAS tools, most often in language classrooms.

The participants' narratives revealed that using CAS in language classrooms is extremely important for enhancing the language proficiency of their learners. English language teachers practice CAS as an umbrella term for these kinds of assessments. From the narratives of my participants, it was found that they used project work, peer review, group work, portfolio maintenance, rubrics, and poster presentation etc. as tools of CAS for their language classrooms. However, they shared that classwork and homework are often practiced CAS tools in their language classes.

As teaching and learning are interrelated processes, CAS is also integral to teaching-learning activities. I also learned that assessing learners using CAS tools can support the professional growth of English language teachers when they narrated that using CAS helped improve their students' language proficiency. In contrast, it was also helpful for them to grow professionally. It was also found that some EFL teachers were conscious of implementing appropriate CAS tools according to the lesson's content and context to enhance all four language teaching skills.

Based on the narratives of my participants, they shared that they employ all the tools of CAS in their language classrooms; however, classwork and homework as CAS were practiced the most often due to various constraints such as time, class size, and resources. Upon analyzing the narratives of the research participants, it is apparent that the majority of teachers rely on homework and classwork as tools of CAS. Therefore, it was found that classwork and homework are the most commonly used and regularly practiced tools within CAS for language teaching and language assessment.

After analyzing and interpreting data collected from the narratives of my participants, it was found that using CAS in the classroom helped the teachers for fair and transparent assessment of their learners. According to Adams (2006), CAS enhanced performance by increasing transparency and clarity of evaluation, resulting in student satisfaction and reduced confusion or disputes. Jie et al.(2020) suggest that CAS can improve students' ability to work and collaborate, express their ideas effectively, and promote accountability and ownership of their work, which align with the theory of social constructivism for this study.

The theory of social constructivism is relevant to consistency and fair grading using CAS in language teaching; when the students participate in classroom discussions, they actively participate and learn language proficiency through collaborative activities and social interaction (Adams, 2006a; Watson, 2001). According to Vygotsky and Cole (2018), a child heavily relies on others, particularly their teachers and group of their friends, for learning through social interaction. Therefore, the study found that the theory of social constructivism is relevant in that learning occurs when children interact with their friends or have social interaction in the class by means of using various CAS and CAS tools, which promotes self-assessment and ensures language proficiency.

EFL Teacher's Narratives on Challenges of Implementing CAS in Language Classrooms

After analyzing the teachers' narratives, some common challenges they faced when implementing CAS in language teaching classrooms at the secondary level are the lack of resources and teaching materials. My participants shared that lack of resources and teaching materials are the major challenges they have faced in implementing CAS in their language classrooms. Besides this, another significant challenge they shared in their narratives was the lack of support from their school authority.

According to them, the use of CAS in language classrooms was heavily affected when they did not receive the proper support from their school administration in using CAS.

Another challenging factor for them to implement CAS in language classrooms was that it was time-consuming for teachers and students. They shared that CAS requires a heavy amount of time for frequent evaluation and feedback, and they considered a classroom teaching period of forty minutes is not sufficient for them to implement CAS. They have also reported that they are lacking various assessment tools, including technology materials, to implement CAS effectively. As they narrated, these resources are not always available for them to successfully plan and implement CAS in their language classrooms.

Similarly, my participants also shared in their narratives that excessive workload is another major challenge for implementing CAS in language classrooms because it consumes additional time and effort from teachers when they are already full of their teaching responsibilities. As they shared that as language teachers, they are required to teach multiple classes, prepare lesson plans, grade assignments, and prepare CAS tools for upcoming lessons, and implementing CAS and its tools like classwork, homework, and portfolio maintenance require extra time and attention, which is too challenging for them to manage. Therefore, from their narratives, I have discovered that teachers struggle to implement CAS effectively due to work pressure. Therefore, having an additional workload for the teachers was found to harm the quality of CAS implementation and hinder the students' overall learning outcomes.

Language barriers of the students in implementing CAS for EFL classrooms is another yet significant challenge for the teachers. They find using CAS in language classrooms challenging when students struggle to learn basic English. Mixed-ability groups of students in the same class further complicate CAS implementation as providing individualized classroom instructions for the large classroom is quite challenging for the EFL teachers. Consistent grading across students with varying language abilities proves challenging, and maintaining a regular track of progress for each of them is quite challenging for EFL teachers in Nepalese public schools.

The lack of training on CAS poses significant difficulties for English teachers in Nepal. Teachers can enhance their skills and knowledge through targeted training, professional development initiatives, and collaborative efforts, leading to more effective implementation of continuous assessment in English language classrooms. This will contribute to enhanced learning outcomes and a more student-centred approach to English language education in Nepal.

Theoretical Discussion

Social constructivism emphasises learning as a social process through interactions between students, instructors, and tasks within the social environment. Using CAS in English language classrooms in Nepalese public schools fosters a collaborative learning environment in which students actively engage in social interactions related to language learning and acquisition. Following social

constructivism, CAS assessments which EFL teachers in their classrooms, practices designed and adopted to promote group discussions, peer interactions, and collaborative problem-solving.

According to the social constructivism theory, knowledge can be constructed and reconstructed individually or socially (Adams, 2006b; Jie et al., 2020b). English language teachers narrated that they create CAS assessments that require students to construct knowledge individually and through social interactions. The practices of CAS they incorporated in their EFL classroom teaching consisted of group assignments, peer reviews, and classroom discussions to promote knowledge construction through collaboration.

As Vygotsky and Cole (2018) stated, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept of social constructivism suggests that students should work on tasks that exceed their current level of competence under the supervision of instructors and peers, CAS assessments that Secondary-level EFL teachers at public schools in the country used to determine each student's zone of proximal development and provided them with appropriate scaffolding and support. EFL teachers actively engaged students in social interactions utilizing various tools of CAS to help them progress within their zone of language proficiency, thereby nurturing language development.

Social constructivism focuses on the significance of authentic duties and problem-solving. In the study, EFL teachers narrated that they create CAS assessments that incorporate authentic language use, such as resolving language-related problems encountered in their daily life situations. The use of this strategy for CAS is consistent with the notion that learning takes place through participation in cultural practices. The teachers often narrated that they emphasize language function by employing CAS tools in group work, peer work, or classroom discussions for their cognitive development within a social setting (Shah, 2019b). By implementing CAS, the teachers often used language to communicate and build their knowledge. According to their narratives, the EFL teachers developed and implemented CAS for their classroom teaching that encouraged their students to use language effectively in social interactions, thereby nurturing language proficiency and cognitive growth.

Implementing tools of CAS in language teaching classrooms is a collaborative and multidirectional process involving teachers and students. The participants shared in their narratives that despite the challenges, they often employ formative assessment practices within CAS to engage students in ongoing reflection, self-assessment, and peer assessment. As in social constructivism, it fosters a deeper understanding of language concepts and enables the identification of comprehension deficits.

According to the narratives shared by the participants, they try to create their classroom-like real-world context using CAS, which is one of the most significant points of social constructivism. EFL teachers create CAS assessments that relate language learning to authentic situations, such as field work, project work or community interactions. Using these activities through CAS helps students improve their language skills and ability to apply what they've learned in the real world. The theory of social constructivism provides a valuable framework for designing and implementing CAS in English

language classrooms in Nepal. Teachers foster language proficiency and cognitive development by emphasising social interaction, collaborative learning, authentic tasks, and the function of language as a social tool. In addition, implementing tools of CAS in language classrooms is consistent with the social constructivist perspective to improve students' overall learning experience of both teachers and the students.

Theory in Relation to Understanding the Teachers' Perception of Using CAS

The theory of social constructivism is used to understand English teachers' perceptions of using the continuous assessment system (CAS) in language teaching in Nepal as

English teachers in Nepal have a positive mindset toward CAS, perceiving it as an ongoing evaluation process. Their perceptions align with social constructivist principles, as CAS fosters student engagement and motivation. This positive attitude reflects that learning is enhanced through social interaction and collaboration (Shah, 2019b; Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

Similarly, CAS provides greater transparency in the grading process, which is consistent with the social constructivist view of assessment. Transparent assessment criteria help students understand how they are evaluated and what they need to improve, promoting a shared understanding of learning goals through social interaction. In addition, the teachers' narratives highlight how CAS tools such as project work, group work, classroom presentations, and portfolios enhance language learning creatively and interactively. This approach aligns with the social constructivist idea that collaborative activities and social interaction contribute to knowledge construction (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

As in the participants' narratives, CAS allows teachers to assess students' language learning over time and make necessary improvements. This emphasis on continuous assessment and feedback corresponds to the social constructivist perspective, where learning is an ongoing process shaped by interaction and feedback (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). CAS not only assesses students' language performance but also provides diagnostic information to teachers, which is aligned with the theory of social constructivism, as it emphasizes collaboration and teacher feedback as students work together to create knowledge.

Similarly, it was found that CAS employs various activities like group work, pair work, project work, and portfolios, promoting collaborative learning. This collaborative approach resonates with the social constructivist view, emphasising that learners construct knowledge through interaction with peers and teachers (Jie et al., 2020b). The English teachers' perceptions of using CAS in language teaching classrooms in Nepal align with the principles of social constructivism. They emphasize engagement, transparency, collaborative learning, ongoing assessment, and the role of social interaction in enhancing language proficiency, reflecting a belief that learning is a socially constructed process influenced by interactions within the classroom environment.

Theory in Relation to the Practices of CAS in Language Classrooms

The theory of social constructivism, when used to understand the practices of using continuous assessment systems (CAS) in language teaching classrooms in Nepal based on their narratives, highlights the significance of CAS in enhancing learners' language proficiency. This aligns with social constructivism, as it emphasizes the role of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process. Teachers recognize that CAS tools, such as project work, group work, and peer review, encourage students to actively participate and learn through social interaction, consistent with the social constructivist perspective (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

The EFL teachers' narratives indicate that implementing CAS supports their professional growth. This aligns with the social constructivist view that learning is an ongoing process, and teachers, like students, can benefit from collaborative learning experiences. CAS encourages teachers to reflect on their practices and make improvements, aligning with the principles of social constructivism (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). The narratives reveal teachers choose CAS tools based on lesson content and context to enhance language teaching skills. This reflects a thoughtful approach to teaching and learning, which is consistent with social constructivism. According to Vygotsky and Cole (2018), social constructivism emphasizes adapting teaching strategies to meet the needs of learners in various contexts, promoting active engagement and learning.

While teachers employ various CAS tools, classwork and homework are the most frequently practised. This may be due to practical constraints such as limited time and resources. However, this is closely concerned with the theory of social constructivism as these tools still promote active participation and interaction in the classroom, contributing to language proficiency through collaborative activities. Their narratives found that CAS is seen as a means of fair and transparent assessment by teachers. This reflects the social constructivist perspective that emphasizes transparency and clarity in evaluation. It contributes to student satisfaction, reduces confusion, and aligns with the social constructivist idea that collaborative learning and interaction lead to effective learning outcomes (Adams, 2006b; Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

The study also emphasizes that learning occurs when students interact with their peers in the classroom using various CAS tools. This idea is closely related to social constructivism, which posits that learning is a social and collaborative process. Students learn language proficiency and engage in self-assessment through social interaction and the use of CAS tools, reinforcing the principles of social constructivism. Practices of using CAS in Nepalese language teaching classrooms align with the theory of social constructivism by emphasizing collaboration, active participation, transparency in assessment, and the role of social interaction in enhancing language proficiency and promoting self-assessment among learners. Social constructivist principles are reflected in the teachers' approaches to CAS implementation and assessment practices.

Theory in Relation to Understanding the Challenges of Using CAS in Language Classrooms

The theory of social constructivism has some limitations when it is used to understand the challenges of using the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) in language teaching classrooms in Nepal. The narratives of EFL teachers highlight the challenge of inadequate resources and teaching materials for implementing CAS. From a social constructivist perspective, this challenge reflects a disconnect between the social and cultural context of learning and the availability of necessary tools. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of the learning environment and available resources, making it difficult for students to construct knowledge effectively when essential resources are lacking (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). However, the challenges raised due to the resource constraints align with the social constructivist view that social and environmental factors influence learning.

The teachers' narratives indicate that the lack of support from school authorities hinders the effective implementation of CAS. Social constructivism highlights the role of the community, including school administration, in shaping the learning environment. When support is lacking, it disrupts the collaborative and social aspect of learning that social constructivism emphasizes. Students' learning is influenced by the interactions and support they receive from their social context, including teachers and school administrators (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018).

Teachers narrated that CAS is time-consuming and adds to their workload. This challenge is significant as it disrupts the social constructivist perspective, which emphasizes collaborative and interactive learning. When teachers are burdened with excessive work and time constraints, it becomes difficult to engage students in meaningful social interactions and collaborative learning experiences. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of time for students to engage in social interactions that facilitate knowledge construction (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). Besides, language barriers among students and mixed-ability groups challenge CAS implementation. From a social constructivist viewpoint, these challenges hinder the collaborative aspect of learning. Social constructivism underscores the role of social interaction and collaboration among students with varying abilities to co-construct knowledge. When language barriers and mixed-ability groups create disparities in communication and understanding, it disrupts the collaborative learning process that social constructivism promotes.

In addition, the EFL teachers also narrated that the absence of training on CAS is identified as a significant challenge for EFL teachers in Nepal. As Shah (2019) stated, from a social constructivist perspective, training and professional development are essential components of the social context supporting learning. Teachers' skills and knowledge are shaped by their interactions, training, and collaborative efforts with peers and educational institutions. The lack of training hinders the teachers' ability to effectively implement CAS, a

social constructivist approach that emphasizes the role of educators in scaffolding students' learning experiences (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018). The challenges of using CAS in language teaching classrooms in Nepal are understood through the lens of social constructivism by highlighting the impact of resource scarcity, lack of support, time constraints, language barriers, and inadequate training on the social and collaborative aspects of learning. Social constructivism emphasises the importance of the learning environment, interactions, and support from the educational community in facilitating effective knowledge construction and language development. These challenges disrupt the theory of social constructivism, which mostly promotes collaborative and interactive learning experiences.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion of research findings from the shared narratives of my research participants, the researcher examined how EFL teachers at the secondary level public schools in Nepal perceived and experienced implementing CAS. The study also uncovered how teachers practised CAS and explored the challenges they faced while implementing CAS. The teachers in the study explained that they have a positive mindset about using CAS since they all know the significance of using CAS in language classrooms. From their narratives, it is concluded that using CAS in language classrooms reflects the accurate picture of what their students have achieved in language proficiency and directs their learners on the areas of their weakness to improve further.

When analyzing the teacher's narratives for my second research question on how they practiced CAS in their language classrooms, the researcher concluded that the teachers practiced CAS as an umbrella term for various tools of CAS, including homework, classwork, group work, project work, self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolio, rubrics, etc. From their narratives, the study concludes that most teachers use homework and classwork as tools of CAS often for their language teaching because of time limitations, large class sizes, and limited resources. The findings of their narratives also concluded that using both classwork and homework as CAS tools are valuable and effective, as the students were found motivated and engaging for language learning while implementing these CAS tools.

The objective of my third research question was to explore the challenges of EFL teachers in implementing CAS in their language classrooms. Based on the narratives shared by my research participants, it is concluded that a lack of resources and learning materials is a major challenge for implementing CAS in language classrooms. Besides that, an excessive workload within a limited period of time is another challenge for them in CAS implementation. Lack of support from the concerned school authority for implementing CAS was frequently reported as a challenge in their shared narratives. It is, thus, concluded that lack of resources, learning materials, and school infrastructure, excessive load of and pressure of their teaching responsibilities, and lack of administrative support from the school authorities, language barriers of the students, the students with

mixed ability groups within the same classes and lack of training for the teachers are the major challenges for implementing CAS in language teaching.

The study also concludes that the EFL teachers adapt CAS not just to assess their student's learning but instead is used to ensure their learners improve and enhance language proficiency. Therefore, the study shows that CAS isn't only about assessing their students in language learning and providing them with corrective feedback to support their learning. Implementation of CAS goes along with teaching and learning. Therefore, it is imperative that teachers use CAS to assess and ensure their students achieve language proficiency. According to Jie et al. (2020), learning can be extended with the help of implementing CAS tools, as learning a language requires optimum practice and exposure to the target language. After the students are assessed with CAS, the feedback and support from teachers help students learn independently and acquire skills for language learning. Besides using CAS, teachers also get a chance to review the effectiveness of their teaching and assist them in improving their teaching strategies through CAS, which helps them grow professionally.

This study also found that using CAS in language classrooms is not just to assess what the students have memorized or learned from their lessons but also to help them improve their learning proficiency continuously, instead of administering summative assessment for them, which makes decisions of what they have learned and does not help their students improve as CAS does to help students understand better. Even though teachers shared in their narratives that they frequently administer varieties of CAS tools such as group work, pair work, classroom presentation, project work, portfolio, peer assessment, self-assessment, homework, classwork, etc., I did not find the teachers were conscious of selecting an appropriate CAS tool to assess and teach their students all four skills of language learning. Therefore, the study suggests that teachers need to be mindful and aware of choosing suitable CAS and CAS tools to assess all language learning skills equally so that it is helpful for them to improve in all these areas equally. In addition, since it is a language classroom, it is also suggested that the teachers employ CAS and CAS tools to enhance their critical thinking abilities besides achieving language proficiency. Thus, teachers use CAS in language classrooms to assess the student's performance and assist them in attaining better language proficiency.

Research Implications

Besides regular classroom teaching learning activities, implementing CAS in language classrooms is extremely important for assessing the students over time to ensure they are learning. According to the national policy of implementing CAS in school education, teachers should be familiar with the tools of CAS and how it is successfully implemented in classroom teaching (CDC, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to prepare and develop appropriate CAS tools to assess student's performance fairly and ensure that students improve their language proficiency. To conduct meaningful and genuine CAS practices in language classrooms, EFL teachers should use a variety of CAS tools apart

from homework and classwork. The EFL teachers are suggested to incorporate tools of CAS to ensure their students acquire all four language learning skills.

Through the use of CAS tools such as portfolios and projects, learners become motivated, self-directed, and interested in their learning resulting in students' increased participation in language learning; the teachers are suggested to employ it in language classrooms. Implementing CAS promotes diversity in language learning using diverse tools such as projects, classwork, self-assessment, portfolio maintenance, etc., encouraging students to engage more actively in learning tasks. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers use them effectively in language classrooms. Support from the education stakeholders and school authorities is necessary to implement CAS for language teaching successfully. Therefore, teachers require appropriate guidance and support with resources and learning materials to implement CAS efficiently. CAS is effective for remedial instruction, particularly for less competent students; therefore, teachers should be well-versed in implementing CAS for language teaching.

The linguistic barrier of the students and the students with mixed ability groups within the same classes is a significant challenge. Hence, the study suggests that education stakeholders allocate them in the classrooms based on their level of understanding and performance. It is also advisable that education stakeholders in public school education in the country arrange the provision of special education to address the need and requirements of each of them. The lack of appropriate training on the CAS for EFL teachers has significant consequences. It results in inconsistent assessment practises limited opportunities for students to receive timely and meaningful feedback, and an overemphasis on summative assessments that do not accurately reflect students' ongoing progress. It is essential to prioritise professional development initiatives and training programmes for English language teachers in Nepal. These programmes should emphasise enhancing teachers' comprehension of continuous assessment, equipping them with designing and implementing CAS, introducing various tools of CAS, and providing guidance on providing constructive feedback. In addition, teacher collaboration and knowledge-sharing platforms can cultivate a supportive environment where educators can share their experiences and best practices and learn from one another. This collaborative approach can help mitigate the difficulties caused by the lack of training for EFL teachers by providing opportunities for ongoing professional development and continuous assessment practice for language classrooms.

Since some of the participants raised the issue of the gap between the policy and practice of CAS in secondary school education in the country, the study suggests that the stakeholder bridge them with proper planning and execution, especially in language classrooms. Simina and Hamel (2005), apart from assessing the learners, implementing CAS in language classrooms should demonstrate that the students improve and enhance their language proficiency. As EFL teachers must prepare a log of learning materials and resources to successfully administer CAS in language classrooms, it is also suggested that they become mindful and conscious of supporting the sustainable development goal (SDG) of quality education. As discussed, EFL teachers are advised to develop and administer engaged and motivating CAS tools in language classrooms. Using CAS tools aligned with the interest

and objective of language teaching, students are involved in these tools that ensure their students achieve language learning skills. Therefore, teachers in language classrooms should use CAS tools that grab the attention and interest of their students. EFL teachers can also grow professionally through the effective use of CAS tools. Hence, the school authority needs to support them to overcome the challenges they face while implementing CAS in their language classrooms. It is also suggested them to provide them necessary training and opportunities to grow professionally.

Recommendations

This qualitative study examined Secondary-level EFL teachers' understanding, practices, and challenges while using CAS in their language classrooms in Nepalese public schools. The data analysis has contributed to a deeper understanding obtained through teachers' narratives of using CAS and the challenges of implementing them within the context of Secondary-level EFL Classrooms. However, specific areas of language teaching in public schools in the country like Nepal need additional research.

Exploring the various perspectives on designing and using CAS could yield fruitful results from additional research. This could include insights from close stakeholders of public-school education, the Ministry of Education, the District Education Office, the Resource Person, the representatives from the Local Education Office, school principals, educational experts, teachers from various disciplines, and EFL students. Examining students' perspectives could provide a particularly insightful perspective on the effective implementation of CAS. In future studies, it may be useful for researchers to use various updated tools of CAS and digital platforms for the effectiveness of CAS in language classrooms, especially in rural settings of public schools in Nepal. It becomes plausible to conduct studies further with the question of how effective these CAS tools were in language classrooms in student learning, which is unanswered in the present study.

The application of CAS in ELF classrooms in Nepalese public schools is of great interest and significance. The conclusions derived from the research findings shed light on the perceptions, practices, and challenges of Secondary-level EFL teachers regarding using CAS. The study proposes several research recommendations for advancing and implementing CAS in Nepalese language classrooms. Exploring and developing innovative CAS tools and techniques tailored to the unique challenges confronted in Nepalese language classrooms is a crucial area for future research. Researchers can investigate digital platforms, interactive applications, and gamified assessment methods to address constraints such as time constraints, class size, and lack of resources. These approaches engage students and provide comprehensive feedback across all four language abilities, whereas the effectiveness of CAS implementation largely depends on teacher competency. Therefore, designing and implementing individualized professional development programs is essential to equip EFL teachers with proper strategies to optimize

CAS tools, effectively manage time, and adapt to diverse classroom settings. It will empower the teachers to tackle and overcome the challenges while using CAS in their language classrooms.

Several challenges posed by limited resources and infrastructure demand creative solutions. Researchers can investigate resource allocation strategies that maximize available materials, encourage teachers to share resources, and advocate enhanced resource allocation from educational authorities. Administrative support is indispensable for the successful implementation of CAS. The study suggests that research should focus on identifying strategies to garner support from school administration, policymakers, and teachers. Collaboration between stakeholders can produce an environment that recognizes the significance of CAS and provides the resources and support necessary for its implementation.

To evaluate the long-term effects of CAS, longitudinal studies are recommended to be carried out where the researchers could evaluate the impact of consistent CAS implementation on fostering students' language proficiency, critical thinking skills, and academic progress. This research avenue will yield valuable insights into the long-term benefits of CAS. Similarly, the principles of CAS are not limited to language classrooms alone. It is recommended that further study be conducted to examine the assimilation of CAS in other subjects, thereby contributing to a broader comprehension of its benefits and challenges across the school curriculum.

Researchers can investigate strategies for adapting CAS tools for pupils with diverse linguistic backgrounds and skill levels. By making CAS more inclusive, researchers promote diversity and inclusion by contributing to equitable assessment and learning experiences for all students. CAS should empower students in their learning journey. How CAS can be used to provide regular feedback that encourages self-assessment, peer feedback, and student-led discussions about their learning progress can be investigated. Adopting this strategy as a tool of CAS is expected to promote student autonomy and active engagement in the learning process.

Reflection

The realm of education is ever-evolving, with pedagogical approaches and assessment methods adapting to meet the changing needs of students. This reflective paper delves into my experience researching and writing my Master's thesis, which focused on exploring the perceptions, practices, and challenges of implementing the Continuous Assessment System (CAS) in English language classrooms in Nepal.

Looking back on my teaching experience in my country, I mostly used homework as a means of CAS. When my colleagues used various tools of CAS in their classrooms, I observed that students frequently felt anxious and overwhelmed. However, my perception of using CAS and its tools shifted after enrolling in the IMER. The course on PDA 183 Academic Reading in Education, where the part of text analysis assisted me in reflecting on my life accounts to a path of the academic world and how

it helped me to my academic identity. It was extremely difficult for me to adapt to the IMER because I lacked experience reading scholarly articles, participating in seminars, working in groups, presenting on an assigned topic, and writing a scholarly article as part of the final examination for each course. In my native country, the standard academic practice consisted of memorization and recitation during the three-hour written exam. The assessment system the instructors have adopted here has enabled me to reflect and inquire further about how Nepalese EFL teachers at the secondary level perceive and practice using CAS in their classrooms.

Besides, the course on PDA182 Academic Writing and Research Design inspired me to refine and narrow the scope of my research. I began writing a research proposal on a similar area of secondary-level EFL teachers' understanding, practices, and challenges of using CAS in Nepalese classrooms. With my tutor's thorough guidance, I finalized the area of my inquiry, combining my experiences with teachers actively teaching and using CAS in secondary-level classrooms.

The formulation of research questions was a pivotal moment. Questions such as 'How do secondary level EFL teachers perceive CAS?', 'What practices are employed in its implementation?' and 'What challenges do they face while implementing CAS?' guided my exploration and shaped my research trajectory. My study consisted of a comprehensive review of pertinent literature, which involved reviewing numerous books, journals, and articles closely related to my research topic and served as the basis for my study. During the process of the literature review, various subtopics concerning CAS emerged. Through participant narratives, I found it essential to study various concepts concerning CAS, their types, practices, challenges, etc.

Regarding my study's theoretical foundations, I chose the social constructivism theory as a suitable framework. This theory was chosen because its emphasis on inquiry, exploration, and reflection aligns with my belief in meaningful understanding and practices of CAS. This theory was chosen to serve as the theoretical foundation for my study. To add context and substance to my study, I conducted a comprehensive review of prior research conducted in various districts and provinces in the country. By comparing these studies carefully, I obtained valuable insights, suggestions, and directions that guided my research on related topics. In addition to that, I also examined CAS policies in Nepal to compare them to EFL classroom practices. This examination helped me comprehend the constraints, scope, and recommended CAS practices, providing valuable insights for my studies.

Considering my research objectives and concerns, I chose narrative inquiry as my study's methodological foundation. Following the advice of my course tutor of PDA 182 and with the support of my peers, I crafted a series of open-ended inquiries for each research question. I conducted in-person Zoom interviews with five research participants from three provinces and five districts to capture their narratives and experiences using CAS in their classrooms.

Interviews were subsequently transcribed and analyzed thematically. In response to the research questions, the subsequent study sections were created. Following the existing literature, the emerging themes from the experiences and narratives of English language teachers were analyzed.

The findings unveiled a diverse range of perceptions among educators regarding continuous assessment. While some embraced its potential to enhance learning, others were cautious about its feasibility within the existing educational framework. Practices varied from conventional assessments such as homework and classwork to tools of formative assessments such as portfolios, project work, fieldwork, rubrics, etc., reflecting the adaptability of continuous assessment. A significant aspect of my research was the exploration of challenges. Limited training, resource-constrained, and teacher workload were prominent obstacles.

Reflecting on this journey, I am reminded of the personal and academic growth I've experienced after enrolling in the IMER. The support and guidance from my tutors during my research process nurtured my skills for gathering information, organizing data, and analyzing it. It also heightened my appreciation for the intricate relationship between research and policy implementation. I am grateful for the opportunity to embark on this research journey. Exploring the perceptions, practices, and challenges of using the CAS in Secondary-Level EFL classrooms in Nepal has broadened my perspective on education, research, and the strength of using CAS. The path ahead involves continued advocacy for student-centred CAS practices, contributing to the ongoing conversation on education reform in Nepal, and inspiring positive change in the EFL classroom in public school education.

Future Direction

The culmination of research on continuous assessment provides a foundation for advocating educational reform. With a comprehensive understanding of how continuous assessment aligns with modern pedagogical principles, researchers can contribute to discussions and initiatives to shift assessment paradigms in EFL classrooms. By presenting evidence of the benefits of ongoing feedback and personalized learning, policymakers can be prompted to consider integrating continuous assessment as a fundamental aspect of the education system. The challenges identified in implementing continuous assessment highlight the need for targeted teacher professional development. Future directions involve designing workshops, seminars, and teacher training to equip them with the necessary skills and strategies to effectively integrate continuous assessment into their teaching practices. Collaborative platforms that encourage sharing best practices and addressing common challenges can foster a supportive environment for educators to refine their assessment methods.

The research outcomes can also be a compass for incorporating technology and innovation into the continuous assessment process. Future initiatives might explore the development of digital tools and platforms that streamline assessment processes, provide real-time feedback, and aid in data

analysis. Incorporating educational technology enhances efficiency and aligns with the digital era's learning preferences and expectations.

The research findings show the importance of aligning curricula with assessment practices. Future directions involve revisiting curriculum design to integrate continuous assessment seamlessly. This alignment ensures that the assessment methods employ the learning objectives and instructional content, fostering a harmonious educational ecosystem. In addition, collaborative research endeavors in the country and internationally can provide a broader perspective on implementing continuous assessment in EFL classrooms. Cross-cultural studies can show how challenges and practices differ across diverse educational contexts. The culmination of research can influence policy amendments that facilitate the integration of continuous assessment in EFL classrooms. Advocacy efforts can highlight the necessity of allocating resources for teacher training, providing adequate assessment tools, and creating a supportive framework for educators to navigate challenges.

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Appendices

Appendix I: The Interview Guidelines

- i. Would you please narrate the story of your academic journey?
- ii. How do you understand using Continuous Assessment System (CAS) in English language classrooms?
- iii. What are your general perceptions towards using CAS in language class?
- iv. How do you practice CAS in your language classroom?
- v. What are your experiences of using them?
- vi. Would you share some incidents/events/experiences of using CAS in language class?
- vii. Could you please share your practices and experiences of using CAS?
- viii. Would you please share your practices of using CAS (tools and types of CAS) for teaching language skills?
- ix. How do you think CAS helps your learners to enhance their language learning skills?
- x. What kinds/tools of CAS do you use for assessing/teaching reading?
- xi. What kinds/tools of CAS do you use for assessing/teaching writing?
- xii. What kinds/tools of CAS do you use for assessing/teaching listening?
- xiii. What kinds/tools of CAS do you use for assessing/teaching speaking?
- xiv. What major challenges have you faced in implementing CAS in your language classrooms?
- xv. Why do you think they are the challenges for you?
- xvi. Based on your teaching experiences, would you please share what is/are the most challenging tools/types of CAS did you find in implementing it/them in your language classroom?
- xvii. Why do you think it is/they are challenging for you to implement it/them for teaching English?
- xviii. Have you used any intervention techniques to overcome the challenges you faced during CAS implementation in your classroom teaching? How do you implement them?
- xix. Have you ever noticed differences in learning language skills before and after using CAS?
- xx. How did CAS help them improve their language proficiency?
- xxi. Is there anything you would like to share your experiences of using CAS for your language class?

Thank you so much for your time and effort.

Appendix II: Information and Consent Letter

Information and Consent Letter

Thank you for expressing interest in participating in my research study. As a student at the University of Gothenburg, this research project is part of my master's thesis in the IMER. This qualitative study explores your personal stories/narratives of your perceptions, experiences, practices and the challenges of implementing a Continuous Assessment System (CAS) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

To gather data for this study, I will be interviewing you. Your perceptions, experiences, practices, challenges, and insights regarding using CAS in language classrooms in the form of your narrative stories will be used as data for the study.

Please note that all data collected is used solely for the purpose of this thesis and will be handled according to the Personal Data Protection Act. Your name will not be mentioned in any part of the study, and a pseudonym will be used to protect your identity when your information is referred to.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and you may withdraw anytime. If you wish to participate, please sign below to indicate your understanding and willingness to be interviewed.

Consent for the Participation

I have received and understood the information about the research project and hereby consent to participate in the interview.

Signature of the participant and Date