CHAPTER-I

Introduction
It is much as though we had been fishing all day with no results, though believing with good reason that there were fish in these waters. Finally, we discovered our net is full of such enormous holes that it could snag any thing smaller than a whale. What shall we do? Rather than giving up, as though there were no fish to be caught, I say, we should try again with a better net.

Erikson
CHAPTER I
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN NEPAL

1.0 Introduction

English language has gained prominence all over the world in the last two centuries. Most developing nations today have realised this fact, and consequently have geared their education policies and restructured their educational system to include English language as one subject of compulsory study in the school and college curricula. Nepal cannot afford to remain uninfluenced by and indifferent to this awareness on the global level.

The researcher in this chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive survey of the English Language Teaching (ELT) practices in the kingdom of Nepal, in a historical perspective tracing its development from the beginning (1854) to the present day. It mainly deals with the curriculum, methods of teaching, teachers and teacher training followed by the evaluation system. Then a chronological study of the exercises of curriculum development has been presented to project the efforts made by His Majesty's Government of Nepal. This is followed by the emergence
of the +2 system of education in the country. This provides an impetus to the topic of the present research problem, its emergence and relevance, as well as objectives and significance of the study. The chapter concluded with a presentation of the limitations of the present study.

1.1 Introduction to Nepal

The Kingdom of Nepal lies in the lap of the lofty Himalayas. Bordered along India on east, west and south, stretching 850 kms from east to west with a mean width of 193 km from north to south, the country is rectangular in shape with total area of 147,181 square kilometers. Nepal lies between 26° 22' N to 30° 27' N in latitude and 80° 4' E to 88° 12' E on longitude. The northern frontiers of Nepal are adjacent to Tibet, the autonomous state under the Republic of China.

The status of Nepal as the only Hindu Kingdom on this planet has been a glorious epithet to it, however, the people of different faiths have always lived here together in ideal peace. The religious harmony of the country has been an exemplary one. Although comparatively a very small country, with a population of hardly one core eighty five lakhs (according to the Census of 1991), Nepal has perpetually enjoyed the glory of remaining an
independent nation since its inception; it was subjugated to none. The unique geographical setting of the country has always enabled it to serve as a buffer-state between India - the largest democracy and China - the largest Socialist Republic on the earth. The friendly relationship with its two huge and mighty neighbours has invariably blossomed into numerous co-operative undertakings, which have substantially contributed to the raising of infrastructure of the country.

Nature has been very bountiful in providing the country with plenty of deep rivers and dense forests. Because of the heavy rain during the monsoon and the alluvial soil being in plenty especially in the lower belt of the country, Nepal is predominantly an agrarian country. More than 80% of the people are engaged in agriculture.

A study of the topography of the country reveals that there are 3 parallel regions viz the terai belt including the Chure range, full of hillocks with brittle stones, the Mahabharat range covered with vegetation and the Himalayan range, perpetually shrouded with mist and snow. Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world, lies in this very range.
From administrative point of view, the country has been divided into 14 zones and 75 districts. In order to ensure a balanced development in different fields, the country has been divided into 5 development regions, viz. the eastern development region, the central development region, the western development region, the mid-western development region and the far-western development region (see Appendix I).

Although Nepal is a country of multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities, unity in diversity has been the most spectacular characteristic feature of the land. According to the Census of 1991, Nepali is spoken as mother tongue by 50.3% of the total population. It is the only national language of the country. It is used as medium of instruction. It is also the language of the legal offices, business transaction, mass media and public administration. Nepali is used as lingua-franca throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom.

The article 18:1 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990 makes a provision that "Each community residing within the Kingdom of Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script and culture" (p. 13). The constitution also reserves the right of each community "... to operate schools upto primary level in its own mother tongue for
imparting education to its children" (p.14). However, these policies have not been yet translated into practice and therefore, Nepali remains the language of instruction in all the primary schools of the country.

After the dawn of democracy in the country and specially after 1970, there has been a consistent increase in the number of educational institutes in the country. According to the Population Monograph of Nepal, 1995, there are 19,498 primary schools, 4,230 lower secondary schools, 2,309 secondary schools, 332 higher secondary schools (Higher Secondary Education Board: Plans and Progress Report 1997) and 128 colleges in the country. Currently, three universities, viz., Tribhuvan University, Mahendra Sanskrit University and Kathmandu University (under private entrepreneurship) are functioning. One more university has been established in the eastern zone of the country recently. Tribhuvan University, the oldest and the largest one, provides higher education through four faculties viz., Humanities and Social Sciences, Law, Education and Management. Besides, there are five institutes such as Agriculture and Animal Sciences, Engineering, Forestry, Medicine and Science and Technology. The medium of instruction at all these institutes is English. Use of English at the four faculties mentioned above is optional.
English language is also extensively used at the private boarding schools where the teaching-learning pursuit is compulsorily carried out through English. Now what follows is a short account of English language teaching in Nepal, its problems and perspectives, mostly confined to school level education.

1.2 ELT in Nepal: Historical Perspective

The educational system in ancient Nepal was carried out by 'Gurukuls' and 'Gumpas' which were centres of Sanskrit education and Buddhist literature respectively. Mass Education was non-existent for most of the time during the Rana regime (1846-1950). Only the privileged few had education opportunities abroad or in very few schools in Nepal. In 1939 the Government allowed the communities to establish and run schools to provide education to the common people. Since the end of the Rana regime in 1950, education became accessible to an increasing percentage of the population. In the 1950s, education was loosely organized, with several systems of schools existing side by side, including the English type schools which were accredited on the basis of the Oxford and Cambridge examination, and the Nepali/Hindi/Sanskrit schools providing a "classical" and religious education. English
education, however, started only after the establishment of Durbar High School in 1854.

The establishment of Durbar High School in 1854 is considered to be a landmark in the history of ELT in Nepal. Although, in the beginning, it was meant only for the children of the ruling class and a select elites, later, however, it was made open to the common people also. The formal teaching of English at high school level started with this pioneering school. However, it took considerably a long time for English education to have a place in higher education in Nepal. After 54 years of English education at high school level, Nepalese students could avail themselves of English education at higher education, which started with the establishment of Trichandra College in the year of 1918. It was the first college to impart education through English in the Kingdom. Malla (1977:21), commenting on the prevalent educational system in Nepal says, "Till the 1940s and 1950s even in secondary schools, English language and English curriculum occupied an important place. Many S.L.C. candidates voluntarily opted for English as the medium of examination for all subjects other than Sanskrit and vernaculars."

With the dawn of democracy in 1950, Nepalese education system was harnessed to speed up the pace of national
development. The first university in Nepal was established in 1959, named after the King Tribhuvan, regarded as the Father of the Nation. The Tribhuvan University accorded a high priority to English in its curriculum. However, the government was not content with the pace of progress. In order to accelerate the pace of educational development so as to meet with the aspirations of the growing population, a high level policy-making body was formed consisting of leading educationaists of the country and experts from abroad. It was named National Education Committee (NEC). It produced an exhaustive plan entitled 'National Education System Plan 1971-76 (NESP) to be implemented in the Kingdom in five phases.

The NESP 1971-76 introduced an overall change in the curriculum, textbooks, and examination system, right from primary schools upto the university levels of education. However, it proved rather a retrogressive step to the ELT practitioners to discover that the NESP reduced the importance of English by making it optional and by decreasing its weightage from 200 to 100 at the SLC. It was against the popular demand of the public. In a comprehensive survey, Awasthi (1979:64) concludes: "The majority of people in different groups did not want English to be substituted by any other language. They were all in favour of
continuing English in SLC despite the high percentage of students failure in this course."

Likewise, the higher education underwent a drastic change. Credit hours for different courses at different levels were fixed, a new nomenclature was introduced. Colleges were substituted by the name of Campuses.

Intermediate, Bachelor, Master and Ph.D. levels of education were rephrased as proficiency certificate, diploma, degree and research level respectively. There was nothing wrong with this new nomenclature except that the credit hours and time allotment for English were reduced. At the proficiency certificate level (PCL), English was to be taught for 15 credit hours i.e. for 150 marks, which used to be for 200 marks earlier. Diploma level English also was curtailed, ranging between 3 to 12 credit hours, depending on the needs and requirements of different institutes. The situation deteriorated from bad to worse when the NEC decided to employ Nepali as a medium of instruction in schools and in campuses. Thus, the decreased time allotment and reduced weightage to English besides employing Nepali as medium of instruction, resulted in a considerable deterioration of standard of English in the country. It took nearly a decade for the NEC
to realise the serious consequences of it. In order to rectify this folly, the government decided to do away with the semester system in 1981. The annual system of academic sessions and examination was re-introduced. Naturally, it called for a restructuring of syllabuses, English was restored its former importance in terms of time allotment and weightage attached to it. However, the ill-effects of the policy executed for nearly two-decades are still haunting the educational planners in general and the ELT practitioners in particular. His Majesty's government is interested in promoting the standard of ELT in higher education so much so that 31% of the educational budget for higher education is allocated for ELT alone. Despite all these efforts and planning of the government, ELT in Nepal is still staggering and weak.

1.2.1 ELT in Nepal: State-of-the-Art

In order to get a clear picture of the current practices of ELT in the country, a glimpse of the present structure of education system could help us. The school education in Nepal consists of five years' of primary, three years' lower secondary, two years secondary, and two years higher secondary teaching, comprising altogether a period of twelve years. As for the
higher education in Nepal, it has a four-tier structure: two years PCL, three years Bachelor level, two years Master level, followed by the research level. The system of three year Bachelor/Degree Course has been implemented since 1996. The table given below gives a bird's eye-view of the school education in the kingdom.

Table No.1: Types of School and the Duration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Grades/Class</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>6 to 8</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>9 &amp; 10</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Secy. School/+2</td>
<td>11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the foregoing table, it is evident that it takes altogether 12 years to complete school education in the country. This system is comparable to Indian schools system of 10+2 though the internal structure is different. A cursory look at teaching of English at the school level with its relative weightage given in the table below supplies us important facts in this regard.
Table No.2: Weightage given to ELT at School Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level/Grade</th>
<th>Hours/Weeks</th>
<th>Full Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.Secondary:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table indicates that English begins in Grade 4 in govt. run schools. At the Primary level English is taught for 5 hours a week and the examination carries 100 marks. From the Class/Grade 6 to 12 English is taught for 6 hours a week and the marks remain unaltered. This would mean on an average a learner is exposed to 1560 hours of English in 9 years of instruction. Despite this enormous exposure, the competence of learners in English seems to be wanting.
The weightage and duration given to ELT at the university levels has been presented in the table given below:

Table No.3: Weightage and Duration Given to ELT at the University Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/Institute</th>
<th>PCL</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hours/</td>
<td>F.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weeks</td>
<td>Duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Animal Sc.</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Curriculum Development Centre, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.
As seen in the table, English is taught as compulsory subject at different faculties/institutes of higher education. Students of Agriculture and Medicine study English only for one year at the PCL while the students of Science have to study English for two years at this level. Students of Education, Engineering and Forestry study English in the first years of their PCL and Bachelor level. Humanities students study English for a total of 4 years, two years at the PCL and two years at Bachelor level. Law graduates study English for two years while Management students study English only in the first year of the Bachelor course. Annual exams of each level carries 100 full marks.

Although HSEB has been entrusted with the responsibility of running the +2 system of education in the country, the PCL courses of the TU are still being offered. There is an overlapping of two years' post secondary level education currently run by both TU and HSEB parallelly. An agreement between TU & HSEB has been reached so as to ensure a smooth transition of phasing-out of the PCL system in favour of phasing-in the +2 system gradually.
1.2.2 The English Language Curriculum in the Schools of Nepal

The existing school level curriculum was first designed and implemented in 1971 by the curriculum, textbook and supervision development centre (CTSD) (now Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare, a body solely responsible for framing, implementing, evaluating and revising the school level curriculum. The CDC has been discharging its duties according to the guidelines of the NESP which marked a departure from the traditional literature-oriented curriculum towards a language-oriented structural one. Though revised in 1981, no significant change has taken place in the objectives first laid down for the teaching of English at the school level. Some of the aims of teaching English at primary, lower secondary and secondary schools of Nepal are to enable the learners:

1. to communicate in speech and writing matters related to everyday activities with other people who speak English within the range of language elements provided by the curriculum;

2. to understand directions and instructions in life at work;

3. to develop essential reading skills and techniques required for the early as well as later stages of language learning;
4. to develop an interest in reading for both information and pleasure.


This curriculum is based on structural-oral-situational (SOS) approach. Keeping in view the present trends in language teaching, the structure-based curriculum seemed to be incompatible with the view of language as communication. The CDC, accordingly, revised its curriculum of English language thoroughly for each level of school education. This departure is clearly reflected in the objectives laid down in the primary education English curriculum (1992) which states: "The broad aim of the course is to develop in students an ability to use English effectively by exposure to the language used in real life situations where children use English as their mother tongue. At the same time, the course is designed to enable learners to internalize the underlying systems and structures of the language and to develop functional performance skills in it" (p.5). It clearly states that the course aims at developing a well-integrated and comprehensive communicative competence on the part of the learners. The lower secondary English curriculum (1993) has been framed in the same spirit. The secondary level English curriculum although not printed out yet is being finalized on the
lines of the communicative spirit as reflected in the primary and lower secondary level English curriculum.

10+2 system of education has been quite recently introduced in the kingdom. The Higher Secondary School Curriculum for English developed in 1996 has been framed in conformity with the movement of communicative teaching. The general objectives of +2 have been set to:

1) teach students skills in the use of English for academic and communicative purposes,
2) train them in the functional, notional and grammatical areas of English language use,
3) make them see the relationship between structures and meaning,
4) teach them English structures in communicative contexts,
5) provide students a self-complete, self-terminating, as well as a bridge between secondary and university education.

(Source: Higher Secondary School Curriculum, 1996:15)

1.2.3 Methods of Teaching and Teaching-Learning Situations

The method prescribed for teaching English in the 1971 curriculum was based on the SOS approach, but the mid-term evaluation of the NESP revealed that due to various constraints,
this approach to teaching English could never be translated into reality. The over-crowded classrooms, specially in the urban areas have made the teachers, although trained, adopt grammar-translation method. The structure of the classrooms benches and desks "built as one unwieldy structures" (Davies et al 1984:24) render group work impossible. As they have observed, teaching is always teacher-centered and ironically, the teacher derives much more practice than the students. Imparting a skill in such a crowded and noisy environment is impossible. Even a successful and competent teacher cannot handle the situation in his favour. Any change in the ELT methodology cannot bring desired results unless the environment is made more conducive to teaching. The situation in the rural areas is more favourable as there are less crowded classes, but the lack of efforts on the part of the teacher is quite obvious. "Teachers' irregular attendance in the classroom" (Verma and Pandey 1988 as quoted in Khaniya 1990:82) is one of the various causes resulting in a large number of students' failures.

There is no difference between teaching social studies and English because the latter is considered not as a set of skills, but a subject. In addition, there is frequent use of Nepali by the teacher, making the exposure of English to the Nepalese
school students too poor. In this regard Feldman (1989:11) rightly observes that a school student in Nepal "... does not speak English for even ten minutes in ten years of studying the language."

Regarding the teaching of English and the environment in which it is taught in Nepal, Kerr (1994:4) observes: "Teaching instruction consists of grammatical dissection and rote memorization of the text. This gives children no opportunity or encouragement to use the language. Further, the physical conditions of the schools and large number of students are not conducive to good teaching and learning. Teachers who are able to make additional teaching materials have no place to either store or display them."

The overcrowded classes of compulsory English courses have been veritable ordeal for the teachers. The student-teacher ratio in English language classes works out at 1:85 (McCafferty, 1967), "Almost all general secondary schools and all colleges of T.U face the problem of over-crowded compulsory English classes. They have to handle English classes with nearly 150 students. Sometimes it could be even larger. Hence it is interesting to note that the NESP preferred the student-teacher ratio in higher education 15:1 whereas in compulsory English language classrooms.

ELT in Nepal perhaps suffers most at the hands of examiners who use techniques of evaluation and measurement to test students' proficiency and achievement in English language. Serious doubts from different quarters have been raised regarding the validity, reliability and discriminating capability of the tests and examinations in Nepal. Khania (1991:5) argues that "TU examinations are oriented to the prescribed textbooks, bazaar notes and previous examination papers rather than the true abilities and skills which would have been desired by the courses being offered at TU." Clearly, examinations of this type will have a number of problems. In this context, Jha (1995:112) remarks, "The practice of evaluating students' proficiency exclusively through annual written examination at schools and colleges worsens the situation all the more. Use of unfair means in the examination halls, parroting the important topics, overflooding of cheap bazaar notes in the market are some of the immediate results of this kind of evaluation system. Consequently, the SLC graduates overall proficiency is far below the expected mark. They find themselves linguistically too poor to cope with the English courses of the +2 level and college level."
The standard of education in the country and the ELT situation there are the two facets of the same coin. ELT situation in Nepal is in a pitiable condition not only because of poor motivation, aptitude and learning abilities on the part of students or unsuitable curriculum, textbook materials, over crowded classes, and faulty evaluation system on the part of the government but also because of chaotic political and educational situation and compromising terms with mediocrity on the part of the teacher community as a whole. An extract from Prof. Y.N. Khanal's Convocation Address at the 19th TU Convocation on May 7, 1993 substantiates this statement and sums up the scenario. He remarks:

... a state of virtual anarchy reigns in our educational world. Competence in teaching and administration has drastically declined. Politicization is unchecked. Political ideologies are instruments of partisan political actions rather than matters of free, legitimate and dispassionate discussion. Mediocrity is the rule with teachers and students at the expense of excellence. Educational assessment is based on the examination system which is fast losing its credibility both because of new theories and practices of assessment and because of growing practical difficulties it faces with the breakdown of optimal teacher-student and administrator-teacher ratios, efficiency has eluded us all around.
1.2.4 Teachers and Teacher Training

There is an acute shortage of trained and efficient teachers of English in the Kingdom. Pointing to this fact Davies et al (1984:7-8) state:

... the very obvious lack of English proficiency among teachers which leads to the total failure to provide 'comprehensive input', i.e., to offer a model of spoken English which is always just a little above the students' group and at the same time contains a message which students wish to understand.

They also found that the teachers' proficiency was not up to the level they were sought for. For example, the proficiency of English of the graduate teachers teaching English in Kathmandu was found to be below that of the tenth graders of a well-established private high school. The situation outside the Capital is all the more bleak.

In a recent survey regarding the needs of 380 teachers of English in the country; Kerr (1994:4) found that "... the standard of written and spoken English amongst government schools teachers ranges from Grade Two to Grade Four native speakers, with only a few exceptions." She also discovered that the standard of the teachers teaching English at private schools is
not satisfactory because their general range seems to be "... from Grade Five to Grade Eight standard native speakers."

Most of the English teachers are not trained. During the eighties the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) made training optional, which compounded the problem all the more. Teachers who had taught for a year at a school were regarded eligible to apply for a permanent tenure. The untrained teachers, thus, got permanent appointments only to worsen the ELT situation in the country. The following table presents the scenario of teacher training in Nepal:

Table No.4: No. of Trained and Untrained Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Trained</th>
<th>Untrained</th>
<th>% of the untrained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>79590</td>
<td>38536</td>
<td>41054</td>
<td>52.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.Secondary</td>
<td>13647</td>
<td>4623</td>
<td>9024</td>
<td>66.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>12656</td>
<td>5512</td>
<td>7144</td>
<td>56.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Educational Statistics of Nepal, 1994

The foregoing table presents candid picture of teacher training in the country. The majority of the untrained teachers cannot cope with the methodological complexities. They fail to
be innovative as their trained counterparts. McCafferty (1969) quoted in Malla (1977:15) finds that "on an average, an untrained primary teacher will get five out of six English patterns wrong, and a secondary teacher will get two out of three wrong." This indicates the reality of the ELT situation in Nepal. However, the recent decision made by MOEC to make teacher training obligatory to obtain permanent tenure in schools is a positive sign and it has started motivating a lot of promising teachers to undergo training.

1.2.5 Evaluation System

The achievement or success of school level education (Grades 1-10) is assessed by the number of candidates who pass the SLC examination conducted at the end of the high school education. This annual examination is also the only measuring rod for testing the success of students' efforts.

While discussing the scenario of the 1970s regarding the failure rates in the SLC examination Malla (1977:2) warns that "... if the failure rates at the SLC and university examinations are any reliable indicators, the rates are not only high but disturbingly high because 80% to 90% fail SLC examination,
because they fail in English." Explaining its probable causes, he says that firstly, this ensures to the government's decision to switch over to Nepali medium, and secondly, to the reduction of 100 marks in English after the NESP.

The data in the following table demonstrates the poor performance of SLC students in English showing average marks scored in English.

Table No.5: Pass Percentage and Average Marks in English at S.L.C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Total appeared:</td>
<td>50459</td>
<td>56853</td>
<td>64154</td>
<td>100360</td>
<td>99463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pass Percentage:</td>
<td>60.91</td>
<td>60.10</td>
<td>63.23</td>
<td>61.42</td>
<td>29.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Average marks in English:</td>
<td>33.83</td>
<td>34.30</td>
<td>34.43</td>
<td>32.94</td>
<td>22.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SLC Examination 1991 at a Glance

The figures present a stark reality of the falling standard of ELT as reflected by the average marks scored in English. Another serious comment regarding the SLC examinations is that they "... do not test students' ability to function in English. They are unsuitable and require a complete overhaul (Davies et
al. 1984:4). This is further confirmed by a report submitted by the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES) to His Majesty's Government of Nepal which states that the question papers of the SLC examination are "... seriously restricted in the range of skills tested, concentrating mainly on the factual recall of the textbook information and sometimes encouraging the repetition of learned model answers based on textbook exercises" (UCLES 1985:13). Thus the evaluation system appears to be faulty. The SLC questions check only the memory power of students but never allowing them any opportunity to show their own creativity.

So far we have dealt with the problems of ELT, dealing with different variables responsible for it. Curriculum is by far, one of the most crucial variables in this regard. Now what follows in the succeeding pages is a short account of the art and craft of curriculum design as practised in the past history of the country, its chronological development with a view to focus on the landmarks accomplished in the field of curriculum improvement in the Kingdom.
1.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN NEPAL; A CHRONOLOGICAL SCRUTINY

1.3.1 Introduction

Curriculum, as a plan of instructional programme of the school and as a guide to classroom instruction, occupies a crucial position in the educational system of a country. In essence, it reflects the nature, the focus and the direction of an entire educational programme. Thus, the curricular aspects of an educational system deserve a closer chronological scrutiny in order to provide a clear picture of the trend, potentials and future prospects of a sound educational programme in consistence with the needs and demands of the changing society.

During the past several decades, school curricula in Nepal have undergone various changes both in content as well as in the emphasis given to various components of the school programme. In contrast to the tradition-bound education practice of the period before 1951, significant changes have been proposed and put into effect in the past three decades for streamlining school level curricula in response to new demands placed upon the education system at different periods of time. The most notable efforts in this direction are curricular changes as proposed by the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) in 1956.
and by the All Round National Education Committee (ARNEC) in 1961. The task as initiated by these commissions of evolving a comprehensive national education system from a diverse and unsystematized educational tradition took a definite shape in the design of the education system set by the National Education System Plan (NESP) in 1971. Thus, a gradual refinement can be seen taking place in the development and focus of the school level curricula in the direction of evolving a relevant and productive education system in the Kingdom.

1.3.2 Mechanism and Process of Curriculum Development

The Board of School Leaving Certificate Examination, established in 1934, published syllabuses for grades nine and ten. For other grades, the subjects to be offered were determined by the Department of Education. The details of contents were left to the choice of the school teachers themselves.

In 1948, the Department of Education published for the first time a syllabus for all levels of schools in Nepal. The National Educational Planning Commission made recommendations for defining the authority of MOE, for the establishment and enforcement of standards and for planning and prescribing a minimum curriculum.
In 1960, the Department of Education was reorganized, and for the first time, a section was established to look after the curriculum and textbooks. The Department of Education formed committees of subject specialists, educationists, and teachers to discuss the curriculum and to go into the prescribed detailed guidelines of the curriculum.

The All Round National Education Committee (1961) recommended that the Department of Education should issue occasional orders on matters of school curriculum, textbooks and examination.

It was only in 1971 that a permanent mechanism for planning, developing and improving the school curriculum was introduced when the Curriculum Development Centre was established under the Ministry of Education. During the early years of the implementation of the National Education System Plan, a section on Textbooks and Curriculum in the Ministry of Education functioned as primary administrative mechanism to formulate policies on curriculum and textbooks. The Curriculum Development Centre was engaged in the activities related to the development and improvement of curriculum and curriculum guides. Later on in 1979, the Curriculum and Textbook Section of the Ministry of Education and the Writers' Division of the Janak Educational
Materials Centre were merged with the Curriculum Development Centre and it was renamed as Curriculum, Textbook and Supervision Development Centre (CTSDC). Later in 1981, CTSDC was, however, again renamed CDC. At present, the CDC performs all functions related to school curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

The following chart shows the current institutional arrangement for the development and adoption of the school level curriculum in Nepal.

CHART I

His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Education and Culture

Co-ordination Committee

Supervision Committee

Subject Committee

Subject Experts of CDC

The curricula in each of the school subjects for all school grades are prepared by respective subject committees which consist of subject specialists, teacher educators and university professors. Separate curricula are prepared for primary, lower-secondary and secondary levels. Each subject curriculum includes objectives, content outlines categorized into units, methods of
teaching and evaluation. The curricula prepared by Subject Committees are scrutinized by the Supervision Committee consisting of policy level personnel. Finally, the school level curriculum is approved by the Coordination Committee which is chaired by the State Minister of Education.

Recently, the Curriculum, Textbook and Supervision Development Centre has adopted a process which ensures a continuous development and renewal of school curriculum. The process is illustrated in the following chart:

**CHART II**

**PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

1. Identification of learning needs of students
2. Preparation of inventory of specific objectives
3. Periodic discussion with parents and teachers
4. Development of broad outlines of curriculum
5. Discussion in subject committees
6. Finalization of curriculum in co-ordination committee
7. Development of textbooks on the basis of curriculum
8. Evaluation of Effectiveness of curriculum
1.3.3 Structure of School Education

School education in Nepal has gone through a series of changes ever since the establishment of Durbar School, the first ever kind of a modern school, in 1954 (see Chart III). At the initial stage, the first two years of education was called lower primary and the next three years, upper primary. The two years of lower primary education was elevated to three years by an ordinance issued in 1938. The Ministry of Education made primary level education of five years' duration in 1954.

With all aim to achieve universalization of primary education, this basic level of education was again limited to three years' period under the National Education System Plan of 1971. Considering the difficulty of travelling to and from school as one of the factors in rural areas, the duration of primary level education was again revised upward to include the first five grades in 1981. And currently this structure is in vogue.

The duration of the middle or lower secondary level education has many times fluctuated between two and four years. Except for the period between 1938-1954, grades VI-VIII was called middle school. The NESP extended this level of education
to four years encompassing grade four to seven with all aim to impart basic knowledge as well as prevocational skills and to build character.

With the extension of primary education up to grade five in 1981, this level of education has again been shortened to two years only. In spite of the recommendations made by the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) and the All Round National Education Committee (ARNEC) to abolish the middle school system, it has all along found a place in the structure of school education in the country.

The last two years of school education constituted the secondary level education in the years before 1971. During the 1954-1959 period a three years' high school education system was adopted on an experimental basis. But the SLC Examination was based on the last two years' courses only. From 1971 onward a three-year secondary education programme was offered with the SLC Examination focussed on grade ten courses. The system of conducting the SLC Examination on courses prescribed for grade nine and ten has once again been revived in recent years in compliance with the general demand for spreading out the SLC
courses for two years. ARNEC had recommended six years' secondary education, thus making the total school education to be of eleven years' duration.

To sum up, the school system has been re-structured at least four times during the past twenty-five years. Initially there were three years of lower secondary and two years of secondary education after the five-year primary cycle (5+3+2). The NESP changed to four years of lower secondary and three years of secondary, following three years of primary education (3+4+3). In 1981, the (5+2+3) structure was introduced. The National Education Commission (NEC) recently recommended that, beyond the five years of primary education, secondary education should consist of three levels: lower secondary (Grades 6, 7 and 8), secondary (Grades 9 and 10) and higher secondary (Grades 11 and 12) (5+3+2+2). Following the NEC recommendation, the Education Act (Fifth Amendment) has just introduced this new structure (see Chart III).
Chart - III

SCHOOL EDUCATION STRUCTURE

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1.3.4 Emergence of Comprehensive Curriculum

It is only in recent years that the importance of a comprehensive curriculum for school education has been felt in the country. Till 1950's or even till 1960's, the very concept of language curriculum was almost an anachronism in the field of education in Nepal. It was the usual practice then to prescribe just the contents that had to be taught in a particular subject leaving all other aspects like skill development, attitudinal changes, teaching techniques and evaluation methods to the discretion of the respective teacher. In short, curriculum was in those days mostly identified with the courses of study only, or in other words, with the topical items to be taught regardless of all factors related to the child's development and social needs.

The functioning of the Curriculum Development Centre in early 1970's, as it were, the beginning of the design, development and implementation of school curriculum on modern lines. This process of framing and applying a well-defined curriculum in schools got established as an indispensable part of the education system when in 1971 the newly introduced National Education System Plan prescribed a uniform curriculum in the
country with a view to ensuring national integration and bringing about a uniform standard of education throughout the country.

1.3.5 Secondary Education in Nepal: Objectives of Secondary Education

The objectives of Secondary Education in Nepal has been to provide general education with a focus on communicative skills in English and in one oriental language by way of preparation for higher education. Gradually, however, secondary school objectives encompassed a knowledge of healthful living and household management and some orientation on skill training. After 1951, the objectives of secondary level education have been broadened to include occupational training and appreciation of fine arts.

The curriculum revisions made in the 1950s and 1960s were influenced largely by the recommendations of NNEPC and ARNEC. According to the NNEPC, the objectives of secondary education should be to develop qualities of civic and political leadership, to produce skilled labour and to provide a foundation for high level manpower training. The ARNEC's recommendations included inculcation of a feeling of loyalty to the country and the King.
and of faith in God. Development of a sense of nationalism was also a major objective recommended by the ARNEC.

During the period between 1961 and 1971, secondary education, in addition to intending to promote proficiency in Nepali and English languages, sought to promote a knowledge of science. The syllabus also gave prominence to an exposure to a variety of occupations.

In 1971, the National Education System Plan recommended that the objectives of secondary education should be to produce citizens who are loyal to the country, the King and the then panchayat system of government and to produce skilled workers for national development. It emphasised the development of a sense of nationalism as well. Promotion of national culture was also recognized as one of the major objectives of the secondary education.

The major objective of secondary school education, according to the revised syllabus of 1981, was to prepare for general and technical higher education. By providing a wide variety of subjects to choose from, the curriculum aimed at allowing the students to think about their field of study in higher education.
at an early stage. To generate respect for labour and to prepare productive citizens were other important objectives. The new curriculum also specified that one of the objectives of secondary education was to consolidate and strengthen faith in God and loyalty to the country and the King. Developing a sense of discipline was emphasized as another major objective of secondary education. (See Chart IV, p.40.)
### MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

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1.3.6 Secondary School Subjects

Courses of study for the secondary schools of Nepal were framed and adopted in Nepal for the first time in 1934 with the constitution of the School Leaving Certificate Examination Board.

The 1934 syllabus was language-oriented with English occupying the key position. More than sixty percent of the total marks were allocated to languages. Though language was heavily emphasized, Nepali was one of the elective subjects only. History and geography were two separate subjects covering 25 percent of the total marks. Mathematics was one of the compulsory subjects.

Eighteen years after the formation of SLC Board, some major changes were made in the syllabus of 1952. Nepali became a compulsory paper. Language still occupied the major portion of the curriculum, about 50 percent of the total weightage was allocated to language papers alone. English remained to be the key subject with the highest percentage of weightage. This curriculum of 1952 also introduced science, rural economics, hygiene and physiology and occupational areas as optional subjects. History and geography were less emphasized because students were required to study only one of them. The optional
subjects became more diversified and contained the areas of occupation, science, fine arts, social sciences, mathematics, hygiene and physiology and languages. The Nepal National Education Planning Commission, formed in 1954, recommended for the planning of secondary education with a new perspective. The NNEPC visualized secondary education as a strategy of social, economic and cultural development of a new democratic state. It recommended three main subject areas: common learning, vocational subjects and avocational subjects.

Some of the NNEPC recommendations were followed when the multi-purpose high schools came into operation in the later part of 1950's. One third of the total marks was offered to the vocational subjects in the multi-purpose curriculum. However, the curriculum for the general high schools remained almost the same as that of 1952. Although the All Round National Education Committee made several suggestions for consolidating secondary school education, its recommendations were not implemented.

A new curriculum was designed by the National Education System Plan in 1971 and it came into effect in 1972. The design of educational programme isomorphic with national development was
the main idea behind it. It recommended three streams of curriculum, one each for general, vocational and Sanskrit.

1.3.7 Instructional Materials

An adequate provision of instructional materials such as textbooks and audio-visual aids facilitates efficient teaching and learning processes in the classroom and lends an academic atmosphere to the school. The intended curricula will remain just an unrealized plan, if required instructional resources are in acute shortage. In this section, major attempts at producing and distributing textbooks and other instructional materials are briefly described here.

1.3.8 Textbooks

Prior to 1951, almost all the textbooks and other educational materials were imported from India for use in the schools of Nepal. After the establishment of Gorkha (Nepali) Bhasha Prakashini Samiti (now incorporated into Sajha Publication) some books were published in Nepali and some of them were used in Nepalese schools also. The Nepal National Education Planning Commission recommended the need of curriculum in 1954 and subsequently, the Department of Education published primary
and lower secondary curriculum in 1958. The private publishers started getting textbooks written on the basis of the curriculum and the government started the selection of textbooks and prescribing them for schools.

In 1961, the Ministry of Education established Educational Materials Centre, now Janak Education Materials Centre (JEMC) equipped with trained textbook writers and a printing press. Some textbooks were written by these writers. The Education Press printed the books and they were distributed to schools. The Ministry of Education had the policy of selecting the textbooks from among the available ones on a basis of competition and assigning a specific textbook for the specific district or zones of the country. As most private publishers had profit as the prime motive, the quality of textbooks were far from satisfactory. Moreover, the private publishers were not interested in making the textbooks available in the remote and mountain areas of the country.

At present, Janak Educational Materials Centre holds the total responsibility with regard to the publication of textbooks for all the levels of school education. Janak Education Materials Centre has its five regional depots from where it
distributes books to booksellers. JEMC shares the responsibility of distribution with Sajha Publication which distributes/sells the books on a commission basis.

The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) is responsible for getting the textbooks written. It invites manuscripts from local writers and selects the best one on a competitive basis. Sometimes it commissions writers of repute to work on certain textbooks. The CTSDC has a regular programme designed for improving the existing textbooks by getting them reviewed by subject teachers and experts. It has started a new policy of trialling the textbooks for one year before it is mass produced for use.

1.3.9 Examination Reform and Evaluation

The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Examination Board came into operation in 1934. This examination, in essence, has influenced the examination patterns across all school grades for a long period of time. Thus, the prevalent pattern of examination, well up to 1971, consisted of half-yearly and annual examinations for all grades. Students were promoted or detained on the basis of their performance in the final examination held at the end of each academic year.
Various suggestions on improving the system of evaluating pupils' progress were offered by two national level education commissions (See Chart V, p.47). However, by and large, virtually the same process was followed with lop-sided emphasis given to the final annual examination. It was only after the adoption of the National Education System Plan in 1971 that a comprehensive scheme of student evaluation was put into effect.

The new scheme for student evaluation under the NESP included the following components.

a. Provision for internal assessment;
b. Maintenance of students' progress records;
c. Improvement of the nature of questions and methods of scoring; and
d. Development of standardized tests.

The implementation of this improved evaluation scheme has brought about a perceptible change (though very scanty so far) in the attitude and practice of the teachers in adopting and using different tools in continuously evaluating pupils' progress. At the same time measures have been taken to improve the SLC examination by making allowance in the question papers an adequate sampling coverage of learning tasks as specified in the course and by improving the marking system in examination by distributing scoring criteria to the examiner.
CHART V

A REVIEW OF EXAMINATION PATTERN AND PROPOSED EVALUATION SCHEMES

Before 1951

S.L.C. Examination Board came into operation in 1934. Evaluation of students' progress confined to half-yearly and annual examinations.

NNEPC
Recommendation, 1956

Evaluation of pupil progress must be as comprehensive as the total objectives of education, all of which must have been measured and recorded in appropriate records.

To measure these varied goals, observation, self-rating performance and other devices must be used frequently and continuously. Failures should be minimum.

ARNEC
Recommendation, 1961

Examination should be oral and action-oriented. On the basis of each month's evaluation of sports, character, knowledge on the specified subject, class promotion should be decided.

NSEP
Student Evaluation Scheme
1971

Quarterly examinations will be held to assess the progress made by the students.

Teachers will maintain a progress record for each student. Standardized tests will be developed for subjects that are amenable to such a procedure.

At the end of the Primary Education students will be promoted on the basis of examination conducted by a team of district school inspectorate officials.
To conclude, within a short span of little more than four decades, there has been a perceptible change in Nepalese concept of education, a transition from a pedantic type of education to a concept of education as an investment in human resources towards the creation of a just and exploitationless society. A significant stride in designing a nationalistic school curriculum has been made in producing Nepalese textbooks, and in incorporating some extra-curricular activities into the tradition-ridden school programme. HMG has initiated various innovative projects in the direction of identifying alternative approaches to teacher preparation, development and dissemination of instructional materials, and institutionalization of appropriate management and evaluation mechanism— all geared to create a required infrastructure for efficient functioning of an education system.

The effectiveness of an education system is determined by the soundness of its programme, the confluence of essential instructional, resources and above all, the concerted efforts and commitment of all concerned personnel. Several curricular changes in the past four decades are indicative of Nepal's efforts to make school programme more responsive to the changing needs and demands of the society.
The foregoing description of curricular improvement exercises in Nepal, however, should not be mistaken as complete and absolute. It is a fact that the curricular journey has come a long way but it is just one among the variables of quality education. A good curriculum is responsive to changes in the society, both inside as well as outside of the country. The plan of educational renovation and reconstruction in Nepal was taken under consideration by the MOEC, specially after the adoption of 10+2 system in India and other South East Asian countries. In the succeeding section, the long-felt need for re-structuring of high school education in Nepal has been dealt with at some length, with an account of the various constraints in achieving its goals and objectives.

1.4 Introduction of 10+2 System in Nepal

1.4.1 Background

During the late eighties, the need of 10+2 educational system was strongly felt in the different quarters of the Kingdom. Serious doubts were expressed about the standard of tertiary level of education, very often remarked as
"deteriorating and failing to produce either well-educated young citizens, or any substantial socio-economic benefit to the society." It was in this backdrop that educationists, administrators, pedagogues and experts of the field had to take momentous initiatives to address the crisis. HMG, Nepal, on the recommendations made by two national seminars held at Jhapa and Kathmandu, decided upon adopting 10+2 structure of school education and, accordingly, brought into force the Higher Secondary Education Act of 1989. Consequently, Council for Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Minister of Education. An autonomous body of HSEB was formed to implement the 10+2 system of school education in 1990.

1.4.2 Rationale

The HSEB envisaged that a broadly uniform pattern of 10+2+3 in the country would help upgrade quality of education at all three levels. It would strengthen rationalization of the school and the university system and help modernistic curricula and make them more relevant to the needs of the society. It would also facilitate adoption of latest techniques of teaching-learning and pupil evaluation. It was further envisaged that 10+2 system
would further help establish new linkage and discover new avenues after +2, as this stage would be vital, the road to higher education would fork at this point, one leading to university premises and the other to the world of work (vocationalisation).

The major rationale for the restructuring of the school system (10+2) advanced by HSEB on the lines of what the Education Commission of India (1966) had brought forward three decades ago. They are as mentioned below:

i) The student at the age of 16 is hardly mature enough to enter the university system. It is only at the age of 18, or more that the student is mature enough to study on his own and profit by the methods of teaching which are appropriate for the university stage. The children, therefore deserve to remain at school and continue to be taught by methods appropriate to the school age;

ii) The total duration for the school stage should not be less than 12 years, as otherwise the students would not be adequately prepared for the university education and it would adversely affect standards of all tertiary education;

iii) +2 stage serves as a terminal stage and some of the students after completing it, should be able to enter the world of work;

iv) +2 as a part of the school system would be less costly as compared to being a part of the university system;

v) It will maintain a system and a standard that conforms to and matches well with those of SAARC countries;
vi) Introduction of 10+2 will bring about uniformity in the structure of education with other countries and enhance the quality of education in Nepal. (Source: HSEB Periodical: Sampreean, June-July 1997 (in Nepali))

The 10+2 initiative in Nepal has been envisaged as extending school education by two years to higher secondary level in Grades 11 and 12. Students who pass the SLC examination would continue to study with the school system rather than switch to university campuses. Concomitantly, the PCL courses which cater to equivalent students cohorts would be, as envisaged by TU and HSEB, brought within the fold of 10+2 completely by the year 2005. This would also mitigate the burden of large enrollment at the PCL under TU, enabling it to meet the needs of upgrading the 3-year degree courses to international standards.

Accordingly, a national curriculum for the +2 level was framed and implemented in 1993 on a trial basis. In 1996 the curriculum was redesigned by the HSEB and implemented throughout the kingdom. However, it seems everything did not go well with it; it is ailing with some serious problems. Teachers are not very happy with it; examinations results have been alarmingly poor and the English curriculum has been the butt of criticism from various quarters. What follows now is a short overview of
the English curriculum reflecting teachers' perceptions engaged at this level.

1.4.3 An Overview of the Compulsory English Curriculum for the 10+2 Level

1.4.3.1 Introduction

Although Higher Secondary Education Act was passed by MOEC in 1989, it took almost 3 years for the HSEB to create essential infrastructure for the same. During this period, the two interim reports, "Educational Reconstructions in Nepal" were prepared by Dr.(Ms.) Helen Abadzi, Education Specialist, World Bank and Dr. R.P. Singhal, Consultant, World Bank, respectively. In conformity with these two reports, the Higher Secondary Curriculum was first designed in 1993 and implemented throughout the country. The curriculum was, however, redesigned in 1996 to meet the changing needs of time and people's aspirations from the HSEB.

Here, an attempt has been made to present an overview of the compulsory English curriculum in use at the +2 level under the following headings:

i) Objectives;

ii) Teaching Materials and Nature of the Course Content;
iii) Methodology;
iv) Evaluation System; and
v) Teacher Training.

1.4.3.2 Objectives of the +2 English Curriculum:

The specific objectives of teaching English as compulsory subject at Grades 11 and 12 are:

- to provide a link-English course,
- to teach English for functional, academic and communicative purpose, and
- to provide extensive reading materials of literary merits for information and pleasure.

1.4.3.3 Teaching Materials and Nature of the Course:

A) Textbooks:

The +2 English curriculum 1993 had prescribed following coursebooks to meet the objectives of this level:

1. Link English (TU, Sajha Prakashan)
2. English for Further Education (Hawkins and Strongwick, Orient Longman)
3. Popular Short Stories (OUP)


The teaching materials prescribed in the redesigned English curriculum 1996 are as follows:

1. Link English (TU Sajha Prakashan)
2. Meaning into Words (Doff et al, CUP)
3. The Magic of Words: A Collection of Poetry, Prose and Drama (Lohani et al, M.K. Publisher, Kathmandu)
4. The Heritage of Words (Lohani et al., M.K. Publisher, Kathmandu)
5. Basic English Usage (Swan, OUP).

A critical enquiry into these teaching materials makes one feel that, for the most part they are oblivious to the linguistic proficiency of the learners on the one hand, while on the other hand they meagerly meet the linguistic demand of the job market. Link English is meant for providing a refresher course to the SLC graduates. However, expecting too much from this remedial course would be disappointing. Link English can not be used as a 'quick fix', a readymade solution to the linguistic proficiency problem of the learners. The book was prepared by British ELT expert Bob
Jordon only with a view to provide short remedial course.

English for Further Education prescribed in the 1993 curriculum, proved very little as an asset to the students and teachers. It failed to serve its purpose because of its innumerable exercises (over 300), unfamiliar topics and abundance of words straight from teenage western culture, such as 'bikini' and 'wicket'. In an interview with Ms. Julie Tyler, one of the Volunteers Service Overseas (VSO) Education volunteers from Britain, serving as teacher and teacher-trainer in Doti district of Nepal, commenting on this curriculum, remarks: "The challenge is finding a way to teach an extremely difficult curriculum ... which is quite peculiar, unrealistic and therefore frustrating." Popular Short Stories in her view are neither very popular nor very short. She says, "Giving a summary of the story is an obvious way of simplifying and shortening what needs to be studied and given that even the most able students cannot read the text directly without a lot of help, a summary is probably essential. It is a shame to not use the text at all." Incidentally, this also reflects the utter linguistic poverty of the average Nepalese learners at this level.

The preceding remarks made against English For Further Education prescribed in 1993 curriculum holds equally good with
the textbook *Meanings into Words* prescribed under the current curriculum (1996). Teachers and students find this book extremely difficult because of its preoccupation with western culture and concept. Nor has the book been available in required numbers at the book shops in all the districts of the country. Besides, its prohibitive cost keeps the economically poor students at a bay.

Teaching of prose, poetry, drama and stories has been a veritable ordeal to the teachers. Despite their desire and attempts to carry out teaching these courses in English, success has been elusive and far. Students' linguistic proficiency in general is too low to carry out teaching of the reading materials exclusively through English.

1.4.3.4 Nature of the Course Contents

A study of the nature of the compulsory English courses of the current curriculum of the +2 level reflects that it is, by and large, a prescription of a reading text (prose, poetry, stories and plays) along with some exercises on comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and composition. Although the weightage given to 'language items' is 50% in the compulsory English, it
does not seem to take into account learners' needs and interests. In fact, no attempt to make a systematic assessment of learners' needs has been reported. The passages selected are, by and large, ill-suited to the learners' proficiency levels and the exercises that follow the passages are also not suited. As such, the compulsory English courses prescribed for the +2 level do not seem to be substantially contributive to the development of the different language skills to the desired extent. In addition to these curriculum complexities, the instability in the political scenario has resulted into a serious degradation. Both the students and teachers find themselves prone to political upheavals, failing their duties of exhibiting their optimum sincerity and dedication. Consequently, a morbid scene of cheap 'bazaar guides', 'pass books' and 'guess papers' have mushroomed. Students resort to these sub-standard means to get through the examinations, defeating the very purpose of teaching English language.

1.4.3.5 Methodology

The methods of teaching English throughout the country is reported to be predominantly exam-oriented and teacher-centered. Teaching of English is largely carried out through lecturing and
text explication with frequent use of translation and dictation of notes. In fact, a successful teacher as considered by majority of students, is the one who carries out his teaching with examination point of view, providing students with answers to the probable questions in the forthcoming examination. Teaching of English is equated with transforming information of the contents in the prescribed syllabus.

Neither any provision of tutorial classes has been reported nor has the HSEB issued any circular to the respective schools to this effect. Barring a few VSO British volunteers and conscientious Nepalese teachers, conducting tutorial classes is regarded as an 'extra-load' and therefore unwelcome.

1.4.3.6 Evaluation System

The evaluation scheme under present English curriculum has allocated 40% for reading, 40% for writing and 20% for grammar and language use. It is categorically stated in the evaluation scheme of the +2 English curriculum that "Questions will be set to test students knowledge of content of the textbooks as well as their communicative competence." (See Appendix III) The evaluation scheme does not provide any scope for internal assessment. It is exclusively through external (annual)
examinations that the communicative competence of the students is examined in a total duration of 3 hours. As such, serious doubts are expressed about the validity and reliability of the evaluation system.

1.4.3.7 Teacher Training

The HSEB, with the help of Faculty of Education (FOE), TU has recently started imparting Post-Graduate Diploma Training in Education (PGDTE) training course of two semester duration. The syllabus of the PG Diploma, however, is more academic in nature, aimed at providing the trainees with varieties of theories related to applied linguistics. It needs to incorporate more practical oriented sessions, enabling them to be able to 'teach' the prescribed books of English at the +2 level.

To sum up, the +2 English curriculum needs to take appropriate account of general linguistic competence of 11 and 12 grades as well as match the needs and linguistic demands of the future job market. The HSEB has to strive to achieve both the objectives which are 'terminal' and 'preparatory' in nature.

So far, in the preceding pages, we have attempted an appraisal of ELT in Nepal along with a chronological scrutiny of
curriculum development. As mentioned earlier, Nepal is passing through a transitional phase of re-structuring its educational system. Its steps to reform the school structure (10+2) can be better studied in the international perspective. In order to incorporate contemporary educational trends and be compatible with its neighbouring countries, specially, India (as Nepali education largely reflects the Indian model), a comparative study of the educational systems focussing +2 structure in the SAARC nations would be contextual here. The study may be useful in setting a background to such an informed approach to interpret the educational system and appreciate the steps towards reforming higher secondary education in the Kingdom of Nepal. It would, as Noah (1983) rightly puts it,

deepen our understanding of our own educational system, setting a larger canvas, helping us understand better our own past, locate ourselves more exactly in the present and discern a little more clearly what our educational future may be (Noah, 1983:4).
What follows now is the current practice of the +2 system in the SAARC nations, pointing out the landmarks, giving very short but clear account of the stories of success and hardships in the educational arena of the South East Asia.

1.5 Focus on the Higher Secondary Education in the SAARC Nations

1.5.1 INDIA

As a result of the Kothari Commission Report (1966), the Central Government decided to extend the number of school years and to streamline the institutions that afford the various stages of education. A central goal of the extended schooling was the vocationalization of education. The implementation of the 10+2 system throughout Indian territory was, however, a lengthy process. In a key-note address to implementation committee for 10+2 in Nepal, Dr. A.K. Sharma, the Director of NCERT, remarked that it took nearly 30 long years to implement the 10+2 policy in the entire country. Nevertheless, 12-year schooling has become the norm in India.
1.5.2 PAKISTAN

Post-primary education in Pakistan has certain similarities with Nepal. It includes a middle stage (grades 6-8), a secondary stage (grades 9-10), and an intermediate stage (grades 11-12). At the end of grade 10, students are required to pass the Matriculation examination, Grades 11 and 12, which have been traditionally part of higher education, are offered in integrated higher secondary schools, intermediate colleges, and degree granting institutions.

In 1986 the Government announced its intention to integrate grades 11 and 12 in the school system and to convert intermediate colleges to secondary schools. By 1991, however the policy had been implemented in only two provinces and only to a limited extent.

1.5.3 BANGLADESH

The structure of the school system in Bangladesh is similar to that of Pakistan. It has essentially a 10-year schooling period, leading to the Secondary School Certificate examination. Secondary School graduates may attend the 4-year university courses. All 12-grade leavers have to pass Higher Secondary
Education examination for entrance to higher levels of education. Students who pass subsequently enter the third year of the universities. There are also university level honours courses, whose graduates receive a total 15 years of schooling.

The complexity of the system has created uncontrolled enrollment increases without quality control. To support government intentions in streamlining the system, ADB approved a Higher Secondary Education Project in 1991 ($60.9 million). The project components were: (a) curriculum development and textbook improvement, (b) teacher-training for grades 11 and 12; c) infrastructure development to enable intermediate colleges to expand secondary schools to add grades 11 & 12; d) management improvement, including a management information system.

1.5.4 SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka has adopted the British system of GCE, thus extending its schooling period to 11-13 years. About 50% of its schools provide instruction upto grades 11 and a total of 64% provide up to grades 13. Instruction in the last three grades is clearly not considered higher education.
The Sri Lankan system has erected two barriers prior to university entrance. At the end of year 11 (end of secondary school), there is a GCE "O" level examination which is conducted centrally. Years 12 & 13 (senior secondary) culminate in "A" level examinations. Throughout the system, few students pass the examinations, pass rate for "O" level is about 25% and for "A" level it is about 20%.

1.5.5 BHUTAN

Bhutan also has a 10-year system, at the end of which students take the secondary education certificate examinations. Grades 11 and 12 are considered university studies which are offered in only about three institutions. Relatively few students reach the secondary level, and university students often go to India for their studies. Therefore, 10+2 system is apparently not yet an issue in this country.

1.5.6 MALDIVES

In the late sixties, English system of education was adopted in the country. The high school education is limited to the capital city of Male. Secondary schools in the capital are geared to university of London. These schools provide GCE "A"
and "O" both the levels. Because of poor infrastructure of Maldives not any institute or university exists so far for imparting higher education.

1.5.7 NEPAL

The development of 10+2 system of education is quite a recent phenomenon. After the Higher Secondary Act of 1989 was passed, it took considerable time to create necessary infrastructure for the same. The system has been legitimized as well as institutionalized as a sub-system in the whole spectrum of education in Nepal. Because of the Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) course (equivalent to higher secondary level) run by Tribhuvan University, there has been a serious overlapping in the responsibilities of HSEB & TU presently. Despite an agreement reached upon by the two, the phasing out of PCL in order to ensure smooth phasing in of the +2 has remained a challenge. (Source: Postlethwaite, T.N. (Ed.), 1989.)

So far we have discussed in details the problems of ELT in Nepal and efforts put in by the HMG for the betterment of situation (see 1.2.1 and 1.3). The establishment of the +2 education system in the country (1.4) is a clear indication of Nepal's striving to be compatible with educational progress in
the SAARC countries (1.5), across its borders. A comparative picture of the educational scenario in the SAARC nations has been drawn up in a chart (see Chart VI) in order to study similarities and differences on the issues under the following headings:

(1) National goals of education,
(2) Objectives of Higher Secondary Education,
(3) Administration and supervision,
(4) Financial management,
(5) Teacher education,
(6) Curriculum development,
(7) Methods of teaching,
(8) Problems and challenges.

In addition to the issues mentioned in the Chart VI, an attempt has been made to study the general educational structure in the SAARC nations in a separate chart (see Chart VII). It provides a glance of educational structure at the school level in the SAARC countries.
A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO IN THE SAARC NATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Nepal</th>
<th>Bangladesh</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Bhutan</th>
<th>Maldives</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-development of full potential of child acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitude.</td>
<td>-develop inherent talents and personality of students.</td>
<td>-promoting literacy and religious education.</td>
<td>-preparing for higher academic, technical professional education.</td>
<td>-provide free and universal qualitative education.</td>
<td>-literacy &amp; total development of religious children personality education at primary level.</td>
<td>-vocationalization of preparation education at secondary, college level.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-generating human resources for the diversification of country's economy.</td>
<td>-inculcate respect for the moral, cultural, and social values.</td>
<td>-preparing for higher education.</td>
<td>-promotion of national, cultural traditions.</td>
<td>-self-reliance as the ultimate goal.</td>
<td>-cultivation of moral and social values.</td>
<td>-attuning the educational system to the emerging societal, cultural, economic, and technical situations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-national integration</td>
<td>-keep up identity in national and international context and lead harmonious life.</td>
<td>-producing economically productive man-power.</td>
<td>-orientation towards Islamic ideology &amp; character building.</td>
<td>-quality improvement in science and technology.</td>
<td>-elimination of illiteracy.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-enabling citizens to be economically productive</td>
<td>-produce different levels of man-power for modernization of the country.</td>
<td>-upraising educational standards to meet the emerging challenges.</td>
<td>-education.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-bringing the unprivileged into the mainstream of the nation.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>-GCE 'A' geared to higher education.</td>
<td>-producing medium-level manpower for all round development of the country.</td>
<td>-preparing for higher education.</td>
<td>-good academic background for further study.</td>
<td>-11 &amp; 12 form part of university studies.</td>
<td>-GCE 'A' terminal stage for entry into the world of work.</td>
<td>-preparing for higher academic technical and professional education.</td>
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<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Maldives</td>
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<td>- 30 educational regions further sub-divided into educational circuits.</td>
<td>- 75 District Education offices.</td>
<td>- centralised administration under MOE.</td>
<td>- Centralised system on policy making coordination and advisory authority on education.</td>
<td>- Education Department appoints Inspectors of schools.</td>
<td>- nineteen administrative organizations based on the lines of Central Planning Commission.</td>
<td>- Centre &amp; State level administrative organizations based on the lines of Central Planning Commission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Higher education by autonomous and private universities.</td>
<td>- 4 divisions with Board of Sec.Edn. in each.</td>
<td>- Provincial universities under provincial governments.</td>
<td>- Schools regularly visited by them to maintain and promote educational standards.</td>
<td>- Departments of Ed. under HRD directly responsible for educational development.</td>
<td>- UGC's coordination for dev. of higher education.</td>
<td>- NCERT responsible for curriculum development, textbook production and exams, reforms up to secondary education.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- 5 Regional Directors for school education</td>
<td>- 20 districts, 73 subdivisions, 473 thanas with Edl. Administrators in each level.</td>
<td>- Education fully state's responsibility.</td>
<td>- Fully state financed</td>
<td>- education throughout the country financed by Central and State govt.s., local authorities and private sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Entirely a state responsibility.</td>
<td>- Public school financed by govt.</td>
<td>- Primary ed. financed by govt.</td>
<td>- schools, universities exclusively funded by state</td>
<td>- education fully state's responsibility.</td>
<td>- fully state financed</td>
<td>- education throughout the country financed by Central and State govt.s., local authorities and private sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Private schools self-financed.</td>
<td>- private schools rely on tuition fees and some govt. grants.</td>
<td>- education fully state's responsibility.</td>
<td>- education fully state's responsibility.</td>
<td>- fully state financed</td>
<td>- education throughout the country financed by Central and State govt.s., local authorities and private sources.</td>
<td>- education throughout the country financed by Central and State govt.s., local authorities and private sources.</td>
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<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>-24 teacher training colleges offering in-service and pre-service training.</td>
<td>-12 govt. training colleges</td>
<td>-nearly 70% primary teachers trained from primary training institutes</td>
<td>-Primary Teaching Certificate involves school teachers 1-yr of pedagogical trained at training and 4-months National Institute of teaching practice of Education.</td>
<td>-trained ex-patriate teachers hired to teach GCE 'O' &amp; 'A' level courses sec. school trs. (after Bachelor training)</td>
<td>-2-year certificate course for primary school (after 12)</td>
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<td>-training through correspondence.</td>
<td>-10 months training after SLC for primary level</td>
<td>-majority of secondary level teachers trained graduates from I.O.Ed. Dhaka University.</td>
<td>-1 year B.Ed. training for secondary level</td>
<td>-primary teacher degree) training conducted by Educational Division Centre.</td>
<td>-NCERT &amp; NCTE assist states in developing tr. curriculums.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-2 year of institutional training and 1 year of internship</td>
<td>-2 year training after SLC for lower secondary level</td>
<td>-M.Ed. course of two years.</td>
<td>-B.Ed. training for sec. level</td>
<td>-D.T. Edn. also serves as resource centres for teachers and administrators.</td>
<td>-District Inst. of Ed. provides pre-service &amp; in-service tr.edn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-2 year M.Ed.</td>
<td>-2 year training after intermediate or 1 year training after Bachelor Degree for Sec. level.</td>
<td>-1 year P.G. Diploma for Higher Sec. teachers.</td>
<td>-H.Ed. course of two years.</td>
<td>-State ed.dept. responsible for developing curri. textbooks from 9-12.</td>
<td>-Board of Sci.Ed. in each State responsible for developing curri.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-1 year P.G. Diploma for Higher Sec. teachers.</td>
<td>-textbooks (1-10) produced by CDC under MOE</td>
<td>-syllabi, teachers' guide, manuals &amp; textbooks produced by CDC</td>
<td>-textbooks (1-10) published by Ed.Dept.</td>
<td>-syllabus is recently introduced.</td>
<td>-National Bureaus &amp; textbook boards in the provinces are coordinated by the National Bureau.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-syllabi, teachers' guide, manuals &amp; textbooks produced by CDC</td>
<td>-National Curriculum Committee decides policies &amp; contents of curriculum for 1-12</td>
<td>-textbooks operated at the federal level.</td>
<td>-Syllabus is designed by Ed.Dept. gaered to ICSE (grade 10) &amp; ISC (grade 12) exams. conducted by the Council for the Indian Section/Certi. Exams.</td>
<td>-Dhivahic medium Curri. recently introduced.</td>
<td>-syllabus is developed on the lines of GCE,Univ. of London.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Curriculum Division at H.S.C.S. prepares and adapts textbooks for 11 &amp; 12.</td>
<td>-Uniform curriculum implemented throughout the country.</td>
<td>-Curr.bureaus &amp; textbook boards in the provinces are coordinated by the National Bureau.</td>
<td>-Syllabus is developed on the lines of GCE,Univ. of London.</td>
<td>-Dhivahic medium Curri. recently introduced.</td>
<td>-Board of Sci.Ed. in each State responsible for developing curri. textbooks from 9-12.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-CDC (TU) responsible for syllabus and textbook materials for higher education.</td>
<td>-National Bureau of Curri. &amp; Textbooks operates at the federal level.</td>
<td>-Syllabus is desig- ned by Ed.Dept. gaered to ICSE (grade 10) &amp; ISC (grade 12) exams. conducted by the Council for the Indian Section/Certi. Exams.</td>
<td>-Syllabus is designed by Ed.Dept. gaered to ICSE (grade 10) &amp; ISC (grade 12) exams. conducted by the Council for the Indian Section/Certi. Exams.</td>
<td>-State ed.dept. responsible for primary &amp; middle stages.</td>
<td>-Board of Sci.Ed. in each State responsible for developing curri. textbooks from 9-12.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Type of Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Lecture with frequent use of Sinhala &amp; Tamil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Lecturing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Rote memorization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Lecture method</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Teaching at all levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>Rote memorization</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Rote learning &amp; lecturing predominantly the scene</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Improving the quality of teachers & supervisory staff.
- Majority of the teaching & supervisory staff need special training.
- Universalization of primary ed.
- High rate of illiteracy
- Strengthening vocational education.
- Quality edcuation.
- Equitable education opportunities.
- Universalization of primary education.
- Quality and control of edcuation.
- Decentralization of educational admin.
- Financing of educational expansion.
- Universalization of primary edn.
- Promotion of literacy.
- Improving the internal efficiency & external effectiveness of the educational system.
- Equity in educational opportunity.
- Catering to the individual needs of the pupils.
- Utter shortage of trained personnels.
- Unequitable edu. opportunity.
- Poor quality of education.
- Heavy reliance on foreign educational institutions.
- Lack of accountability among teachers.
- Bringing about fundamental changes in the socio-economic order.
## General Educational Structure in the SAARC Nations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SRI LANKA</th>
<th>NEPAL</th>
<th>BANGLADESH</th>
<th>PAKISTAN</th>
<th>BHUTAN</th>
<th>MALDIVES</th>
<th>INDIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20+ Degree college (3 Year.)</td>
<td>20+ Degree college</td>
<td>19+ Degree college</td>
<td>18+ Degree college</td>
<td>18+ Degree college</td>
<td>18+ Pre-Uni. (11-12)</td>
<td>20+ Degree (3 Yr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18+ Sen.sec. school (11-12)</td>
<td>17+ Higher Sec. (11-12)</td>
<td>17+ Int. College (11-12)</td>
<td>17+ Higher Sec. school (11-12)</td>
<td>17+ Secondry school (9-10)</td>
<td>16+ Sec. school (9-10)</td>
<td>17+ Higher Sec. School (11-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ Jun. sec. School (6-10)</td>
<td>15+ Sec. school (9-10)</td>
<td>15+ Secondary School (9-10)</td>
<td>15+ Secondary School (9-10)</td>
<td>14+ Jun. H. School (6-8)</td>
<td>13+ Primary School (1-7)</td>
<td>15+ Sec. School (9-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11+ Primary School (grades K-5)</td>
<td>13+ Low.sec. School (6-10)</td>
<td>13+ Middle School (6-8)</td>
<td>13+ Middle School (6-8)</td>
<td>12+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>13+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>13+ Middle School (6-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>10+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>10+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>10+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>9+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>5+ Pre-Primary School</td>
<td>6+ Pre-Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>4+ Age</td>
<td>3+ Age</td>
<td>3+ Age</td>
<td>3+ Age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chart VII

**General Educational Structure in the SAARC Nations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SRI LANKA</th>
<th>NEPAL</th>
<th>BANGLADESH</th>
<th>PAKISTAN</th>
<th>BHUTAN</th>
<th>MALDIVES</th>
<th>INDIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree college (3 Years)</td>
<td>Degree college</td>
<td>Degree college</td>
<td>Degree college</td>
<td>Degree college</td>
<td>Pre-Uni. (11-12)</td>
<td>Degree (3 Yr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sen.sec. school (11-12)</td>
<td>Higher Sec. (11-12)</td>
<td>Int. College (11-12)</td>
<td>Higher Sec. School (11-12)</td>
<td>Secondry school (9-10)</td>
<td>Sec. school (9-10)</td>
<td>Higher Sec. School (11-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School (grades K-5)</td>
<td>Low.sec. School (6-10)</td>
<td>Middle School (6-8)</td>
<td>Middle School (6-8)</td>
<td>Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>Middle School (6-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>10+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>10+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>10+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>9+ Primary School (1-5)</td>
<td>5+ Pre-Primary School</td>
<td>6+ Pre-Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>5+ Age</td>
<td>4+ Age</td>
<td>3+ Age</td>
<td>3+ Age</td>
<td>3+ Age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on our observation of the preceding charts and graphs, we come to the conclusion that each of the SAARC nations has set its goals of education in order to cater to its social, religious and geo-political realities. However, all these nations share one common goal i.e., education for all-round development of their citizens. Another common feature shared by all the SAARC nations can be observed in the state financing of education. However, a clear trend emerging in this field is the policy of privatization of education. Quality of education demands for massive investment which, owing to the severe financial crunch in all the SAARC states, has posed a Himalayan obstacle. Hence, privatization proves to be the need of the time. The problems and challenges in the educational fields of these nations further serve as a testimony to this fact. Yet another striking common feature shared by the SAARC nations is their categorical statement of educational objectives for +2 level in terms of terminal and preparatory stage, and years of schooling. Twelve years of schooling (10+2) predominates followed by 3 years of bachelor degree. It is observed that the educational systems developing in the SAARC nations have tended to take on a relatively similar shape, adopt similar practices and follow similar evolutionary patterns. They have done so as a pragmatic response to their existing needs and circumstances and accordingly, reflect conventional time-bound wisdom. The introduction of +2 system in Nepal is by far, a pragmatic response to its needs and circumstances. The chapter now proceeds to the presentation of the problem, its emergence and relevance.
1.6 The Research Problem: Emergence and Relevance

This section deals with the rationale for the present research work; it seeks to shed light on the emergence and relevance of the research topic, followed by the statement of the problem. Then, the methodological aspects of the research work have been delineated followed by a presentation of the design of the thesis.

1.6.1 Background to the Study

After the introduction of 10+2 system in the Kingdom, the tertiary level education came into prominence. The PCL courses formerly run by TU were assigned to HSEB. The educationists and educational administrators were seriously concerned with arresting the deteriorating standards of education failing to produce well-educated young citizens capable of providing substantial socio-economic benefit to the society. To cope with this serious problems at the tertiary level education, HMG, Nepal put in a determined effort and succeeded in the implementation of 10+2 system under HSEB.
The first curriculum of HSEB was implemented in 1993. The curriculum was re-designed in 1996 and implemented throughout the country. The +2 curriculum reform and restructuring of the school education has been urged by the need for raising the standards of education in the country, bringing education closer to life, developing creativity among students, fostering independent thinking in them, improving their ability in problem-solving, bringing about closer relationship with work and productivity, and developing better health and physique of the children.

English in both the curricula of HSEB possesses the status of a compulsory subject.

1.6.2 Rationale for the Study

It was envisaged by the HSEB that the +2 system would upgrade the quality of education and make it more relevant to the needs of the learners and the society. The Board visualised that the new system would establish new linkage and discover new avenues, the road to higher education would fork at this point, one leading to university premises and the other to the world of work.
A study of the strength and weaknesses of the compulsory English curriculum will prove immensely useful in order to revitalise the strong points of the present syllabus and rectify the weak ones. The study will look into the various components of the curriculum in order to discern the gaps and lacuna and suggest measures to modify the curriculum. Talking of the urgency of overhauling and adjustment, the present ELT programmes and practices, Awasthi (1995:233) says:

There is an immediate need for an overhaul in the ELT and learning programme. Some of the most specifically pointed out areas that call for immediate attention are syllabuses, textbooks, teaching materials, training of teachers and examination system. The situation can be improved only by overhauling the syllabuses, getting new textbooks written accordingly, providing adequate teaching aids and trained teachers ... and by improving the evaluation system. [emphasis scholar's]

1.6.3 Assumptions

The main assumptions of the present study are as the follows:

1. The objectives as stated in the compulsory English curriculum do not enable the learners to use English appropriately for day-to-day communication.
2. The objectives of the curriculum are based on the actual needs analysis of the learners as well as that of the society.

3. The textbook materials selected are not efficient enough to achieve the stated objectives in the curriculum, nor are they suited to their needs and interests of the learners.

4. The curriculum production does not reflect the participation of practising teachers in its structure and content.

5. The existing teacher training programmes do not provide adequate professional expertise to the teachers and equip them to teach the learners better.

6. The evaluation system in practice at the +2 level does not properly utilise formative assessment criterion.

1.6.4 Objectives of the Study

The study aims at making a critical appraisal of the current curriculum in order to suggest points of modification to supplement it. It intends to incorporate essential strategies for teacher training to meet the demands of the syllabus. The present study further aims to recommend textual materials suited
to the existing curriculum as well as suggest ways and means for preparing textbooks and teaching aids. Teacher training and their professional growth is a crucial factor taken under the preview of the study. It indicates how the teachers are to be trained in order to impart education as expected of them by the current curriculum. Lastly, the study also suggests methods of testing and evaluation for a more reliable and valid results based on democratic principles.

In the background of what has been discussed above, the main objectives of the present research can be stated as:

a) to evaluate the major components of +2 English curriculum, viz., objectives, textbook materials, methodology, teacher training and evaluation system.

b) to suggest points of modification for the implementation of the current curriculum.

1.6.5 Statement of the Research Problem

The need for curriculum evaluation has been increasingly felt in the field of educational organizations throughout the globe in particular the developing nations where English is used
as a major second language. In the context of the +2 level Compulsory English Curriculum, it appears to be all the more prominent for four chief reasons: a) the present curriculum has been designed after the assumed needs of the learners at this level (no formal needs assessment study for the same has been reported), (b) the textbook materials selected to achieve the set objectives have been found to be beyond the linguistic competence of the learners in general, besides being alien in culture; (c) teachers find the curriculum as a whole in general, and notional-functional aspects of the core-curriculum in particular difficult to get across to linguistically less competent learners; (d) the validity and reliability of evaluation system at the +2 level, (keeping the severely fluctuating results in view), generates serious doubts and questions.

An attempt to evaluate the curriculum has been prompted by questions such as: (a) how far are the set objectives helpful to the learners in shaping their future career and how far are they feasible to attain?; what are the major problems in the prescribed teaching materials and how can they be overcome?; (c) what is the perception of teachers about the objectives, textbook materials and evaluation practice, besides their own needs for professional training to get along in tune with the prescribed
curriculum? The responses to these questions will lead to pave way for the evaluation of the curriculum under study.

The present study is based on the assumptions that (a) the objectives of the present curriculum and the textbook materials selected to achieve them are open to criticism and therefore, an evaluation of the same is required; (b) the evaluation system is faulty and (c) an efficient teacher training programme can prove much more helpful in the effective implementation of the curriculum under focus. Based on the above assumptions, the following hypotheses have been formulated that (a) the present curriculum seems to be over-ambitious in terms of its objectives and content-materials to achieve them; (b) teachers need training for their professional growth as well as for teaching their students confidently; (c) the evaluation system needs to be pragmatic by encompassing internal assessment practice with due regards for its representation in the final evaluation.

In order to test the formulated hypotheses, the following objectives have been taken up for the present study. It makes attempts to (a) evaluate 4 major components of the +2 English curriculum viz., objectives, textbook materials, methodology/teacher training and evaluation system; (b) suggest points of
modifications for the proper implementation of the present curriculum.

In order to incorporate the above mentioned dimensions of the research problem, an attempt has been made to formulate a comprehensive title of the present research. The title of the study reads as follows: A Critical Evaluation of the Compulsory English Syllabus for +2 Level in Nepal with a view to suggesting modifications. The title of the research problem clearly reflects the objectives of the study. The study attempts to make an impersonal appraisal of the objectives, textbook materials, teacher training and evaluation system under the +2 curriculum. In the process of the curriculum evaluation, the study also seeks to suggest measures that can be suitably adapted for the modification of the same. The sole aim of the present evaluation is to identify the lacunae and gaps and offer objective solutions to them as provided by the practising teachers representing all the five developmental regions of the Kingdom.

1.6.6 Defining the Terms

The title of the present study as stated in 1.6.5 uses the terms like (a) critical evaluation, (b) compulsory English
syllabus, and (c) +2 level, which need to be defined and explained for reason of clarity and the sense in which they are used here for the research study.

The term 'critical evaluation' in this study, refers to the process of studying the strengths and weaknesses of some aspects of the curriculum, undertaken for the research work. A critical evaluation of the curriculum requires systematic collection, processing and interpretation of all relevant information about an educational programme. (For a detailed discussion, see 2.11.)

Compulsory English Syllabus, in the context of the present study, refers to the English curriculum designed by the HSEB in 1996 to be studied as one of the core-courses as a compulsory paper for all learners studying at the +2 level. (For details, see Appendix III.)

Plus two (+2) level refers to the post-high school/pre-university level of education offered at the higher secondary schools in the Kingdom. A learner becomes eligible for this education after successful completion of SLC. On an average the learners belong to the age group 16+. (For a detailed discussion, see 1.4.).
1.6.7 Hypothesis

The assumptions stated in (1.6.3) lead to the formulation of the hypotheses of the present study as the follows:

- the +2 learners face problems in achieving the stated specific objectives in the curriculum and comprehending the textbook materials,

- the textbook materials in terms of their linguistic gradation and thematic comprehensibility are not suited to the learners,

- teacher training programmes in their present format are not equipped adequately to train teachers to cope with the demands made by the existing curriculum,

- the evaluation system at +2 level is not discriminatory and objective enough to assess and place the learners suitably.

1.6.8 The Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study is intended to evaluate the +2 English syllabus implemented in the Kingdom. As such, the different aspects of
curriculum have been chosen for a critical study which will reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen components. Four various component of the syllabus, viz., objectives, textbook materials, teacher-efficiency and teacher-training and evaluation system have been taken under the scope of this research. All the four components mentioned above are inter-dependent and influence each other. Objectives of a syllabus are determined by the philosophy of the society as well as the needs and requirements of its learners. Selection of textbook materials is made keeping in view the objectives of the syllabus as well as the proficiency level of the learners. Teacher training is basically imparted to enable the teachers to teach the prescribed materials effectively. Evaluation is done based on a set of objectives mentioned in the curriculum. There is a precarious balance in between and among the components of a syllabus. Even if there is a slight imbalance in one aspect, the whole system of curriculum is affected. The present research work, therefore, intends to enquire into all these components to discern their strength.

For the purpose of the present research, a sample population of 81 school teachers was undertaken. There are over 332 Higher Secondary Schools at present. One could have taken a
much larger sample population but such a task could be undertaken as a part of a huge survey and project lasting at least a couple of years.

The study is sensitive to the perceptions of teachers, as the main tool (questionnaire) for the research was administered to them. Teachers were used as the primary source for data collection, students curriculum experts and administrators' opinions were collected as secondary sources with a view to triangulate teachers' views.

As the study is based on teacher-oriented approach to the evaluation of the curriculum, the summary and conclusions reflect teachers' stance, their conviction and orientation.

1.6.9 Significance of the Present Research

The present research will prove useful to a number of people in various ways.

First of all, it will be useful to the practising teachers who can benefit themselves with the modifications and adjustments suggested for increasing the effectiveness of the curriculum. They can avail themselves of the methods suggested.
Secondly, the curriculum planners can get an insight from the findings of the present research and utilize them while designing any other curriculum in future.

Thirdly, the textbook writers may find some guidelines while producing materials for various levels of education at the school stage.

And finally, HSEB may find the research findings and recommendations helpful in its course of designing future curriculum and prescribing textbook materials for it. It also has implication for conducting examination and designing proper evaluation schemes.

1.6.10 Tools and Procedures Used in the Study

As the present study examines into objectives, textbook materials, teacher training and evaluation system of the +2 English curriculum through the practising teachers, a survey method (through questionnaire) was adopted to collect the opinions of the teachers. In order to validate teachers' views, informal interviews and discussions with students, curriculum experts and educational administrators were carried out. In
order to authenticate the findings, a fairly reasonable representative sample population from all the five development regions of the country was taken for the study. (For details see Chapter III, 3·4).

As the present study heavily relies on the data received from teachers, an elaborate questionnaire for the practising teachers was developed. In addition to this, teachers, students, curriculum designers and educational administrators were informally interviewed. The sampling of teacher population was done on the basis of stratified random sampling principles. Higher Secondary Schools representing different faculties (Science, Humanities, Management and Education) were randomly selected from the 5 developmental regions of the country. The data received from the field were quantitatively and qualitatively analysed and interpreted as of demanded by the nature of the specific question in the questionnaire.

1.6.11 Possible Findings

It is an assumption of the researcher that the study would reveal the lacunae and gaps in the curriculum in focus. It is further expected that the study would find out the serious
problems in the prescribed textbook materials faced by teachers and students engaged in teaching-learning activities. It would also suggest ways and measures to overcome these problems. Some further intuitions of the researcher indicate that the present research could come up with more practical suggestions on the teacher-training programmes, potential enough to enable the teachers successfully to teach the textbook materials at the +2 level in Nepal. Lastly, it is expected that the study would put forward a better, more efficient and practical evaluation system for the same.

1.6.12 Design of the Presentation

The study has been designed in five chapters. Each chapter starts with an introduction and ends with the summary of what has been stated before. This will help in providing links and coherence to the study.

The first chapter seeks to provide ELT situations followed by the introduction of +2 system in Nepal. In order to see the problem on a wider canvas, the educational struggle in the introduction of +2 system in the SAARC countries has been delineated. This follows the research problem of the present study.
The second chapter is devoted to theoretical underpinnings for the present evaluation study. It mainly deals with meaning and definition of syllabus, dimensions in curriculum development, models of curriculum evaluation and purpose of evaluation.

The third chapter deals with the methodological aspects of the present research. The formation of questionnaire, piloting of the questionnaire, modifications for the refinement of the questionnaire, sampling procedure, sample population, administration of the questionnaire for the main study, informal interviews and discussions with students, teachers, curriculum designers and educational administrators - are all described at length.

The fourth chapter is devoted to data presentation and interpretation. Each objective item of the questionnaire has been tabulated and presented in percentage form. The open-ended questions have been qualitatively presented and interpreted.

The fifth chapter concludes with research findings and modifications for the improvement of the present syllabus have been presented. The findings of the research reflect teachers' perceptions of the existing curriculum and accordingly ways to improve it have been recommended.
1.7 Summary of the Chapter

The introductory chapter seeks to present the prevailing ELT situation in the country. It further seeks to project the problem of +2 English curriculum, followed by the endeavours made at +2 level in the SAARC countries. Finally, the objectives of the present research are formulated, scope and rationale are dealt with, limitations of the study are recorded and design of the presentation is discussed. The next chapter seeks to present theoretical foundations so as to build a framework for the evaluation of the curriculum taken up for the research work.

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