12 Should I Stay or Leave? Exploring L2 Teachers' Profession from an Emotionally Inflected Framework

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Introduction

The field of applied linguistics has increasingly recognized that emotions play an important role in shaping teachers' pedagogical practices in the classroom, professional identity construction and teachers' well-being in general. In addition, research on language teacher emotions has evolved beyond cognitive approaches (Gkonou & Mercer, 2017) to include sociocultural and political perspectives (Benesch, 2017; Loh & Liew, 2016). For example, language teacher emotions are now examined in terms of how emotions are discursively constructed (Golombek, 2015) at personal, institutional and societal levels (Wolff & De Costa, 2017). Despite the growing interest in language teacher emotions, there is a paucity of research in documenting language teachers' emotional experiences in the Nepali context. Against a backdrop characterized by globalization and English as a lingua franca (Erling & Seargeant, 2013; Tsou & Kao, 2017), there has been an emergent emphasis on enhancing citizens' competitiveness in the global economy. Such an emphasis is noticeably manifested in educational systems that have adopted English as a medium of instruction (Toh, 2016), with developing countries, in particular Nepal (Sah & Li, 2018), not having been spared from such a phenomenon.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Nepal implemented the Education Act (Government of Nepal, 2010), which made both Nepali and English the legitimate instruction languages in public schools. As a result, a large number of public schools in Nepal have

geared towards English as a medium of instruction (EMI), regardless of their 'low socioeconomic status and limited resources' (Sah & Li, 2018: 110). Problems have been reported, however. Specifically, these problems, which are associated with EMI adaptation, include the lack of educational infrastructure for effective implementation, linguistically qualified teachers and professional training courses for in-service teachers (Phyak, 2016; Sah & Li, 2018). Managing the conflicts between societal expectations on English language education and classroom realities (i.e. large classes, high labour demands on grading, teaching for examination purposes and limited professional support and guidance) has resulted in teacher emotional exhaustion and emotional burnout, which ultimately has led to attrition within the profession (De Costa *et al.*, 2018).

In this chapter, we seek to give voice to the English teachers whose emotional experiences and feelings have remained invisible within the broader EMI trend in Nepal. Viewing emotions as being discursively constructed, we adopted Benesch's (2017) conceptualization of emotion labour in order to explore how two Nepali English teachers negotiated the emotional demands and labour of work as we seek to illuminate the professional challenges and realities these English teachers encountered.

Literature Review

Conceptualizing emotion labour

The construct of emotional labour was first coined by Hochschild and described as 'the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display' (1983: 7). Hochschild (1979, 1983) further argued that humans monitor and manipulate their external emotion display and also consciously negotiate the 'inner feelings' (1979: 562) which are considered normative or socially appropriate in particular social contexts or situations. These 'inner feelings', though tacit, are deemed as emotional conventions or 'feeling rules' that allow people to evaluate whether their emotion displays are appropriate in particular social situations or contexts. Individual management of emotions in response to the feeling rules in daily life are thus framed as *emotional management* (Hochschild, 1979). Relatedly, emotional labour refers to how individuals deploy emotional management in the workplace to display emotions and feelings deemed desirable and appropriate in that context. Thus, individuals' performance of emotions and feelings become part of the job as individuals learn to also navigate tacit institutional feeling rules at their respective places of work.

Hochschild's notion of emotional labour was later adopted in applied linguistics to explore its application to language teaching (e.g. Ho & Tsang, 2008; King, 2016). Benesch (2012, 2017), in particular,

has contributed much to the establishment of emotion labour as a central concern in language teacher education research. Benesch (2017) proposed to replace 'emotional labour' used in Hochschild's original conceptualization with 'emotion labour'. According to Benesch, the juxtaposition of 'emotion' and 'labour' indicates the departure from a cognitive perspective that considers emotions as personal traits, and instead proposes to understand emotions as discursively constructed and shaped by external environments and social norms that they need to adhere to. Therefore, by adopting a poststructural perspective, Benesch defined emotion labour as the efforts by which 'humans actively negotiate the relationship between how they feel in particular work situations and how they are supposed to feel, according to social expectations' (Benesch, 2017: 37–38). In this study, we used Benesch's conceptualization of 'emotion labour' to guide our understanding of how Nepali teachers negotiated an EMI policy implemented at their schools.

Benesch's (2017) conceptualization of emotion labour and that of several other teacher emotion researchers enlarges Hochschild's (1979, 1983) understanding of emotion labour in several ways. First, instead of investigating emotion labour through the dichotomy of performing individuals' fake selves and authentic selves at the workplace, Benesch argues that one's self is constructed historically and also in everyday interactions. Second, as Zembylas (2005) pointed out, emotion labour is manifested in the everyday dynamics of teaching and is thus considered as routine practices, such as managing the classroom, grading student essays, etc. However, this everyday routine facet of emotion labour warrants close scrutiny in order to expose the sociopolitical and unequal power relations in which teaching is embedded (Benesch, 2017; Miller & Gkonou, 2018; Zembylas, 2005). A contemporary understanding of emotion labour within applied linguistics, therefore, enables researchers to examine how language teachers' exercise of emotion labour is shaped by the feeling rules at the workplace that are often politicized by normative ideologies about the teaching profession.

Researching emotion labour in language teacher education

As a result of professional norms, teachers are expected to manage their emotional states in classroom or school settings and be sensitive to the emotional needs of learners by encouraging and motivating them through appropriate displays of emotions, such as showing care and love, warmth, affection and concern (Gkonou & Miller, 2017; King, 2016; Loh & Liew, 2016; Miller & Gkonou, 2018; Yin *et al.*, 2017). This discourse of an *ethics of care* (Gilligan, 1982; Gkonou & Miller, 2017; Miller & Gkonou, 2018) accounts for most of the emotion labour in language teaching. While the emotion labour of teaching is mainly discussed

in the interaction between teachers and students, Yin *et al*. (2017) also examined the emotion labour in the interaction between teachers and their colleagues in the Hong Kong context where teachers were engaged in much collaborative work outside the classroom (Pang *et al*., 2016). In addition, recent studies on language teacher emotions have examined teacher emotion labour in relation to other constructs, such as *teacher agency* (Miller & Gkonou, 2018), *teacher burnout* (Acheson *et al*., 2016) and *teacher identity* (Wolff & De Costa, 2017), thus illustrating how it can be a useful construct in expanding our understanding of language teacher education.

Within English language education, Benesch (2017) explored the emotion labour of ESL teachers in relation to high-stakes literacy tests by theorizing emotion labour as discursively constructed. Her findings revealed that the conflict between teaching to improve students' academic literacy in general and teaching for passing the tests not only constrained their exercise of agency in teaching, but also elicited the discourse of shame. Similarly, Loh and Liew (2016) adopted a discursive approach in their investigation of the emotion labour of secondary English language teachers in Singapore. Due to government demands to improve English language literacy and the culture of testing, the Singaporean English teachers in their study experienced emotional conflicts between teaching English in accordance with their teaching beliefs and teaching English to prepare students for the high-stakes tests. The emotion labour of teaching, according to Acheson *et al*. (2016), might unveil more serious issues such as emotional exhaustion or attrition. Acheson *et al*. (2016) studied the emotion labour of five foreign language teachers in rural US high schools. They found that having internalized the ideology of English as a lingua franca, students were demotivated to learn other foreign languages. Thus, the emotion labour of having to motivate students created an excessive burden for their focal teachers. Moreover, due to the lack of foreign language assessment in the test system, the institution and community in which their teacher participants worked did not provide sufficient support to help ease the burden. The performance of emotion labour and lack of emotional resources eventually affected the teachers' willingness to stay in the profession.

While most studies have explored language teachers' negative emotions derived from performing emotion labour in school, Miller and Gkonou (2018) examined language teachers' positive emotions in relation to emotion labour in US and British tertiary settings. Drawing on Benesch's (2017) poststructuralist view, they investigated language teachers' common emotional experiences through administering a questionnaire and conducting semi-structured interviews. Their findings demonstrated that while discourses of a *teaching-as-caring ethic* at school led to positive emotions in teachers' work lives, this ethic was

not part of teachers' 'natural' feelings of caring (Miller & Gkonou, 2018: 8); instead, such an ethic was constructed and subsequently fostered socially and politically at the workplace. To raise the awareness of this latent feeling rules at work, Miller and Gkonou underscore how teachers' reflexive practices 'intersect with their emotion experiences and choices to exercise agency through emotion labour' (2018: 9). Relatedly, other teacher emotion researchers such as Wolff and De Costa (2017) have emphasized the need to explore teacher emotions from an ecological stance, by taking into consideration how social, institutional and personal forces influence teacher emotions. Specifically, they have called for a longitudinal investigation of how teacher emotions are impacted by events that occur at the macro-national policy level, and meso-institutional and micro-individual teacher levels. In short, teacher emotions are multi-dimensional and permeate across a range of social contexts.

Investigating the emotion labour of Nepalese teachers

Sharing many of the school culture realities with the above-mentioned studies, our study takes a discursive approach in the analysis of the emotion labour of secondary English language teachers in public schools in Nepal. As Acheson *et al*. (2016) observed, emotion labour is institutionally imposed on teachers in the hope of complying to latent feeling rules about the teaching profession that give reference to what feelings or emotion expressions are appropriate for teachers. These tacit rules are shaped by overarching ideologies about language and also the teaching profession (Benesch, 2017). Drawing on insights from Benesch's (2017) conceptualization of emotion labour and from Wolff and De Costa's (2017) ecological framework of investigating emotion from multi-dimensions, this study explores how the tacit feeling rules at the macro- (societal) and meso- (school and community) levels shaped the English teachers' emotion labour and how the performance of different types of emotion labour led to their emotional burnout.

Methodology

Focal participants

Our two participants, Chhabi and Sunil (pseudonyms), were interviewed by the third author (Hima). Hima actively sought to ensure that Chhabi and Sunil were comfortable sharing their emotions related to their teaching experiences. The interviews were guided by some open-ended interview questions, which were adopted from the interview questions for English language teachers in Benesch's book (2017: 111) (see Appendix). Benesch combined Zembylas's (2005) list of teacher

emotions and sample questions from his Meta-Emotion Questionnaire. Each participant was interviewed for two hours (during two one-hour interviews). Although most of the interviews were conducted in English, the participants switched to the use of Nepali quite often, especially when they adopted some sayings and proverbs in Nepali. Because the analysis drew largely from the content of the interviews, author Hima transcribed the interviews verbatim, without going into details on the paralinguistic features such as tone, pitch of voice, gestures or pauses. When transcribing the interviews, Hima also checked with participants about a few audio segments where the recordings were not clear. Then, she translated into English the parts of interviews where Nepali was used, which were later reviewed by a colleague of Hima's who worked in the English education department in Nepal.

Chhabi

Chhabi is a 25-year-old English teacher at a K-10 public school in the western part of Nepal. He became an English teacher in a non-tenure position immediately after graduating with a master's degree in English Education from a large public university in Nepal. At the time of our study, Chhabi had not taken the permanent teacher recruitment exam conducted by the Ministry of Education. Chhabi teaches high school English and each of his classes comprises 80 to 100 students. Although he encountered several emotion labour-related issues, these issues emerged because of his ambition to be a teacher.

Chhabi had always wanted to be a teacher despite the fact that many children would dream of going into other professions. His aspiration stemmed from his observation of the respect his own teachers would receive from their students. On the one hand, it was his personal desire to join the teaching profession. On the other hand, the perceived lack of professionalism in teaching from the societal point of view made him question if he should stay in the job or quit.

Sunil

Sunil is a 30-year-old former English teacher at a public high school in the eastern part of Nepal. He taught for six and a half years before he quit his job in 2017. He had started teaching English at the school after his graduation from a large public university, having specialized in English Education. His classes often consisted of over 100 students, which according to him, was normal in many public schools in his area. He is currently working as a programme coordinator in a non-governmental organization that is committed to improving infant health in Nepal. Initially, he wanted to be a good teacher and his inspiration came from some of the good teachers who had left positive imprints in his mind. However, his desire eroded when he exited the teaching profession.

Despite the early enthusiasm shown by both teachers regarding their decision to pursue an English language teaching career, Chhabi and Sunil experienced emotional highs and lows, which will be examined in greater detail in subsequent sections, during their teaching careers.

Study context

The number of private schools in Nepal has been increasing at an accelerated speed and the main reason for such rapid change has been the English-medium instruction in such private schools. The ideologies of English-as-a-global language and English-as-social-capital have had a strong influence on how society views the role English plays in the Nepalese educational context (Phyak, 2016). Irrespective of whether students attend public or private schools, they all are required to take the same national level exam to exit from their high schools, which is administered by the Ministry of Education. While the textbooks are produced and distributed by the national level curriculum development centre, private schools generally introduce and expose the students to extra and international standard textbooks and various other resources. Not surprisingly, teachers are often under intense pressure to prepare their students for the school leaving exam, a phenomenon that has resulted in limited teacher agency and autonomy (De Costa *et al.*, 2018).

Data analysis

To guide our data analyses, we adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework.[1] First, we familiarized ourselves with the data and generated initial codes, which was followed by the examination of themes that emerged from the data. The themes that recurred throughout the data from both participants were as follows: (1) emotion labour and the pressure of English-medium instruction, (2) emotion labour and lack of teacher agency, (3) emotion labour and lack of mentoring and (4) emotion labour and emotional burnout. We then extracted the related excerpts from the data that would support the common themes found across data from both participants. By examining and analyzing each of these themes, this study addresses the following research questions:

(1) What factors at the macro- (societal) and meso- (school and community) levels shaped the English teachers' emotion labour?
(2) How did the performance of different types of emotion labour lead to our focal participants' emotional burnout?

Findings and Discussion

Emotion labour and the pressure of English-medium instruction

One of the recurring themes from both participants' data was their emotion labour related to the growing demand for English-medium instruction (EMI) in Nepalese schools. Having to choose between complying with the mandate to use English only in the classroom and the need for the use of the first language (Nepali) in specific teaching contexts to facilitate students' learning caused great pressure and frustration among two English teachers. Both participants attributed the emotional low they encountered to the pressure of using English as the medium of instruction in their teaching.

> *Excerpt 1: I need to use translation (Chhabi)*
> I use English most of the time in my classes because I want my students to practise as much English as they can. The parents and the school also desire that but there are many situations in my classes when I need to use translation during the teaching. There are some students whose first language is not Nepali but still they can understand Nepali because it is the national language. Another English teacher who teaches in my school is a graduate from a private English medium college and he only uses English in his classes … at least he claims [laughs]. This pressure to use only English in English classes from the school administration frustrates me sometimes but I think it is okay to use Nepali sometimes when the students struggle to understand.

As revealed in Excerpt 1, Chhabi pointed out that the pressure from the administration level to use only English in English classes caused an emotional burden, as this leaves him in a contested space to make choices between what is required of him and what makes the teaching-learning process easy. In addition, Chhabi's statement exhibits that using only English was not practical when it came to communicating with students with varying proficiencies in English. Likewise, Sunil asserted:

> *Excerpt 2: EMI has made many lives miserable (Sunil)*
> I was able to use only English in my classes. I could do that but some students specially with low English background would lag behind others … so I switched to Nepali sometimes … and the principal said '*sir tapaai ta angrezi teacher ho ni math science teacher ho ra bich bichma Nepali bolnalaai*' [sir, you are an English teacher and not a science or math teacher to use Nepali in between]. That was embarrassing to me. I did not use to do that because I could not use English throughout my classes but just to help my students to understand. *Yo angreziko bhoot le kati dherai teacher laai dukhi aatma banayeko chha*. [The ghost of this English language has made many teachers' lives miserable].

Although Sunil is no longer in the teaching profession, he explicitly expressed his dissatisfaction with the English-only policy that many

Nepalese schools are trying to adopt, describing its presence as a ghost that haunts teachers. Although the teachers sought to make judicious use of the first language to navigate the meaning making process, the English-only policy suppressed their agentive power to do so. The pressure was not only being imposed by the school administration but also by the students' parents. Thus, the administrative pressure and the parents' desire to make the students proficient in English placed an additional burden on teachers, which in turn contributed to their emotion labour and exhaustion. Despite the dissatisfaction evidenced in the above excerpts, both participants stated that they generally tried to comply with the idea of using English as a lingua franca in their respective classrooms. Chhabi stated, 'I know I do not teach content courses but I teach a language course. The language is English, not other languages which are less commonly used. So, using English to teach English is reasonable, but the use of the mother tongue to ease the learning process for students should be allowed'. Similarly, Sunil noted that he did not like the idea of teaching content courses through English as that might add 'more burden on both teacher and the students'. However, he also acknowledges that 'using English in English classes is not a bad idea if some use of mother tongue is permitted'. In short, the contested views of both participants exhibited that their management of emotion labour was associated with their perceptions of English as an international lingua franca as they attempted to negotiate the emotional burden and pressure imposed on them due to the EMI policy.

Emotion labour and lack of teacher agency

According to Grandey (2000), personal and organizational factors influence individuals' emotion regulation processes. Organizational factors include job autonomy and social support from supervisors and co-workers. In the context of this study, it was not only the exhaustion of emotion labour at the physical and mental level that prompted one participant to question his decision to choose the teaching profession and the other participant to quit his job. Rather, it was also the lack of teacher autonomy in relation to their pedagogical practices that led them to dissociate with their profession.

> *Excerpt 3: I feel very helpless (Chhabi)*
> I have learnt so many theories of language teaching and learning in my English Education and English Language Teaching courses. I was so excited with the feeling of using them in my classes, but I do not have control over what I do. I might be able to do some tasks and activities sometimes, but I have to finish the course in a time frame and then revise the whole course to prepare my students for the exams. After all, it is the students' scores and pass percentage that determine my success as well as the school's success. I feel very helpless and my every action becomes less energetic.

Excerpt 4: I had no control over anything (Sunil)
One of my dissatisfactions in the teaching job was that I had no control over anything. I wanted to bring interesting tasks, videos, etc. in the English classes, but I was advised to use the textbook produced by the government because the students' scores in the exams mattered the most, to the parents and schools and perhaps the society also evaluated a particular school in terms of the pass percentage. The school's pamphlets and brochures would then have the pass percentage printed on them. No one would care about the volcano of mixed feelings inside a teacher. I never felt having any type of authority.

Excerpts 3 and 4 demonstrate that the pressure of preparing the students for the high-stakes exams and the expectation of using English only in the classes imposed upon them by the administration, parents and society as a whole impeded their free use of teaching methods. This, in turn, constricted their exercise of teacher agency and autonomy. This scenario is similar to the 'performance culture' experienced by Singaporean teachers in Loh and Liew's (2016) study who were also pressured to deliver strong student exam results. This whole scenario would have resulted in the draining of teacher efforts. However, despite the lack of teacher agency and the pressure to target their teaching to the high-stakes exams, both Chhabi and Sunil remained resilient in their teaching and successfully managed their emotion labour. Putting aside their frustration and relative helplessness to exercise their agency, they attempted to navigate the complexities and dynamics of their respective teaching situations.

Emotion labour and lack of mentoring

Both participants disclosed that they experienced a lack of mentoring from the teacher educators in their teaching contexts. Chhabi, for example, lamented the lack of mentoring during his teacher induction period:

Excerpt 5: Should I stay or leave? (Chhabi)
I had expected that I would be provided a lot of support during the early years of my teaching. I though the senior teachers would guide me, help me ... do you get what I mean? I thought they would hold my hand and show me the way ... instead they just gave me the entire responsibility over the subject I was assigned to teach without much resource and support ... one senior teacher once told me to teach his class and he never restarted ... there was not much course left to teach but still I felt he was so irresponsible ... I just feel a lack of guidance and direction for my teaching and for my further progress in the profession ... I feel should I stay or leave the job to find some other job?

Whereas Chhabi experienced a lack of professional guidance during his initial years of teaching, Sunil experienced this gap even in the later years of his teaching.

Excerpt 6: Feedback … nothing related to ELT (Sunil)
Sometimes the local teacher educators used to come to the schools to observe our teaching, but they were not very helpful. The feedback used to be very personal rather than professional. Once I attended a teacher training in the headquarters of my district. I liked the tips given by the educator, but they were all general tips … nothing related to English language teaching. Then, the same educator came to observe my class after a few days … said that I did not seem interested in teaching … actually it was a day when I was revising what I had already taught so there were not any activities … later, I came to know that his expertise lay in mathematics education … how could his feedback help me in improving my teaching of language … that was very awkward.

Yin *et al*. (2017) found that teachers' perception of trust in colleagues helps them to cope with the perceived challenges caused by emotion labour. Thus, they suggested that schools should facilitate an atmosphere of trust. By contrast, Excerpt 6 shows that before Sunil quit his job, he expected specific guidance regarding ELT from the teacher educators assigned to observe his teaching. Sunil stated that he was not experiencing any professional growth while he was in the teaching profession.

Despite the lack of mentoring, guidance and professional support, both teachers attempted to be engaged in some sort of professional development opportunities on their own.

Excerpt 7: I want to keep growing (Chhabi)
I attend the conference organized by Nepal English Language Teachers' Association and [I] like to join teacher trainings … read tips in teaching effectively in the internet … I want to keep growing and find as many opportunities to learn as possible although I fail to use all the techniques I learn due to time pressure and large number of students to handle.

These resourceful efforts illustrate how Chhabi's willingness to grow professionally led him to try to overcome the negative emotions that resulted from a lack of expected support and mentoring. In other words, Chhabi sought to take matters into his own hands and manage his emotions as he found creative ways to sustain his professional development. On the other hand, Sunil explained that although he had been willing to grow professionally, he felt that he was 'like rotten … doing the same thing like robots every year same content and same methods every year … like stagnated food'. He conceded that he 'did not

feel [like he was] progressing at all'. Hence, Sunil's resistance to learning from the experts of other subjects and his feeling of job stagnation exemplifies how it is not always possible for teachers to constructively manage emotions that may be dampened because of a lack of professional support.

Emotion labour and emotional burnout/exhaustion

Apart from our participants' lack of mentoring support from teacher educators, one of the major issues related to the emotion labour they engaged in was their exhaustion. This exhaustion was manifested in terms of physical labour and perceived emotional fatigue.

> *Excerpt 8: Tiring: emotionally, physically and mentally (Chhabi)*
> I teach for about 10 hours in a day … six hours at the school and four hours of tuition outside of school … I have to prepare lesson plans for each of my class at the school which takes much of my time … the students' English proficiency is not very high and so I have to use translation a lot of times … I rarely achieve my goals set in the lesson plans. The lesson plans are never checked well by anyone but the principal of the school has made it mandatory … it's just a burden to add in the fatigue. I feel exhausted at the end of the day … feel like taking the voice rest for some time but the next day the same routine continues … I have to speak loudly in the class as I teach large classes of about eighty to a hundred students. Most of the time I am standing and moving around the class. It is really emotionally tiring … also physically and mentally.

Chhabi's exhaustion took on physical, mental and emotional dimensions, with each dimension being interrelated to the others. Importantly, he made explicit reference to these varied dimensions, even though the distinction between mental and emotional exhaustion was somewhat blurred. Despite all these challenges, Chhabi sought professional sustenance. He conceded, 'I think no job is free of challenges. Teaching is not an easy job and after all I chose this myself. Although my family and relatives tell me to find a decent job, I think all the hard work is worth [it] when it comes to educating so many lives … to leave an impact on people's lives'. His resistance to giving up despite his exhaustion further illustrated the emotion labour he had to endure. In a similar vein, Sunil disclosed that he had become tired of the demands of his job.

> *Excerpt 9: I was waning … drained (Sunil)*
> I was a different person when I started teaching. I had so much energy and positivity … [but] after about four years, it was too much. I was investing a lot of my time and effort, but I had to conduct some before and after school tuition classes to supplement my low teaching salary

in order to support my family. However, teaching so many classes in a day started making me exhausted. I was waning inside and it was only seven years of the job … my life was like a very busy routine without any benefit … then I got a chance to volunteer in a sports and health event near my village … people liked my work … I had put equal amount of effort or even less … [and] it prompted me to change my profession … However, I did not give up teaching immediately … I tried to find out reasons to stay, but I was really drained of my internal energy and will power to continue. I miss teaching and sometimes teach the children in the sports project, but I do it voluntarily and just for my happiness. I wish I did not have to leave.

The above excerpt shows that Sunil's burnout is related to multiple issues. First, although he worked hard to cope with his teaching responsibilities, he was drained by the excessive amount of work on his part. This predicament was exacerbated by his socioeconomic situation: teachers in Nepal are paid less relative to other professions. Thus, they take on additional work outside of school for supplementary income to support their families. Next, despite his internal desire to stay in the profession, Sunil found it hard holding on to his teaching job. His indecisiveness shows how he strove to manage his emotional exhaustion despite the challenges. He sought to find ways to stay in the job even though he had been facing several challenges such as the pressure to use English only in the classes and the pressure to gear his teaching towards test preparation, while grappling with other socioeconomic issues. However, the unfortunate situation of his quitting the job signals how the commodification of emotions could take different forms: while it might give strength to someone to stay in the job despite challenges (e.g. Chhabi), it could also cause someone to give it up (e.g. Sunil). Crucially, our findings are in line with those of Acheson *et al.* (2016) who found that emotional exhaustion and burnout affect teachers' willingness to stay within the teaching profession.

Conclusion and Implications

This study sought to investigate how our participants' emotion labour was related to various factors that led to their emotional exhaustion. To summarize, the four major themes that were found to be connected to their emotion labour were: (1) their perceived pressure related to the use of EMI in their multilingual classes, (2) the lack of mentoring for their professional growth, (3) their inability to exercise agency and autonomy in targeting the test-oriented teaching and (4) emotional exhaustion as a whole. While one participant is still striving to remain in the profession despite all the challenges, the other has already quit his job, thereby illustrating how the intricacies of emotion management can exist at different levels.

As stated, teachers' emotional exhaustion can be examined from three different levels: the micro-, meso- and macro-level. At the micro-personal level, although the two participants showed their interest in becoming English teachers, their interest suffered from limited teacher agency in choosing the appropriate teaching methods and having to comply with the imposed institutional policy of using English only in the classroom. Consequently, they had to wrestle with emotion labour in order to sustain themselves professionally at work, despite the causes that led to emotional burnout. At the meso-school level, their emotion labour was enhanced due to the lack of interaction with colleagues and support from the administrators. At the macro-societal level, the ideology of English as the lingua franca and a powerful language had been widely accepted and internalized by the government, schools, parents and even teachers themselves. The prevalence of this ideology has contributed to Chhabi and Sunil's perceived lack of autonomy in their teaching practices and overall professional growth.

Zembylas (2005) suggested that an examination of teachers' emotions and emotion labour can thwart the unfavourable conditions in which students and teachers are situated by opening up discussions on how to challenge and transform these demanding conditions in productive ways. In our study, Sunil's decision to leave the profession is the result of having to negotiate the emotion labour at his school. By giving voice to Sunil's emotional experience, this study revealed that teacher attrition is closely related to the negotiation of emotion labour in the workplace. At the macro-level, English is considered as an international lingua franca, supported by the Education Act policy (Government of Nepal, 2010) and the government's promotion of using English as the medium for instruction. This educational stance is advocated even though many schools do not have appropriate linguistic resources or enough qualified teachers. Therefore, teachers like the participants in this study were left on their own to navigate the parents' and administration's expectations of them without receiving any mentoring and sufficient professional guidance.

Given these conditions and in light of the findings of our study, we call for the incorporation of the affective dimensions of teaching in English language teacher education to better prepare teachers for emotion labour in the workplace. As suggested in King (2016), this could be achieved by making teachers aware of different types of emotion labour they might experience or anticipate at individual, institutional and societal levels. Then, informing them about different strategies to cope with those emotions would equip them to navigate the layers, dynamics and complexities of emotion that might affect them as teachers and their teaching profession. In addition, we hope the stories of our two focal teachers, Chhabi and Sunil, will provoke much-needed discussion on bringing teachers' emotions into the public discourse as

they find new ways to address the different types of emotion labour at school.

Post-Reading Tasks

(1) Based on the two focal participants' experiences in this study, how would you negotiate emotion labour at your own workplace? How would emotion labour influence your decisions to stay in or leave the teaching profession?
(2) One of the reasons Sunil dropped out of the teaching profession was his perceived pressure of EMI policy. If he had agentive power to freely choose the medium of instruction in his classes, how do you think he would exercise his teacher agency to negotiate the emotional burden he encountered?
(3) As presented in the chapter, both participants expressed the lack of institutional support and opportunities for professional growth. What could the school administration do to help teachers grow professionally?
(4) Based on the experiences of the two teachers in this study, what should the teacher education programmes do to equip teachers in managing emotion labour associated with their profession? What strategies could be included in teacher education programmes to promote awareness of teacher well-being?

Note

(1) Braun and Clark's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis are as follows:
   a. Familiarizing yourself with your data
   b. Generating initial codes
   c. Searching for themes
   d. Reviewing themes
   e. Defining and naming themes
   f. Producing the report

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Appendix: Interview questions (adopted from Benesch, 2017: 111)

(1)   Which of these emotions do you feel most commonly when teaching:

Happiness/joy	Frustration
Sadness/grief	Disappointment
Anger/irritation	Disillusion
Fear/anxiety	Guilt
Disgust	Despair
Fascination	Caring
Pride	Love
Wonder	Intimacy
Enthusiasm	Loss
Boredom	Powerlessness
Awe	Compassion

The following questions will be repeated for each emotion identified by the respondent in question 1:

(2)   What are your reactions to being (name of emotion)? What do these reactions have to do with your ESL teaching?
(3)   Does the way you feel about (name of emotion) have a history in your teaching career?
(4)   Can you tell if your students feel (name of emotion)? How? What do you do when a student feels (name of emotion)? What are you trying to teach your student about (name of emotion)?
(5)   Are there things you do regularly during your teaching to make sure you feel (name of emotion)? Are there things you do regularly during your teaching to make sure you don't feel (name of emotion)?