

GENERATIVE AI AND ASSESSMENTS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Buddhi Laxmi Lakhe Shrestha* for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in English Language Education* presented on *23 December 2025*, entitled *Generative AI and Assessments: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education*.

APPROVED BY

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The emerging technology of AI is becoming popular in the educational sector, as it offers new ways to design, deliver, analyze, and evaluate learning tasks. So, this exploratory research design, under the topic *Generative AI and Assessments: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education*, investigates the opportunities and challenges brought by generative artificial intelligence (AI) in English language education, focusing on its impact on pedagogy and assessment. For this, I have applied van Dijk's Digital Divide Theory. This study reflects the views of six participants: three English language educators and three learners, all located within the Kathmandu Valley, as gathered through semi-structured interviews. To fulfill the purpose of how generative AI contributes to language learning, introduces pedagogical, ethical and assessment-related challenges within the context of the National Examination Board (NEB) assessment system in Nepal.

The findings show that generative AI facilitates personalized learning, improves grammatical accuracy, expands vocabulary, and enhances writing fluency through automated guidance, support and access to authentic language input. The study had its drawbacks; it also posed significant challenges, such as overreliance on AI-generated responses, a lack of critical and mechanical engagement, and misalignment with assessment standards that value learners' originality and contextual understanding. The

results of this study underscore the indispensable role of human educators in bridging the gap between AI outputs and academic expectations in language learning preparedness and assessment practice. In conclusion, the study suggested that in this rapidly evolving tech-savvy era, students have to be taught ethical and critical AI literacy in the language classroom to support fair, creative, contextually relevant learning and assessment practices.

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23 December 2025

शोधसार

अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा दर्शनशास्त्र को स्नातकोत्तर उपाधिका लागि बुद्धि लक्ष्मी लाखे श्रेष्ठको शोध प्रबन्धको शीर्षक "जेनेरेटिभ एआई र मूल्याङ्कन: अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा एक अन्वेषणात्मक अध्ययन", ८ पुष २०८२ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो।

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सह-प्रा. टिकाराम पौडेल, पीएचडी
शोध निर्देशक

कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता एआई सम्बन्धी उदीयमान प्रविधि शैक्षिक क्षेत्रमा तीव्र रूपमा लोकप्रिय हुँदै गएको छ, किनकि यसले सिकाइका कार्यहरू डिजाइन गर्ने, कार्यान्वयन गर्ने, विश्लेषण गर्ने तथा मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने नयाँ नयाँ उपायहरू प्रदान गर्दछ। यसै सन्दर्भमा, जेनेरेटिभ एआई र मूल्याङ्कन: अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा एक अन्वेषणात्मक अध्ययन शीर्षक अन्तर्गत गरिएको यस अन्वेषणात्मक अध्ययनले अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा जेनेरेटिभ कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ताले ल्याएका अवसर र चुनौतीहरूको अनुसन्धान गरेको छ, विशेष गरी शिक्षण पद्धति र मूल्याङ्कनमा यसको प्रभावलाई केन्द्रमा राख्दै यस अध्ययनका लागि भान डाइकको डिजिटल डिभाइड सिद्धान्त प्रयोग गरिएको छ। यस अध्ययनमा काठमाडौँ उपत्यकाभित्र रहेका छ जना सहभागीहरूको दृष्टिकोण समेटिएको छ, जसमा तीन जना अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षक र तीन जना विद्यार्थी रहेका छन्। तिनीहरूको विचार अर्ध-संरचित अन्तर्वार्तामार्फत सङ्कलन गरिएको हो। यस अध्ययनको उद्देश्य जेनेरेटिभ एआई ले भाषा सिकाइमा कसरी योगदान पुर्याउँछ भन्ने कुरा पहिचान गर्नुका साथै नेपालमा राष्ट्रिय परीक्षा बोर्ड को मूल्याङ्कन प्रणालीको सन्दर्भमा यसले ल्याएका शैक्षिक, नैतिक तथा मूल्याङ्कनसम्बन्धी चुनौतीहरू उजागर गर्नु हो।

यस अध्ययनका निष्कर्षहरूले जेनेरेटिभ एआई ले व्यक्तिगत सिकाइलाई सहज बनाउँछ, व्याकरणिक शुद्धता सुधार गर्छ, शब्दभण्डार विस्तार गर्छ र स्वचालित मार्गदर्शन, सहयोग तथा प्रामाणिक भाषिक सामग्रीमा पहुँच प्रदान गरेर लेखन दक्षता अभिवृद्धि गर्छ भन्ने देखाउँछन्। यद्यपि, यस अध्ययनका केही सीमाहरू पनि रहेका छन्। यसले एआई –निर्मित उत्तरहरूमाथि अत्यधिक निर्भरता, आलोचनात्मक सोचको अभाव, यान्त्रिक सहभागिता, तथा विद्यार्थीको मौलिकता र सन्दर्भगत बुझाइलाई महत्त्व दिने मूल्याङ्कन मापदण्डसँग असमञ्जस्य जस्ता चुनौतीहरू पनि उजागर गरेको छ। यस अध्ययनका नतिजाहरूले भाषा सिकाइको तयारी र मूल्याङ्कन अभ्यासमा एआई द्वारा उत्पन्न नतिजा र शैक्षिक अपेक्षाबीचको खाडल कम गर्न मानव शिक्षकको अपरिहार्य भूमिकालाई स्पष्ट रूपमा देखाएका छन्। निष्कर्षस्वरूप, यस तीव्र रूपमा विकसित हुँदै गएको प्रविधिमैत्री युगमा

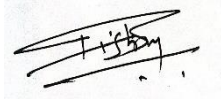
विद्यार्थीहरूलाई भाषा कक्षामा नैतिक र आलोचनात्मक एआई साक्षरताको शिक्षण आवश्यक रहेको सुझाव दिइएको छ, जसले न्यायपूर्ण, सिर्जनात्मक तथा सन्दर्भअनुकूल सिकाइ र मूल्याङ्कन अभ्यासलाई समर्थन गर्छ ।

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बुद्धि लक्ष्मी लाखे श्रेष्ठ
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

८ पुष २०८२

This dissertation, entitled *Generative AI and Assessments: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education* was presented by *Buddhi Laxmi Lakhe Shrestha* on 23 December 2025.

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I understand that my dissertation will be part of the permanent collection in the library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and that it has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree at any other university.

.....

Buddhi Laxmi Lakhe Shrestha
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23 December 2025

DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this dissertation to my adorable son, Beloved Shrestha, whose love and encouragement have been my greatest source of strength. I also dedicate it to my dear parents, whose unwavering support, patience, and blessings have guided me throughout this academic journey. Lastly, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all my gurus who have nurtured and inspired me from nursery to tertiary education.

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Buddhi Laxmi Lakhe Shrestha

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURE.....	vii
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
Balancing Tradition and Innovation in Education	1
Exploring the Role of AI in Language Education.....	2
Rationale of the Study.....	4
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions.....	7
Delimitation of the Study.....	8
Chapter Summary	8
CHAPTER II.....	9
LITERATURE REVIEW	9
What is Generative AI?.....	9
Debates on the Uses of Generative AI in Education.....	9
Challenges and Opportunities Brought by AI in English Language Education.....	10
GenAI, Curriculum, and Assessment Practices in Nepal.....	11
Theoretical Review	12
Policy Review	12
Empirical Review.....	14
Gap Analysis	16
Conceptual Framework.....	17
Chapter Summary	18
CHAPTER III	20
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	20

Research Philosophy.....	20
Ontology	21
Epistemology	21
Axiology	22
Research Paradigm.....	22
Explorative Research as Research Method.....	23
Exploration and Problem Identification.....	23
Data Collection and Initial Understanding	23
Conceptualization and Theorizing	23
Selection of Research Space and Participants	24
Data Collection Techniques and Process	24
Data Analysis	25
Quality Standard	26
Temporality, Sociality, and Spatiality	26
Trustworthiness	26
Ethical Consideration.....	27
Chapter Summary	27
CHAPTER IV	28
EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES: GENERATIVE AI IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND ASSESSMENT.....	28
Systematic Exploration of Generative AI: Insights and Data Handling	28
Personalised Learning through Generative AI.....	29
Pedagogical Efficiency and Balancing AI with Human Interface	32
Personalised Learning and the Digital Divide	36
Enhancing Educational Efficiency and Innovating Language Assessment through Generative AI.....	36
Fostering Engagement and Motivation through AI-Driven Learning Tools.....	44
Expanding Access to Diverse and Rich Language Resources.....	50
Chapter Summary	56
CHAPTER V	58

FACING THE FLIPSIDE: COPING WITH CHALLENGES OF GENERATIVE AI IN LANGUAGE LEARNING CONCERNING ASSESSMENT STANDARDS.....	58
Ethical Ambiguity and the Struggle for Authenticity	58
Contingency Dilemma: Balancing Simplicity with Endeavour.....	63
Loss of Cultural and Emotional Context	68
Digital Literacy and Awareness as an Adaptive Strategy.....	68
Equity and Policy Gaps.....	73
Seeking Human Guidance to Meet Assessment Standards in AI-Dominated Learning Spaces	73
Chapter Summary	79
CHAPTER VI.....	81
FINDINGS, REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION	81
Reconnecting with Research Purpose.....	81
Opportunities of Generative AI in Language Education and Assessment	81
Pedagogical Opportunities	82
Structural Barriers: Digital Divide and Assessment Misalignment	82
Challenges of Generative AI in Language Education and Assessment	83
Coping Strategies: Digital Literacy and Human Guidance.....	84
Integrating Findings with Theory	85
Conclusion	86
Implications of the Study	88
My Reflection	89
Chapter Summary	91
REFERENCES	93
APPENDIX-I	107

ABBREVIATIONS

CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
DNF	Digital Nepal Framework
ELE	English Language Education
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GenAI	Generative Artificial Intelligence
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information and Technology
LLMs	Large Language Models
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEB	National Examination Board
SESP	School Education Sector Plan
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
TU	Tribhuban University

LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework 18

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The introduction chapter provides a brief introduction to my research journey, drawing on my personal working experiences as a teacher. In this chapter, I provide a synopsis of the study's background to establish a foundation for the research. I discuss the rationale behind choosing the particular topic, highlighting the statement of the problem, and outlining the purpose and research questions that guide the exploration. I also clarify the delimitation of the study, along with a chapter summary to connect the chapter with subsequent sections of the dissertation paper.

Balancing Tradition and Innovation in Education

I still remember the incident when I was in ninth grade, one of my teachers said never to be satisfied with acquiring knowledge; if you were satisfied, you would be like the water of a pond. So, from that very moment, I always wanted to deal with new technologies that were invented in the circumstances of human life. I am teaching at one of the reputable schools in Bhaktapur District, Gyansudha Secondary School (pseudonym). On Teachers' Day, some learners were performing on stage, while some teachers were trying to make the surroundings comfortable by maintaining silence so that the audience could be entertained. While involved in the same task, I was roaming around the school premises and saw that two learners were busy playing on their mobile phones. Although learners were permitted to carry mobile phones in the educational institution for educational purposes, they were not allowed to use ICT devices unnecessarily.

This incident, which occurred on my school premises, prompted me to reflect more deeply on digital technology, particularly ChatGPT and Google Translate, in the everyday learning practices of students. So, I grabbed their cellphones and called them to talk. They were learners in grade ten, and I, as their class teacher, asked them what they were doing. They answered my questions; they attempted to translate one of the folk Nepali songs into English using Google translation tools and searched for rhythmic words to manage the song properly. I was happy to hear those sounds; nevertheless, I suggested that they should not use mobile devices unnecessarily in educational institutions, as these

behaviors might impact their juniors as well as co-learners. I found that learners unknowingly engaged in a form of AI-assisted language; therefore, if we guide them well, they could enhance their English skills and prepare for the assessment criteria that test reading, writing, and translation abilities. This typical incident sparked the realization that if students were already exploring basic digital tools like Google Translate for their creative purposes, they would soon be able to encounter more advanced tools such as ChatGPT or Gemini, which pose a greater challenge to academic honesty and assessment integrity.

I also emphasized maintaining boundaries and guidelines to ensure a favorable learning environment for all students. As I also misinterpreted them, there is a high probability that other learners will approach the same conclusion. Dealing with emerging technologies will facilitate us if we become good servants of them. Therefore, I suggested to my students that embracing new technologies requires a balance between innovation and responsibility. Along with this, they also need to play a pivotal role in guiding their junior and senior learners towards responsible usage (Gorgoni & Gianni, 2021). However, the learners' use of AI in unsupervised and informal settings highlighted the urgent need for digital literacy and ethical considerations in institutions that follow the assessment framework. Then, learners went outside the staffroom with gratitude. As I was returning home, some English proverbs came to mind as I thought about those two learners: “The tongue is mightier than the sword.”

Exploring the Role of AI in Language Education

Consistent with the same issue, I also talked with them the next day. Since students in grade ten were regular with their assignments, most often their writing seemed academic as well. On the other hand, they spontaneously delivered their presentation by adding new vocabulary, so I asked them about it. They gave me a genuine answer that a new emerging technology, ChatGPT, an AI tool, helped them. They were busy discussing the facilities of AI, which enhanced accessibility, improved language assessment, introduced interactive language practices, and was user-friendly, as it assisted with grammar, essay writing, poetry writing, and mathematical problems. As a whole, it empowers learners to achieve their goals (Dahal, 2024). These tools can support learners

as they work on writing comprehensive tasks that demand clarity, accuracy, and creativity to meet the English language requirements of assessment criteria.

Continuing with the same, I also began to question and search for AI alignment. Relating to its conflicts, the objectives and expectations set by the framework and assessment rubrics of standardized exams. I was impressed by the growing integration of generative artificial intelligence in various fields, including universities and other academic institutions. Beyond these, all the integration of AI in English education has become a topic of increasing interest and research in the evolving twenty-first century (Baidoo-Anu & Ansah, 2023). AI technology provides new tools and methods to enhance teaching and learning, with the potential to significantly transform the education sector (Rusmiyanto et al., 2023). I became interested in this research topic due to its potential applications in education, particularly in language learning. I found significant conflict while addressing the effectiveness and ethical implications of applying generative AI in language learning. AI models may sometimes provide the proper or suitable replies, leading to language learning problems or misunderstandings (Yang et al., 2020). While using AI, teachers and learners have to be attentive, as AI models can present unsuitable responses which may cause misunderstanding in language learning. While some studies emphasize the positive benefits, Özdere (2023) highlighted the advantages of AI in providing personalized instruction, feedback, and focused language practice. It is very crucial to understand the challenges and possible hindrances that fall under using AI, and navigating ways of using it. The assessment system in Nepal is particularly focused on students' grammar, originality, and creativity. So, to maintain a healthy balance, users of AI have to be very careful and responsible towards mindful behaviours for avoiding overreliance on it.

In the current time, we can see how growing is the use of technology, these growing technological tools made me think about exploring the possible uses of these tools in language teaching. The technological tools, especially the emerging AI tools, have become an area of interest for me. I was motivated to know how AI-generated content can be personalized for language teaching. As I was much concerned about exploring AI-related topics, I decided to explore the complexities of generative AI in the context of language learning in the context of Nepal. In this support, Rusmiyanto et al.

(2023) also stated that there are some positive and negative aspects of using AI tools in language teaching. From this, Peng and Spector (2019) also claimed that AI offers the possibility of individualized and adaptable learning experiences that respond to the different demands of learners. However, some of the significant concerns about data privacy and making unbiased and ethical decisions in AI-generated material remain unexplored. Rusmiyanto et al. (2023) drew attention to the potential benefits of AI, the problems associated with its application in this setting, and the importance of responsible and ethical use. It emphasized the need to approach AI applications ethically and responsibly, underscoring the importance of using them attentively and with a principled approach to achieve positive outcomes while mitigating risks and adverse effects. Summative assessments require learners' creativity, while the improper use of AI tools could lead to academic dishonesty. It also hinders learners' ability to explore independently in the summative assessments. It directly affects learners' learning under the assessment framework, as the National Curriculum Framework for School Education addresses the assessment and evaluation policy with an emphasis on measuring students' true understanding rather than simple memorization of content (Curriculum Development Centre [CDC], 2007). Additionally, recent NEB reforms, such as the Standardized Exam System for Fairness and Development, have been implemented. Generative AI tools threaten these policy goals, which include the loss of learners' original aspects of assessment. Thus, for aligning educational policy, assessment design must include mechanisms that enable students to engage in their own authorship (e.g., oral components, viva, in-class tasks), a clear policy around AI use, and explicit instructions or academic integrity statements.

Rationale of the Study

The advanced technology, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), has great potential to change or reshape the educational sector, particularly in language learning. The reasons of its highlight are that GenAI mainly offers a dynamic and interactive platform for teaching and learning. In this support, Ma et al. (2024) stressed that the recent outspread technology directly contributes for changing teaching and learning mechanisms. However, I observed that the integration of AI in our teaching and learning has a lot of significance. AI really works as a means rather than broadly reiterating.

Similarly, in the context of the assessment, generative AI has not been explored yet, though AI tools are influencing the preparation of students and their performance. In language education, AI can offer innovative solutions to mitigate challenging approaches and methods that are pursued simultaneously (Huang et al., 2021). Moreover, as learners' originality and writing accuracy are more emphasized by assessments. So, the exploration of how GenAI intersects with these expectations becomes highly relevant for Nepali learners and teachers.

Additionally, GenAI simplifies rigid language and translates that language too. It facilitates communication across many different languages and helps foster a bilingual society (Sun et al., 2022). Despite global developments, there is limited research in Nepal on how generative AI aligns or conflicts with the present assessment criteria. At the same time, academic bodies are increasingly experimenting with AI tools related to the fairness and reliability of summative assessments, which are central to the assessment evaluation policies (Shrestha & Gautam, 2022). Nepal still lacks empirical evidence that can inform national examination practices, school-level regulations, and teacher training guidelines. Therefore, this study becomes important for shaping future policy decisions. This research addresses identified gaps in the current literature and provides insights that might impact the future of educational practices (Karakas, 2023).

This research explores the theoretical and practical gap. Theoretically, it enriches the emerging discourse on AI in education by examining its interaction with assessment frameworks in a developing country context (Kumar, 2023). Practically, it offers guidance to standardize the examination system, policymakers, curriculum designers, and school administrators for the responsible integration into assessment and instructional practices. In terms of pedagogy, Zou (2023) also claimed that the operational guideline of GenAI provides a kind of information to the language teachers about opportunities and risks of using AI. He also intends to support in preparing curriculum developers and school administrators. This may support achieving the educational goal set by the Ministry of Education in general and teachers in particular. In this support, Bhattarai (2024) predicted that scaffolding assessment techniques with the help of AI integration make teaching and learning more contextual in the context of Nepal.

Based on the above discussion, it seems crucial for us as the entire world has been using this feature of AI in language education for the future. Similarly, AbuSahyon et al. (2023) also support that language learning becomes more efficient and enjoyable, especially in a language teaching context. The reasons for its preference, as I observed is that it helps teachers to find and search for ethical ways and effective manners. I believe that without compromising originality and fair assessment, the ethical practice will be seen. With the help of exploratory research methods, the findings of this research contribute to the body of knowledge on how generative AI in education and the broader field of research methodology can be used.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Akgun and Greenhow (2022), one thing seems very clear: AI affects English language education and assessment. It directly contributes to the broader discourse on integrating emerging technologies responsibly in language teaching. They also presented that AI tools provide evidence-based recommendations for curriculum developers.

Statement of the Problem

The discourse of using AI seems to be one of the most noticeable areas of concern in the present time. I believe that exploring the alignment between education and technology is one of the relevant research invitations in the present time. Therefore, I started writing on a topic of my interest. But due to a lack of knowledge about procedures to brush up on papers, the unregulated adoption of AI tools posed a significant challenge to the authenticity and integrity of language assessment. In this support, Pency (2023) said that GenAI helps students get accessed for individualized learning experiences. These all help them align with students' individual learning skills and make learning more friendly. The above discussion also makes clear that the idea that although AI tools are meant to ease learning. Using AI tools helps them be creative and think critically in the language classroom. This would be a massive loss for the human generation if we did not know how to rely on these tools correctly and in what manner. This small experience mirrors what many learners may also be facing in benefiting from AI, which unintentionally compromises their independent abilities.

In a similar context, ethical considerations and concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated content need to be explored. In this context, Baidoo-Anu

and Ansah (2023) presented their finding that issues of data privacy and security are also significant challenges that have been seen in the AI-generated texts. Teachers, however, need to adapt their teaching methodologies and pedagogical strategies effectively while using them in their classroom. CDC (2007) emphasizes continuous and formative assessment practices, which promote learner integrity and genuine student work before summative assessments.

There are several research studies, including Heffernan and Heffernan (2014), who noted that the automated systems can be possible if not carefully regulated, the reliability of high-stakes testing. In contrast, Kasneci et al. (2023) demonstrated that AI-generated texts risk masking learners' actual linguistic competence. Despite global interest in using AI for individualized learning, there is still a limited understanding of how these advantages and challenges unfold in real classroom settings. Therefore, this study seems important to be conducted to compare the complex interaction between generative AI and English language assessment. It is also important to specify the assessment framework to identify risks and responsible ways forward in the field of teaching and learning. The excessive trends in using AI to provide individualized learning experiences and adaptable approaches. There is a notable lack of thorough knowledge of how these potentialities and difficulties appear in human written context. The concern of exploring how AI invites challenges and opportunities in education has a lot of rationale to explore them.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the potential opportunities and challenges presented by GenAI in language education, with a focus on its impact on assessment practices. The study further examined learners' use of GenAI in language learning and assessment, associated ethical and pedagogical issues, and possible mitigation strategies.

Research Questions

To fulfil this purpose, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do English language learners explore generative AI to enhance language learning and assessment performance?
2. How does learners' use of GenAI influence assessment practices, including ethical and pedagogical challenges and mitigation strategies?

Delimitation of the Study

Generative AI is a broad term to explore. This study did not discuss any statistics related to educators in Nepal. The research was conducted with Grade 11 and 12 (secondary level) students and teachers under the assessment framework from community-based schools in the Kathmandu Valley, which is the only location reference included intentionally in this section. Confining the research to these educational levels provides in-depth insights into the challenges and opportunities encountered by advanced proficiency learners. Since it is unfeasible to study every aspect of generative AI and analyze every profession, this study didn't examine any other profession. The study focuses on how GenAI influences ELE within the standardized assessments framework in Nepal. Acknowledging that technology and its application were evolving rapidly, this study also addressed the implications of GenAI tools concerning curricula and assessment practices. The study examined recent progress in the field of generative AI in language education. By narrowing the scope to assessments, this research aimed to explore the intersection between GenAI use and standardized testing in English language classrooms in Nepal. This study mainly explored the recent studies conducted in the field of AI in education to provide insights into emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the field of education, especially in language teaching and learning.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the overall introduction of this study. Bringing background information of the study, this chapter introduced how generative AI benefits and challenges. While there, it also raised a major concern with the help of a problem statement. In the problem statement, the concerns about its ethical implications were discussed. It explored personal experiences with AI tools and examined conflicting views on AI and its impact on language learning. This chapter's research questions emphasized opportunities, challenges, and measures to mitigate the integration of AI. Likewise, the significance of the study lies in contributing insights for educators, policymakers, and technology developers. The chapter also underscored the specific focus assessments, examining how generative AI tools intersect with standardized English language assessment practices in Nepal.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter primarily addressed the literature relevant to the study, which formed the foundation of this research (Novikov & Novikov, 2012). The literature review is a statement and summary of a relevant topic (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009). The chapter began with a thematic review, where the concept related to the theme of study and basic concepts were discussed. For this, I went through various books, theses, journals, blogs, and articles to gather relevant materials for my research. I also explored relevant theories used in those learning materials for the theoretical review. Similarly, I reviewed some of the policies related to generative AI, focusing on how AI is applied to assessments. Finally, the chapter concluded by identifying a research gap, followed by a conceptual framework for the study.

What is Generative AI?

GenAI is characterized as associative automation, a technology that uses deep learning models to produce human-like material in response to complex and varied queries. (Michel et al., 2023). The system of artificial intelligence is referred to as "Generative AI" and can produce new material, data, or information (Fui-Hoon et al., 2023). In general, AI is text-based systems, such as Large Language Models (LLMs), that generate human-like text for learning. This technology embeds customized information and activities which respond to the requirements of individual learners and increase engagement (FitzGerald et al., 2018). Generative AI in language education makes learning flexible and adaptable, much like a customized tutor. AI makes the study more interesting with its relevant features. One of the areas is language translation technologies, which helps to break down language barriers and promote successful communication in a classroom context.

Debates on the Uses of Generative AI in Education

In a world of challenges and modern discoveries, the use of generative AI in education has been a topic of debate. In this line, Cope et al. (2021) claimed that generative AI has several potential to speed up language learning. It mainly accepts the

needs of individual students because it provides personalized learning experiences. So that their engagement increases for their study. On the contrary, some experts have claimed that AI tools cannot replace human knowledge and should be applied as a supplement to enhance the learning experience (Dwivedi et al., 2023). These global debates reflect broader questions about balancing technological efficiency with human pedagogical judgment. There is no doubt that our educational classrooms are not free from this pressure, as we are well experienced with diverse classrooms and traditional methods of teaching that remain important.

Kyoungwon et al. (2021) also conducted an in-depth study to explore the possible impact of AI on learners. They mainly focused on how their novelty, ambiguity and the practicality issues influence learning while using AI. They believed that teachers may encounter these issues due to innovative technology and highlighted the concerns in addressing them. Similarly, Yu and Guo (2023) also argue that generative AI has the potential to improve educational outcomes with the help of analyzing data-based learning. It also offers effective strategies. However, these positive discussions are not enough because the context-specific evidence remains limited. Concerning language learning and assessment seems also to be separated here. As a result, it highlighted the need for local research to understand how these debates are introduced into Nepali English classrooms.

Challenges and Opportunities Brought by AI in English Language Education

GenAI generates powerful machine learning models from new data to create original content, incorporating different learning materials like text, audio, code, images, imitations, and video (Martínez-Martín et al., 2024). AI could generate and predict learning patterns based on sequences. As mentioned above, the robust data base, it can also create genuine, human-like content and high-quality data in teaching and learning. These features of AI also offer opportunities for personalized learning. It also offers resources and adaptive instructional support in teaching and learning.

Ethical Concerns Associated with Generative AI

In the case of using GenAI, ethical issues come along with this; as ethical concerns are gaining prominence, it is necessary to discuss the concerns related to Generative AI separately. Monib et al. (2024) argued that the infusion of AI in ELE

presents notable challenges, such as the risk of inequalities in access to technology, privacy concerns because of sensitive data collection, and inadequate preparation for integrating AI. Moreover, the appropriateness and balance between ethical data use and the reliability of GenAI content raised concerns about upholding high standards in education materials. In this regard, Lim et al. (2023) presented those ethical concerns in AI, such as data privacy, the possibility of AI replacing human teachers and biases inherent in the algorithm of generative AI in the context of Nepal and beyond.

GenAI, Curriculum, and Assessment Practices in Nepal

In the current time, the digital platform seems much preferred. It shows that the time is full of technology based. Curriculum and assessment practices are also influenced because of AI. The conduct of traditional, paper-based assessments that emphasizes grammar, comprehension, and writing skills (CDC, 2019) becomes a cornerstone of the examination process. According to assessment practice guidelines, learners' originality and accuracy are most essential. However, learners can easily use AI learning tools to generate answers in a short time, and it is being challenged nowadays. But with the help of AI tools, learners can generate well-structured, effective, and accurate responses instantly. While these tools support language development (FitzGerald et al., 2018), they also raise concerns about originality, academic integrity, and fairness in evaluating student performance. The reason why it is crucial to identify AI-assisted language, along with the inclusion of AI-detection tools or clear guidelines, is paramount.

Furthermore, language educators face challenges in identifying AI-generated content, especially in subjective tasks, due to a lack of insight into AI (Dwivedi et al., 2023). The CDC promotes digital literacy and critical thinking skills (CDC, 2019, pp. 22–23); however, the assessment system in Nepal has not yet incorporated AI competencies and guidelines. This misalignment calls for urgent updates to policy and practice. Clear regulations on the ethical application of AI, the integration of AI literacy into curricula, and reforms in assessment strategies, such as AI-inclusive or blended models, are essential, as they are a demand of this technological era. As a result, there will be higher chances of falling behind in addressing the realities of AI-assisted learning.

Theoretical Review

In the research, theories provide the foundation for the study and make meaning-making comprehensive and relevant. For the theoretical review, I examined a theory by the renowned scholar van Dijk (2006) on the Digital Divide. This theory emphasizes a valuable framework for analyzing the role of technology in English language education. By categorizing the digital divide into four key dimensions, access, skills, motivation, and usage of digital tools, van Dijk conceptualized that digital inequality brings disparities.

In which motivational divide means the differences in willingness to use digital tools. Access or material divide addressed about inequality in the availability of devices and internet connectivity. Whereas the skill divides show variations in digital literacy and the ability to use tools effectively. The final divide is usage, which shows the application of technology in teaching and learning. All four of the dimensions play a pivotal role in understanding the effectiveness of technology in education. Thus, its impact depends on availability and how the technology is understood, adopted, and implemented in a learning environment. This theory also offers insights into how the use of technology differed according to access and skills within the curricula and assessments. Van Dijk's theory acts as a guiding "lens" for the qualitative data collection and analysis in this study. Moreover, the theory also helped to interpret perspectives of technological use, challenges and opportunities in English education.

Policy Review

Information Technology (IT) policy (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2000) acknowledged ICT as a critical driver for the socio-economic development of Nepal, envisioning its role in promoting efficient government services, education, healthcare, and corporate growth. Likewise, the ICT Policy 2015 is evaluated in terms of its strategies and objectives to enhance infrastructure, connectivity, and access to ICT in educational institutions (MoE, 2015). School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) emphasises ICT integration in education. It highlighted the significance of providing online education using ICT for enhancing interactive and digital skills. This helps boost the overall quality of education. The strategy of adopting technology is a requirement for preparing the future workforce. It equips students with the tools needed to compete in an

increasingly digitalized society. Similarly, the draft Digital Nepal Framework (DNF) 2.0 (Ministry of Communications and Information Technology [MoCIT], 2025a) positions artificial intelligence, including generative AI, as a key element of Nepal's digital transformation strategy under the FAST framework. The policy identified Education is as a priority sector where AI is expected to support teaching and learning through personalized instruction and digital learning approaches. The framework places strong emphasis on Skills and Digital Literacy. This is particularly relevant to assessment practices in English language education, as teachers and learners need to use GenAI responsibly.

Nepal's National AI Policy (approved August 2025) establishes a legal and regulatory framework to guide the ethical, secure, and inclusive use of AI across the education sector. It emphasizes skills development, research and innovation, public-private partnerships, and infrastructure of AI centres and national indices (MoCIT, 2025b). Additionally, the School Education Sector Plan (SESP) 2022–2032 represents Nepal's long-term roadmap for improving access, quality, and equity in school education. It includes ICT integration, teacher training for digital tools, and plans for digital learning materials, reflecting a broader commitment to technology-enabled education (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology [MoEST], 2022).

I reviewed the major education and technology policy documents of Nepal. I read them carefully and in detail. These documents include the IT Policy 2000, the ICT Policy 2015, DNF 2.0, the National AI Policy 2025, the SESP 2022–2032, and the SSDP 2016–2023. The IT Policy 2000 talks mainly about training. It focuses on building skilled manpower in the IT sector. One clause supports local and international IT training. Another clause asks schools to include computer education in their curricula. These points show that the policy supports digital learning. They also help prepare students for technology-based education. The ICT Policy 2015 strongly supports the use of ICT in education. It encourages schools to use technology in teaching and learning. It highlights the role of digital tools in improving education. The SSDP 2016–2023 focuses on student assessment.

It promotes continuous assessment in classrooms. It also supports regular evaluation of students' learning. This policy also suggests using technology. Technology

is recommended for managing educational data. The EMIS system supports this idea. It works as a student tracking system. It provides reliable and organized education data. However, while reviewing all these policies, I noticed a major issue. A critical review of these policy documents reveals a significant gap in addressing generative artificial intelligence within the context of education. Particularly in relation to assessment practices in English language education. Existing policies strongly promote ICT integration, digital skills, and technology-supported learning, but they remain largely silent on the pedagogical and assessment implications of generative AI tools. The reviewed policies didn't provide clear guidance on how AI-generated outputs should be addressed in classroom assessments. The policy didn't address how academic integrity can be maintained, and how students' authentic language abilities can be evaluated in AI-mediated learning environments. This absence of explicit policy direction suggests a lag in responding to emerging global developments in educational technology. Consequently, there is a pressing need for policy-informed research. This explores how generative AI is currently influencing assessment practices and how educators are addressing these challenges in English language education.

Empirical Review

Among the research carried out so far, no study has been conducted on the intersection of AI and assessment relating to its potential benefits and drawbacks in language education. So, it has made the adequate availability of the literature difficult. Regarding this study, an attempt has been made to elucidate its objectives, research method, tools, and findings, which are reviewed and presented below.

Chiu (2023) stated, "Generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Midjourney impact four key domains viz learning, teaching, assessment, and administration—and can provide real-time, personalised feedback to learners" (p. 5). This paper highlighted the potential of AI in enhancing assessment practices and learner performance in language education. Likewise, Zou (2023) emphasised the practical implementation of AI tools in a diverse language-learning environment. Despite the progress and advances in AI, current literature focuses on its ethical considerations. Research studies (Borgesius, 2025) discussed issues related to data privacy and argued about algorithmic bias and the transparency of AI-generated content. His study also stressed the need for responsible AI

practices in the educational sector. In parallel, Nguyen et al. (2023) advocated for the implementation of AI in language education. He underlined the need for ethical guidelines for teachers. Borgesius (2025) further argued that for effective insights and ethical safeguards AI tool in language assessment is paramount. On the other hand, Burgess (2023) shared similar thoughts on the ethical implications of using AI in language assessment, providing effective insights and solutions.

Moving ahead, the Huang (2023), explored the various ways of keeping things private and secure when using AI-integrated intelligent computers. The paper addressed that one of the crucial ethical strategies was to prioritize privacy and make it protective. This strategy referred to ensuring that personal information needed to be kept safe and not collecting more data than necessary (Khan, 2024). It was like having a solid lock system on a diary to keep personal thoughts safe. Obtaining permission from stakeholders before utilizing intelligent programs that benefit people. It emphasized seeking permission to ensure it was okay to share something with a circle of friends before sharing a secret with them. This way, everyone involved knew what was happening, and their privacy was respected. Similarly, Disterer (2013) has expressed similar views on the anonymization and pseudonymization of data with unique identifiers, which allows for reporting on overall trends without revealing individual performance, as another ethical strategy.

Aligning with this, the following key areas or strategies discussed by Rawls (2017) focused on fairly treating everyone when using innovative programs in language learning education. Regardless of their origin or circumstances, ethical standards emphasized the importance of ensuring everyone had an equal opportunity to benefit (Rawls, 2017). It was like ensuring everyone in a game had the same rules and opportunities to win. This study also underscored the need for open and transparent work of these programs, ensuring they did not favor one group over another. Everyone should have had a fair opportunity to access the key to success in language education with the help of generative AI.

Our insight regarding recent literature on opportunities and challenges of integrating AI in language education has become broad. This research study assisted in filling a noticeable gap during synthesis through a comprehensible exploration of

different materials. It identified challenges and, at the same time, offered valuable insights to students and teachers. The global empirical data of this study highlighted strong potential and concerns. Similarly, the study also examines ways of addressing issues specifically applicable within the Nepali assessment framework. Therefore, the study becomes important as it connects international concerns through global studies on AI with real instructional situations faced by language educators and learners.

Gap Analysis

My review of previous existing studies, which include theoretical, empirical, and policy reviews, provided me a strong foundation for identifying a notable gap (Baako et al., 2022). We are not unaware of the fact that AI-driven tools are enhancing language learning. However, disparities in four key dimensions access, skills, usage, and motivation persist. Van Dijk's theory drew attention to digital skills, the meaningful use of technology, the availability of devices, and motivational access, which were paramount (van Dijk, 2006). I observed that the disparities are particularly significant for students reading in grades eleven and twelve. They may lack the resources or guidance to utilize generative AI for language learning and assessment preparation effectively.

Although I acknowledged that dealing with emerging technologies held the potential for enhancing language education, only a few studies demonstrate how generative AI can be effectively integrated into classroom practices or theoretical frameworks for language education (Rawls, 2017). There are still very few studies on AI use in education. We do not fully know how teachers use AI tools. We also know little about how students use them. There is also a problem of inequality. Socio-economic gaps affect access to AI tools. Digital divides also limit effective use. Because of this, many learners and teachers cannot benefit equally. This gap shows the need for deeper research. More studies are required to reduce this divide in AI use. When used properly, Generative AI can help students. It improves their readiness for learning. With this support, Nguyen et al. (2023) also stressed that AI supports better assessment performance in English learning

The policy review shows a gap between technological development and education policy in Nepal. Earlier policies, such as the IT Policy 2000, ICT Policy 2015, and SSDP 2016–2023, focus on ICT access and assessment practices but do not address artificial

intelligence. Recent policies, including the Digital Nepal Framework 2.0, the National AI Policy 2025, and the SESP 2022–2032, recognize AI at a general level. These policies provide little guidance on the use of generative AI in classroom assessment. As a result, teachers lack clear direction on managing AI-assisted writing, assessment validity, and academic integrity in English language education.

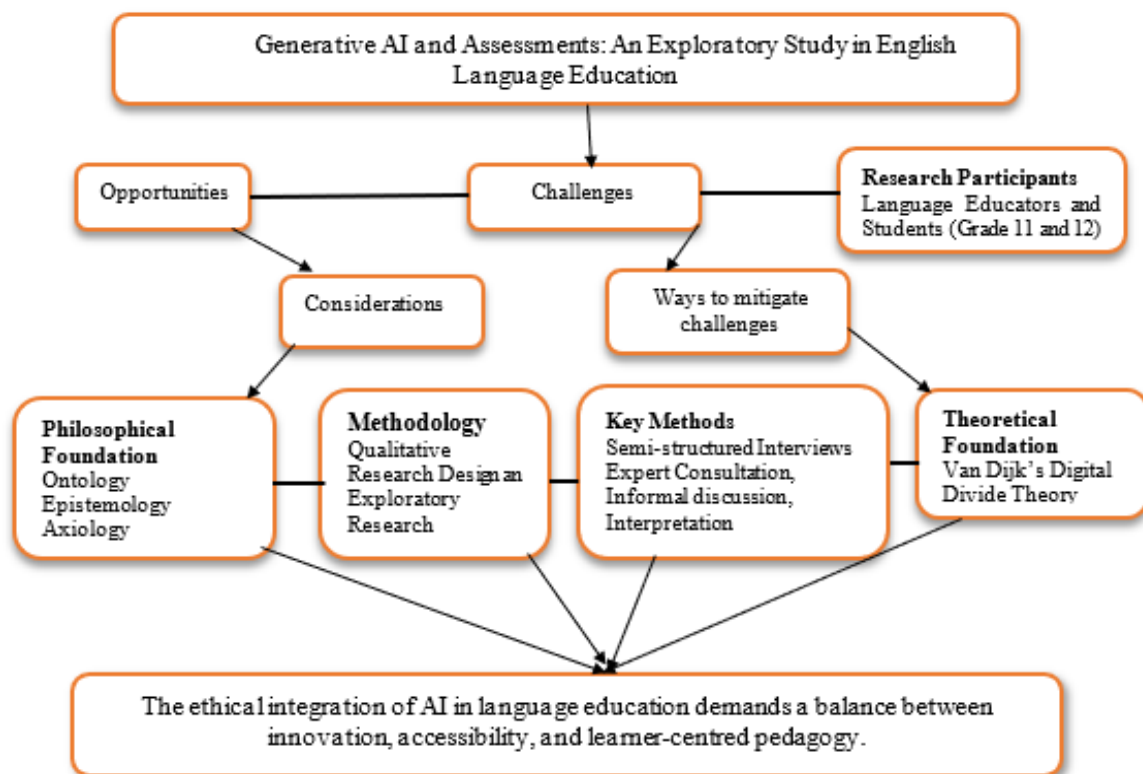
It highlights the need to align education policies with current technological changes. The absence of provisions for AI-based assessment practices, such as adaptive testing, speech evaluation, etc., demonstrates a gap which examines how learners' use of generative AI challenges or facilitates traditional assessment practices. Besides, teachers are not adequately trained in advanced technology. There remain gaps in ethical and pedagogical guidelines for using AI. This gap advocated for the urgent need for amendments in the educational policies of Nepal to align with new trends. This helps to access innovative tools that accelerate learning and assessment. This highlights the urgent need for inclusive, updated policies that bridge digital disparities and promote the ethical and effective use of AI in language assessment.

Empirical studies in this research pointed out the need for practical implementation, technological efficacy and ethical considerations. This assists in the scaffolding of language learning through AI. Likewise, van Dijk's Digital Divide Theory emphasized the importance of addressing disparities in motivation, access, skills, and usage, which can impact learners' ability to utilize AI. The mentioned gap highlights the need to develop actionable guidelines, pedagogical strategies and assessment-related support for the effective implementation of AI in language education and assessments.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework guided me toward my goal based on the research problem and its question. The framework encompasses the opportunities and challenges presented by generative AI in language education, as well as considerations and strategies for mitigating these challenges. I used this framework to assist me throughout my research journey.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



The theories and the model of my qualitative research help me to understand and evaluate the stories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In this study, the stories, experiences and concepts of participants are linked to the Digital Divide theory, which acts as the main interpretive lens. I interpreted the stories obtained from the qualitative research method. Digital divide as a guiding theory and the lens that impacts language learning outcomes, I look at issues of access, skills, motivation, and the use of AI tools. The framework presents how opportunities, challenges, considerations, and ways to mitigate them are connected within it. This framework helped my research take a more effective goal-based approach.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presents a comprehensive literature review that explores themes such as generative AI, debates on the applications of generative AI in education, and the challenges and opportunities presented by AI in language education. The theoretical

review aligned with van Dijk's Digital Theory, which provided the lenses to gain insight into the impact of AI in education. An empirical study highlighted ethical considerations and noticeable insights for its learners and educators. The chapter also discussed policy review, emphasizing the shaping of contemporary education to inform amendments in Nepal's educational policies. It concluded with a conceptual framework that links digital divide theory to this qualitative interpretive research design, investigating the opportunities and challenges in language education.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology section outlines the research philosophy, research paradigms, research design, methods and approaches (Porta & Keating, 2008). Operating an exploratory research design, the study employed a qualitative approach, and I conducted in-depth interviews. Interviews with teachers and students provided qualitative insights. Thematic analysis was applied to collect in-depth qualitative data. Similarly, to maintain the ethical standards of the research, I described how the research was carried out, including the data collection tools and sites. The integrated findings comprehensively explore the opportunities and challenges presented by generative AI in language education.

Research Philosophy

The philosophical understanding of the researcher guided the research (Mwita, 2025). This research adopted a pragmatic research philosophy by bridging theoretical insights with practical applications in the dynamic field of AI in language education (Ilomäki & Lakkala, 2018). Different people have different assumptions regarding various topics, and the same applies to AI. We can view the reality of AI in education from different perspectives, including ontology, epistemology, and axiology. The assessment system of Nepal predominantly follows a traditional exam-oriented curriculum. However, the growing technological era demands a pragmatic approach for addressing the influence of AI and digital technology in education; therefore, this study focused on practical solutions that support the real needs of teachers and learners. The study also underscored the value aspect (axiology) that valued fair, accessible, and responsible use of AI is necessary for the education system. The philosophy of students' learning and the ways of responding to assessment patterns in English education support a critical examination of how curriculum and evaluation methods align or fail to align with contemporary digital learning practices. Hence, this research informed methodological decisions and highlighted the need for more adaptive and inclusive educational policies in Nepal that match the digital learning environment.

Ontology

Ontology is the explicit and systematic arrangement of concepts within a certain realm, including defining words and their connections (Gruber, 1993). My research relies on the notion that there is no single reality about generative AI in language education. Ontology plays a crucial role in the study of GenAI in language education by structuring essential concepts, such as natural language processing and machine learning. According to Gruber (1993), English Language learning provides a dynamic framework for the opportunities and challenges presented by AI. Ontology guides the exploration to gain a deeper understanding of how AI integration influences language education. Additionally, it acknowledged that these realities were subject to evolution due to the impact of AI technologies. Instead of focusing only on definitions, this study uses ontology to understand how participants' experiences shape their own realities of using AI. AI advancements reshaped traditional practices and introduced modern techniques in language education (Huang, 2023). In the context of Nepal's assessments, this belief is useful because it demonstrates that language learning is not a one-size-fits-all approach. AI may change how students prepare for and respond to English exams. As a result, what we consider 'good' language performance may also shift, depending on how students and teachers use AI tools in different schools. The truth and reality changed with time, context, situation, and individual. My ontological beliefs guided this study by accepting multiple truths and allowing participants to express their own perspectives, and I believe there is enough room on my research agenda for the participants to express their subjectivity.

Epistemology

The philosophy that deals with the branch of knowledge of nature, origin, and scope is epistemology (Audi, 1998). It is a process of acquiring knowledge and meaning-making through the same thing, which might differ according to people's perceptions. It concerns the methods and procedures involved in acquiring knowledge, as well as the criteria that qualify as knowledge (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Thorough interaction between the researcher and participants is necessary for this process; solidarity with participants may help obtain a subjective reality, which reflects an interpretivist epistemological stance (Hopwood & Edwards, 2017). My epistemology is concerned

with how people acquire knowledge and understand GenAI in ELE through different perspectives.

This study used a qualitative approach. It aimed to understand how AI tools work in real learning contexts. The study explored the views of learners. It also explored the experiences of educators. Both groups shared how they use and understand Generative AI. Technology can influence assessment. It can change what students learn. It can also change how they learn, especially for standardized exams. This approach helped the study explore one key issue. It examined how AI shapes language learning. It also looked at how AI supports an insight-based assessment framework. This approach also helped explore how knowledge is shaped by the use of AI tools when preparing for standardized exams, where technology may influence what students learn and how they learn it.

Axiology

Axiology is the branch of philosophy and the principle of ethics that deals with the study of values where people and social groups shape, modify, and interpret the world in which they exist (Wiles, 2013). This study examined the positive opportunities and challenges associated with integrating generative AI in language learning, with a focus on its impact on understanding. I valued participants' belief systems in various contexts and situations related to my study, as the study was based on the diverse experiences that contributed to constructing reality (Kesberg & Keller, 2018). This is especially important in understanding how learners and teachers perceive fairness, authenticity, and responsibility when AI tools are used in preparing for assessments. I also applied reflexivity by acknowledging how my own background, academic experience, and personal values could shape the way I collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data. In this study, I precisely elaborated, analyzed, and interpreted the collected information through the valued participants. Additionally, I respected the data collection tools and provided enough space for the value of my participants and my own.

Research Paradigm

A philosophical framework, comprising research paradigms such as ontology, epistemology, and research methodology, guides the research process and determines how the research is conducted (Gannon et al., 2022). This research involved experience, perception, and the meanings that research participants in my study attribute to

integrating generative AI in language education, aiming to shape and provide a deeper understanding. This research study employed an interpretive research paradigm to explore reality and the complex interplay of factors shaping the implementation of AI in language education. Because this study relied on in-depth interviews and personal meaning-making, the qualitative approach supported the interpretive paradigm that allowed participants' views to emerge naturally. For examining the usefulness of AI and how the learners and the teachers interpret it in the preparation of assessments, where subjective meaning-making plays a vital role, this approach is very suitable.

Explorative Research as Research Method

A researcher can engage in exploratory research to gain a thorough understanding or a deeper understanding of a phenomenon that has yet to be explored. This research particularly enhances open-ended inquiry into emerging topics and is often used to generate new insights rather than test existing hypotheses (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The exploratory research method identifies key variables in unexplored areas, sets the foundation, and provides a foundational understanding of the subject, gathering qualitative data from participants. This research method enabled me to investigate the evolving dynamic of generative AI in education. Stebbins (2001) outlines three main stages of exploratory research:

Exploration and Problem Identification

In this stage, the researcher identifies an emerging issue or gap that lacks sufficient theoretical or empirical grounding. For this study, the emerging issue was the limited understanding of how students and teachers are beginning to use generative AI for language learning and exam preparation.

Data Collection and Initial Understanding

This is the second stage, and it deals with qualitative methods, which include interviews, observations, or document analysis. These are practices to gain first-hand insights and define the key variables or themes related to the particular phenomenon being dealt with.

Conceptualization and Theorizing

The final or the third stage introduces the patterns of the data, where the researcher interprets patterns very closely and tries to view relationships in the data.

Then, develop initial frameworks that can support future, more structured research to refine. This research design allowed me to explore the evolving dynamics of AI in language learning and examination. Exploratory design provided me the flexibility to capture teachers' and learners' authentic experiences. This research design assisted me in gathering data on the potentialities of AI, along with drawbacks too. This design helped me gain insight into the influence of AI on examination practices.

This method is open and flexible. It helped me define the research clearly. It did not limit the study from the beginning. The exploratory research approach starts with very few assumptions. It allows ideas to develop naturally. This is also supported by Stebbins (2001) because he said that patterns and insights emerge from participants' views. Their experiences and real-life contexts guide the findings.

This approach helps uncover new ideas. It also brings out new perspectives that may not appear in structured studies. The method did more than answer “what,” “how,” or “why” questions. It encouraged curiosity. It helped me decide what to explore next. According to (Nakash et al., 2022) this approach also showed possible directions for future research. As I believed, using this method, I explored how teachers and learners are starting to use AI tools. I examined how this use supports or challenges traditional assessment practices. The method also allowed me to study AI more deeply. It helped me understand its impact on assessment models. For these reasons, I chose this method for an in-depth exploration.

Selection of Research Space and Participants

To collect data for my study, three language educators involved in English language teaching and three Grade Twelve learners studying English language education were selected. These participants were selected from three community institutions in the Kathmandu Valley. In this research, the purposive sampling method was used. I chose them as my participants had experience encountering AI in their learning or teaching, and they were also involved in assessment practices, making their insights relevant to the purpose of the study. Permission was taken before collecting data.

Data Collection Techniques and Process

As my purpose suggested me, I chose interviews as the main tool for data collection. They allow close and detailed interaction with participants. Interviews help

capture people's real experiences. They show how language educators and students understand their learning. They also reveal the challenges they face while using AI. According to Clandinin (2006), this method provides rich qualitative insights. It helps explore perceptions and personal experiences in depth. For these reasons, interviews were the most suitable method for this study. To obtain in-depth and contextual stories from the participants, I conducted interviews with the educators and students with their authentic permission. Following the selection of participants, one-on-one interviews were conducted (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with an interview guide to ensure consistency, while participants shared their experiences freely. The interviews were conducted in Nepali and English at the participants' convenience. I took notes during the interview for the rich narratives. Furthermore, I recorded audio during interviews to capture emotional nuances. I expressed my gratitude to the research participants for sharing their experiences and perspectives.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, I employed a thematic analysis approach as outlined by Terry et al. (2017), which is a flexible method for analyzing and interpreting patterns in qualitative data. At the very first, I familiarized with the collected data by myself. Next, I read and reread the transcribed interviews and field notes to gain or achieve a thorough understanding of my participants' perspectives and experiences. Then, with the help of a table, written interview questions, raw data (responses), and cycles of coding, I generated codes by highlighting significant statements and ideas related to the opportunities and challenges of using generative AI in language education and assessment. I used a manual coding process (non-software-based) to organize the data, as I found it closely connected me to participants' narratives. These codes were organized into themes that included recurring concepts. I reviewed and refined the themes to ensure that each generated theme accurately represented the overall dataset. To achieve this, I remain attentive to two of the research questions to maintain analytical focus. After refining all these, I defined and named each theme to capture the overall essence genuinely. Ultimately, I interpreted the themes by relating them to a well-developed theoretical framework that incorporated van Dijk's Digital Divide Theory and relevant policy contexts. This

systematic criterion helped me to ensure coherence and credibility of the analytical task. Additionally, it enabled the findings derived from thematic analysis to provide thorough insights into how generative AI influences educational instruction and assessment practices within language education.

Quality Standard

While researching to maintain the quality for better implications, a researcher should follow the quality standard. As a researcher, I was more conscientious about maintaining the quality of my study. I followed the given quality standards.

Temporality, Sociality, and Spatiality

While researching, the concepts of temporality, sociality, and spatiality are integral components to consider. The term temporality is explored in human research, specifically in relation to human perception of societal structures of duration and time (Clandinin, 2006). In this study, I maintained the temporality that connects the narratives of the participants lived experiences with time to understand how their perceptions developed over time. I connected the experience of research participants to the present context. In this study, sociality is the social interaction and collaboration among educators and students in the context of AI integration. The research applied sociality by considering the relationships, roles, and interactions between teachers and learners as they engaged with AI tools. Spatiality refers to the influence of spatial aspects on language learning outcomes. Spatiality was used to recognize the community-school setting, and digital learning spaces shaped by the participants' experiences. I kept this quality standard for the study.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of my study, I created a trustworthy atmosphere with my participants to facilitate the best possible meaning-making. A trustworthy study is crucial for establishing reliability and credibility in AI applications for language education (Jiang, 2022). The researcher presented data in this domain by applying statistical analysis. Instead, the researcher-built rapport with participants. I went through four criteria to maintain trustworthiness, which included *credibility*, which was supported through member checks. A member check is a crucial step in my research to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the findings (Candela, 2019). *Transferability*, I ensured it by

providing clear descriptions of the research context, which included community schools, Grade 12 learners, and English teachers. The process helps to judge whether applicable findings apply to similar contexts. Next was *Dependability*. By keeping a clear record of the research process, I maintained dependability, including sampling decisions, interview procedures, and coding steps, so that the study could be repeated. Lastly, as *Confirmability* was addressed through reflexivity, I reflected on my own assumptions and ensured that findings were grounded in the voices of the participants.

Ethical Consideration

According to Cohen et al. (2017), ethical considerations play a paramount role in determining what a researcher should and should not do in their research, and research behaviours are the focus of ethical research. A researcher had to prioritize participants' well-being and rights before collecting data. During my research, I obtained consent from participants before approaching and collecting data. As my participants connected with various other organizations apart from this study, I ensured I took care of their vulnerability. Moreover, participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing repercussions. This commitment towards research criteria and ethical principles safeguarded the research process honestly. I was aware of social justice during my research on generative AI and assessment.

Chapter Summary

Chapter III explains the research methodology. It uses qualitative data. The aim is to understand both the opportunities and challenges of AI. The chapter also explains the research philosophy. It discusses ontology, epistemology, and axiology. These ideas are linked to van Dijk's Digital Divide theory. For data analysis, the study uses thematic analysis. This helps identify important patterns and key insights. The chapter also addresses quality standards. It considers time, social context, and research setting. Trustworthiness is ensured through ethical practices. Member checking is used to improve reliability. This methodology also guides the analysis of Generative AI. This chapter also set route for exploring how AI tools interact with the curriculum. It also examines assessment practices in English language education.

CHAPTER IV

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES: GENERATIVE AI IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND ASSESSMENT

The research task is full of excitement, and I can see that my study table is full of papers and printed books. It has been almost two months since I began translating and transcribing data collected through interviews conducted with six participants: three undergraduate English majors and three language educators from the same teaching institution. I have reviewed my transcribed data multiple times and identified the common conceptions present in the data, using both coded and decoded data.

As this is exploratory research, this chapter focuses on the potential opportunities offered by generative AI in language education and assessment, while also uncovering how AI-driven tools are shaping the experiences of both learners and language educators in the context of educational circumstances, addressing my first research questions. This qualitative approach examines participants' reflections, seeking themes that describe diverse ways GenAI tools contribute to teaching, learning and assessment. Additionally, these shared insights provide a foundation for understanding how these emerging technologies are being utilized in an educational context, facilitating personalized learning experiences, enhancing efficiency in academic tasks, supporting assessment practices, and promoting engagement in learning activities. Moreover, I have developed the themes by addressing the perspectives presented and shedding light on the evolving opportunities offered by AI for enhancing ELE in relation to the theory. Additionally, my participants' reflections, experiences and insights may vary as they hold individual beliefs, thoughts, culture, and educational qualifications. To keep confidentiality, I have used pseudonyms such as Anny, Manita, Krishna, Melina, Ram and Anup.

Systematic Exploration of Generative AI: Insights and Data Handling

Generative AI has been around for four years, since its introduction in this competitive world. I am always eager to learn and delve into the details of particularly evolving technologies. In terms of my concern and insight on GenAI, it is one of the most significant opportunities identified in English language education (Pokrivčáková, 2019, p.

144). GenAI facilitates personalized learning experiences for learners and educators simultaneously. I initiated my research activity using my research tool, where I generated questions to gauge whether my research participants had a good understanding of information and communication technology. I went through piloting many times with many participants. Ease seldom brings fulfilment; therefore, I believe in the rewards of hard work. This research journey was challenging but worthwhile. Ultimately, I engaged with research participants who demonstrated a profound understanding of GenAI. While collecting insights and reflections from research participants, they began discussing their experiences with current college life and professional life, particularly in relation to their encounters with AI.

Through a thematic analysis of the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2012), I have examined and collected data and also confirmed it. Inductive identification of common patterns or themes was compared across diverse data units. I began by coding the data, which allowed me to group those codes into potential themes across different categories. After that, I used these themes for organising the relevant coded data. Later, I carefully handled the procedure to ensure its coherence within the data, making the themes meaningful. Research questions, collected data, literature and, most of all, the theoretical framework are all applied to organise the themes into overarching categories.

Personalised Learning through Generative AI

In the world of online technology, our level of familiarity with these facilities determines how much we can enhance ourselves in this field. I can have substantial benefits as it presents significant opportunities for language educators and learners to facilitate teaching and learning activities, especially in English language education, it can have substantial benefits (Oneis-Ozigagun et al., 2024). Familiarisation with information and communication technology (ICT) and emerging tools not only enhances ways of communicating with others but also enables one to be an effective academic writer and foster the English language. In this regard, one of the student participants, Anny, shared:

AI provides valuable assistance in addressing various difficulties and hindrances related to English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. It is also beneficial for young learners reading at the pre-primary or Montessori level, as they often find textbooks less engaging. (Interviewed on 2081/02/03)

A student studying humanities shared her insights on using AI for various purposes in English language education. Though she was unaware of applying AI at first, she was well-trained by her mates. She emphasised that command over using AI is the most crucial factor to consider when seeking the expected response related to the course content. She also whispered that AI is better for junior learners as it constrains visual aids that help engage learners (Corbett et al., 1997). As I was expecting an answer on AI-driven tools or applications designed for language learners and their assistance, she explained that,

I am familiar with tools like Duolingo and ChatGPT, which help me progress from basic to advanced English proficiency through interactive exercises. These tools assist in correcting errors and enable me to access learning materials quickly and very conveniently from home. It makes language learning more flexible and accessible. It is a good option for people living in remote or resource-limited settings.

After listening to her response to these inquiries, I thought that AI-driven tools could be good materials to improve the English language. She further noted that ChatGPT and Duolingo are flexible and accessible; therefore, these tools could be a good option for students in resource-limited settings. Consequently, I drew her into the next interesting content related to specific areas where GenAI could enhance language education. She shared her intuition and said,

I have experienced AI helping to summarise long texts into simpler language. When my teacher asked me to write a summary of one of the lessons (The Modern Tradition) she was teaching, I directly posed the same query in AI. In the meantime, AI-enhanced answers improved grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure. Similarly, I use AI tools for language translation whenever I feel I need any assistance discussing a specific topic or speaking practice. AI plays an important role in nurturing both my writing and communication skills.

According to the insights shared by Anny, a student, AI tools can bridge the gaps in language education for learners in resource-limited settings. The Theory of Digital Divide by van Dijk (2006) drew attention to the disparities in access, skills

and the usages derived from technology. She was acquainted with AI tools with the help of her peers, which reflects on overcoming the first-level digital divide as she gained access to digital technology. Building on these insights into the role of AI in educational settings and its practical uses, AI encourages a learner-centred methodology. It also makes education more inclusive and accessible to people in remote areas. This demonstrates that AI enhances personalization and encourages students to take ownership of their English language learning journey through this learner-navigated second-level divide, while also addressing diverse needs within the classroom. Anny's ability to interact with AI demonstrated the third-level divide. This example stressed that AI has the potential to create an equitable learning environment for ensuring linguistic competence.

Furthermore, the teacher participant, Melina, stated her views on personalised learning experiences under the opportunities brought by GenAI.

When I began my teaching career, I started with chalk and a duster, and few resources were available. I had to struggle a lot to find reference materials for resources. Now, time flies over us but leaves its shadow behind. As per my insight and learning, the students who feel shy or frightened to ask questions in the classroom can rely on AI for a free learning experience. They can also address gaps in their knowledge, practice language skills, and clarify their doubts at their convenience. Most often, I find myself in the same situation with confusing queries. These features or flexibility may empower learners to focus on their areas of improvement, being far from their fear and being judged by their friends. It fosters confidence and empowers autonomy in learners' educational journeys.

It is clear that in the evolving landscape of education, generative AI and its tools, such as ChatGPT, have brought about numerous changes in educational instruction. As stated by the teacher participant, Melina, the revolution in teaching and learning experiences has shifted from limited resources, such as chalk and dusters, to sophisticated technology. AI-driven tools bridge the significant gaps in traditional classroom teaching. Moreover, creating a balance between evolving technology and human interface in the educational context is essential, enabling learners to overcome their fears, resolve

uncertainties, and develop effective practical learning skills (Patel, 2024, p. 8). She further stressed,

I use AI to alleviate a state of confusion regarding ways to help my learners understand content that caters to diverse learning needs. For example, AI tools can easily generate various exercises and grammatical drills appropriate to the typical chapters or level I am dealing with. AI has generated interactive prompts and created language structures that offer ample opportunities to improve students' writing skills and refine comprehension skills.

AI simplified complex concepts and supported the improvement of learners' language skills. Walter (2024) states that AI also enables language educators to focus on critical thinking and creative development, thereby assisting their learners (p. 19). Similarly, AI ensure engaging and enriching teaching-learning journeys for students and language educators. In terms of teaching and learning writing skills and other communicative skills, she stated,

I have experience with AI tools in the case of teaching literary items; they provide instant access to canonical texts, making it easier for students to understand in depth whether they are related to cultural background or historical contexts. Likewise, AI boosts confidence and autonomy in hesitant students. Moreover, AI presents new perspectives on creating or analysing literary texts such as poetry, short stories or experimental narratives.

It is crystal clear that AI tools are highly effective in teaching and learning literary items, as they provide instant access to canonical texts and historical contexts (Pedreschi et al., 2024). It also helps them develop creativity in new perspectives for analyzing literary works, such as poetry and narratives. However, to ensure educational development, it is necessary to strike a balance between utilizing AI and maintaining its originality.

Pedagogical Efficiency and Balancing AI with Human Interface

One of the teacher participants, Melina, emphasized that AI aids shy or hesitant learners by offering a secure and adaptable space where they can practice, clarify doubts, and build confidence and autonomy among learners. She further noted that AI

fills voids in traditional classroom teaching through the creation of targeted exercises and language structures. That said, balancing technology with human interaction is necessary for effective learning, critical thinking, and engagement. AI empower students and supports in learner-centred pedagogy.

In the same regard, student participant Manita expressed her learning and insights into using AI in the English Language Education. Her sharing resembles that of the first participant, Anny. She elaborated,

Generative AI helped in speaking and writing English, because before using AI. I experienced anxiety in speaking, and I didn't have confidence in speaking English, but tools like ChatGPT and Google Assistant have made me fluent and accurate. These tools were instrumental in helping me find the correct pronunciations and meanings of words. It helps me gradually move from simple to advanced vocabulary. (Interviewed on 2081/02/05)

AI encompasses almost all the features; it depends on the specific area and how users apply it in the English language context. AI can make language learning more effective and can instil confidence in individuals. The research participant mentioned above highlights that AI supports learners in overcoming language barriers and helps them achieve better communication skills.

Furthermore, she added an extra bit in the same circumstances, addressing the enthusiasm for improving writing skills and mitigating language hindrances. She stressed and explained,

I wanted to improve my writing skills, so when I searched for information on writing issues, AI provided me with ideas for content and helped me deliver correct grammar. I was familiar with Grammarly; I always asked Grammarly to check my grammatical errors and replace simple words with advanced vocabulary. As a whole, I feel happy using it since it is accessible and efficient.

GenAI can play a vital role in personalising; it fosters one's confidence and improves language proficiency in learners. AI has significantly enhanced Manita's writing skills, making her feel professional and improving her pronunciation and understanding of new, complex words. The insights from Manita emphasised that AI has

specific potential for transforming language education according to diverse learning needs.

The transformative role of AI makes its learners accessible in overcoming diverse barriers in educational journeys, encouraging them to engage more efficiently and actively in learner language development (Popenici & Kerr, 2017). Teacher participant Ram shared,

I think AI tools are just like translation systems because their text-to-speech features make it easier for learners to grasp concepts in their preferred way.

He further went on by giving an example and said,

AI has simplified learning methods for learners, the process of learning pronunciation, and word usage by providing clear guidance, as I have experienced so far. Most of all, it provides for individual needs and allows access to learning materials in multiple languages. This tool translates them into English and helps improve their skills through practice.

AI tools effectively span the divide between accessibility and personalization, and further offer insights and real-time experiences. As such, they highlight needs of individuals while also simplifying complex text. Additionally, it helps improve linguistic items and enhances language acquisition skills, making education more inclusive and adaptable (Patel, 2024, p. 8). It translates languages and suggests self-directed and reflective learning when learners and language educators use it strategically in teaching and learning activities. Ram added that,

AI provides immediate support for tasks like preparing applications and translating content. Moreover, AI tools often save my time, allowing me to concentrate on the aspects of teaching while catering to the specific needs of students. It offers flexibility to incorporate advanced tools into conventional classroom methods, so that I can adapt resources to suit diverse learners' proficiencies.

In order to enhance teaching practices, AI provides instant support and long-term benefits as well. It enables learners and language educators to quickly adapt crucial materials and methods to meet students' individual needs (Popenici & Kerr, 2017, p. 10). Therefore, it will not be worthless to say that AI plays a vital role in

enhancing teaching and learning experiences. Scaffolding this view, another teacher participant, Anup, advocated,

AI offers vast exposure to various texts and resources. Therefore, learners can access paragraphs, articles and entire texts which help them to form language patterns and structures in appropriate contexts.

According to him, this exposure helps learners understand the basic necessity of language learning, particularly focusing on reading and writing. He added that,

With the help of AI, learners can grasp language structures and an idea of how to organise paragraphs, which enables them to write effectively.

Applications of AI tools in English language education enhance access to produce structured writing practices. In addition, AI promotes analytical thinking (Vassilakopoulou & Hustad, 2023). These features of AI easily bridge the gap between theory and practical language application. Concerning the thought on adaptability and accessibility, Krishna explained,

AI helps me grasp the necessary content easily. I want to share an example. Students can easily use AI tools to generate ideas or gather desired insights on unfamiliar topics. Despite its drawbacks, such as dependency on tools, AI allows its users to approach language challenges in a way that suits their level and pace, benefiting learners, including language educators' language development.

In short, the strength of GenAI lies in its ability to respond to each student individually, evolving in step with their capabilities. It not only promotes learners' understanding of complex topics quickly but also provides ideas and information they might struggle to find on their own. This lightness allows student to engage at their own pace and develop practical skills. This technology bridges the gap between theory and practice since it facilitates educators and learners with comprehensive learning and application of language concepts. However, there is a danger of becoming too reliant on AI. Still, the speed and guidance it offers for educational purposes are very beneficial.

Personalised Learning and the Digital Divide

The discussions with participants made it clear that GenAI in ELE opens genuinely personalized learning pathways and narrows gaps in access, skills, usage, and motivation (van Dijk, 2006). Anny shared that AI assists with grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, and her familiarity with ChatGPT and Duolingo gained with peer support illustrates overcoming the first-level divide (access) and second-level divide (skills). Similarly, Manita described how she started using Grammarly and AI-based translators to improve writing, vocabulary and pronunciation over time. This reflects gradual progress and a growth in digital skills. AI tools help the learners explore interests independently. Ram shared about the immediate help he got from AI when preparing applications and translating content. This reflects the third-level digital divide.

Here, effective use depends on motivation and confidence. Melina and Anup, both teachers, shared their experiences. They explained how AI supports learner autonomy. They also highlighted its role in learner-centred teaching. AI allows students to practice on their own. They can make mistakes without fear. There is no judgment. AI can help reduce inequalities. It can make learning more personal. It supports an inclusive learning environment. AI also builds learner confidence. It encourages learners to take ownership of their language learning journey. GenAI tools in language teaching provide learners with interactive and personalized practice that nurtures engagement and supports learner autonomy in acquiring language skills (Neupane et al., 2025). In this way, AI responds better to real classroom needs.

Enhancing Educational Efficiency and Innovating Language Assessment through Generative AI

AI delivers personalized feedback and puts information at learners' fingertips almost instantly (Ayeni et al., 2024). AI tools have become truly transformative resources for both language teaching and learning. Similarly, it also structured the language content to improve the efficiency of educational processes. Furthermore, it facilitates innovative language assessment by offering real-time evaluation and helps teachers create tests that cater to students' needs and their progress. Therefore, based on the interview, addressing traditional challenges such as limited resources and time

constraints, teachers and students are increasingly utilising AI. In this regard, language educators like Anup shared how he has been reshaping classroom practices and supporting language instruction. He highlighted,

I have experienced AI enabling my learners to access structured content, such as essays and long documents, in an organized manner within time constraints. This facility helps learners understand language patterns, text organisation and content, which significantly improves learners' reading and writing skills. It exposes students' learning processes by making them more efficient and effective. In other words, AI quietly supports learners for examination, and it does so by giving them practice tests that match it. (Interviewed on 2081/02/18)

According to Anup, generative AI plays an important role in making teaching far more effective than it used to be. He clearly explains how tools like ChatGPT help learners improve their test scores, particularly in reading and writing skills. Moreover, (Zhai et al., 2024) found that AI helped strengthen analysis, but also cautioned that its users must remain aware of potential risks of over-reliance on AI to balance the perspectives (p. 3). However, Anup also pointed out some critical drawbacks concerning efficiency. He observed,

I could see that my learners were over-reliant on AI tools, which might hinder students' creativity and critical thinking skills. They tend to rely on AI-generated content rather than engaging in brainstorming activities and solving problems independently. It is a huge matter of concern. Yet despite these limitations, AI has become an inseparable and invaluable resource for language learners and educators. Since AI-driven tools are quick and efficient in getting solutions. They also facilitate learners with instant self-check tasks, rules, format and standards set by the assessment system in Nepal.

Involving online media and modern discoveries is crucial to addressing various drawbacks in learning activities (Collins & Halverson, 2018). Apart from this, AI makes learning easier and faster, but we should be concerned about the bypass effect, such as hindrances to brainstorming and critical thinking skills. These skills are essential for a learner's academic growth. To overcome these issues, encouraging students to brainstorm

and solve problems independently while utilizing AI for support can create a balanced and effective learning atmosphere (Slater et al., 2023). The integration of AI technologies into an educational environment amends the learning journey. AI facilitates language educators and learners by aligning educational content with each learner's needs (Onesi-Ozigagun et al., 2024, p. 599).

My next teacher participant, Melina, also explored this thought, as she has extensive experience applying AI tools in educational instruction while teaching at the university level. She was one of the good users of AI-driven materials in the classroom. She enhanced her views,

No uncertainty, AI align educational content with individual learner needs and automates routine tasks. That said, one can't deny that leaning too heavily on automation might chip away at creativity and originality. They are the core aspects of holistic education. So, in order for the AI to be used effectively, it is very important for one to understand its dynamics, along with current educational practices.

Her point suggests that language educators and learners, and even the syllabi, need to embrace AI thoughtfully, making sure that it complements traditional methods rather than quietly pushing them aside. It is necessary to strike a balance between the use of emerging technology and preserving creativity for efficacy. She emphasized training for educators and monitoring systems to enhance the practical roadmap, rather than addressing challenges in AI integration and maximizing opportunities. My teacher participants further supplemented,

The integration of AI technologies into everyday teaching has made things run smoothly. Lesson preparation is faster and less draining, and enables me to optimise time and effort. At the same time, these tools facilitate learners, allowing for more formative ongoing assessments. It leads to better understanding and language proficiency. Besides, classroom efficiency has also improved considerably. However, there remains a clear need to use these technologies in a balanced way so that creativity is fostered.

Krakowski et al. (2023) argued that both the educators and learners should navigate this rapidly changing landscape, something that complements, rather than applies as a substitute for human effort and efficacy. She noted,

It is possible for teachers to encourage creativity by building in tasks that demand real problem-solving, exploration of ideas, and opportunities for learners to express their own voices in distinctive ways. Educators can also incorporate activities, such as collaborative projects, open-ended discussions, and writing challenges, as they go a long way toward safeguarding students' originality. With these activities, educators can create a balance between technological advancement and creative growth in education. The result is not only more efficient learners but is also resourceful individuals for future challenges.

She urged that only when generative AI is integrated with a comprehensive educator is it possible to foster training, creativity and learning efficiency. Her training programmes tackled both the strengths and shortcomings of AI, making sure language educators are not only aware but also skilled in adapting AI in meaningful teaching and learning activities. She explained: AI can distribute practice materials that perfectly match learners' capacities and goals. At the same time, she stressed the importance of clear policies and effective monitoring systems to utilize AI tools. Furthermore, learners should ensure their responsibility and a way that is befitting for teaching and learning outcomes (Pedreschi et al., 2024). Building on Mr. Ram's insights, my fellow teacher participants have shared additional perspectives on how AI can support educators and learners in diverse educational contexts. He expressed,

AI is a new dimension to teaching and learning, and it lets educators optimise their practices. Generative AI has supported me in translation, interactive teaching, and document preparation, making my teaching process more efficient. Furthermore, it is time-saving and full of resources, particularly in higher education settings. Most often, it helped me design model answers aligning with students' learning needs. AI-driven tools deliver quick solutions for putting together presentations, which makes classroom sessions far more engaging for students. They have been a real help for me as I have included videos and storytelling tools to facilitate learning.

His articulation reflected the practical benefits of AI in instructional tasks while enriching the classroom experience. In this support, Chiu et al. (2023) concluded that the excessive use of AI bridges the gaps and enhances learner engagement through multimodal approaches. My observation on this aspect pointed that the need for further exploration to meet the varied demands of education and equip educators with confidence and skills to unlock the true potential. Generative AI fosters innovative teaching methods to make learners more interactive and dynamic. Mr Ram also emphasized:

Learners are actively engaging in this new dimension; therefore, the necessity of integrating AI into learning activities should be done thoughtfully to foster creativity rather than passive learning. Educators must strive to make students active in educational instruction. By designing activities that promote originality, we educators can be sure that AI becomes a complementary tool for learning and teaching language rather than a prop for learners' and educators' convenience.

Although learners actively engage with AI in education, van Dijk (2006) emphasized that the digital divide is not merely about access; it also encompasses skills, motivation, and the quality of usage, and the integration process is not equitable. Therefore, teacher training and access to infrastructure are necessary to support institutional challenges and ensure the effective utilization of AI.

In alignment with this viewpoint, there is no doubt that AI offers immense potential; however, the misuse of AI could lead to over-reliance, which directly hampers the ability to think critically and solve problems (Zhai, 2024). Educators must create alternative ways to balance the use of AI by designing learning tasks that demand judgment and human creativity. Another student participant, Anny, one of the hardworking students, pointed out,

Generative AI simplifies classroom tasks, enhances teaching and learning efficiency, and saves time. For example, ChatGPT particularly assisted me in composing high-quality essays on diverse topics with tight deadlines, reducing stress and anxiety. AI helped me with my writing coherence and the relevance of my reading and writing. Additionally, tools like Grammarly improved my writing accuracy and developed my skills.

AI-driven tools are transformative; they reduce the workload of learners and educators. Moreover, it enhances the learners' ability to meet deadlines without compromising the output quality. Adopting AI tools can increase learners' collaboration and foster professional development (Porter & Grippa, 2020). Anny was highlighting the creative opportunities that AI offers to its users, particularly in the fields of interactive and mutual learning experiences. She further shared,

Duolingo, one of the AI tools, provide two-way communication. Using this application, one can simulate real-life conversations and polish individual learning styles by focusing on grammar or vocabulary, and prepare oneself for self-assessment exams. I have also noticed that digital materials tend to work much better than textbooks.

Listening to the above story shared by my participant, I came to know that the impact of AI in education goes beyond just supporting traditional methods. It now meets the individual needs of learners. She also shared her experience. She said AI helps address different learning styles and challenges. According to her, it does this more effectively than traditional textbooks ever could. For this researcher and language educators, it is important to keep exploring authentic ways of weaving AI tools into everyday language instruction. These tools can make learning more engaging and accessible for all learners from diverse backgrounds and with various disparities (Pokrivčáková , 2019, p. 143). She enhanced her experiences,

AI-generated tools can bridge gaps in learning because they can easily cater to diverse learning needs. It is most useful in large classrooms where individual attention may be limited. AI broadens my linguistic understanding. It helps me better understand language with proper and appropriate content and tasks associated with writing literature. The combined function of efficiency and creativity makes AI a powerful tool for transforming conventional teaching and learning practices into more dynamic, engaging, and adaptable experiences.

These advanced tools can easily bridge learning gaps by addressing the diverse needs of both learners and educators. Van Dijk's (2006) theory of the digital divide underlined that not everyone can equally benefit from technology. This divide goes beyond having access to AI tools. It is also equally about possessing the necessary skills,

motivation, and ability to use them effectively. Every learner and every educator should have access to the necessary resources and training to utilize this technology effectively. Additionally, a workshop on the use of AI, providing simple guidelines, can help them move from hesitation to confident use of AI. At the same time, when these gaps are closed, it is possible to create an inclusive environment by enhancing learning opportunities for everyone, regardless of their circumstances.

In addition, another student participant, Krishna, shared his experiences that AI has made his learning process much more efficient. He added,

AI helped in so many practical ways. For instance, it gave me quick access to exam-related materials and made lesson preparation much less time-consuming. Back when I was preparing for my exams, I relied on applications like ChatGPT and Bing to familiarize myself with important questions and summaries of stories, poems, and essays.

He emphasized that AI-powered tools simplified complex topics and provided him with clear explanations in simple language. He further explained,

Those tools reduced my reliance on teachers and friends for simplifications; now, I can find answers on my own. I feel more updated and confident.

After listening to Krishna, I realized how AI is changing the learning experience. He explained that learners no longer depend only on teachers or classmates for answers. Instead, they can find explanations on their own. This helps them become more independent. This change also keeps learners engaged. They become more informed and better at managing their own studies. AI tools make difficult ideas easier to understand. They break complex concepts into simple, clear language. This helps students grasp lessons more effectively. This supports a bigger goal in education: autonomous learning. This is also supported by Bozkurt (2024) as he said that students take more responsibility for their own learning.

Similarly, using AI in classrooms can complement traditional teaching. It can balance guided instruction with opportunities for self-directed learning. Building on this point, Krishna further explained,

Generative AI has supported my creativity by making the language easier to understand and to work with. It has encompassed different aspects of the English

language, such as grammar, pronunciation and essay writing. For example, when I found it difficult and couldn't understand certain lessons taught by my teachers, I used AI to find summaries and explanations, which helped me grasp the meaning and prepare answers.

He stated that these activities saved him time and allowed him a well-academic space to explore the content in more detail and with greater depth. That broadened his ability to read, write and express effectively. He also noted that,

AI tools have improved accessibility in my studies through features like voice recognition and text-to-speech. These functions allow me to listen to them and receive answers without the need to type or read them. As a whole, AI helps me combine efficiency with creativity, making exam preparation easier and strengthening a better understanding of educational content.

As mentioned above, the story shared by Krishna, shows the layered nature of the digital divide. It is not just about access to technology. It also involves motivation, skills, and the availability of learning materials. He showed a strong willingness to use AI tools like ChatGPT and Grammarly. These tools helped him overcome challenges he faced in traditional learning settings. In support of this, Vassilakopoulou and Hustad (2023) noted that motivation is the first step in bridging the digital divide. At this stage, learners begin to see the value of technology. They understand how it can improve their learning experiences. The use of AI tools to clarify lessons and strengthen writing, pronunciation, and grammar illustrates how digital technologies can support motivated learners in narrowing technological knowledge gaps and expressing their creativity (Dancsa et al., 2023). At the same time, participants emphasized that the benefits of generative AI depend not only on access but also on having necessary skills and materials. The combination of advanced digital tools and the ability to use them effectively opened up new academic opportunities, allowing participants to engage with academic space more confidently and creatively. This aligns with van Dijk in that one has to engage qualitatively to bridge the usage divide, where technology does not merely serve learning but transforms it.

Likewise, Manita, my next student participant, shared that using AI, she has significantly boosted her learning capability. She elaborated,

AI offers quick access to ideas, knowledge and a wide range of educational resources. Google Assistant and Grammarly have helped me overcome challenges with grammar and verb agreement. It makes me practical in offering corrections, searching for synonyms, determining meanings and pronunciations of new words. These improvements have increased my writing pace, along with building confidence in delivering answers.

Manita highlighted that she made her learning process more professional, focusing on fluency and better expression in both writing and speaking. She added that, *Teachers and students have both benefited from the ability of AI; it easily simplifies complex topics and creates comprehensive learning experiences. For me, AI has bridged gaps in traditional teaching methods by creative approaches to learning and problem-solving.*

Van Dijk (2006) claims that we can bridge the digital gap if we educate people on the proper use, processing and use of technology to benefit from it meaningfully; mere materials are not enough. Manita uses AI for grammar support and verb agreement. These skills help her overcome barriers she faced in traditional learning settings. As a result, her confidence in communication has grown. She also recognizes the role of AI in creating new ways of learning. This reflects the usage divide described in van Dijk's theory. Technology can improve learning experiences and support professional growth. However, her success also highlights a problem. Learners without similar skills or access face injustice.

This supports van Dijk's idea that bridging the digital divide requires equitable access to technology and knowledge. The experiences of all participants show a clear pattern. AI helps create an inclusive and adaptive learning environment. It accommodates different learning needs. It also strengthens preparation for exams, including assessments like those of NEB. Participants noted that AI provides flexible, creative, and personalized learning opportunities. These go beyond what traditional textbooks alone can offer.

Fostering Engagement and Motivation through AI-Driven Learning Tools.

Generative AI tools have significantly transformed the approaches students and language educators take toward learning. AI tools encourage learners to foster engagement and motivation by simplifying complex texts, providing quick access for

writing poems, and inspiring learners to engage in two-way communication (Pokrivcakova, 2019). Additionally, stimulates learners to think innovatively and helps them explore new ways of expression. These features of AI reveal that generative AI empowers its users' creativity and makes learners learn more efficiently, transforming traditional education into an engaging and motivating journey. Therefore, these tools do more than just teach. Anny, one of my student research participants, shared that,

Tools like Grammarly and the most prominent tool, ChatGPT, transformed my learning process. These tools helped me effectively summarise lengthy texts and correct sentence structures, allowing me to recognise my mistakes and improve my writing skills. They also instilled in me a curiosity, encouraging me to engage with assigned tasks more thoroughly and enthusiastically. Learning environments foster an intrinsic motivation to excel in English language education.

It is obvious that reliance on AI enhances technical skills and also reshapes the overall learning experience. AI assistance tools created a supportive room where students feel empowered to take ownership of their learning (Nuary et al., 2022, p. 90). This cognitive shift from passive consumption to active engagement will encourage a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence. Undoubtedly, these are key drivers for sustained motivation of language education. She further shared,

These tools helped create a dynamic classroom environment in which engagement merged naturally, motivating learners to strive for and achieve excellence. This aspect of AI supported my growth both as a learner and a creator. AI-powered tools also assisted me in understanding literary components, such as plot structures and themes. It also supported me to get involved with literature in a deeper way and this is an important aspect of my academic journey.

She explained that she has developed the ability to generate rhyming words and come up with ideas for stories. This has encouraged her to think innovatively. Aligning with the same theme, the next student participant, Krishna, highlighted the practical benefits of AI in teaching and learning instructions. He pointed out that,

AI applications like Bing, Copilot, and ChatGPT have significantly supported me in my educational journey, particularly when writing essays and conducting literary analysis. AI-generated content assisted me in interpreting

poems and stories, as well as summarizing rigorous tasks. This assistance from AI became valuable and worthy when my friends and teachers were unavailable. It made my learning accessible and engaged me well in language education. (Interviewed on 2081/02/18)

AI features with transformative roles that foster learners, including autonomy for language educators (Subramanian & Riya, 2024, p. 15). Applications like Copilot and ChatGPT enabled him to tackle tough literary tasks, especially during the absence of teachers and classmates. These experiences of Krishna (the student participant) accentuated the potential of AI that supplements human support and makes learning accessible and motivating. However, Krishna's experiences reflect the usage gap; if students and users are facilitated with the acquisition of AI skills and task completion, they can utilise them effectively. This theory reminded us that broader disparities in access to modern technology may create obstacles for others to exploit such tools.

Krishna shared that AI applications with simple and clear language have helped him during his preparation for examinations. He explained,

Students should become familiar with recent technological developments and make use of tools such as video-based learning. That is because these can reduce classroom monotony and create a more engaging connection with the subject matter by making education more interactive and dynamic. However, I faced problems related to connectivity and technical frustrations. Despite these obstacles, the transformative potential of AI tools strengthens and expands the learning capacity of both teachers and students.

These demonstrated experiences suggest that, despite challenges, AI tools are promoting innovation, accessibility, and student engagement at the same time. Krishna remarked that,

AI tools such as Grammarly and ChatGPT have significantly reshaped the way I approach learning and writing. Using these applications made me feel like I was engaging in a real conversation. It accesses me with each query; unknowingly, it improves my communication skills and composition.

Another student participant, Manita, noted that AI-driven learning tools have changed her approach to interacting with literary texts. She shared,

Generative AI provided me with new opportunities to understand the text's themes, styles, and patterns in greater detail and depth. For example, I feel more comfortable when analysing poems and stories because AI helps me explain more thoroughly. Gaining exposure to different perspectives and interpretations of the text proved valuable for my understanding. Monica, the AI tool, is particularly useful to me in supporting creative writing, especially when shaping a plot or developing characters. AI made exploring new ideas easier.

Generative AI has opened up diverse opportunities to address problems in language learning education (Mittal et al., 2024). Tools such as Monica can help shape plots and develop characters, making the writing process feel more fluid and manageable. Emerging AI applications designed for language learning also lower the barriers to exploring new ideas (Baidoo-Anu & Ansah, 2023). Above all, these tools open up space for greater creativity and make it easier to produce original work. Generative AI provides several interpretations and insights that help uncover layers of meaning and support connecting with necessary materials. Student participant Manita said,

Language applications like HelloTalk help me learn at my own pace. It is quick in response; this nature motivates me and encourages me to learn independently. The nature of AI tools made my learning entertaining and focused. They make my learning feel more like a game than a chore. Furthermore, they improve my skills faster than traditional methods.

According to her, using AI language learning applications in learning made her feel like playing a game rather than studying. Since the application she was using gave her reward-like badges, that reward system dragged her to use Duolingo. She enhanced again,

ChatGPT explains things in a way that I want for my difficult questions. It gives me suggestions for strengthening my weak areas. This flexibility reduces the strain often associated with learning process. These tools track my progress, which keeps me engaged because they provide exercises tailored to my proficiency level. It feels as though I have an unlimited range of learning opportunities at my fingertips. I can access materials whenever and wherever I need to. Ultimately,

this makes it easier to manage my time effectively and maintain continuity in my learning.

Overall, these tools helped her feel more confident, engaged, and motivated to learn, offering forms of support that traditional methods do not always provide. Students' positive experiences with AI clarify that applications like ChatGPT and Duolingo enhance access, skills and usage of learning opportunities. Learners' ability to access AI tools reflected the access divide, as described by van Dijk's Digital Divide (2006). Similarly, their effective use of AI features reflected a level of proficiency that helped narrow the digital divide and the prevailing skills gap. These educational AI tools also personalised her learning experience, offering a degree of flexibility and access to learning opportunities that traditional methods often cannot provide. However, van Dijk's Digital Divide theory reminds us that everyone has equal access to technology and skills to apply it, and this bias can hold some people backwards in the world of competition from enjoying these benefits. AI-driven learning tools motivated learners and fostered engagement in varied ways. Teacher participant Ram underlined that,

Generative AI is supported in translation systems. It allows students to convert written text into sound and recorded speech into written text, enabling its users to learn more easily. This capability aids comprehensively in introducing novel ways of interacting with the content. It enhances the engagement of learners along with language educators.

The application of GenAI in education prioritised the importance of aligning modern tools with meaningful purposes, as the thoughtful use of these applications can bridge the gap between traditional ways of learning language and contemporary digital sound (Vassilakopoulou & Hustad, 2023, p. 964). It supports genuine learning methods and development by ensuring technological advancement. Ram observed,

I have experienced the benefits of involving myself in teaching core language skills, and these innovative approaches are more fruitful and engaging. It ensures that learners feel supported and motivated, acknowledging its benefits.

However, Roe et al. (2023) noted that the proper usage of AI-powered tools is profoundly necessary and should be used by teachers and students for holistic

development (p. 25). He emphasised that thoughtful implementation is essential for fully realising the potential of AI.

For example, language educators ought to design learning activities that correspond to learners' needs and proficiency levels. The teacher participant, Ram, emphasised the proper usage of AI and described the importance of teacher training to implement the technological features of AI, so that teachers can maximise the benefits of generative AI, creating innovative and supportive educational settings. Building on this perspective, Melina, a teacher participant, highlighted how AI-powered tools have made language learning more learner-centred. Melina remarked,

As a teacher, I have observed the transformative impact of AI on language education, especially in the context of teaching literature. GenAI has made teaching canonical texts much more efficient and accessible. I have found that it frequently offers quick and comprehensive access to cultural and historical contexts. And that can enrich classroom discussions. Educational platforms like Grammarly have polished minor grammar, punctuation and spelling errors. Because of access to canonical texts, teaching literature is less gloomy.

AI tools have created a foundation for exploring learners' and educators' perspectives on storytelling and poetry (Nuary et al., 2022). For example, students who previously found it challenging to understand literary devices can now confidently create and participate in their tasks independently. As a result, the classroom has become a dynamic environment. She added,

The flourishing of innovative tools each new day introduces a new space for literary imagination and creativity. That directly encourages me and my learners to explore novel experimental techniques in literary devices. However, I also feel that the AI systematised information to the limited extent that it left space for original interpretations. For learners and educators who want to move beyond traditional approaches and look for something new, AI can sometimes feel more limiting than empowering.

Melina emphasised the importance of bringing users' own voices into their work to maintain originality and authenticity. She pointed out that finding the right balance between what AI can offer and what individuals can create themselves is essential for

strengthening teachers' experiences and improving students' learning outcomes. As she explained,

I can see it happening in my own classes. I have noticed increased engagement among learners due to AI. It has provided learners with opportunities to work on rhyme, rhythm, and novel literary forms, which help maintain creativity. Learners who have struggled to understand poetic techniques now find it easier to cope with writing verses. I found this blending method, a combination of conventional and modern approaches to teaching literature, made instructional presses exciting.

Based on van Dijk's digital theory, Melina has highlighted opportunities and challenges associated with AI access, skill and usage in education. This aligns with the materials access aspect of the theory, in which digital technologies provide access to difficult resources that were previously difficult to obtain at first. Similarly, AI supports creativity, but sometimes it limits the original information, which underscores the skill divide. Critical digital literacy is needed to maintain teachers' and learners' perspectives; they must foster the ability to use AI innovatively. Melina also underlined the importance of a balance between the abilities of AI with traditional methods, pointing to van Dijk's usage divide. Lastly, the thoughtful application of AI in teaching and learning activities fosters an inclusive environment that combines modern and conventional teaching approaches.

Expanding Access to Diverse and Rich Language Resources.

Generative AI tools offer learners with wide range of linguistic resources and neatly-structured content that can support studying and learning (Godwin-Jones, 2024). These tools help learners to work through texts, articles, and different language patterns, which in turn strengthen their comprehension and their ability to communicate effectively. AI tools enhance exposure to language education; however, they should be balanced to encourage critical thinking and creativity in learners. In this regard, teacher participant Anup broadened his thought,

Generative AI offers opportunities to engage with structured information, which would be challenging to access in conventional educational settings. I have experienced AI tools that offer solutions to specific queries and make

high-quality language resources accessible to a broader audience. It also provides easier structures for learners to understand language and its patterns, and to organize sentences effectively. (Interviewed on 2081/02/25)

Ram supported the idea that AI-powered language tools assisted learners, including educators, in exploring complex ideas in simplified forms. Moreover, he explained that AI tools must be used carefully to cultivate creativity and problem-solving skills. For this, teachers need to guide learners to use AI tools as supplementary rather than replacement tools, ensuring that these technologies boost learning without weakening the originality of individual effort. Ram added,

I have found that learners easily address queries related to subject-verb agreement and paragraph organisation. AI tools are easily accessible; therefore, teachers and learners from less-resourced backgrounds can be facilitated by high-quality language materials, making language learning more accessible to everyone.

Ram shared that AI-generated texts offered an idea about the well-organisation. It helps to understand different subjects. However, the over-reliance on AI tools can discourage brainstorming. He continued with his notes and noted,

Generative AI can help learners by offering a wealth of language materials and well-organized content to study and learn from. Despite this, I believe that exposure provided by AI is valuable for building language skills, particularly basic language skills. Furthermore, if educators combine traditional teaching methods with AI, they can balance the benefits of these resources without hindering learners' natural thoughts.

The expansion of technology is pivotal to enhancing inclusive education and preserving equitable learning opportunities. GenAI accommodates diverse dialects, enabling individuals to connect with their cultural heritage (Tafazoli, 2024, p. 2). These technological advancements promoted linguistic diversity and also facilitated education. Beginning with the next student participant, Manita noted,

In this rapidly globalizing world, dealing with the challenges of language education, rich language resources need to be accessible to all learners. I have used AI tools for writing assignments and project work, and they have corrected

my mistakes and suggested better word choices and synonyms, making my tasks more professional. Likewise, educators can also benefit because generative AI allows them to prepare lesson materials and assignments more efficiently.

(Interviewed on 2081/03/11)

Generative AI also plays an important role in reducing gaps between learning and teaching by supporting more inclusive educational practices. These tools address diverse linguistic needs, expand access to language resources, and enrich the learning experience for both learners and educators. AI has the potential to create meaningful learning opportunities for learners from varied backgrounds and with different levels of proficiency (Anis, 2023, p. 55). Through this, they can flourish in their educational journey. Manita further added her experiences,

I believe that AI is incredibly supportive because it saves me time and helps me pace myself whenever I have difficulties dealing with lengthy poems or academic content. It suggested clues and even provided examples by simplifying the meaning of rigorous content. However, I have noticed that AI struggles with interpreting emotions, particularly in literary content such as poetry, stories, and one-act plays. It also gives learners a sense of confidence to explore ourselves, especially when learning a language and using English in new ways. (Interviewed on 2081/03/05)

Manita discussed the disparities in access, skills, and usage of digital technologies among the various groups identified in van Dijk's Digital Divide theory, noting the experience of generative AI. She emphasised that modern technologies can empower learners and language educators alike by simplifying complex texts and offering quick and accessible explanations. However, there are challenges that not all students and educators are equally accessible to these advancements. According to the theory, the digital divide is not only about owning it but also about having the skills and opportunities to use it and implement it effectively in educational settings. Manita highlighted ensuring equal access to AI tools for everyone to bridge the divide essential for nurturing inclusive education. Student participant Anny's experience also resembled hers and pointed out that,

To enhance my English proficiency, I prefer to use AI tools like Duolingo. It supported me through practical exercises and it even offered relevant cultural contexts. In contrast, most conventional methods tend to be rigid, and they tend to rely on a fixed curriculum in which everyone is expected to learn in the same way, regardless of individual preferences or needs. AI-powered tools, however, are far more flexible and responsive. For example, Duolingo generates interactive visuals that help create unique learning styles for learners from diverse backgrounds. It is beneficial for learners from countries where English isn't widely used, such as Korea or Japan, since it aids them in practising and learn English naturally.

According to Anny, Generative AI addresses the limitations of traditional methods by underscoring the rigid curricula, which fail to meet learners' needs. AI tools such as Duolingo incorporate adaptive tasks, including audio-video exercises, that respond to learners' individual styles. By combining practical activities with cultural contexts, these tools contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment. Anny further noted,

For me, ChatGPT is one of the AI tools that is particularly helpful for engaging with literary content and developing creative writing skills. It assisted me in identifying themes and analysing literary structures, especially when preparing for examinations. I have used these tools when I was in a state of dilemma regarding writing cultural texts to ensure that they are culturally relevant and easy to understand. Lastly, AI tools revolutionised how I learned with rich language materials.

AI tools empower learners to explore the contextual dimensions of language, aligning with the nature of contemporary curricula, which in turn facilitates the application of technological knowledge to enhance pedagogy. This shift demonstrates that advanced technologies assist in personalization and enrich learners' experiences with specific content. Melina, a teacher participant, highlighted her ideas and experiences concerning advanced technology and its flourishing in diverse and rich resources, which is not only for learners in language learning but also for language educators to adapt new methodologies. She emphasized that, in her teaching experience, she had observed how technology has revolutionized language learning. She further enhanced the example,

He shared that the AI-powered platform helped him learn idiomatic expressions and phrases that were rarely found in textbooks. It refers to AI tools providing resources to make language learning inclusive and proving that geographical and economic limitations do not bind them. As a teacher, I have experienced platforms that expose learners to dialectal variations, which traditional course books often miss. It fosters learners' conception of understanding the global linguistic landscape.

In this experience, Melina argued that AI-powered tools are helping to democratise access to quality education. They are narrowing gaps created by economic and geographical barriers (Anis, 2023). Likewise, AI platforms are equipping both learners and educators for real-world communication by offering content that reaches beyond textbooks. Therefore, these tools help educators meet the diverse needs of learners. Melina again added,

My students were excited when I introduced them to ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) Speak, an AI-powered application designed to support pronunciation practice. It motivated them and gave them the confidence to speak fluently. However, over-reliance on AI tools can lead learners towards passive learning; therefore, there must always be teachers to guide them in using such applications, balancing them with traditional methods of learning. By doing so, the language learning context becomes achievable, and educators can also ensure that advanced technologies don't act as a barrier.

The perspectives of Melina align with van Dijk's Digital Theory, which emphasizes unequal access, skills, and usage of technology among different groups. AI-powered tools like ELSA Speak and Duolingo can easily bridge geographical and economic barriers. However, learners who don't have access to internet connections and digital literacy to use it may create a worse divide. To address these inequalities, Melina advocated that language educators must address these challenges or ensure opportunities for the benefit of learners. These educators should provide support for those who may face technological challenges. This can be achieved by blending two methods simultaneously: traditional methods and AI tools, to ensure equitable access to

technological help in learning environments (Kumar et al., 2021). Krishna, my next student participant, pointed out,

I came from a remote area, where I had limited access to physical resources for enhancing my academic skills; nevertheless, I use AI tools like ChatGPT, and because of it, I can now practice my grammar, work on literary tasks, and read summaries of stories and poems with ease. These resourceful AI platforms made my learning experience more inclusive, something a textbook couldn't provide on its own. Now I can access a range of learning materials and engage with exercises whenever I need them with just an internet connection.

Based on Krishna's insights, these novel technologies can strengthen learners' confidence and support their academic growth, especially when they are working through complex topics. AI offers open services to tackle various challenges, and it empowers learners by reducing the stress of falling behind in class (Baidoo-Anu & Ansah, 2023). It does not exclude someone from a remote area, but rather integrates them into a global linguistic classroom. Krishna further continued his discussion,

AI is featured dynamically. This amazing tool helped me deal with new vocabulary, grammatical cohesion and coherence that appeared in real-world language. I believe that if AI is used properly, then it can prepare learners like me for real-world communication, and we are able to overcome many of the barriers that we face during the process of language acquisition.

Drawing on Krishna's insights, van Dijk's Digital Divide theory helps clarify how access to and use of digital technologies, such as Generative Artificial Intelligence tools, can reduce gaps in language education, particularly in underprivileged areas. Krishna's experience with generative AI reflects the first-level digital divide, in which access itself becomes a key barrier. As such, AI for him opened doors to learning materials that had previously been out of reach. These tools also supported challenges related to pronunciation and grammar, empowering him to overcome language barriers. This connects to the second-level divide, which concerns the skills and competencies necessary to use AI technologies in language learning effectively. Krishna's narrative showed that the academic growth and linguistic support he has gained are through AI tools. This potential of AI resembles the third-level divide. It focuses on long-term

benefits and outcomes of digital literacy and its usage. To ensure that all learners benefit fairly, there is a growing need for structured guidance that promotes balanced AI usage alongside traditional educational methods (Chen et al., 2020).

Chapter Summary

Generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, Duolingo, and educational applications like Monica have changed how learners acquire knowledge by offering personalized learning, flexible and learner-centred experiences. Both learners and language educators benefit from advanced technologies, which support self-paced learning and provide immediate feedback. In addition, these tools facilitate formative assessment and help track progress. Student participants Anny, Manita and Krishna discussed how AI empowered them by enhancing their skills in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and literary content, particularly in contexts where resources are limited. They pointed out how they built confidence and were able to evaluate their own writing against expected academic standards. Language educators had the opportunity to make their classrooms more inclusive and interactive, and they were able to simplify lesson planning as AI provided learning materials effortlessly. Similarly, some educators use AI to design practice tests and generate answers for ease of assessment. Moreover, generative AI has helped overcome limitations of conventional methods of language teaching and engaged learners through communicative approaches. In the process, it has addressed diverse challenges related to learning a language. Similarly, gamified and interactive learning strategies have further enhanced learners' potential.

However, both teachers and language learners identified drawbacks that may arise from over-reliance on AI and the need for critical digital literacy. The applied theoretical framework, van Dijk's Digital Divide, highlighted the importance of equitable access and human creativity in making learners and language educators active, skilled, and creative. Melina, Ram and Anup, the language educators, reinforced the necessity of blending methods to preserve learners' originality and critical thinking. They prioritized that AI can assist in assessment, but it should not replace educators' judgment. For this, the strategic use of generative AI is compulsory to foster independent learning.

Based on the above discussion, it can be said that AI is one of the most dynamic technologies in this advanced era. It is designed with various merits; however, it is crucial

to address disparities that come along with AI as it promotes inclusive learning environments and empowers learners and educators, fostering active engagement and motivation, but it always demands thoughtful integration.

CHAPTER V

FACING THE FLIPSIDE: COPING WITH CHALLENGES OF GENERATIVE AI IN LANGUAGE LEARNING CONCERNING ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

This chapter deals with the second research question of my dissertation paper: How do learners cope with the challenges posed by Gen AI in language learning in relation to assessment standards? Every participant involved in this study shared their experiences with the use of AI in English language education. As this study is exploratory research, this chapter aims to interpret the diverse perceptions and coping mechanisms of participants who are familiar with the use of AI in language learning.

The accumulated insights are evident that I am aware of the extent of the hurdles faced by the participants while applying AI-equipped tools and applications. According to the participants, the primary concerns were over-reliance on AI, unimaginativeness and loss of creativity, academic deception, and dependability of AI-formatted matters along with rigidity in complying with evaluation criteria. These accounts provide insight into how learners and educators are navigating the new landscape of AI-assisted learning. This chapter begins with various themes that focus on the ethical and pedagogical implications of AI use, as well as the strategies adopted by learners and educators. This chapter presents a thematic analysis and critical interpretation of diverse voices to highlight the evolving nature of language learning and assessment in the era of GenAI.

Ethical Ambiguity and the Struggle for Authenticity

The tech-savvy age is evolving rapidly; the use of AI-assisted tools is becoming mandatory for personal growth. Therefore, learners and language educators are enhancing their own learning environments by making them technology-friendly. The accessibility of Generative AI is notably surging in the teaching and learning activities of language; nonetheless, in my observation in the research, it was discovered that the ambiguity and confusion were rampant among the participants, regarding the use of generative AI. Moreover, the trustworthiness of AI is doubtful in many cases, and hence it demands logging in for navigation. Many of the participants in this study explored the

inappropriate use of AI tools. These tools lack formal academic guidelines, and they don't provide a clear understanding. Melina explored her experiences in this regard,

Most often, I feel that with the emergence of GenAI, the authenticity of language learning is getting lost. In the classrooms, the engagement of the students is diminishing, even with their tutors, since they are completely into making their assignments using their fingertips over the screen of their phones. I can see a lack of personal bonding. Students no longer value authentic learning materials and literature. As I am familiar with AI, I found that the sources of AI are not always clear and reliable. I am unaware of my data access. I have heard about hacking issues frequently, which makes me cautious. But what I believe is, it is unstoppable; both students and educators cannot avoid its uses. However, we have to use our own awareness and common sense while using it and manage it properly. Policymakers, on the other hand, need to step forward to ensure the ethical usage of AI in language education. (Interviewed on 2081/02/10)

Melina clearly outlined the advantages and disadvantages of GenAI. She mentioned that advanced technology changes the way of learning; it makes educational tasks easier and quicker. She also highlighted that AI reduces classroom involvement and diminishes the connection with language educators and real classroom materials. This sharing by Melina resembles that of Lakhe Shrestha et al. (2025), who stated that the bond between the teacher and student is found to be feeble due to AI. Curzon et al. (2021), who strongly suggested that the sources of information from AI are unclear time and again, and consequently, data privacy turns to be a matter of concern. Therefore, learning can be maintained in reality through the use of AI in practice drills between the teachers and students in participatory settings. At the same time, they should also bring authentic materials, such as novels, articles, and course books, for live discussions. Moreover, language institutions should teach the effective use of AI, as well as comprehensive rules regarding data use, etc. According to van Dijk's Digital Divide Theory, if people don't learn AI skills properly, some students will fall behind. Training and policies are essential to preserve the human element in education and ensure the proper use of AI. Another participant, Anny, emphasized,

I have experienced AI tools like Chat GPT and Duolingo that help to learn about sentence structure, and they support students of all ages. Even younger students can search for their necessary topic and explore their own. I must say that using AI is convenient.

Being worried, she expressed her concerns:

As a student, I am starting to rely too heavily on AI for quick and accurate answers. It is affecting my natural effort and mindset. I have seen some of my colleagues submit assignments that do not contain their own voice. It lacks the human sensitivity that the writer should have. (Interviewed on 2081/02/015)

She suggested an idea to address these current issues: *“Different educational institutions and the Nepalese government should raise awareness campaigns.”*

She further emphasized the need for training for language teachers and students on the ethical use of AI, so that human creativity should be enhanced by AI but never be substituted. This response is a reflection of the participant’s consciousness not only on the opportunities but also the threats presented by GenAI in language education. She observes that the AI tools are instrumental in enhancing the structure and composition of sentences, and are handy for all age groups of learners, and this fact complies with research exhibiting the capacity of an AI in customizing the learning for a learner and improving language practice (Curzon, 2021). Moreover, she even added her voice for an appropriate application of AI such that it would not destroy individual effort and real creativity. The themes match those of Holmes et al.’s (2022) findings that excessive dependence on AI tools can adversely affect cognitive involvement and ingenuity. Anny, thus, suggested that ethical training along with campaigns to raise awareness about proper use of AI are a must to incorporate it into education. Further, the expression of the student participants that AI should facilitate human creativity, not substitute it, also aligns with van Djik’s (2006) Digital Divide Theory, which puts the spotlight on the idea that providing access to digital tools to a user merely does not justify their meaningful use. They also need digital literacy to support their usage. Krishna, another student participant, expressed his experiences,

I got that AI is helpful in case of explaining difficult topics; it does make educational settings interesting and interactive while using videos to draw

students' attention. However, I sometimes felt frustrated, as AI tools ask for logging in and dealing with the language is confusing. Using AI is confusing; I'm unsure whether I'm using it ethically or not. I have also seen many students submit AI-generated tasks. It lacks human feelings and their personal effort, too. I believe such actions lead to a loss of creativity and originality in students. The students cannot overcome the dilemma about where they should draw the line between employing AI as a helpful tool and using it inappropriately. Therefore, the proper guidelines and policies from the government are mandatory. So that we can teach today's young learners about the ethical usage of AI. This technology should support us; we cannot let it replace our creativity.

Research participants Anny and Krishna shared similar thoughts about using AI in language learning. They both agreed that AI tools make the learning environment more interactive, but learners should be concerned about AI-generated tasks, which often lack personal voices and emotional depth. Krishna emphasized that learners' learning skills may be compromised if students do not invest their own effort into writing tasks. Studies have also shown that AI can be helpful, but excessive use can hinder students' ability to think critically (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). Krishna, like Anny, reiterated that AI should be used as an assisting tool by the learners, it should not displace their endeavor and novelty. Therefore, there is a need for clear rules and training so that students and teachers can utilize AI effectively. Next, teacher participant Ram prioritised his thoughts about applying AI-assisted tools in language education. He added his point:

There is no doubt that advanced technologies, such as AI and its tools, are more convenient. However, there are some challenges when it comes to ethics. For instance, while using AI tools, many of them often demand us to get logged in, usually through our email ID, along with providing consent to a volume of terms and conditions mentioned. We may not fully understand what we're agreeing to, but we continue. It made me confused. Additionally, AI is capable of quickly generating responses to any content and topic. Sometimes, I feel students may generate answers from it. Hence, awareness among the language educators and learners about proper and ethical application of AI plays a crucial role in effective direction in this aspect, leading them to fair

*and purposeful use of AI without compromising the originality in answers.
(Interviewed on 2081/02/8)*

Ram, the teacher-participant, in his remark, clearly illustrated that using AI-based tools in education generated perplexity among the language educators and the learners, specifically in terms of approval. Ram also expressed his insecurity about losing personal endeavour and ingenuity of the students' works due to overdependence on AI. In addition, Pandey and Rai (2023) add, though the learning activities are supported by the AI tools markedly, the importance of promoting digital awareness and ethical directives cannot be ignored among the language educators and students to keep the misuse at bay. Next participant, Melina quoted,

AI tools assist in language learning by simplifying complex lexical resources and language; nonetheless, it was detected that they are not robust enough in dealing with the context of emotions and culture in literary works. AI strains to elaborate subtle human emotions, while poetry is discussed.

Her concerns represent Turkle's (2011) view that technology has abilities in mimicking connection without true understanding, in alignment with Gunkel's (2012) reasoning that no machines can strengthen emotional and moral growth the way literature does. A teacher participant, Anup, stated

The application of the AI tool forced us to limit the ingenuity of students' work. I have often observed that students rely on AI to generate better content without understanding it well and without raising ethical questions about its originality. I am afraid the overreliance may lead to a decline in mental engagement. Students no longer create mental maps, which is very dangerous.

According to Anup, authentic codes and AI literacy campaigns are mandatory for establishing accountable use of AI. The concern of the teacher participant, Anup, resonates with the idea that increasing reliance on AI challenges the value of originality in academic work. They also reduce ample opportunities for cognitive engagement in meaning-making processes. On the other hand, it creates a gap in the learning process, where students lack the deeper learning that assessment standards expect. Student participant Manita shared her experience,

Whenever I use AI chatbots to generate answers, it looks perfect and aligns with the content well, but deep inside, I feel uneasy about submitting that task as it is not my hard work. I want to reflect my own ideas, my originality, but AI makes me depend on ready-made content.

Talking about her struggle between authenticity and convenience, she further continued her sharing,

I feel I am hiding behind polished and organised sentences and academic work, since those are not my authentic voice. This creates an ethical dilemma for me: should I prioritize speed and accuracy from AI, or should I take the longer path of developing my own language skills? If I continue like this, I will lose the ability to express myself honestly.

From Manita's reflection, it is clear that when using AI, learners face a certain level of anxiety regarding their assessments and learning tasks. Generative AI provides accuracy; it also provides efficiency, but at the same time, these tools simultaneously weaken learners' authorship and originality (Mazzi, 2024). The participants' voices reveal that the blurred ethical "line" around GenAI use remains unclear, as it lacks formal guidelines; students and teachers themselves need to navigate issues of authenticity, data trust, and personal effort. This lack of clear guidelines is the reason why maintaining originality intact in assessments is becoming difficult. So, in the absence of clear national rules, maintaining academic honesty becomes even harder.

To address this ethical ambiguity, stakeholders responsible for AI development, policymakers, and relevant institutions must be involved. Only then are genuine learning outcomes of students preserved and integrated. In this theme, I have presented the experiences and thoughts of research participants on ELE and the ambiguity of AI, who have insightfully expressed the impacts of their experiences on their learning.

Contingency Dilemma: Balancing Simplicity with Endeavour

AI has become a very effective and potent tool in facilitating human knowledge. This theme examines the dilemma faced by teachers and students when utilizing generative AI in educational settings.

This evolving technology is making language learning and teaching easier. The quality of promptness in responding saves time. It is concise in explanation and helps

with tasks such as writing, translating, and planning lessons. On the other hand, this convenience may result in an addictive reliance on AI. Many learners may start relying completely on AI for every sort of work and assignment, so that they cease to think independently and imaginatively. This can reduce their creativity, effort, and critical thinking. Participants in this study found that taking the shortcut is easy; however, these temptations lead to laziness and less motivation towards learning. As Sharma (2025) points out, striking a balance between utilizing AI as a helpful tool and still encouraging personal effort is crucial in education. If the students over-rely on AI, they will leave their learning skills far behind. In this regard, student participant Manita shared her thoughts and ideas,

Students who are well familiar with AI chatbots are very familiar with the fact that AI has made things very easy. With just a good prompt, I can get answers to questions without giving a burden to my mind and thought process. I shouldn't be happy here, as, unknowingly, AI is pushing me backwards. I know many of us are using AI without proper knowledge to easily get answers. Therefore, for the proper use of AI, we require effective training for both teachers and students to understand how to utilize it effectively. The balance in the use of AI is mandatory for less dependency on it. Without critical guidance, the learner might make the mistake, assuming that they are familiar with all the issues just because of AI.

Manita's response highlighted her worry about overdependence on AI tools. She experienced that while AI offers immediate answers and reduces mental effort, it also risks weakening students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Her insight revealed that students are caught between the convenience of AI, so that, as far as possible, the preservation of students' cognitive engagement is crucial. Zhao (2024) noted that overreliance on AI can lead to metacognitive loss and hinder critical engagement. In the same regard, teacher participant Anup echoed his manliness,

While I am involved in teaching and learning, I personally have experienced that it helps with my teaching assignments. It wrote me an essay within a few seconds. It made my task easier. However, the problem is that when everything comes so easily, we start losing our habit of thinking for ourselves. We depend on AI instead of using our own creativity and effort. That's where the real challenge lies.

Undoubtedly, AI support us in almost every sector of learning. But the best criterion is that we should not let AI diminish our real work. We should take ideas from it, but the work, real thinking, must be ours. This is the way we can grow in the technological world.

Anup advocated for key ethical and pedagogical concerns while integrating AI into education. He deeply underscored the tension between the convenience of AI and the cognitive autonomy that students may lose because of AI. This remark resonates with the idea of Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019): While AI can enhance productivity and provide scaffolding for both teachers and learners, it should not replace the foundational processes of thinking, creating, and problem-solving. Anup noted that, as AI can complete the assigned task with minimal effort, there is a high risk of losing the self-reliance habit of students. This aligns with Selwyn (2022), who argues that AI must be positioned as a co-agent in learning, one that encourages reflective thinking rather than passive consumption of information. Therefore, students and language educators need to be trained in cultivating critical AI literacy to raise questions on ethical issues. From which the user of AI will be able to preserve their intellectual agency.

Another teacher participant, Ram, enhanced the parallel thought just as Anup explored. Ram stressed that,

It has made things easier for learners and teachers, either for making lesson plans or doing literary tasks like developing poems or writing essays. It generates answers quickly, but this quick access may hinder us. As a teacher, I also use AI; it provides us with content, but not always the essence. I believe this is what I take as a real drawback. We cannot neglect the application of AI-based tools in learning. Yet, in our setting, it is crucial to keep balance, where language learning also signifies emotional connection, and AI really falls short.

AI poses several significant benefits in imparting language education, but what should not be ignored is the ability it holds in limiting in-depth study and learning in a learner. Selwyn (2022), in this context, strongly supported that AI tools ought to facilitate learning, not substitute the student's potential of thinking freely and creativeness. The teacher also expressed concern about emotional profundity and cultural meaning, which lines up with van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide Theory, which describes clearly that the

value acquired by using digital tools is not equal for all, specifically at times when the tools do not meet human emotional and cultural understanding. The educators and learners must learn to make prudent use of the AI tools, which are effective, so that they can optimize support from these cutting-edge technologies for meaningful association with language education. For the effective use of AI-generated materials in the learning environment. Being in the same theme as another participant, Anny, accentuated her experiences and promoted,

AI has really made things easier for me, especially when it comes to long texts. Tools like ChatGPT help me summarize big chapters in simple language. However, I have even noticed that it is imperfect. While preparing for assessment, I observed that in a literary context, AI does not comprehend implied human sentiment or metaphoric meaning. It supplied the erratic names of the characters and failed to grasp symbolic meanings in poetry and stories, which made me realize that full dependence on AI is questionable so far. So, I feel that while AI supports learning and creativity, we should not completely rely on it.

Anny's realization aligns with broader concerns raised in recent studies by Burgess (2023), who shared that a lack of required skills in literature analysis, such as interpreting symbolism or emotional depth, may cause hindrances in the study that AI causes. The teacher participant, Melina, shared her experience under the theme *Dependency Dilemma: Balancing Ease with Effort* and noted,

I gained significant convenience in canonical literary texts, as well as the technical aspects of writing, including rhyme, rhythm, and structure, with the use of AI. However, such ease can reduce learners' personal effort. AI tools left less room for original thinking and unique perspectives. Most often, I feel moral discomfort when using AI, as it never requires my contribution for any responses. Moreover, true literary expression requires more than what AI is currently providing us. I mean, a personal and imaginative insight is necessary.

Melina emphasized that the use of AI should be judicious to preserve learners' creativity, emotional connection, and ethical integrity in learning. Melina's moral discomfort aligns with the ethical concerns of authenticity in AI-assisted learning. Therefore, humans should develop interpretive autonomy in literature education

(Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). The student participant, Ram, shared his views on AI-generated content,

AI has created a culture of dependency because learners these days neglect the effort of developing their own writing skills. I often generate assignments with the help of AI, as it offers creative avenues for poetry and story writing. However, these contributions lack authenticity. That's why I feel that content comes and goes, leaving the essence.

Ram highlighted the risk of dependency in generative AI. Although it assists by providing fluent and creative content, a lack of personal expression remains. Being a researcher, it implies the necessity to check how assessment and pedagogy can motivate the students to hit an equilibrium between AI assistance and their independent analytical reasoning and creativity. He further added,

Using AI provides us with instant and accurate results, but it also enhances the risk of missing out on the struggle and creativity that foster authentic understanding. In the case of assessment, AI helps me to meet the surface-level requirements of assessment standards; however, it fails to cultivate cultural awareness.

His expression reveals that despite the convenience AI offers in learning tasks, it usually fails to incorporate vital elements in learning language like the real depth of meaning, personal participation and context of culture. Krishna, the student participants shared how generative AI brought support and struggle in language education.

I particularly learn about sentence construction from AI. I am engrossed by the attributes of the microphone and the speaker of AI in using complex vocabulary. Nonetheless, the content, if incomplete, can ruin learning unless it is resolved. AI reads poems and stories aloud, which may cause learners to depend on the technology instead of making a personal effort. My aspiration is that the availability of AI be offline and free of cost so that everyone willing to learn can be included without bias and without any condition. Moreover, the learners need to be responsible while using AI tools for maintaining a balance between effort and ease.

This intersects with van Dijk's Digital Divide Theory (2006), particularly the skills and usage access dimensions, which suggest that equitable participation in digital environments depends not just on access to technology but also on the ability to use it critically and meaningfully. One must have technological knowledge to be an active user of AI tools. It is also necessary to be far from the risk of becoming a passive user of AI tools.

Loss of Cultural and Emotional Context

The participants highlighted that AI makes essay writing or lesson planning faster; however, it cannot capture the emotional and cultural nuances which are essential in language learning. As stated by Ram, Anny and Melina, overdependence on AI diminishes imaginativeness and creativity of a person, efforts and also loses the essence of meaning or depth of understanding, time and again, derived from the spontaneous engagement with literary contents. Therefore, it is very important to balance between AI and legitimate human-based learning to maintain the emotional and cultural profusion of ELE.

Digital Literacy and Awareness as an Adaptive Strategy

In this digital age, Generative AI is prevailing tremendously in language education. Therefore, the need for digital literacy and critical awareness is crucial to tackle and cope with the increasingly emerging technology for the enhancement of language education in a better way for both learners and educators. Cheng et. al (2021) pointed out that AI offers support in various tasks like content generation and summarisation, but for its effective and ethical use, the understanding of its responsible use and limitations is required to be clear. Participants in this study emphasised that cultivating digital literacy means the ability to access, evaluate, and ethically apply digital tools that empower them to make informed decisions about when and how to use AI. The insight related to AI assists in mitigating over-reliance upon AI-generated tools and also encourages its learners and educators to maintain academic originality and critical engagement. With this intellectuality, they foster balanced and meaningful integration of AI in language education. In this regard, the student participant Krishna noted,

I come from a non-technological background, so digital literacy and awareness are essential for me so that I can use AI tools effectively in language education. AI

tools help me explore good pronunciation. However, I found that AI tools often offer only limited access unless users pay, and this becomes a barrier in the journey of learning. Next, clear rules and proper training in using AI are crucial to use digital literacy effectively and bridge the gap between opportunity and its accessibility. (Interviewed on 2081/03/12)

Krishna emphasised that the proper use of digital literacy to enhance oneself is very important, but equitable access is another challenge to fulfil. He emphasized that learners from non-technological backgrounds face challenges in navigating AI effectively. On the other hand, due to payment barriers, students and educators face issues of digital equity, which directly affect inclusive access, and the potential of AI remains largely unexplored by privileged learners and educators. This observation aligns with van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide Theory, which emphasises the gap between those who have access to digital technologies and the necessary skills to use them, and those who do not. The learner participant prioritized training programs and effective policies to promote modern and affordable access, ensuring the advantages of AI tools. Hatton (2023) puts forward that through enrichment of digital literacy and securing fair access to AI technologies, the learners from varied educational backgrounds can be empowered, particularly in the background of language learning. Likewise, Anny, another student participant, voiced,

AI tools influenced me to be lively to learn its new details since by nature it is responsive. However, digital literacy and its awareness are the most while using AI tools. As AI offers tremendous benefits, students, along with language educators, must be aware of the inaccuracies and limitations of AI. Since being digitally literate, an educator and a learner can identify these shortcomings, stop excessive dependence on AI, and get the tools used effectively through verification of details and information and explaining imagery or figurative language meticulously. I have experienced that most often; AI misses the cultural and regional nuances. So, for the sake of authentic learning and intellectual growth, digital literacy is a vital mechanism in this educational setting.

Anny, a student participant, noted that the integration of digital literacy into language education is necessary so that language educators and learners can be equipped

with the necessary skills for engaging with AI tools in the learning landscape. The educational institutions can confirm that AI functions as a helpful tool instead of being a source of fabrication and addiction (Washington, 2023). These conditions can foster a highly significant and productive learning setting. Likewise, Manita, next participant, opined her view on AI. She reflected on both the features of AI that she had experienced, including its possibilities and constraints in a learning context.

AI is a better way to be creative as it aids in understanding literary styles, themes and plot development. But at the same time, AI often fails to grasp the depth of human emotions in poetry and stories, which affects the authenticity of its interpretations. Moreover, it also lacks cultural nuances in its outputs; therefore, for the improvement of AI, incorporating diverse culturally rich references and a wide range of literature is mandatory. The reason why digital literacy and critical awareness should go beyond technical skills, that AI empower learners and fosters authenticity.

From Manita's insight, it is clear that for the proper use of AI, its users must have advanced knowledge to understand the underlying cultural biases and interpret the divide. Her emphasis on digital literacy is also supported by Nyaaba et al. (2024), who strongly presented that generative AI regularly overlooks the regional, societal or cultural meanings which have significant value in education. Manita highlighted that embedding critical awareness into AI literacy training enables learners and language educators to enhance and supplement AI outputs, thereby aiding in empowerment and fostering comprehensive creativity among its users. Moreover, it fails to convey emotional depth and often misleads. In this rapidly evolving landscape of generative AI in language education, technological skills and awareness emerge as a very crucial coping strategy. The teacher participant, Anup, shared his experiences and elaborated,

I was overwhelmed by the emergence of generative AI, but I found that being digitally literate helped me to guide my learner in a good manner. It helped me distinguish between credible and unreliable AI-generated content. Moreover, it empowered me to use AI tools responsibly. Now, I want to inform all learners and educators to understand the merits and constraints of AI to develop more ethical

and responsible use of emerging technology to reduce over-reliance on AI for classroom management and language learning landscapes.

The reflection of Anup underscores that digital literacy is not merely enough to navigate modern technology, but critical and ethical awareness of using AI is also mandatory. According to him, in the domain of language education, academic comprehension is a key approach to accomplishment in digital literacy. Researchers like Ng (2012) debate, digital literacy incorporates technical, analytical, interpersonal and emotional measures, facilitating users to work with digital matter sensibly and thoughtfully. Anup's consideration about overdependence on AI vividly reflects that unquestioning use of generative AI can compromise learners' imaginativeness and independence (Holmes et al., 2022; Selwyn, 2022). According to him, digital literacy and awareness on ethical use of AI are very important strategically, to equip and empower both teachers and learners. Ram, a teacher participant, opened up his experience,

Digital technology is helpful in diverse ways; one common example is that it interprets or translates any document in a few seconds. Nevertheless, the effective use of AI largely depends on the digital competencies of users. I have experienced, many educators are lacking sufficient training and exposure to digital tools, especially in traditional teaching environments, which hinders the integration of AI in language settings.

Ram acknowledged that for meaningful utilisation of AI in the classroom, teachers required an authentic orientation and awareness program. He further continued and added that,

Without the foundational literacy of AI, it becomes more of a burden than a benefit. Therefore, for responsible and purposeful use of AI in education, it is obligatory to develop necessary infrastructure and deliver government-aided training effectively.

Digital literacy and understanding have risen as a crucial tool or a defensive strategy to cope with challenges caused by generative AI in the advancing setting of language education (Lakhe Shrestha et al., 2025). Language educators familiar with digital literacy can expand their expertise beyond basic operational skills to include the ability to critically evaluate and ethically utilize AI tools like Grammarly and ChatGPT.

Those users can also distinguish between reliable and misleading AI-generated content. Similarly, teachers and students can recognise algorithmic biases, from which the users can be informed about when and how to engage with AI-assisted tools. Also, Melina, the teacher participant, highlighted the importance of understanding and knowledge in avoiding over-reliance on AI. She said that,

Awareness-building is a key measure in addressing the challenges brought about by AI. I believe that proper training, which covers the pros, cons, limitations, and accessibility of AI tools, ensures that risks are addressed alongside the merits of AI. The proper integration of AI in the language classroom depends on the capacity, needs, and syllabus goals of the students and the teachers. Moreover, strategic planning is also a key to the responsible use of AI.

She argued for the necessity of firm policy and monitoring,

As per my concern, institutional monitoring, along with strict guidelines on age appropriateness, is mandatory for using AI safely. To balance the opportunities and challenges of GenAI in language education, it requires systematic awareness, effective guidelines, and well-maintained monitoring from the institutional and policy levels.

This coping mechanism enables educators to guide learners effectively in utilizing AI as a supportive tool, rather than a substitute for human thinking and creativity (Pandey & Rai, 2023). According to experiences shared by research participants, awareness has brought about ethical, cultural, and pedagogical implications of AI, which help develop a balanced learning environment. It fosters a positive mindset that promotes digital literacy in education. The study pointed out that to use AI responsibly, digital literacy is vital. Teachers' participants shared that they suggested practical steps like checking AI content, providing ethical training, and giving guidance on prompts. Melina, Ram, and Anup noted that proper training and support help learners and teachers use AI without losing creativity and authenticity. The teachers and learners are equipped with necessary competencies to fight the challenges and thrive in the educational environment through this digital awareness.

Equity and Policy Gaps

Participants in the study highlighted that access to AI tools is often limited. For access, users have to pay a limited amount. It creates barriers for learners engaging in learning from non-technological sources or those who belong to low-income backgrounds. So, the teachers, Melina, Ram, and Anup emphasized the need for clear policies, government-supported training, and proper infrastructure to ensure fair and responsible use of AI in the world of competitiveness. Addressing these equity and policy gaps has to be addressed so that all learners and educators can benefit from AI. It helps to maintain creativity, authenticity, and academic integrity among the learners and teachers.

Seeking Human Guidance to Meet Assessment Standards in AI-Dominated Learning Spaces

In this digital era, we often feel that AI is the quickest route to scaffolding polished answers (Burgess, 2023). AI can support practice and generate error-free responses, but it alone cannot fulfil the expectations of learners in the case of assessment rubrics. Therefore, to address this gap, learners seek human support, such as teachers, peers, or monitors. Human support directs them with marking schemes and genuine practice writing, which is not offered by generative AI. This necessity of human assistance represents an adaptive strategy through which the students set an equilibrium between AI and humans. AI-supported learning and authenticity of human competence, specifically in the preparation of assessments. The attendee Manita mentioned,

Regarding insightful understanding of texts, AI tools are backed, but intensive understanding is not fully satisfied by them. Chatbots like Grammarly and Monica often fail to capture the contextual and emotional nuances embedded in literary texts, as they don't capture the meaning I need for board exams.

She expressed the inability of AI in interpreting the emotional and contextual factors of poetry,

When I inquire about Muna Madan, for example, it only explains the story, but it doesn't connect the story to our cultural reality, such as the struggle of migration and social issues, which are actually important for addressing exam questions. I felt the same when I studied Robert Burns' The Red, Red Rose. AI provided a general explanation, but the answer lacked the regret and emotional conflict of

the poet. Therefore, I genuinely feel that I still need guidance from teachers to understand the proper way to prepare for the summative examination.

Manita reveals the limitations of generative AI, though AI supports learners in vocabulary enhancement and feedback. However, when facing tasks related to assessment, sensitive interpretation, cultural awareness, and creativity, learners often require guidance from language educators. She explained that teachers made them clear about assessment rubrics, wrote with authenticity, and aligned their tasks with the evaluative standards expected in standardized examinations. In the context of assessments, whether that is class-based or board examinations, a balance between AI-generated assistance and seeking human assistance for credibility, enabling learners to navigate challenges of AI and to safeguard learners' academic integrity and to meet the standards of formal evaluation set by assessment, is always important (Perkins et. al, 2024) Anup, the educator participant, claimed that generative AI not only imparts disclosure to language, but also it may deter students from using their creative minds, when used excessively. He added,

Students in my class rely on AI even to generate classroom presentations, leading to plagiarism and a lack of originality, as they do not need to brainstorm for solutions. Depending upon AI poses a major challenge for the learners who must meet academic requirements that require independent effort. Teachers and students who are using AI are very much clear that it provides texts followed by introduction, body and conclusion, but the text may not meet the depth of analysis and originality valued in examinations.

He emphasized creating classroom environments where students are motivated to show their own abilities. He noted,

Students should use AI for gathering ideas and concepts, but language educators should safeguard the values that assessments aim to measure by making them aware of their over-dependency. Teachers' mentorship and guidance, or support, is the one that helps learners internalize exam rubrics, practice authentic writing, and develop accountability. It also cultivates higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, for their own learning processes, which are central to assessment. As a teacher, I encourage my learners to critically evaluate

sources and develop argumentation skills, enabling them to effectively present their ideas orally and prepare for written assessments and classroom presentations.

According to him, generative AI helps learners and educators with neatly packaged responses; however, it falls short in fostering metacognitive awareness and reflecting learners' own learning strategies, as well as monitoring progress. Moreover, seeking human support is a compensatory strategy to deal with the shortcomings of AI (Shneiderman, 2020). It is a proactive means of equipping learners with adaptability and intellectual rigor, which are important for exploring diverse assessment contexts. In contrast to AI that supports swift access to any literary texts or tasks, personal guidance by an educator prepares the students for the variability and uncertainty of examinations. They confront the learners with open-ended questions, various genres of previously faced and completely new texts or culturally connected conditions that resemble the real examination scenarios. Through such activities, the learners get trained by the educators to ponder critically in a pressurized environment and also assist them in expressing their ideas in different ways that meet the evaluation schemes of the assessment standards. As a whole, this balanced interplay between AI efficiency and human support ensures that learners not only benefit from technological assistance but also possess the necessary originality to succeed in formal evaluation criteria. Likewise, the student participant, Anny, said,

In the process of learning, AI tools have significantly eased my academic work by simplifying long and difficult chapters, improving sentence structure, and translating content into my mother tongue (Nepali). Tools like Grammarly and DeepSeek enhance my writing; these tools are beneficial during my exam preparation because they provide quick review summaries, including writer names, plots, and characters of literary texts. However, it also surprised me that, despite all the convenience, AI was not always reliable in meeting the deeper and more intensive demands of assessments. I experienced a lack of hidden meanings and symbolic language when I needed an accurate explanation. It also missed the emotional depth of a poem or story. These inaccuracies in figurative language

forced me to seek human guidance for critical interpretation and contextual sensitivity, which the exams required.

These reflections from Anny illustrated that generative AI provides surface-level support in correcting mechanical errors, but it fails to address the subtleties of language learning that examinations often test. AI-paved tools often overlook the creative expression that assessments emphasize (Khatri & Karki, 2023). As a result, learners proficient in using AI also rely on mentors and peers for effective guidance. It becomes a coping strategy through which learners develop interpretative sensitivity and emotional literacy. These qualities are essential for both meaningful language learning and passing the examinations. To meet the assessment rubrics, a balanced and negotiable use of AI tools is crucial. Further, she added that,

I took assistance from my teacher in unfolding emotional mood and cultural environment where AI lacks. However, I utilize AI for preliminary support and rely on mentors for academic and authentic interpretation, which places me under the scrutiny of formal examinations.

Generative AI is positioned as a convenient tool (Burgess, 2023). These tools are irreplaceable, and users today cannot substitute them because of their quick accessibility. Learners are adopting a hybrid approach in AI-dominated learning spaces. We must be clear that human mentorship is not merely supportive and essential, but rather guidance becomes central in bridging the gap between AI efficiency and evaluative standards of examinations (Holmes et al., 2019). Thus, human guidance safeguards academic integrity and ensures that student work aligns with the demands of evaluative frameworks, something that AI alone cannot guarantee. Acknowledging significant opportunities of AI in language education, the teacher participant Ram shared,

It is a technology-friendly learning method, it supports the development of four language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). It also makes teaching more efficient and facilitates the development of analytical and creative skills in learners. However, there is a lack of infrastructure, training, and weak governmental policies that stand as major barriers. The reason educators still rely on traditional guidance for learning and assessment is that

He also emphasized the need for a balanced approach to address the assessment standards. He continued again,

While using AI for learning a language, students have to be concerned about data privacy, passivity among themselves and lack of authenticity and logicity. It means AI alone cannot ensure academically tuned learning. For the betterment of assessment, policy-level interventions are necessary so that learners and teachers can ensure their fairness of examinations and maintain academic integrity. While AI is a supportive tool for document preparation and pronunciation practices, it is still hollow without human guidance, particularly to meet assessment standards.

Ram's insights reveal that AI introduces opportunities in language learning by providing preliminary scaffolding, such as pronunciation and translation. But it cannot replace the human role in preparing learners to meet assessment standards, which demand contextual awareness (Holmes et al., 2019). In the high-tech of the technological era, observing the hybrid method is essential to value critical guidance. Moreover, if the government and institutional organizations provide clear guidance and proper training, then learners and language educators can use AI-paved tools without compromising assessment fairness. Thus, the implementation of modern technology in education necessitates policy-level intervention. Similarly, another student participant, Krishna, delivered her insight,

I use AI tools especially for speaking practice and writing long essays. I know it is quick, but it often provided me with incomplete answers, stopped midway, or demanded payment to continue. It works as an online tutor and support system; however, it is not yet sufficient to meet the more structured requirements of academic assessments. Therefore, for a deeper understanding, we learners are compelled to return to our institutional guidance to ensure its alignment with examination standards.

According to him, AI tools are powerful in scaffolding learning, as they can make learning more accessible. However, their limitations, such as misalignment with rubrics, generic feedback, and paid or incomplete access, make human guidance indispensable in assessment standards. Additionally, AI tools pose a risk of fostering superficial comprehension, which undermines the accountability that formal exams require (Kasneci

et al., 2023). Hence, for sustainable academic growth, students still depend on human guidance, interventions, and institutional regulations; in addition to this, the balanced integration of AI in education is essential. Melina, the teacher participant, expressed her insight,

The proper use of AI is necessary in teaching and learning because they need to consider learners' goals, requirements and capacities. Thus, for effective training of educators and learners to be crucial, without training, they become blind users of digital devices. I use AI tools, but I always value human guidance and structured oversight, as AI cannot independently guarantee authentic or quality learning.

She acknowledged that AI cannot be a reliable means for authentic learning and assessment, although it provides convenience and polished assistance. These tools devised shortcuts in completing any assignment, undermining the learners' creativity and originality. She added,

The overreliance upon AI is a concern of ethics and morality. It represents the pressure between the ease posed by AI and originality. Coordinated fusion is required to bridge this gulf. Guidance and direction by human mentors on in-depth interpretation, cultural delicacy, and inventiveness is a must while using AI for the aforementioned purposes. In the Nepali context, AI must operate merely as a helpful tool, and educators should play the role of watch guards of contextual and righteous relevance, thus meeting evaluation standards.

In reference to Melina's reflection, AI plays an assisting role in language education; nonetheless, for a valid examination, human guidance is still a requirement. Digital technology consistently calls for appropriate orientation and coordination of training; without which, the students may fall short of required creative skills and knowledge for practical application. Melina's statement of personal awareness also relates to van Dijk's (2006) digital divide theory, which spotlights clearly on evidence that digital disparities do not always incorporate physical reach, but it also stretches to skills and the competence to employ digital tools impactfully. Quick access is the surface-level benefit of AI; even though learners can easily access AI tools, a skills and usage gap is present among its users. Learners do not prefer deep thinking and analytical answers on

their own; instead, they push towards AI. The reason why they fall downwards in circumstances where they need to show understanding of the context and creativity.

Overall, for the betterment of education, its users have a dual responsibility. On the one hand, educational institutions and policymakers must ensure proper guidelines to safeguard authenticity. On the other hand, educators and learners must nurture reflective practices to balance originality (Perkins et al., 2024). Educators are well aware of examinations like those of NEB, which prioritize comprehension, accuracy, and learners' originality, for which AI tools often lack quality and demand human mentorship. Therefore, pedagogical training, practices, and human guidance are important to ensure fairness, academic tone, and authentic assessment products.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explores how learners and language educators deal with the challenges and opportunities of generative AI in language education, particularly concerning assessment standards. My research participants found that generative AI makes their learning easier by assisting with grammar, translation, vocabulary, and offering instant summaries, presentation files, and lesson planning, but it didn't address serious concerns. For instance, over-reliance on AI reduces users' originality and creativity; besides, it also produces content that lacks emotional depth, cultural sensitivity, and authenticity, particularly in the literature section. Challenges such as plagiarism risks, ethical ambiguity, and unequal access due to the digital divide still remain. The participant highlighted the importance of digital literacy, awareness, and the responsible use of AI tools as coping measures. Among all, in the core emerged human directions since educators and peers jointly work out in elaborating texts, meeting assessment procedures and enhancing higher-level critical thinking which are partly missing in AI. Institutional and policy-level interventions, including training, monitoring, and guidelines, were also emphasized to safeguard fairness and integrity in education. Van Dijk's Digital Divide theory suggests that meaningful use of the digital divide requires skills, equitable opportunities, and proper awareness. The theory emphasized that only access to AI tools is not enough. In general, adoption of a just and mixed method by the language educators and the learners is a must to devise a sensible zone of learning language where AI becomes a fundamental equipment under the meticulous guidance of

educational policies and educators' roles. In this way, one can preserve creativity and academic integrity in language education.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter recapitulates my research journey, from identifying the research issues to the conclusion. This chapter presents my experiences on how this research issue emerged and the obstacles I faced from the very beginning to the end of my research journey. It synthesises the significant findings related to the research questions, draws conclusions, and discusses the implications for learners and language teachers. This chapter presents opportunities and challenges generated by AI in language education and assessment. This section also outlines the implications that emerged from the participants' voices and their practical experiences, acknowledging the study's limitations. It was followed by a suggestion for further research. The insight gained from the study provides a comprehensive closure to the broader landscape of educational practices and future directions.

Reconnecting with Research Purpose

The twenty-first century is overwhelmingly surrounded by new technology everywhere, including the educational sector. AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and translation platforms, are becoming increasingly prevalent in language classrooms. With a focus on assessment, the study aimed to explore the opportunities and challenges of AI concerning ways of addressing risks in English language education. The central concern of this study was not only whether AI could make language education easier and efficient, but also whether the use of AI aligns with the goal of authentic assessment, creativity, and critical engagement. Thus, by applying van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide Theory, the study discussed both the supportive and problematic aspects of AI in language education and assessment, relating to two guiding research questions.

Opportunities of Generative AI in Language Education and Assessment

In the study, participants experienced numerous opportunities that AI presents in their language education. They shared that generative AI enhances learning efficiency, provides instant support, supplements teaching practices, and builds learning confidence.

Pedagogical Opportunities

Besides, both learners and educators disclosed that AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Grammarly, Duolingo, and Google Translate are useful for building vocabulary, correcting grammar, summarizing, and even brainstorming ideas. It motivated them by reducing the workload and creating more engaging classroom activities that enable differentiated instruction and learner autonomy. These observations align with Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019), who argue that the purposeful use of AI enhances learners' productivity and scaffolds learning. Similarly, Selwyn (2022) emphasised AI's role as a "co-agent" that supports learners in navigating academic content more efficiently. The language teacher conveyed that AI tools benefited effective feedback generation, assessment preparation, and lesson planning, which help teachers manage classroom instruction promptly. From a pedagogical perspective, it can be said that the potential of modern technology develops motivation and creativity when students use it interactively in a language environment.

Structural Barriers: Digital Divide and Assessment Misalignment

However, the physical division of these tools is not equally accessible to all learners and educators. According to van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide Theory, unequal access outlines skill and usage dimensions that emerged clearly in the study. The study revealed that some users who are from rural schools or from limited digital literacy have to struggle to use AI ethically. Whereas the learners living in the urban areas or studying in private schools benefited from AI integration in education, and other than this, they lacked support and misused these tools. So, the study indicated the presence of a gap in equitable access to AI.

The finding also indicated that even AI-enhanced or supported learning falls short with assessment practices governed by assessment criteria. New technologies rarely assist in preparing contextual and traditional content. Similarly, it falls short in preparing memory-based examinations, which demand critical thinking and the learner's own creativity. As a result, the study found that academicians most often hesitated to fully integrate AI into instruction because of inappropriate performance in standardised examinations. There seemed to be a mismanagement of structural inequalities, policy limitations, and misalignment in assessment. Thus, for well-grabbing opportunities of

generative AI, participants in the study advocated the need for teacher training, reformation and development of digital infrastructure, and reformation of the curriculum to ensure AI integration in learning and assessment practices of Nepal.

Challenges of Generative AI in Language Education and Assessment

Generative AI incorporates numerous benefits which accelerate educators' and students' learning habits. According to the participant voice in the study, AI created a learning portal for them, where they can interact with their friends and teachers. Kasneci et al. (2023) also emphasised that generative AI enhance collaboration and accessibility in the educational context. Despite its benefits, they noted significant concerns regarding over-reliance on AI for academic standards, including assessment practices in Nepal. Chan and Hu (2023) echoed similar concerns, warning that frequent dependence on AI texts may compromise analytical engagement. Students in this research openly admitted that they are now habituated to the use of AI, particularly for writing responses to assignments, exam preparation, and creating summaries of longer literary texts without investing their personal effort. This research finding exposed that generative AI ensure grammatically accurate and well-organised, cohesive answers, but it diminished learners' motivation and independent exploration. They felt difficulty in exploring topics independently.

Some participants expressed that excessive reliance weakened cognitive engagement in literature-based assessments, which stood as a hindrance to the development of an original perspective among learners and teachers. Moreover, this emerging technology lacks emotional depth and interpretive nuance. This is not feasible in the context of NEB's assessment practices, as the assessment standard prioritises the writer's personal, comprehensive expression and analytical ability in writing (Curriculum Development Centre [CDC], 2019).

This dissertation highlights the growing mismatch between AI and language education. The flowless surface-level answers often failed to meet deeper evaluation criteria expected in high-stakes exams, creating a new "Usage Divide," where learners' assessment success depends on their ability to use AI effectively and ethically (Acharya, 2025). These findings are similar to points made by Luckin et al. (2016), who remind learners about overdependence in AI and its huge demerits, which can lead to

metacognitive loss, thereby undermining their capacity to self-monitor and self-regulate. Selwyn (2022) raises concerns about the erosion of academic integrity among learners when students bypass authentic engagement with machine-driven shortcuts. The participant experienced moral discomfort when submitting work assisted by AI. They were caught between the convenience of AI and the serious risk of losing originality, as they had become habituated to using AI time and again for assistance. This aligns with Saeedi and Soltani (2025), who argued that AI cannot capture the symbolic, contextual, or culturally embedded meanings in literature, resulting in shallow or decontextualised learning. Van Dijk's theory evokes a lack of skill and a usage gap of technology that turns students backwards. Students ought to be smart enough to use AI ethically. According to the theory, having access to technology isn't meaningful. For this, the user should know how to use it properly. To address this, institutions, whether private or public, should incorporate digital literacy and responsible use of AI into their assessment criteria. Only after this, the mechanism helps learners meet assessment standards.

Coping Strategies: Digital Literacy and Human Guidance

Participants in the study highlighted challenges like cognitive loss, overreliance on AI, and ethical awareness as the main concerning issues. Similarly, they advocated for the development of digital literacy and human reinforcement as guidance for efficient coping strategies. The tech-savvy era extends beyond the ability to operate AI tools; therefore, participants voiced a need for critical awareness, ethical judgment, and the capacity to evaluate AI-generated outputs for accuracy and relevance. This consideration also resembles Ng's (2012) multidimensional model of digital literacy, which particularly values the incorporation of technology, cognition and socio-emotional skills. Similarly, the Digital Divide Theory necessitates the interconnectedness of access to technology, the ability to use it and the skill to benefit from it. Therefore, to align with their educational goals, they must develop competencies in applying AI tools responsibly to meet educational requirements.

The assessment criteria in Nepal emphasize the originality, comprehension, and analytical ability of learners (CDC, 2021) however, AI presents a challenge in achieving this. The participants found that AI provided a preliminary response instead of presenting contextually relevant content. Even if AI gives a grammatically perfect response, it may

fall short in critical thinking and contextual depth to meet the rubric requirements. As a result, both teachers and students noted that without human support, students cannot transform AI-generated text into the contextual and analytical responses demanded by assessment rubrics. Human mentorship is mandatory for developing literary interpretation and fostering higher-order skills such as cultural sensitivity. In this regard, teachers' mentorship plays a key role as a pedagogical bridge for supporting students to overcome the "skill/usage divide" (van Dijk, 2006). This observation supports Holmes et al. (2022), who assert that teachers are essential in fostering creativity, critical literacy, and ethical reasoning qualities that AI cannot replicate. Consequently, Luckin et al. (2016) remarked that pedagogical frameworks are important while integrating AI as they provide guidance to students for scaffolding learning efficiency and determination to ensure authentic engagement and develop learners' autonomy.

Integrating Findings with Theory

As this study aimed to explore the use of AI in language education and assessment, the participants shared their experiences of applying AI in an educational setting and during preparation for the assessment standards. To understand how generative AI is used in language education and how it influences the assessment system, van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide Theory was employed as an analytical lens. Van Dijk's framework was developed before the emergence of AI technologies, even though it has intensified in the current era. The theory emphasized that physical access to technology is not sufficient to reap the potential benefits from it. The mere access to digital technology is not enough; students need to acquaint themselves with critical awareness and reflective capacity.

The findings also revealed that most of the teachers and learners have access towards AI tools, but they are having trouble in case of using them. Their engaging perceptions, depth of AI tools are different among them. For instance, learners or teachers with stronger digital literacy were able to evaluate critically and access the desired outputs, which van Dijk identified as essential for closing the digital divide. Those learners can easily adapt required responses and meet the assessment standards, and integrate them efficiently into their instructional activities. In contrast, passive users with limited digital skills often employ a method of copying and pasting. They tended to rely

on surface-level only, which limits the opportunities for authentic learning and the development of skills to use AI properly. This theory helps explain the new form of digital divide that is generative AI. According to van Dijk's theory on shaping learners' preparedness and performance, learners must critically engage with technology and possess the necessary skills and awareness. Mere access to digital technology is not worthwhile. In this way, the rise of GenAI has intensified the digital divide, highlighting disparities not in the availability of technology but in the quality and depth of its pedagogical use.

In the study, van Dijk focused on disparities in access and digital literacy. So, the extension of this framework for the era of AI necessitates a new layer of the digital divide. Which is shaped by the critical and mechanical application of AI tools. This new layer of AI shows that AI can either bridge or widen educational inequalities, according to one's critical digital competence. Moreover, the study made it clear that the use of AI risks fostering dependency and superficial learning, thereby reinforcing existing inequities in assessment performance. This gap risks widening educational inequalities, as those with limited critical literacy may fail to meet higher-order cognitive demands such as analysis, synthesis, and application, which are prioritised in classroom assessments and examinations. Therefore, for equitable access to AI, sustainable investment in digital literacy, ethical awareness, guided pedagogical practices and criticality of technology uses are essential for its users to address the divide shown. It ensures AI is not just a tool of dependency; instead, it is the most powerful and effective transformative tool to empower language educators and learners, meeting higher-order assessment demand and developing learning autonomy.

Conclusion

Applying an exploratory research design, I have gained different perspectives and experiences from my research participants. This is the beauty of applying exploratory research. When we adopt a holistic approach, we gain multiple perspectives on the same experiences through interviews, observation, and focus groups. This section presents the key insights derived from the study's findings and discussion.

The findings of this research paper confirmed that emerging technologies offer potential benefits, as they can transform language education by providing customised

learning, instant feedback, creative prompts, and authentic access to language input that supports engagement and confidence (Kukulka-Hulme & Viberg, 2018). Participants shared that AI-assisted platforms enhanced their grammatical accuracy, vocabulary range and built confidence in reading and writing. They are also helped in vivid ways, such as creative prompts for sparking their engagement. Students can navigate long and complex blocks as AI offers multiple options for paraphrasing and rephrasing, through which they can easily overcome challenges. However, participants noted drawbacks, including overreliance on machine-generated outputs, limited opportunities for original thought, and ethical concerns related to plagiarism and academic integrity (Ng, 2012). Participants advocated the notion that AI should be used as a supplementary tool, as human effort, guidance, and critical language practices are always paramount in the case of assessment practice in Nepal.

The study revealed that most often, GenAI-generated answers lacked alignment with the assessment criteria. It missed cultural and situational appropriateness, and most of the answers were of a surface-level linguistic correctness. On the other hand, the assessment system evaluates originality, contextual understanding, higher-order critical thinking skills and depth of argument. This aligns with Holmes et al.'s (2022) argument, who stated that human educators are vital in guiding learners towards their responses that demand integration of personal insight, contextual relevance, and evaluative reasoning for assessment.

Summing up, the study examined necessity of human guidance in meeting assessment standards and developing higher-order learning skills. Human teachers have to serve as cultural mediators, contextual interpreters, and gatekeepers of assessment standards. For covering and providing nuanced feedback that AI could not reproduce (Holmes et al., 2019). Furthermore, ethical and critical AI literacy is vital; ethical use of AI requires critical awareness, moral judgment, and socioemotional intelligence (Ng, 2012). Learners must develop the ability to detect inaccuracies, mitigate bias in generated texts, ensure originality, and adapt content to specific linguistic and assessment standards. Holmes et al. (2019) and Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019) studies suggested embedding AI literacy into curricula to make learners critical evaluators rather than making them inactive. They believe that incorporating AI literacy into current language

curricula enhances learners' capacity to engage in academic and professional environments, promoting responsible, innovative, and equitable use of AI in language education in the twenty-first century.

Implications of the Study

This dissertation, titled “Generative AI and Assessments: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education,” has several essential implications, particularly for educational practice, policy, and future research. Both learners and students must possess competencies in pedagogically using AI; they need to move beyond using AI as merely a general answer machine. Instead, they need to treat it as a reflective and analytical learning partner or mentor. Students and teachers should be critically motivated to adapt to AI-generated content. They must avoid consuming responses passively, as this concern encourages promoting creativity, critical awareness, and learners' autonomy (Maslej et al., 2025, p. 15). Moving forward, the inclusion of AI literacy is becoming mandatory for effective English classrooms to help learners understand the biases, inaccuracies, and ethical dimensions of this technology. Educators are a central body of mediators for equipping students with better language content to grasp and score higher. Therefore, they should design assignments that demand critical thinking, align with assessment scoring, and include students' own ideas and style, as well as polished answers, so that they can distinguish between AI outputs and genuine work.

This research demonstrates that policy levels must cooperate with educational stakeholders, ranging from schools to examination boards and government bodies, to develop moral guidelines for integrating AI into the curriculum and assessment. Such coordination is essential, as previous studies have shown that policies often fail to achieve their intended impact without active engagement of all stakeholders (Neupane et al., 2025). According to this dissertation, AI literacy is now foundational for developing human intelligence, as its incorporation across the educational system has emerged globally. For instance, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Economic Forum's AI Literacy Framework (AILit) advocated for AI literacy. The European Commission, an institution that has already offered frameworks which emphasise equity, transparency, and teacher support in integrating AI (Aiken & Epstein, 2000). Similarly, the standardized examination board of Nepal should

review and revise its assessment rubrics. So as to account for the realities of AI-generated content. The study explicitly urged that assessment-led policy reform is essential to ensure responsible, fair, and contextually relevant integration of AI into language classroom practices and assessment systems of Nepal. It ensures the responsible use of AI integration and equitable access to training and AI-assisted tools by the responsible bodies and stakeholders.

Students and educators have found that to explore the sustainability of AI integration and its impact on learners' critical thinking, longitudinal studies need to be conducted in the future. Next, to promote ethical and engaging classroom activities, a teacher and AI can co-design an AI literacy curriculum together, supporting learners. Based on the theoretical conception emphasized by van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide theory, fostering AI literacy competencies requires prompt proficiency. Likewise, ethical reasoning and legal considerations are other important frameworks identified to enhance effective and authentic use of AI.

My Reflection

My research journey at Kathmandu University School of Education for the MPhil started during my summer vacation from school in 2023. When I visited educational websites, I found information about the admission process, and I was interviewed by professors via online mode, receiving notification of being shortlisted. I always had a strong interest in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education, so I planned to focus my dissertation on this area. As a teacher in both plus-two levels and classes up to Grade ten, I noticed a growing trend of AI in many of my students. I found that their outputs were grammatically correct and in cohesive order, too. However, there was a lack of originality and personal effort among the students. They were using digital technology to complete their assignments, particularly in writing tasks. This typical observation sparked my curiosity. This led me to change my research direction toward exploring Generative AI and Assessments so that I can explore its implications for language education.

Throughout this research I experienced vivid challenges along with rewards too. As I am determined in my research domain, I have thoroughly immersed myself in the literature on AI integration in education, ethical considerations, and assessment practices.

According to my participants' availability of time and schedule, I visited them more than several times in locations, including their own residences, colleges, universities, cafes in Bhaktapur, Kathmandu and Gathaghar, based on their comfort. Before starting interviews, I engaged myself in the rapport building process so that my participants would feel comfortable with me. This helps me to establish trust and openness with them. This process perfectly helped me to collect enriching and insightful data as they shared their honest experiences and perspectives openly.

Besides all these, I must say the journey was truly far from smoothness because of my health issues, which kept recurring frequently during this research. I was hospitalized at Annapurna Hospital for about two weeks due to severe spasms in the muscles of my right hand and myofascial pain in my shoulder joints. It tested my patience and slowed my progress. Follow-up in the hospitals took approximately five months, and requiring visits to several different hospitals put me in depression and anxiety. More recently, I have been dealing with a soft tissue injury in my left leg, which has forced me to take additional rest. These health issues that I am facing have delayed my progress in my research journey, that exceptionally tested my patience level.

Even though I was going through these setbacks, I managed to publish several articles on AI in education. I published some in international Q2 journals and NEPJOL. I consider it a significant achievement in the journey of my life. Through this research journey, I have developed valuable skills in academic writing, qualitative interviewing, and time management. This will significantly strengthen my professional growth. Furthermore, I learn the skill to adapt to unforeseen circumstances without losing sight of my research goal. The challenges in my research taught me the importance of persistence, whereas the achievements reinforced my confidence level as a research scholar. This research journey made me more adaptable and reflective; it shaped me as an academic personality. So, I now view this journey as a process of personal growth. It has strengthened my commitment to exploring the role of technology in education and to promoting ethical, learner-centred assessment practices. This path was not that easy; it was tough and demanding, but ongoing research experience has prepared me to contribute continuously in a meaningful way to the field of language education and assessment.

In conclusion, this remarkable research journey of my career taught me that for the exploration of a field like evolving AI requires patience, willingness and continuous learning to navigate challenges. My research, entitled, *Generative AI and Assessments: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education*, has been a journey of personal perseverance, professional reflection and adaptation. Unexpected issues during this voyage my health problems, challenged my self-paced learning and literature engagement, despite which I strengthened my understanding of the topic and ability to contribute effectively because of my article publication of articles. To step forward in this research journey, I believe the insight and competencies I have gained will continue to guide my teaching practice and future research.

Chapter Summary

After an extensive discussion about the literature, the research participants' views and theoretical notions, the chapter captured the significant discussion and conclusion parts of the research paper. This chapter particularly brings together the core findings, implications, insights and reflections of the study on *Generative AI and Assessment: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education*, offering a comprehensive view of AI's role in Nepal's language education and assessment system, particularly under the assessment framework. The study revealed that AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, Duolingo, and Google Translate scaffold learners' effectiveness of learning efficacy, develop vocabulary growth, and provide grammar correction and summarisation of long and rigorous literary texts. Moreover, the study also noted that AI-generated tools motivate learners and assist teachers in differentiated instruction. Drawing on van Dijk's (2006) Digital Divide Theory, the study highlighted that AI-paved tools were not free of challenges. According to this theory, unequal access due to infrastructural, usage and skill gaps, overreliance on AI-paved tools leads to reduced creativity and criticality. AI outputs led to linguistic inaccuracy, emotional depth, cultural relevance, and analytical nuance required by assessment rubrics. Therefore, the study seemed to stress the strengthening of AI literacy for safeguarding ethical and socio-emotional dimensions and human guidance for purposing getting refine output. The implication of this study emphasised collaborative policy action to bridge usage divides, such as reforming curriculum for embedding AI literacy, equitable digital infrastructure, and sustainable

training for educators, etc. Likewise, while reflecting on the research journey, although there was a presence of health setbacks, she achieved notable academic milestones, fostered adaptability, commitment to the ethics of AI and learner-centred assessment practices. Summing up, the chapter concludes that generative AI is not merely transformative, simple and technology-aided. AI tools are valued in balanced use, ethical and guided integration. The study suggested that for the enhancement of language education, replacing human creativity, their critical engagement and contextual understanding in assessment is not worthwhile.

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APPENDIX-I

CONSENT LETTER

To,
The

Date: _____

REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOL AND
PARTICIPANT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER

My name is Buddhi Laxmi Lakhe Shrestha. I am a Master of Philosophy student at Kathmandu University in the School of Education, Lalitpur, Nepal. Currently, I am pursuing my M.Phil. degree at this university; therefore, as part of the completion of the mentioned degree, I am conducting a research study titled “*Generative AI and Assessments: An Exploratory Study in English Language Education.*” This research aims to investigate and clarify the complex interaction between generative AI and language education. It also aims to explore how it enhances language learning, what ethical and other challenges it brings to education, and ways to mitigate such challenges.

I am approaching you with a request for consent to be a participant in this research. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be permitting me to interview you. The interview is expected to last approximately forty-five minutes and will be digitally recorded on audio recording. No identifying information will be collected during the interview, and you will be reminded not to provide identifying information before the start of the interview. All collected data will be stored securely and accessible only to the researcher and authorised personnel. After I transcribe each interview, the corresponding audio recording file will be deleted.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to be involved in an interview session. Similarly, you also have the complete right to withdraw at any time without consequences or explanation by contacting me at 9842539292 or buddhi_mpele2023aug@kusoed.edu.np. The data collected will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. By using pseudonyms for all names in any dissemination of the research, I will ensure

confidentiality. The information you provide will have no implications for your personal or professional lives. Your insights and experiences may contribute to a better understanding of the potential implications of integrating AI into language education and assessment. Therefore, I assure you there are no direct benefits or anticipated risks associated with participating in this research endeavour.

By consenting to participate in this study, you confirm that you have read and understood the consent form well. You understand the study's aim, methods, and your rights as a participant. Before we begin the interview, I will document your consent electronically or in writing.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to reach me anytime through a phone call or email. In addition, if you have any concerns regarding your rights as a participant, you may contact the Kathmandu University Research Committee at 01-5912524 or admin@kusoed.edu.np.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please insert your name, signature, and date in the spaces below. Your signature in this form indicates that you agree to the knowledge that you have read the content described above and willingly decide to participate.

Participant's Signature:

Researcher's Signature:

Date:

Date:

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Buddhi Laxmi Lakhe Shrestha

buddhi_mpele2023aug@kusoed.edu.np

M.Phil. in ELE, August Cohort

Kathmandu University, School of Education