

## ENGLISH MEDIUM PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEPAL: A NEW LINGUISTIC MARKET IN EDUCATION

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### Abstract

This article is the result of the pilot study of my PhD research project. It explores the views of the school principal, teachers, ethnic students and ethnic parents regarding the need and use of English as a medium of instruction and the classroom practices of using English in a public school in Nepal. Nepal is a multilingual and multicultural country with diverse geo-biological landscape. However, public schools in Nepal have been adopting English medium instruction as a new linguistic market in education, challenging the mother tongue based multilingual education policy of the government. This paradigm shift from Nepali as a medium of instruction (NMI) to English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has raised controversy in the education system of Nepal. As this study found, there has been a growing demand of parents for EMI viewing English as a linguistic capital in the global socio-economic market and they have taken it as an economic investment in education. However, there seems a noticeable gap between the true spirit of EMI policy and actual classroom practice in public school education. Teachers were found to have been using bi-/trilingual language policy in the classroom neglecting the spirit of EMI. Public schools in Nepal need to adopt EMI only after wider discussion with all the stakeholders so that there could be well preparation with prerequisites for the effective implementation of EMI in the classroom contexts.

**Keywords:** Language attitudes, English medium instruction, public schools, linguistic market, paradigm shift, language ideology

### Introduction

The choice of language as a medium of instruction has been an issue of policy concern in the education system of a country. Generally, the national language becomes the medium of instruction in a country. However, even the international language can be the medium of instruction in the global context. Being an international language, English language has been enjoying preferences as the medium of instruction in the world, especially in “non-native English speaking countries” (Bradford, 2016, p.2). Due to the global spread of English, there has been a paradigm shift from teaching English as a foreign language to adopting

English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in many non-native English speaking countries including Nepal.

Public schools in Nepal have been adopting EMI as a new linguistic market in education in recent years. This trend is due to globalisation and socio-economic power of English language, viewing English as a linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1993) for better “socioeconomic mobility” (Khubchandani, 1978, as cited in Bhattacharya, 2013, p.165) in the globalised socio-economic market. When the Constitution of Nepal (1990) followed the economic liberation policies (Phyak, 2016), private English medium schools have been mushroomed in Nepal. National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2007) stated, “The medium of school level education can be in Nepali or English language or both of them” (p.34). Since then, public schools have been free to choose either English or Nepali language as medium of instruction in their schools. As a result, a large number of public schools have adopted EMI in Nepal since 2010 (Sah & Li, 2018).

However, the shift from Nepali as a medium of instruction (NMI) to EMI has been a controversial issue in Nepal. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) clearly states that “Every Nepali community living in Nepal shall have the right to acquire education in its mother tongue, and the right to open and run schools and educational institutions as provided for by law” (Article 31, Clause 5). The constitution has recognised mother tongue based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) at school level. However, EMI has been adopted by private schools and this trend has been growing even in the government aided public schools. EMI has become a demanding phenomenon in public schools at present in Nepal and this issue is challenging the MTB-MLE policy of the government.

Formalising in 1990 and implementing in 2007, Nepal has been following a ‘trilingual’ policy (learners’ first language, Nepali and English) at school level education as stated in School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) report (2009). However, it has not been fully implemented until now. Most of the schools are adopting NMI from the early grades; some schools have fully adopted EMI while others both EMI and NMI. In this regard, Nepal’s language-in-education policy seems to be controversial. Written policy documents recommend using trilingual policy but most of the public schools are using bilingual policy, both Nepali and English.

In fact, English has been used as a medium of instruction and as a subject around the world. EMI is “the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English” (Dearden, 2014, p.2). Thus, EMI is teaching all the academic subjects in English rather than teaching the English language. Like in many non-native English speaking countries around the world, Nepal has been shifting the status from English as a subject to as a medium of instruction in public schools.

Though Nepal is a multilingual country with diverse ethnic groups, EMI has become a demanding need in public schools all over the country due to the influence of neoliberalism in education. As a result, many public schools have adopted EMI in their schools to fulfill the needs and demands of the public and to address the “crisis in education”(Tollefson, 2014, p.1) that they have been facing. That crisis is the decrease of students in public schools. As Dearden (2014) reports, “there is more EMI in private than public education” (p.8) and the situation of Nepal is also the same. Almost all private schools have been

conducting medium of instruction exclusively in English since the establishment of their schools, but just a few public schools have adopted EMI fully or partially and some are in the process of adopting it. EMI, therefore, has become a global issue and the area of interest to be researched especially in multilingual public school contexts of Nepal.

Considering this context, this study explores the views of the school principal, teachers, ethnic students and ethnic parents regarding the need and use of EMI and the classroom practices of English in the multilingual classroom contexts in Nepal. To fulfil this objective, this study answers the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the head teacher, teachers, students and parents on the drivers for EMI?
2. How is EMI being practised in the multilingual classroom contexts?

### **Literature Review**

Under the literature review, I discuss a range of language related policy issues, empirical studies, and theoretical framework along with practical implications relevant to this study. I start with language policy and English education in Nepal followed by empirical and theoretical issues relevant to this study.

#### ***Language policy and English education in Nepal***

Nepal has been declared as the 'Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal' with seven provinces (The Constitution of Nepal, 2015). Despite its small geographical landscape, Nepal is a multilingual, multi-ethnic and multicultural country with 123 ethnic languages spoken as mother tongues by 125 ethnic groups as stated by Central Bureau of Statistics (2012). Nepal's linguistic diversity can be seen with cultural diversity closely linked to biodiversity of the country. Nepali, with its official status, has been used as a lingua franca in Nepal used for communication among speakers of different ethnic groups in the country.

The education policy of Nepal has been guided by political motives rather than academic needs and foundations from the very beginning of formal education. The formal education in Nepal began in English medium with the establishment of Durbar High School in 1854, to provide education only to the elite Rana families. Education became formally available to the public only after the establishment of democracy in 1951. Later, Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC, 1956) proposed Nepali, being the national language, as the medium of instruction in schools to strengthen the national integrity in the linguistically and culturally diverse country Nepal. All Round National Education Committee (ARNEC, 1962) and National Education System Plan (NESP, 1971) followed the same path. Moreover, NESP (1971) made the provision of both public (government-aided) and private schools. After the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal (1990) stated that "Each community shall have the right to operate schools up to the primary level in its own mother tongue for imparting education to its children" (Article 18, Clause 2). National Education Commission (NEC, 1992) reflected this spirit of the constitution. Thus, the post 1990 period moved towards pluralistic language policy (Weinberg, 2013) accepting multilingual education.

As the literature shows, the development of English education in Nepal can be discussed in three phases: during the Rana regime (1846-1950/1), during the Panchayat system (1950/1-1990), and after the restoration of multiparty democracy (from 1990 onwards) (Awasthi, 2004, 2011; Giri, 2011; Phyak, 2011; Eagle, 2000; Sonntag, 1995, Weinberg, 2013). The Rana period was the period of opposition to education as only a few elites, especially the Rana families, received education. The Panchayat period followed the “one-nation-one-language ideology” (Phyak & Ojha, 2019, p.344) in the education system of Nepal. The Democratic period (1990-2007) was the period of multilingualism in education allowing mother tongues in schools. Political interest in each shift seems to be the sole cause in the revision of the education system in Nepal.

However, in Federal Republic Nepal, the history of Nepal’s language policy, planning and practices can be divided into four periods: Rana period, Panchayat period, Democratic period and Republican period. The Republic Nepal, from 2007 with the introduction of the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) onwards, has now embraced the neoliberal language ideology in education allowing mother tongues, Nepali and English as mediums of instruction in schools as per the local needs and demands of the learners and parents. EMI in public schools is the result of this neoliberal language policy which has taken English language as a commodity or as capital. In this regard, School Sector Development Plan (SSDP, 2016-2023) mentions “most private schools use English as the medium of instruction and a number of community schools have also started using English as the medium” (p.29). Now, EMI has become a demanding phenomenon in the Nepalese public school education system.

The adoption of neoliberal economic ideology after 1990 encouraged privatisation in education and in other sectors. English medium private schools started establishing throughout the country since then. These English-medium private schools have developed the ideology in people that teaching and learning through English medium brings so-called high quality in education. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has also encouraged the public schools to introduce English medium policy in their schools as stated in the document of NCF (2007) that I have mentioned above. NCF (2007) further mentions that the medium of education will generally be in mother tongue up to grade 3. Likewise, the Constitution of Nepal (2015) mentions, “Every Nepali community living in Nepal shall have the right to acquire education in its mother tongue” (Article 31, Clause 5), but in practice we see EMI from the elementary level in public schools. Thus, there seems a mismatch between policy and practice regarding the use of language education policy in Nepal. This is what Phyak (2016) calls “local-global tension in the ideological construction of English language education policy in Nepal” (p.199).

SSRP (2009) asserts, “English will be taught as a subject from grade one onwards” (p.81). However, it mentions that the choice of medium of instruction in school can be determined by the SMC at the micro-level. This assertion encouraged the public schools to adopt EMI in their schools. Because of this policy, public schools in Nepal are adopting EMI to fulfil the demands of the parents and communities.

Now, English is being taught as a foreign language from Grade one onwards as a compulsory subject. However, it is being used as a medium of education in

private schools, and even in public schools. Giving power to the schools and communities through decentralisation, public schools are managed by School Management Committees (SMCs). “Any community (government) school can decide to change from Nepali to English as its medium of instruction” (Ranabhat, Chiluwal, & Thompson, 2018, p.83). The right of deciding the language of instruction is with the CMC.

Thus, the English language has been getting increasing space in the Nepalese education system from general social discourse to micro-level educational policies and practices due to the demands of the parents as social capital along with the influence of globalisation and neoliberalism in education. Though EMI has been a debatable topic in the Nepalese education system, it has been being adopted in public schools around the country.

### ***Previous research on EMI***

As a review of the literature reveals, EMI is “a relatively new phenomenon” (Yildiz, Soruc, & Griffiths, 2017, p.388). Many developing countries have policies promoting EMI in schools. Though the spread of English is taken as “linguistic imperialism” (Phillipson, 1992), the demand for EMI has been seen throughout the world, including Europe (Aguilar, 2015; Dearden & Macaro, 2016), Africa (Viriri & Viriri, 2013) and Asia (Chapple, 2015; Lei & Hu, 2014). The British Council conducted a survey in 2014 involving 55 countries across the globe and discovered that 62% of these countries use EMI (Dearden, 2014). EMI originated from Europe in the late 1990s (Brown & Bradford, 2017) and now it has been a “growing global phenomenon” (Deardon, 2014, p.2) at present and has been growing rapidly in Asia (Walkinshaw, Fenton-Smith & Humphreys, 2017).

Despite the fact that EMI is a new phenomenon, several studies have been conducted about the perceptions (Sorrell & Forlin, 2015; Al-Qahtani & Al Zumor, 2016; Nguyen, 2017), outcomes (Williams, 2014; James & Woodhead, 2014), challenges (Uwambayinema, 2013; Ibrahim, Shafaatu, & Yabo, 2017) and classroom practices (Annamalai, 2013; Nguyen, 2017) of EMI in various countries including Nepal. However, most of the studies have been carried out in higher education on EMI and EMI related issues (e.g. Vu & Burns, 2014; Hu & Lei, 2014; Huang, 2015).

To take a few, Paulsrud’s (2016) study found that “EMI is offered for prestige, an international profile, marketing potential and personal interest”. Similarly, Wijayatunga (2018) found that teachers teaching in English medium in urban schools were enthusiastic but majority of them were not proficient enough in the language to teach in English.

Regarding the use of EMI in Nepal, Sah and Li (2018) found that “parents, students, and teachers regarded EMI as a privileged form of linguistic capital for developing advanced English skills, enhancing educational achievements and access to higher education, and increasing the chance of upward social and economic mobility.” Similarly, Ojha’s (2018) study found that EMI has been adopted in public schools in Nepal without careful planning and the necessary preparation to make it a success. He further states that schools are shifting to EMI mostly because of demand and pressure from parents.

Despite its extensive application around the world including Nepal, the EMI policy is still a debatable issue. In this regard, Saud (2019) views “EMI policy

seems to be against linguistic and cultural diversity in multilingual English classrooms in Nepal” (p.78). Much research and reports on EMI show that “the use of English for delivering contents encounters various pedagogical challenges and difficulties” (Floris, 2014; Erling, Adinolfi & Hultgren, 2017; Ibrahim, Shafaatu, & Yabo, 2017; Simpson, 2017; Wijayatunga, 2018). While research into EMI is growing, only a few studies have been conducted in school education in Asia, particularly in Nepal. Therefore, this study explores the stakeholders’ perspectives and practices on the use of EMI in the multilingual school context.

### ***Theoretical framework***

For this study, I have employed language attitudes, language ideology (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994), linguistic capitalism (Bourdieu, 1993), diglossia (Ferguson, 1959), and English-medium paradigm (Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018) as the main theoretical frameworks for the analysis of information. Language attitudes are the feelings people have about their own language and the languages of others. Ryan and Giles (1982) define language attitudes as “any affective, cognitive or behavioural index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties or speakers” (p.7). As Obiols (2002) writes, the study of language attitudes “can predict a given linguistic behaviour: the choice of a particular language in multilingual communities, language loyalty, language prestige...” (p.1). People’s attitudes show their behaviour towards a certain language.

EMI is rooted in the ideology of monolingualism (Blommaert, 2006; Heller, 2007), “English as a global language” (Crystal, 2003) and “English as a lingua franca” (Seidlhofer, 2005) ideology and the ideology of neoliberalism in education. English language is taken as a capital to get jobs and other opportunities in the society with high prestige and social status. Diglossia is a situation in which high prestige language or language variety is used in certain situations like formal education and the low prestige language or language variety is used in community’s everyday communication – this is what Ricento (2000) calls “stable diglossia” (p.198 ). English medium paradigm “characterises the various instructional types in English-medium teaching contexts” (Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018, p.4).

The theories I have discussed here are the theoretical lenses that guide the thematic findings. Moreover, English medium paradigm is guiding the study throughout this article.

### **Methods**

#### ***Study context***

This study employs a qualitative case study in a community school in Kailali district. The school from which I collected information is located in the Rana-Tharu community along with the emigrants coming from hilly and rural areas. It is a newly started EMI community school as it started English medium only in 2018 from grade one and in 2019 from grade nine. It has both NMI and EMI, charging a little amount of tuition fees from the English medium students in the name of aid from the community. The majority of the students are from Rana and Tharu speakers with only a few teachers of these backgrounds. However, Nepali is the dominant language of communication in school.

### **Participants**

The participants of the study included eight subjects: the head teacher, one teacher each from Science, Social Studies and Accountancy, two students (one from Rana and Tharu ethnic group each), and two parents (one Rana, one Tharu). They were selected using purposive non-random sampling procedure. All teachers were from non-ethnic communities, speaking Nepali as their mother tongues. The head teacher, Science teacher and Social Studies teachers had experiences more than twenty years, but Accountancy teacher, who was a female, was a new teacher. The students had come from private English medium schools and the parents had children studying at grade one and two. The Rana parent was a primary level teacher while the Tharu parent was a labourer.

### **Data collection and analysis procedure**

The information was collected through semi-structured interviews with the principal, parents, teachers and students. Two classes were observed, one from grade two and one from grade nine, to see how EMI was actually practised in the classroom context. Interviews were taken once only and so were class observations. The data was audio-taped in Nepali and translated into English. Thematic analysis was adopted for analysing the information collected through interviews and class observation.

### **Results and Discussion**

After the transcription and analysis of the data, four themes have been emerged. The following section discusses these themes.

#### ***Parents' need and demand for EMI***

Shifting to EMI in the public schools has become the need and demand of the parents as “a new linguistic market in education” (Rubagumya, 2010). The parents hold the belief that English education brings quality in education. “The belief in the value of English medium schools is so intense that students flock to them, despite the fact that most students are unable to learn effectively through English, with disastrous consequences for their education” (Tollefson, 2000, p.18). The belief in the value of English education is rooted in language ideology, which Fairclough (2001) defines as “common sense assumptions which are implicit in the conventions according to which people interact linguistically, and of which people are generally not consciously aware” (p.2). To be more specific, language ideology is a perspective, attitudes and beliefs about the language shared by members of a social group (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). EMI in public schools is the result of neoliberal ideology in education.

Here is what the head teacher expressed:

*We have started English medium due to the interests and demand of the parents, and the attraction of the students towards English language. We felt the desires of the community members as if there was English medium in community schools.*

As the head teacher expressed, the school started EMI due to the parents' demands and the community's needs. The school authority takes this shift in medium of instruction as the need of the time and the demand of the community. Almost all sorts of people from all backgrounds want to learn English as its acquisition can guarantee the availability of opportunities to employment, travelling, higher education, and even better life. Because of such perceptions of people, the demand for EMI increased and the public schools started to catch the sentiment of the community by adopting English medium. By understanding the community's wish, the school started English medium education from the year 2018.

People seem to have the strong preference toward English over the Nepali and other local languages, which Ricento (2000) describes as 'stable diglossia'. English language seems to have high prestige, and Nepali, Tharu and Rana including other local languages have low prestige in the sense of Ferguson's (1959) diglossia. The parents have positive attitudes towards English language so that they have demand for EMI in the public schools.

### ***New linguistic market in public school education***

In fact, EMI has created a new linguistic market in Nepalese public school education because people take it as economic investment and English has been taken as a linguistic capital. As one of the parents' said,

*"Our children can get jobs in the future if they study English. So we want to teach them in English. This school has addressed our interest,"* while another said, *"If we teach our children by paying fees, even if it is low, in comparison to private schools, they will get jobs. So we want to teach in English medium."*

Therefore, the parents are ready to pay tuition fees even in public schools though public school education is free of charge. As the Social Studies teacher confessed:

*The children of poor people can't afford in private boarding schools paying expensive fee...it is not bad to teach children in public schools with low fee...Some materials are to be bought...teachers are to be recruited also... classes should be run differently...teachers are to be added some kind of facilities to teach in English medium. So it is not bad to take low fee just 500 in public schools. Private schools take much more.*

Government has the policy that school level education is free and compulsory. However, English medium public schools are taking tuition fees from the students though it is low in comparison to private English medium schools, often known as boarding schools. When I asked the parent (Mr. Chaudhary), *"Do you have to pay fee?"*, he replied *"Yes, but it is cheaper than boarding school"*. The students also said that they had shifted from boarding school to community school due to low fees. When I asked why the school was taking fees as the government has the policy of providing free education up to



secondary level, and it was against the government's policy, the head teacher replied, *"We have not taken fee as it is but we have taken it as grant"*. It seems that public schools are doing business by taking fees from the students challenging the government policy of free education. "Some schools in the Kathmandu Valley and other parts of the country have been using both languages and charging fees even though school education is free under government-set rules" (Republica, 2016). The situation of Kathmandu and out of Kathmandu seems the same regarding taking charges in the government-aided community schools.

### ***Parents' priorities to English medium children***

The school where I visited for my pilot study of my PhD project has run NMI and EMI parallel classes within the same school. Some parents' children are in Nepali medium classes while others' in English medium. Parents give priorities to their children who are studying in English medium classes. The parents whose children have been admitted to Nepali medium do not come to drop and take their children, but those parents whose children are in English medium come to drop their children at school with tiffin and also come to take them when the school hour is over. According to the head teacher, *"Students of Nepali medium come alone, students of English medium come with their parents and parents also come to take in the evening. Parents care more in English medium."* Actually, parents have discrimination over Nepali medium and English medium children. It is perhaps they have paid some amount of money as educational investment for English medium and they want to utilise it fully by making their children aware of education and taking care of them to make them competent in English. Both parents said that they come to drop and take their children after they admitted their children to English medium, but they did not do so in previous years while they are studying in Nepali medium classes. It seems that English language attitude has highly affected family dynamics.

Not only the parents but also the community schools are creating two kinds of societies within the school, where students studying in English medium would think themselves superior and others would feel discriminated. Today, English is often taken as linguistic capital for future career and international access and for social mobility "achieving a higher social status in society" (Bourdieu, 1993). However, there is still a split between English medium and Nepali medium schools. As Reay (2006) claims, "social inequalities arising from social class have never been adequately addressed within schooling" (p.288). A wider socio-economic context on schooling to English medium creates what Savage (2003) calls "a new kind of class paradigm, recognising the mutual constitution of markets, classes and individuals" (p.535).

### ***Bi/Trilingual practices in EMI classrooms***

There seems a contradiction between the spirit of EMI policy and classroom practice in public school education. EMI is framed more as a school requirement than a pedagogic model that teachers need to deliver contents in English. In practice, teachers mostly teach in Nepali with a limited use of English as a medium of instruction in the classroom. The teachers had difficulty in delivering the contents in English due to the lack of English language proficiency although

they know the content well. In this regard, the Science teacher (Mr. Bhatta) expressed his views as *Due to lack of proficiency, we are feeling difficulty in explaining subject matter, though we know the content. We are facing difficulty in making students understand due to lack of language proficiency.* This is what I found when I observed the class of Accountancy teacher. She just read the content from the book written in English but she explained it in Nepali with only a few words in English. I feel that this school cannot be labelled as an EMI school because there is explanation in Nepali. It is a matter of discourse to be discussed and further research is necessary regarding how EMI should be implemented in the multilingual classroom. “While it is often not conceived as such, EMI is a form of multilingual education, as English is not usually the home language of students or teachers in such settings” (Erling, Adinolfi & Hultgren, 2017, p.20). Due to the lack of English language proficiency, EMI seems to be a burden for school teachers other than English. EMI is simply implemented in the classroom as in bilingual education.

There seems a lack of clarity on language use in EMI classrooms. Mostly teachers are found to use Nepali in such classrooms. When I asked the Social Studies teacher (Mr. Nepali) whether he translates into the learners’ mother tongues or Nepali in Social Studies classes, he replied:

*Generally we do not translate. Sometimes we have to translate in mother tongue. They become happy if we do so. For example, ‘feather’ means ‘pwankh’ in Nepali, but Tharu children do not understand if we say ‘pwankh’. Then we have to show in picture and they say ‘pakhana’ in their Tharu language. Then we say ‘feather’ means ‘pakhana’ and it is called ‘pwankh’ in Nepali. We have this kind of experience of teaching.*

From the observation also, I found the same situation at early grades. The class teacher showed a picture and the children would say in their mother tongues. For example, when the teacher showed the picture of ‘cat’, one Rana child uttered ‘bilaiya’, while a child with Nepali mother tongue said “biralo”. Thus, there was the trilingual practice in learning.

Tharu and Rana students did not understand Nepali clearly. Both students from grade nine said the same thing in interviews. They preferred English rather than Nepali as they were from boarding school backgrounds. There was the use of mother tongue (using Tharu/Rana language), Nepali and English in teaching and learning activities. From this fact, we can claim that EMI public schools have been following a ‘trilingual’ policy in education at school level education as stated in SSRP report (2009). Since all children in Nepal learn Nepali and English from grade 1 onwards, Nepal is implementing multilingual education (Taylor, 2010).

## Conclusion

This article is the result of the pilot study of my PhD research project. I have examined the views of the school principal, teachers, ethnic students and ethnic parents regarding the need and use of EMI, and observed the classroom practice in this study. Nepal is a multilingual and multicultural country with diverse geo-biological landscape. However, public schools in Nepal have been adopting EMI

as a new linguistic market in education, taking fees from the parents even though it is low. This paradigm shift from NMI to EMI has raised controversy in the education system of Nepal. As this study found, there has been a growing demand from parents for EMI seeing English as a capital in the global socio-economic market and they have taken it as economic investment in education. There seems a noticeable gap between the true spirit of EMI policy and actual classroom practice in public school education. Teachers were found to have been using bi-/trilingual language policy in the classroom neglecting the spirit of EMI.

English medium education has become a new linguistic market in public school education in Nepal. The community and the stakeholders have taken English education as new form of cultural and linguistic capital for better opportunities and high standard habitus in the society. As a result, English medium education has become a “discourse of linguistic capital” (Silver, 2005) in the community. Many parents in Nepal are dissatisfied with the public education system, seeing that students cannot speak English even after passing SEE and the results of SEE in Nepali medium public schools is very low. Therefore, many public schools are now adopting EMI, claiming that it is the demand and need of the community. Almost all the participants in the interviews declared that EMI brings quality in education. The neoliberal ideology of language provided public schools with space to adopt EMI policy even though this policy is contradictory to government’s MTB-MLE policy.

Public schools in Nepal have been increasing community involvement with the education system to some extent, valuing local needs and demands more relevant to the community. However, they need to adopt EMI only after wider discussion with all the stakeholders so that there could be well preparation with prerequisites for the effective implementation of EMI in the classroom contexts. How EMI can effectively be implemented in the multilingual classroom contexts with its true spirit can be an issue of further investigation.

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