

Keynote Speech

Language to Decode Media Power: Critical Discourse Analysis in Malaysia's Ethnic Press and Its Classroom Application

Dr. Ng Miew Luan

Dean of the Faculty of Education and Liberal Arts at INTI International University, Malaysia.



Abstract

In this keynote speech, the speaker will delve into the intricate relationship between media, power dynamics, and language through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Drawing from two compelling case studies on ethnic press in Malaysia (1998 and 2012-2013), the speaker will explore how language functions as a tool of power and influence within media contexts. Additionally, the speaker will examine the methodological approaches, theoretical frameworks, and key findings from these case studies, shedding light on the complexities of media representation and linguistic strategies employed by different ethnic presses in Malaysia. At the end of the speech, the speaker will discuss practical strategies for integrating CDA into the classroom.

Keynote Speaker Bio:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ng Miew Luan, a distinguished academic and seasoned professional in the realms of education, journalism, and social sciences. Dr. Ng currently serves as the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Liberal Arts at INTI International University, Malaysia. With a rich background encompassing various roles in academia, she has previously held positions such as Acting Deputy Dean and Head of School of Communication, along with serving as a Senior Lecturer and Lecturer in several esteemed private higher institutions across Malaysia.

Dr. Ng's expertise extends beyond academia, having made significant contributions to the field of journalism as the former Head of Southeast Asia Regional News and senior writer for prominent Chinese language newspapers in Malaysia. Her multifaceted career also sees her actively involved in professional bodies, where she currently holds the position of Assistant General Secretary for the Malaysian Social Sciences Association.

As a Program Assessor for Communication & Media with the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), Dr. Ng ensures the quality and standards of communication and media education in Malaysia. With over two decades of teaching experience spanning from primary school to

tertiary level, she brings a wealth of knowledge and insight to her areas of expertise, including education, journalism practice, media studies, media education, and critical discourse analysis.

Dr. Ng's research interests are equally diverse and impactful, covering crucial areas such as education, media education, political communication, minority press, and language and power.

Keynote Speech

Transformation in English Language Education Innovations, Collaboration and Motivation

Prof. Dr. Jaya Raj Acharya

Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Abstract

English language education entered into Nepal with the return of Jang Bahadur Rana from his visit to Britain in 1850. In the past, teaching of English and every other subject was based on textbooks. Rote learning or memorizing the words, phrases, sentences and even paragraphs was rewarded with prize for success. Teaching/learning English was based purely on Grammar-translation method. Now the innovations in modern technology of communication can be used in classrooms as well as at home to teach many subjects. Today, almost all urban centers in Nepal have access not only to Nepali TV channels but also BBC, CNN, DW, NHK, CCTV and many others. As a result, exposure to spoken English or any other language has become much easier. Regarding the international collaboration for modern English education in Nepal we see that India, UK and USA played crucial role in the development of educational institutions at their early stages. As knowledge of any discipline has to pass through four stages towards perfection such as reading, understanding, practice and teaching, so is language skill gained and perfected by listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is the ultimate joy if one can be creative in it. Teachers and students have an interactive role in it. We cannot be sure yet if AI can substitute them.



Keynote Speaker Bio:

Jaya Raj Acharya is a retired professor of English. He has Master's degrees in Sanskrit and English from Tribhuvan University (1976) and a PhD in Theoretical Linguistics from Georgetown University (1990). His books in Nepali, Sanskrit and English are published from Nepal, India and USA. Some of his publications include *Traditional Grammars: English and Nepali: A Study*, Kathmandu: Navin Press, 1980; *A Descriptive Grammar of Nepali and an Analyzed Corpus*, Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press 1991; *The Nepala-Mahatmya of the Skandapurana (Legends on the Sacred Places and Deities of Nepal)*, New Delhi: Nirala Publications, 1992. His book in Sanskrit *Shrī Manahkāmanā-māhātmyam* has been translated into Nepali, Hindi, English, Newari and Maithili and published in separate volumes

(1998-2000). His *Yadunath Khanal: Jivani ra Vichar* (Yadunath Khanal: His Life and Thoughts), Kathmandu: *Sajha Prakashan*, 2003 was a best-seller. He has also published *Bhāshavijnānako Saiddhāntik Vimarsha* (A Theoretical Discussion on Linguistics), Kathmandu: Makalu Prakashan, 2014. His articles are published in Nepali and American journals.

Keynote Speech

Vedic and Tantric Borders Criss-crossing Parallel Lining

Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma

Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal



The Vedas as well as the Tantras, both of them do have rigidly framed system of rituals, the first is accepted as most intellectually established system whereas the second as the most flexible and inclusive one. Four vedas are associated with the four mouths of Brahma and six Āmnāyās of Tantra from five faces of Shiva or Mahadev. The Vedas and Tantras have their own framed borders for observing rituals. The Vedas or Vedic system is referred by the term 'nigam' and Tantras by 'āgam'. Usually these two are contrast systems, however, they also criss-cross in many spaces and thereby create a need to develop synthetic system or mixed system as accepting something from both systems as well as negating something from both sides. Sometimes items used in Vedic and Tantric rituals are just contrast. For example alcohol as ritual item is not accepted in vedic ritual rather it is a prohibited item whereas in Sākta tantra it is a basic item. Use of 'pancha dravya' or pancha pavitra is very common in Tantra whereas in Vedic practices these things are prohibited. The presentation will be limiting to analysing certain rituals from both Vedic and Tantric frames how they run parallel and how they criss-cross the set borders. The approach to see the rituals is from the Border Theory as developed by Henry A. Giroux, Scott Michaelson and David E Johnson.

Keynote Speaker Bio:

Professor Krishna Chandra Sharma, Ph.D., is a distinguished academic and researcher born on October 2, 1960. His illustrious career was primarily dedicated to the field of English literature, where he served as a Professor at the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, until his retirement on October 2, 2023. Before his retirement, he notably held the position of Executive Director at the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) at Tribhuvan University. Hailing from Bamgha VDC Ward 3 in the Ruru Village Municipality, Gulmi, Lumbini Zone, Professor Sharma's roots are deeply embedded in Nepali soil, a fact reflected in both his personal and professional life. His parents, the late Sharmananda Sharma (Bhandari) and late Bhagiratha Bhandari, instilled in him the values that would guide his impressive career.

Professor Sharma's leadership and administrative capabilities were evident through his tenure as the Campus Chief of Butwal Multiple Campus from 1997 to 1999, and as the Chairman/Head of

the Central Department of English at Tribhuvan University from 2006 to 2010. His extensive experience culminated in his role as Executive Director at CERID, where he served from 2012 to 2016. Throughout his career, Professor Sharma has been a guiding force for numerous researchers, overseeing the successful completion of Ph.D. studies for twenty-two scholars in diverse areas of English and Nepali literature, cultural studies, and more, from the translation of classic works to explorations of cultural identities and literary criticism.

In addition to his mentorship, Professor Sharma has made significant contributions to the academic world through his translations, critical books, co-writings, and creative works. Notably, he translated German dramatist Schiller's drama "The Robber" into Nepali from English in 2005. His critical writings include "Pathan Anubhuti" and "Vicharka Jhilka" two books published by Dayitva Banmaya Pratisthan, philosophical writing Tradition of Nath Yoga in Nepal, a book published by Nepal Academy, and Trend and Tradition of Nepali Folk Literature book in print by CENAS,TU and several comparative studies of prominent literary figures and their representative works. His co-written works further establish his expertise and dedication to the fields of literature, philosophy, and educational research. He worked in a team to prepare Prajna Nepali English Dictionary, and Prajna Philosophy Dictionary published by Nepal Academy.

Professor Sharma's creative output is as impressive as his academic endeavors. He authored "Sabdataranga," a collection of Nepali poems, and "Reflection on Life," a collection of English poems, showcasing his versatility and depth as a poet. His editorial expertise has also been crucial in shaping literary and academic discourse in Nepal, evidenced by his role in editing significant works and journals that range from UGC journal, Nepal Academy Journal,TU Journal, CERID journal and Journal of CDC TU. celebrating Tribhuvan University's milestones to delving into higher education and curriculum development issues. In the later phase of University career Prof. Sharma is devoted to academic research in Vedic literature including Yoga and Tantra.

Professor Sharma's contributions have not only enriched the literary and educational landscape of Nepal but have also inspired a new generation of scholars, writers, and educators to study different aspects of Vedic literature and connect them to academic sectors of Nepal.

Plenary

Learner Diversity and Learner Autonomy in an EFL Classroom

Dr. Meenaskhi Harraw Verma
Professor & Associate Dean
School of Education & Humanities
Jigyasa University, Dehradun
(Formerly Himgiri Zee University, Dehradun)
Email : meenakshi.v68@gmail.com



Abstract

As educators, committed to the advancement of language learning, we recognize that our classrooms are dynamic spaces that reflect the rich tapestry of human diversity. Each learner brings unique experiences, backgrounds, abilities, and challenges to the learning environment, shaping the way they engage with the English language.

The landscape of EFL education has evolved significantly over the years, embracing the principles of inclusivity, equity, and personalized learning. In today's interconnected world, where English serves as a global lingua franca, our classrooms are more diverse than ever before. We welcome learners from different cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds, each with their own motivations and aspirations for acquiring English proficiency.

As we navigate this landscape of diversity, we are confronted with both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, learner diversity enriches our classrooms, fostering cross-cultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect among students. It opens up avenues for exploring global perspectives, promoting tolerance, and celebrating multiculturalism. However, on the other hand, addressing the needs of diverse learners requires thoughtful planning, adaptability, and a student-centered approach to instruction which further gives rise to the need of the learner autonomy.

In a language classroom learner diversity must be used as a resource to bring in varied experiences that will further help the instructor promote learner autonomy for developing communicative competence. Learner diversity and learner autonomy are not merely pedagogical approaches, but these are essential principles that shape the future of EFL education. Diversity, equity and empowerment must be the key terms in promoting learner autonomy in EFL context. A language classroom is distinct from other classrooms in a way that it teaches the content which students use throughout their life in distinct contexts. Therefore, when teaching language in a classroom, learner diversity and learner autonomy both are important concepts to empower a student who is being prepared for using the language outside the classroom in real-life context.

Speaker Bio

Dr. Meenakshi Harraw Verma is an acclaimed academician in the area of English Language and Literature Teaching and Communication Skills Training. With a background in corporate, she has worked in the area of academic research, teaching and training. She has 25 plus publications in national and international esteemed peer reviewed journals. She has participated and presented papers in 35 plus national and international conferences and seminars in India and abroad. She has effectively worked in the area of Curriculum Design for UG, PG and PhD course work, student development and academic learning.

Along with a Doctorate degree (PhD), she has dual master degree in English Literature and Applied English. She has done PGCTE and PGDTE from English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. She has a versatile approach to teaching and learning and valued for her innovative teaching techniques. In her academic career, she has taught Professional Communication, Business Communication, Technical Writing, Writing for Journalism and Mass Media, Language Teaching through Literature subjects related to English Literature, Literary Criticism, Indian Writing in English, American Literature, Humanist Literature and Post Colonial Literature.

She has won accolades for her multi-tasking skills and result oriented approach. She has served as Head of the Department in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Invertis University. To her, commitment and discipline is the most important character trait and that made her fit to many positions of responsibility along with the position of Deputy Chief Proctor in her past organisation. She has also served as the Chairperson-Women Grievance Cell and Chief Executive Officer-Publications and Media Relations.

She has worked as a nominated member of Regional Advisory Committee in Central Board for Workers' Education, a central government department. She has conducted various life skills training workshops to the organised and unorganised sector employees in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Dr. Meenakshi is associated with the State Engineers' Academy, Roorkee, Uttarakhand as Visiting Faculty to conduct workshops and training sessions for in-service engineers from various departments of Uttarakhand Government and with various colleges and universities to deliver soft skills training to students and organise faculty development programmes. She is elected as Management Committee Member of Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD), Dehradun Chapter. Presently, she is working as Professor of English in Jigyasa University (formerly Hingiri Zee University, Dehradun), Uttarakhand, India. She is also working as Co-ordinator for the Rekhi Centre of Excellence for the Science of Happiness.

Plenary

Transformation in English education: Innovation, collaboration and Motivation

Prof. Dr. Rishi Ram Rijal

Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal



Abstract

English education is one of the components of teacher education which includes the preparation of not only teachers and teacher educators but also the administrators, supervisors, guidance and counselors along with other members of work force needed for nation building. The main aim of English education is to produce English teachers and teacher educators to deliver high quality teaching and learning in a sustainable and inspiring manner supported by innovative research and technology. The preparation of these teachers and teacher educators, as well as the administrators, supervisors, guidance and counselors need highly effective curriculum contents and pedagogies to enhance essentially effective learning, critical thinking, and more holistic experiential discussion and analysis on the basis of collaboration and enhancing high motivation in all stakeholders.

Academic and professional institutions prepare teachers and teacher educators for schools and college levels. Currently, the departments and colleges of those institutions focus on content knowledge, theory and pedagogy with some nominal field experience in their teacher preparation programs. The training centers and professional organizations also organize teacher learning activities with the top down decision making, prescriptive, decontextualized and one size fits all events without analyzing the participants' needs and interest by observing their classroom teaching, talking to them formally and informally, hearing their grumbles and analyzing their portfolios. The investment in teacher education seems to be large but the outcome of it seems almost zero in improving student achievement (MOE, 2015).

Everywhere there is quest for high quality teaching (Imig & Imig, 2007). This quest can be fulfilled if teacher education institutions focus their attention towards learners' practical experience with theory through transformation. The theory learning of designing lesson plans, classroom presentations, involving learners in activities, using formative and summative assessments, identifying learners' needs and providing feedback, working with teachers, supervisors, staff, etc. is of no use in isolation. This paper presents the quest of transformation felt in teacher education especially in English Education.

Speaker Bio

Dr. Rishi Ram Rijal, born on October 2, 1959, is a professor of English Education at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal. He has dedicated his career to the advancement of education, particularly in the field of English language teaching and educational research.

Dr. Rijal's academic journey began at the University Campus, Kirtipur, T.U., where he earned a Master of Education in English in 2046 B.S. He achieved his PhD from the Faculty of Education, T.U. in 2070 B.S., focusing on the professional development of English language teachers in Nepal. His professional career spans over several decades, starting as an Assistant Lecturer at Mahendra Ratna Multiple Campus, Illam from 2048 to 2054. He then progressed to positions such as Lecturer, Reader, and Professor at Mahendra Ratna Campus, T.U, Kathmandu, Nepal demonstrating his commitment and expertise in university teaching.

Dr. Rijal has also been extensively involved in research, holding roles such as Research Team Leader and Key Researcher on multiple projects funded by various organizations, including the Education Review Office, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal. His research has significantly contributed to understanding and developing the educational landscape in Nepal, with a particular focus on teacher education, school performance auditing, and student achievement.

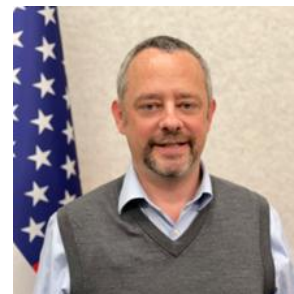
Dr. Rijal's publications include books like "Constructivist Perspective on Teacher Development" and numerous research articles and studies that reflect his deep engagement with educational practices and theory. His work continues to influence educational policies and practices in Nepal, making significant impacts on the professional development of teachers and the educational achievements of students.

Plenary

Hands-on Activities for Learner Engagement

Roger Cohen

Regional English Language Office (RELO), US, Embassy
Kathmandu, Nepal



Abstract

The participants in this workshop will actively engage in learner centered activities that can be used in large and medium classrooms.

The participants will learn practical techniques of designing and delivering learning centered activities.

Speaker Bio

Roger Cohen joined as Regional English Language Office (RELO) Kathmandu in August 2023. Roger previously served as RELO Ankara and RELO Amman. Before his career as a diplomat, he worked in such diverse places as the Defense Language Institute English Language Center, the University of Guam, and Mongolia as a Peace Corps volunteer and English Language Fellow. Roger has an MA in Teaching from the School for International Training.

Plenary

Motivating Learners in Learning

Dr. Shiv Ram Pandey

Associate Professor of English in
Education, Gramin Adarsha Multiple Campus,
Kathmandu



Abstract

This plenary begins with an adage which is interconnected with motivation for learners in learning. *“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.”* — Henry Ford. Then, the presenter conceptualizes the term motivation and its sources. He sheds light on importance of motivation in learning and motivation. The presenter deals with how teachers are motivating learners in learning in general and how English Language Teachers are motivating the learners in particular. He highlights the role of learners in motivation. He specifically presents what learners have done to bring motivation in learning. In addition to this, the presenter brings his own personal and professional experiences on how he gets motivated in learning with some anecdotes and examples. He adds that his mission in life is not only to survive, but to strive and thrive. To achieve this, he inculcates passion, compassion, content, conduct, communication, command, humor, and style in learning. Literature shows that low achieving students have very less motivation in learning English, and most of them study English only to pass examination and teachers rarely initiate activities in the classroom to motivate them. Teachers are key actors who shape the learning environment. And one of their most important tasks is to create a learning environment that enhances and sustains students’ motivation and engages students in learning. The presenter adds that there are no magic motivational buttons that can be pushed to make people want to learn, work hard, and act in a responsible manner. Similarly, no one can be directly forced to care about something. Facilitation, not control, should be the guiding idea in attempts to motivate humans. Finally, he shares some challenges to motivate learners in learning.

Speaker Bio

Dr. Shiv Ram Pandey, an Associate Professor of English in Education at Gramin Adarsha Multiple Campus, Nepaltar, is a committed, competent, confident and experienced teacher, trainer and more importantly an exuberant learner. Academically, Dr Pandey has earned his PhD degree from Kathmandu University in 2012 and MPhil. degree from Kathmandu University in 2007. He has earned M.Ed degree in English education in 1999 from Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal. Dr. Pandey received his PhD Fellowship from UGC, Sanathimi, Nepal. In 2016, he won an IATEFL scholarship to present a paper on leadership and management at Birmingham, England. He has presented a paper at BELTA International Conference. He has given a key note speech in a conference. Dr Pandey teaches research methods, teacher development, applied linguistics and SLA at the campus. Professionally, he has an experience of facilitating the MPhil scholars in Education, at Tribhuvan University and Nepal Open University. He has been teaching for three decades ranging from Nursery to Tertiary level students in different parts of Nepal. He is an avid reader and writer. He has written a number of books. He has written a number of articles both in national and international academic journal. Dr Pandey loves working in collaborative, cooperative and collegial culture. He loves learning, teaching, learners, and teaching materials. Pedagogically, he is a reflective and reflexive practitioner. Socially, he is an active, interactive and proactive human being. Culturally, he is cultivated with myriad cultures. Moreover, Dr Pandey is a life member of NELTA, IATEFL and TESOL. He has been supervising theses to the M.Ed., MPhil., and PhD level scholars. His key areas of interest are motivation, continuous professional development, leadership, reflective practice, creative writing, communication, classroom management, researching and training.

Plenary

Activating Speaking Skills in an EFL Class

Bishwa Raj Gautam

RELO Program Specialist at the U.S. Embassy, Nepal



Abstract

The participants in this workshop will engage in twospeaking activities to spark and sustain speaking skills in an EFL class. **Some teachers and facilitators attribute students' lack of speaking participation to their low level of proactive-ness.** Anxiety (Young, 1990) of making mistakes and correct/incorrect dichotomy (McCaughey, 2005) may hinder to participate in speaking. This anxiety can be avoided by establishing speaking as a process not a result. Kayi (2006) cites (Chaney, 1998, p. 13) speaking is a process of building and sharing meaning. After this workshop the participants themselves can design and use low cost teaching tools and provide variety of activities, resources from the <https://americanenglish.state.gov/> site.

Mr. Bishwa Raj Gautam, RELO Program Specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Nepal manages English language programs of the U.S. Department of State. Mr. Gautam has been providing teacher training for over a decade in Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. Mr. Gautam has presented plenaries at NELTA conferences, workshops, and sessions at various national and international conferences, including the TESOL Int. Conferences in the USA.