

AAALA Regional Representative Report

Region: Nepal

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Section 1: Establishing links with local assessment networks

As Dr. Pitambar Paudel, the Regional Representative of AALA from Nepal, I have undertaken various initiatives to connect with local language assessment networks and strengthen assessment practices within Nepal's multilingual educational landscape. Nepal's over 124 languages create unique challenges in assessing students' language proficiency, underscoring the importance of effective assessment processes for both educational advancement and societal cohesion. Building on this foundation, and through my ongoing role as AALA's representative, I have initiated several collaborative tasks. Notably, I have been practicing and cooperating with colleagues for adequate internal assessment basically in semester system, in which 40 points is for the internal assessment.

I recently attended the IATEFL Research Group (ReSIG) and MenTRnet Online Event: *Research! Online 2025 Conference*, held on 29–30 March 2025. This conference provided valuable insights into how teachers from different countries have conducted research to support and enhance their students' learning and development. Inspired by such initiatives, through NELTA Gandaki, we are planning to launch *NELTA Gandaki Dabali*, a discussion forum aimed at fostering dialogue and professional exchange on a range of topics, including test construction, English language teaching methodologies, and the integration of ICT and AI in education. Additionally, I participated in a one-day training programme on *Evaluation, Testing, and Examining Students' Answer Sheets* organized by the Office of the Controller of Examinations, Tribhuvan University. This programme equipped university teachers with practical skills in test design, student evaluation, and effective assessment of students' written responses, further strengthening my understanding and practices in assessment and evaluation. As part of my collaboration with the government, I am currently carrying out a research project titled *"From Obligation to Transformation: Practices and Challenges in*

Conducting Action Research Among Community School Teachers in Gandaki Province, Nepal," in partnership with the Ministry of Sports, Youth, and Social Development, Gandaki Province. Through this study, I aim to investigate the extent to which community school teachers in Gandaki Province write and implement action research in their classrooms, identify the challenges they face in the process, and explore the strategies they adopt to mitigate these challenges and ensure effective evaluation. In addition, through institutional collaboration with the British Council Nepal, I am conducting another research project that examines the impact of action research on students' achievement. Both of these research initiatives are integral to broader programme evaluation efforts. Alongside these projects, I have been supervising the theses of Master's and M.Phil. students, with research topics focusing on areas such as content validity in test items, teachers' professional development, curriculum evaluation, textbook evaluation, and processes and perceptions related to programme evaluation.

As Editor-in-Chief of the open-access journal *English Language Teaching (ELT) Perspectives*, I actively contribute to global conversations on language assessment and related areas. The journal welcomes research articles from diverse domains of English language teaching and learning, including language assessment, test construction, evaluation, and more. In addition to my editorial responsibilities, I regularly review articles submitted to various national and international journals, further deepening my engagement with current research and scholarly practices in the field.

Section 2: Feedback to AALA on issues of national or regional concern

Recent educational policy reforms in Nepal reflect a growing emphasis on integrating both English and Nepali as mediums of instruction, creating an urgent need for assessments that can effectively measure language proficiency across both languages. In line with this, Tribhuvan University has recently implemented a policy requiring examination questions at the bachelor's level to be provided in both English and Nepali. This initiative aims to make education more inclusive, comprehensive, and quality-oriented, catering to students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. If successful, it could serve as a model for similar bilingual or multilingual education policies across Asia.

Several organizations including the Government of Nepal, Ministry of Education, Department of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, Nepal Sanskrit

University, the Regional English Language Office (RELO), the U.S. Embassy in Nepal, Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA), and the British Council—have introduced training programs focused on enhancing teachers' language assessment skills. These initiatives particularly emphasize formative assessment practices that support learning and the construction of quality test items. Such developments are expected to positively impact the broader Asian language assessment community by highlighting the critical importance of teacher readiness and continuous professional development (CPD) in assessment practices.

Moreover, several research articles and reports have been published on English language assessment and practices in Nepal's multilingual context. These developments underscore the growing recognition that robust assessment policies and systematic teacher training are essential in multilingual regions like Asia. It would be highly beneficial if the AALA Executive Board encouraged and facilitated collaborative research on bilingual and formative assessment practices across Asia, thereby creating more context-sensitive resources and training models to support teachers and learners in linguistically diverse classrooms.

Section 3: Professional development and support

In Nepal, the Government of Nepal, through the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education, provides professional development training for school-level teachers across a range of domains, including language assessment and evaluation. These trainings are conducted through its various training centers with the goal of enhancing teachers' instructional and assessment skills.

Similarly, Tribhuvan University's Faculty of Education actively contributes to teacher development by organizing regular capacity-building workshops for teachers and researchers. A recent noteworthy initiative was the 75-hour workshop on *Assessment in Teaching and Learning* (ATL), which focused on foundational concepts of assessment, the design and use of rubrics, and the importance of formative assessment in supporting student learning. This program has equipped educators especially those at the school level with strategies to design more effective, student-centered assessments in language education.

In addition to institutional efforts, national, regional, and international conferences organized by associations such as the Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA) play a

vital role in promoting professional growth. NELTA's conferences often feature dedicated sessions on language assessment, where educators, researchers, and practitioners from Nepal and abroad come together to share the latest practices, research findings, and innovations. These events not only offer valuable professional development opportunities but also foster collaboration and keep participants informed about regional and global trends in language assessment.

Furthermore, several academic journals including *English Language Teaching Perspectives*, *Journal of NELTA Gandaki (JoNG)*, *Journal of NELTA*, *Prithvi Academy Journal*, *Journal of Research and Innovation*, *Awadharana*, etc. are regularly publish research articles that highlights new ideas and advancements in language assessment and evaluation. These platforms provide researchers with valuable spaces to share innovative practices and contribute to the ongoing discourse on improving assessment in multilingual and diverse educational contexts.

Section 4: Future goals

Strengthen Local and Regional Assessment Networks

- Establish a formal network for language assessment practitioners and researchers across Nepal, linking it with AALA and other regional bodies.
- Expand *NELTA Gandaki Dabali* into a national dialogue platform for sharing research, best practices, and innovations in language assessment and evaluation.

Develop Bilingual and Multilingual Assessment Models

- Design and pilot context-specific bilingual assessment tools that can assess student proficiency in both Nepali and English effectively, with a view toward scaling these models across multilingual schools.
- Initiate a national project to document and publish case studies on bilingual and multilingual assessment practices from different provinces.

Promote Collaborative Research and Publications

- Facilitate multi-institutional and cross-border research projects (e.g., with AALA members or universities in South Asia) on bilingual assessment, formative evaluation, and multilingual classroom practices.
- Launch a special issue in journals like *English Language Teaching Perspectives* focusing exclusively on innovative practices in language assessment in multilingual settings.

Build Teacher Assessment Literacy

- Develop and offer certified short courses (both in-person and online) on language assessment literacy for school and university teachers, with modules on test construction, rubrics, formative assessment, and AI-integrated assessment.
- Create open-access teacher resource materials (guides, templates, videos) on classroom-based assessment strategies tailored for Nepal's multilingual classrooms.

Integrate ICT and AI in Language Assessment

- Conduct pilot studies on using digital tools, apps, and AI-based platforms to create more dynamic, adaptive assessments in English and Nepali.
- Organize training workshops for teachers and researchers on using technology for formative assessments and automated feedback.

Capacity Building for Research Supervision

- Launch a "Young Researchers in Assessment" mentoring program that pairs early-career researchers (Master's, M.Phil., Ph.D. students) with senior scholars to promote research in language assessment, evaluation, and educational measurement.

Expand Professional Development Activities

- Organize an annual national conference or symposium on Language Assessment in Multilingual Contexts in Nepal, inviting both local and international experts.
- Offer fellowships or mini-grants for teachers conducting action research in assessment practices in their classrooms.