

Research perspectives on education in Oman

Edited by
Mark Wyatt and John Atkins

Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman
15/2009

ISBN 978-9948-15-244-6

Foreword

One of the most significant impacts of the BA (TESOL) Project on English Language Teaching in particular and on education in general has been the impetus it has given to the educational research culture, particularly to classroom-based research, in the Sultanate of Oman. While studying on the BA (TESOL) programme, each student had to identify a topic of research relevant to his or her own particular classroom context, develop appropriate research methods, choose data collection tools and apply them in his or her dissertation research. The best dissertations from Cohorts 1 and 2, Cohorts 3 and 4, and Cohorts 5 and 6 are published in three volumes of this series.

More than just acquainting BA participants with the procedural knowledge and skills of classroom-based research, the BA (TESOL) Project has helped in the propagation of a research culture. It has enabled more than 50 of the best of the Ministry's professionals, in English and other subject areas, to pursue post-graduate studies in the School of Education, University of Leeds and to research issues of current interest. The research papers contained in this volume therefore mark a further step in the development of the educational research culture in the Sultanate. These papers are edited versions of the best critical studies undertaken by Omani education professionals in partial fulfilment of their MA degree studies at the University of Leeds, in the fields of TESOL, General Education, Information and Communication Technologies and Education, Special Needs Education, International Education Management and Science Education. A perusal of the contents page will show that the research projects reported in this volume were highly substantial pieces of work, seeking to answer questions of relevance to educational issues in the Sultanate today. They provide a baseline upon which future researchers can build. The Ministry of Education is keen that the research culture should continue to develop not only in the field of TESOL, but in the education system in the Sultanate of Oman in general.

Her Excellency Dr Muna Al-Jardania, Under-secretary for Education and Curriculum, Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman

CONTENTS

Foreword	iii
List of contributors	vi
Introduction: Research perspectives on education in Oman Eds. Mark Wyatt and John Atkins	viii
1. English teachers' attitudes towards the post-lesson discussion in Oman. <i>Suleiman Mohammed A'Shizawi</i>	1
2. Fostering professional development in post-lesson discussions: perceptions of teachers and supervisors. <i>Fawzia Hamdan Al-Zadjali</i>	15
3. How Senior English Teachers support teachers in reflecting on their lessons during post-lesson discussions. <i>Salima Khamis Al-Sinani</i>	31
4. Developing as a teacher trainer planning INSET courses. <i>Maryam Mohammed Al-Jardani</i>	48
5. The impact of an INSET course on teachers' views and reported practices in teaching stories to young learners. <i>Khadija Darwish Al-Balushi</i>	61
6. Peer observation in Oman: How it is carried out and teachers' attitudes towards it. <i>Huda Said Al-Habsi</i>	75
7. Beginning teachers' perceptions of their first year's teaching experience. <i>Anwar Saleh Al-Blooshi</i>	89
8. Developments in the understandings and practices of first-year Omani teachers of English <i>Mahfoudah Abdullah Al-Bahri</i>	105

9.	Teachers' attitudes towards continuous assessment and its effect on their work <i>Sultan Mohammed Al-Kindi</i>	122
10.	Learners' beliefs about listening in an Omani secondary school <i>Hamdoon Khalfan Al-Handhali</i>	137
11.	The influence of kindergarten education on subsequent achievement in Grade One <i>Mahmood Mohammed Al-Abri</i>	153
12.	The effectiveness of the Learning Difficulties Programme in Basic Education Cycle 1 schools <i>Sultan Hamed Al-Ghafri</i>	170
13.	The Internet in English language teaching in Oman <i>Fahad Salim Al-Adi</i>	187
14.	Integrating the 'knowledge in pieces' and 'learning demand' perspectives on learning into an analysis of the Omani Physics curriculum for Grade 11 <i>Asma Salim Al-Mahrouqi</i>	202
15.	Motivating teachers in times of change <i>Saleem Khalfan Al-Habsi</i>	227
16.	Introducing Total Quality Management to Basic Education schools in Oman - Are they ready for it? <i>Mohammed Abdullah Al-Maqbali</i>	246

List of Contributors

All contributors are MA graduates in Education from the University of Leeds and have extensive experience of teaching in the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman.

Suleiman Mohammed A'Shizawi has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Regional Supervisor of English in Batinah North Region.

Fawzia Hamdan Al-Zadjali has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is Director of Cycle 1 Programme Development Office.

Salima Khamis Al-Sinani has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Senior Teacher of English in Muscat Region.

Maryam Mohammed Al-Jardani has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Regional Teacher Trainer of English in Muscat Region.

Khadija Darwish Al-Balushi has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Regional Teacher Trainer of English in Batinah South Region.

Huda Said Al-Habsi has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Lecturer in English at Nizwa College of Education.

Anwar Saleh Al-Blooshi has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Regional Teacher Trainer of English in Batinah North Region.

Mahfoudah Abdullah Al-Bahri has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Regional Teacher Trainer of English in Batinah South Region.

Sultan Mohammed Al-Kindi has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is the Head of the Qualification Evaluation Section in the Department of Certificates and Educational Qualifications of the Ministry of Education, Muscat.

Hamdoon Khalfan Al-Handhali has an MA in Education (TESOL) and is a Senior Teacher of English in Sharqiya North Region.

Mahmood Mohammed Al-Abri has an MA in Education (General) and is Director of the Department of Supervision and Evaluation in the Directorate General of Private Education in the Ministry of Education, Muscat.

Sultan Hamed Al-Ghafri has an MA in Special Educational Needs and is a Lecturer in English at Ibri College of Technology.

Fahad Salim Al-Adi has an MA in ICT and Education and is a Public Relations Assistant in Qalhat LNG.

Asma Salim Al-Mahrouqi has an MA in Science Education and is pursuing PhD research in Science Education at the University of Leeds.

Saleem Khalfan Al-Habsi has an MA in International Education Management and is a Regional Supervisor of English in Sharqiya North Region.

Mohammed Abdullah Al-Maqbali has an MA in International Education Management and is Manager of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, University of Sohar.

Editors

Mark Wyatt was a Regional Tutor on the BA TESOL Project in Oman between 2002 and 2008 and is now a Senior Lecturer in English Language and Linguistics at the University of Portsmouth. He has a PhD in Education from the University of Leeds. His main research interests are in teachers' self-efficacy and practical knowledge growth. Forthcoming publications include: 'One teacher's development as a reflective practitioner' in the *Asian EFL Journal*.

John Atkins has been the Project Manager since the BA (TESOL) project started in 1999. He has previous experience of managing education projects in Bulgaria and Ethiopia.

Front cover photo: Clive Gracey

Introduction: Research perspectives on education in Oman

Mark Wyatt and John Atkins

1 EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN OMAN

Educational reform in Oman has been rapid, characterized by curriculum renewal, teacher development and infrastructural growth. In 1995, the Ministry of Education embarked on an ambitious plan to introduce Basic Education to the Sultanate for all children of school age, aiming to develop life skills through communication and self-learning, the capacity for scientific and critical thinking, the ability to deal rationally with problems and the development of positive values (Ministry of Education, 2001). Features of the new Basic Education schools would include computer laboratories and learning resource centres.

Changes were planned in the curriculum. English, for example, would be introduced from Grade 1, with a new coursebook, English For Me (EFM), replacing the Our World Through English (OWTE) series that had been used under the General Education system for children from Grade 4. (OWTE was phased out gradually over a number of years as new Basic Education schools, Cycle 1 for Grades 1-4 and Cycle 2 for Grades 5-10, were established.) Other subjects that would be at the core of the new curriculum were Islamic Studies, Arabic, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Environmental Life Skills, Information Technology, Physical Education, Art and Music. The entire curriculum would be learner-centred, with learners' needs met and their 'physical, affective, social and intellectual development' addressed (Ministry of Education, 2001).

Teacher development programmes supported the evolution of the new curriculum. These included short in-service methodology courses for teachers new to Basic Education. The most ambitious teacher education project initiated, though, was the BA Educational Studies (TESOL), developed by the University of Leeds for Oman in consultation with the Ministry of Education (O'Sullivan, 2000). The aims were to support Omanisation, build capacity to enable teachers to contribute effectively to educational reform, and implement a programme of academic study

whose rationale was compatible with, and supportive of, the goals of the Education Reform programme (ELCD, 2002).

To fulfil these aims, the Ministry planned 6 overlapping cohorts of the BA Programme between 1999 and 2008, and over 800 Omani teachers of English graduated from the University of Leeds with BA Educational Studies (TESOL) degrees between 2003 and 2009, with the most outstanding gaining Firsts and Upper Seconds. Of these outstanding graduates, three per year between 2003 and 2009 were awarded scholarships to study for one-year MA (TESOL) degrees in Education at the University of Leeds. In addition, in 2005 and 2006, 20 further MA scholarships at Leeds (in General Education, Information Computer Technology and Education, International Education Management, Science Education, Teacher Education and Special Educational Needs), were offered to Ministry of Education staff who were graduates of Leeds and other universities. This volume is a collection of edited research papers written by 16 (of a total to date of 54) Omani MA (Education) University of Leeds graduates. It is part of a series arising from the BA (TESOL) Project (see Borg, 2006, 2008, for volumes already published in this series).

As the list of contributors reveals, many of these MA graduates are now in positions where they can continue to contribute to educational reform. This is in line with BA Project mission goals. Some are now Senior English Teachers (SETs) (a post created under the educational reforms) and have the primary responsibility of managing teacher development in schools through activities such as peer teaching, conducting workshops, observing, giving feedback and otherwise mentoring. Others are Regional Supervisors of English (RSEs), who tend to be responsible for a number of schools, where they support SETs, conduct teacher development workshops, make advisory visits to classrooms and appraise teachers (Harrison, 1996). Others are Regional Teacher Trainers of English (RTTs), a position Omanised in the past few years. As well as supporting SETs and RSEs in their teacher development work, RTTs are responsible for conducting short in-service training courses. Typically, these include methodology courses for teachers new to the curriculum, as well as courses supporting language development and research skills. Other contributors to this volume are now in senior positions in the Ministry of Education, elsewhere in higher education, in business, or engaged in further studies.

2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS VOLUME

This volume is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it showcases the research writings of some of the most outstanding talents in education in Oman. To be selected for an MA scholarship in Leeds, applicants went through a rigorous process. Then, to have their work selected for this volume, they needed to excel in their studies, and, in particular, produce outstanding final pieces of work. Secondly, together with volumes earlier in this series (Borg, 2006, 2008), it demonstrates the commitment of the Ministry of Education towards encouraging research. Thirdly, it provides further evidence of the success of Oman in tackling educational reform, which may be of interest to other countries contemplating change. As Freeman (2007, p. 52) wrote in his evaluation of the BA Project: "I am not aware of any other national context currently in which the confluence of professional training and

capacity-building with educational policy and curricular reform have played out as positively.” Finally, it contributes to a growing body of published research in education, both in Oman and in the region. This is important, for if research is not shared, it cannot be acted upon. Volumes such as the present one will continue the process of raising awareness of the value of research within the Sultanate and in neighbouring countries, where volumes devoted to locally conducted research have also recently started to appear (Coombe, 2007; Warne et al., 2006).

3 CONDUCTING RESEARCH WHILE IN LEEDS

As earlier reported, the 16 articles included in this volume were produced by graduates of the University of Leeds MA in Education programme; 10 of the 16 studied TESOL, 2 International Education Management, and 1 each studied General Education, Information and Computer Technologies and Education, Science Education and Special Educational Needs. In common, they studied for one year in Leeds, each producing a critical study of approximately 15,000 words as their final piece of assessed work. Many, but not all, returned to Oman for brief periods while they were conducting the research to collect data.

Conducting research while at Leeds provided the MA students with access to excellent University resources, in terms of library facilities and tutorial support. Furthermore, while away from home, researchers reviewed their practice and drew implications from their findings that would influence the way they approached their work when they returned to Oman. Unsurprisingly, given the time constraints affecting the collection of data, closed questionnaires were the most popular research method, though, as in earlier volumes in the series (Borg, 2006, 2008), most of the researchers used several methods.

Faced by the challenges of conducting research at distance, some of the authors in this volume were very inventive, making full use of internet and mobile phone technology to conduct interviews. Several also made extensive use of documents. Questionnaires were carefully designed and ethical procedures followed. Well-planned and intensive data-gathering trips to Oman were made.

Though the researchers featured in this volume were removed from the contexts in which they worked while studying, there is no sense of their research being irrelevant to the context of education in Oman. Indeed, the experience of studying in Leeds clearly enriched their research perspectives on education in their own country, as this volume demonstrates.

4 CONTENTS & ORGANIZATION

Following Borg (2006, 2008), we have standardised the organization and layout of the articles. We have also presented the material more concisely, so that each of the chapters is approximately two-fifths of its original length (with one exception, Asma Al-Mahrouqi’s, which is longer). Background information, literature reviews and research methodology sections have been most heavily edited, though we have tried to retain sufficient information to facilitate replication of the studies. Weight has been given to findings and discussions, so that key implications can be

understood and acted upon. We will now consider the contents in more detail.

The first three chapters explore the role of the post-lesson discussion (PLD) as a means of supporting teacher development from various perspectives and using different methodologies. Sulaiman A'Shizawi surveyed 100 teachers of English in one region of Oman, investigating their attitudes towards PLDs, and considering how these discussions could be made more useful (Chapter 1). While he found that attitudes were generally positive, he felt that if initial teacher education programmes concentrated more fully on the value of feedback, positive attitudes would be more widespread. Furthermore, he found that observations tended to be general and unplanned. If they were centred on a specific focus, he argued, teachers would gain more. A third key recommendation was that the interpersonal skills and professional knowledge of Regional Supervisors of English (RSEs) who conduct observations on their visits to schools were subject to on-going professional development.

While Sulaiman was primarily interested in teachers' attitudes towards PLDs, Fawzia Al-Zedjali's main concern was how she could best promote professional development (PD) through them (Chapter Two). Accordingly, her focus was much more on RSEs' supervisory behaviour during these encounters. After using qualitative tools to survey 27 teachers of English and interview 3 RSEs, she concluded that supervisors could focus more on developing reflective processes during the PLD through encouraging self-questioning and modelling reflective practice. Supervisors could also be more conscious of their own developmental needs. Reflecting on her own work, she identified a need to focus more on exploring teachers' personal qualities, beliefs and assumptions affecting practice.

Salima Al-Sinani approached PLDs from the perspective of a Senior English Teacher (SET) (Chapter Three). Using recordings of SETs conducting PLDs, as well as subsequent interviews with them, Salima explored how PLDs are structured and analysed the types of questions asked and forms of language used, examining effects on reflective responses. She concluded that staging PLDs to include climate-setting, reflecting and learning phases, making use of open WH questions and using supportive rather than directive language all contributed to stimulating reflective processes.

Chapters Four and Five focus on in-service teacher training (INSET) from the perspective of Omani teacher trainers of English new to the role. In Chapter Four, Maryam Al-Jardani analysed her plan for a 20-session INSET course she had designed against various criteria. She examined the plan for evidence of principles, such as whether it built on teachers' prior experiences, considered the importance of the social environment in learning, provided opportunities for teachers to develop skills, modelled principles underpinning the new curriculum and provided opportunities for the development of reflective skills. She then identified ways in which her future plans could embody these principles more fully.

Rather than concentrating on her own prior training behaviour, Khadija Al-Balushi focused on the impact on teachers' views and reported practices of an INSET course taught by one of her colleagues. She focused, in particular, on the teachers' cognitions and behaviour with regard to teaching stories to young learners

(Chapter Five). Though she was unable to observe the teachers of English in their classrooms, she observed two of the training sessions they attended and interviewed six of the teachers on the course. She found that, while the impact of the course varied due to individual factors such as noticing skills and degrees of experience, there was discernible growth in the reported cognitions of all teachers, as analysis of the content and language of the interviews revealed. Khadija felt the impact of the course may have been greater had more been done to 'get out' before 'putting in', as Malderez & Wedell (2007) describe the process of accessing prior beliefs before providing input. Other implications for the future that she identified with her own practice as a trainer in mind included doing more to develop noticing skills through INSET courses.

Chapter Six continues the theme of teachers' professional development (PD), focusing on peer observation, a school-based Ministry-supported procedure which can empower teachers to take charge of their own PD. Huda Al-Habsi surveyed the perceptions towards peer observation of 65 Omani teachers of English and their reported practices, and found evidence that peer observation was being used to some extent in the way envisaged by the Ministry. However, perceptions of the value of pre-lesson discussions were relatively undeveloped, while reported practices regarding post-lesson discussions varied. Recommendations included awareness-raising workshops to highlight the benefits of peer observation and reflective work, and to encourage teachers to take the initiative with regard to their own PD.

While experienced teachers are expected to become fairly autonomous, beginning teachers (BTs) of English (the focus of Chapters Seven and Eight) often need a great deal of support. Using questionnaires and interviews, Anwar Al-Balooshi explored BTs' perceptions of their first year's teaching experiences (Chapter Seven). Using Lave & Wenger's (1991) socio-cultural framework, he examined how they moved from the periphery to become fuller members in their communities of practice, supported by members of the school community. Generally very positive relationships with SETs and access provided by them supported this process, as his quantitative data revealed. However, a qualitative case study focusing on one BT highlighted the need for headteachers, who are often very busy, to support the socialization of BTs to a greater extent. RSEs also have a role in facilitating this process, as the implications Anwar draws from the study make clear.

Mahfoudhah Al-Bahri also considered the socialization of BTs, but this was within the broader context of cognitive and behavioural change in the first year (Chapter 8). While the BT Anwar made the subject of his case study was a graduate from Ajman, a private university, the four BTs who Mahfoudhah made the subject of hers were all graduates of the English teaching programme of Sultan Qaboos University, the most prestigious government university in Oman. This allowed her to make recommendations for the redesign of the pre-service course they had attended. She found that the teachers' understandings and practices developed in various ways during the first year in response to the diverse contexts they were working in. Challenges posed included the level of the learners, the need to control

the class and the requirements of the syllabus, but all four teachers responded adequately. As they learned how to maintain control while motivating learners at the same time, they were supported by the collaborative nature of the school cultures they were working in.

After the first eight chapters, which all address professional development in different ways, Chapter 9 focuses on continuous assessment (CA) and teachers' attitudes towards this system, which, at the time of the research, had only recently been introduced to the Grade 12 curriculum. Sultan Al-Kindy surveyed the attitudes of 50 Grade 12 teachers of English towards CA, after observing lessons taught by two of the surveyed teachers for evidence of CA practices. His findings revealed a complex picture; innovative ideas appeared to co-exist with traditional ones and gaps were apparent between perceptions and practices. Sultan concluded that changes in assessment practice were gradually taking place. These changes could be speeded up by in-service training and materials' development.

Hamdoon Al-Handhali also conducted research with Grade 12, but focused on learners rather than teachers, investigating their beliefs about listening to English (Chapter 10). After surveying one class of 30 secondary school boys, he concluded that in general they appeared to be good listeners, using their knowledge of the context to support top-down processing and able to tolerate ambiguity. However, listening exercises in class seemed to cause anxiety, and their exposure to the language was limited. Furthermore, they would have benefited from a greater focus on metacognitive listening strategies. While they reported they were able to direct attention efficiently and solve problems while they listened, they also reporting making use of the inefficient strategy of translating key words and tended not to monitor or evaluate their listening. So a key recommendation was that teachers should focus more on developing strategy use.

In Chapter Eleven, attention switches from learners about to leave school to those joining it and from TESOL issues to those concerning education in general. Mahmood Al-Abri investigated the influence of kindergarten education on the subsequent achievement of Grade One children. After surveying 152 teachers, interviewing 10 teachers and testing 90 pupils, Mahmoud identified a number of benefits gained from attending kindergarten. These include increasing readiness to attend school, in terms of confidence, independence and knowledge, as well as in social and academic preparation, such as in literacy and numeracy skills. While acknowledging that pre-schooling is perhaps not for everyone, Mahmoud concluded that kindergarten education should be offered to every child, with funding made available to highlight the benefits and to support implementation.

In Chapter Twelve, the focus shifts from students who start school with the advantage of having had a preschool education to students suffering from 'learning difficulties' (LDs). In the context of Sultan Al-Ghafri's special educational needs study in Oman, LDs relate to particular tasks, such as reading, writing and maths, and are experienced by children whose overall intelligence is within a normal range. The focus of Sultan's article is on evaluating the effectiveness of the learning difficulties' programme in primary schools in one region of the country. Questionnaires were given to 11 Special Educational Needs' Co-ordinators

(SENCOs) in schools and 30 class teachers (CTs), and interviews were conducted with SENCOs, CTs, children with LDs and their parents. Findings suggested that the programme was positively perceived and was helping children overcome LDs, though a number of recommendations were made, with a view to enhancing the success of the programme. These proposed changes relate to the various stages of the process, from the assessment of LDs to intervention, and address issues relating to inclusion and partnership.

After this focus on special educational needs, the next two chapters address other curriculum areas; information and computer technologies (ICT) and science education, respectively. Fahad Al-Adi investigated the attitudes of 35 Omani teachers of English towards the internet (Chapter Thirteen). At the time he was conducting the research, the teachers were engaged on a module entitled Technology in Language Learning during a Leeds BA (TESOL) summer school. Findings revealed that the teachers were generally positive about potential uses for the internet in teaching. However, there were gaps in their ICT skills and a need for in-service training was identified. Various recommendations for the integration of ICT into the work of schools were also made.

In Chapter Fourteen, the focus switches to science education. Asma Al-Mahrouqi analysed a chapter from the Grade 11 Physics syllabus used in Oman in relation to two perspectives on learning; 'learning demands' (Leach & Scott, 2002) and 'knowledge in pieces' (diSessa, 1993). After studying the various misconceptions that learners need to overcome to understand linear motion (the subject of a chapter in the syllabus), Asma concluded that both of the above perspectives have shortcomings. She demonstrated that mathematical and graphical representations are integral to the process of science learning and need to be considered, alongside conceptual representations, in theoretical accounts of the process. Asma suggested how the particular chapter in the Omani syllabus in question could be restructured to facilitate learning, and implied how the planning of science teaching in general could be re-thought.

Following this focus on science education, the last two chapters in the volume address issues related to international educational management. In Chapter Fifteen, Saleem Al-Habsi investigated the motivation of 150 teachers in five schools as a case study, with a view to identifying motivational needs that could be supported through the actions of headteachers. Saleem recommended that head-teachers focus on giving teachers the recognition they deserve by, for example, offering praise and encouragement, and seeking to raise their status in the local community. He also recommended providing opportunities for in-service professional development in schools, and improving working conditions, by, for example, distributing workloads equitably.

The focus of Mohammed Al-Maqbali's investigation was into whether Basic Education schools are ready yet for Total Quality Management (TQM) (Chapter Sixteen). Applied to education, TQM is an organizational approach to management that focuses on providing quality through developing and refining educational services offered in response to feedback. It involves all members of staff in working together towards common objectives. After surveying the staff of six schools and

interviewing headteachers and Ministry officials, Mohammed found a willingness to accept TQM. For this innovation to be introduced successfully, though, commitment would be required at every stage from planning through implementation to evaluation. Mohammed suggests how this commitment could be gained, so that the various quality procedures in the Ministry's work could be combined under a TQM framework.

REFERENCES

- Borg, S. (Ed.). (2006). *Classroom research in ELT in Oman*. Muscat: Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman.
- Borg, S. (Ed.). (2008). *Investigating English language teaching and learning in Oman*. Muscat: Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman.
- Coombe, C. (Ed.). (2007). *Language teacher research in the Middle East*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- diSessa, A. (1993). Toward an epistemology of physics. *Cognition and Instruction*, 10, 105–225.
- Elbaz, F. (1981). The teacher's 'practical knowledge': A report of a case study. *Curriculum Inquiry* 11, 43-71.
- ELCD. (2002). *The Ministry of Education – Leeds University BA (TESOL) Project Mission Statement*. Muscat: Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman.
- Freeman, D. (2007). *Fourth evaluation of the Ministry of Education, Oman – University of Leeds BA Educational Studies (TESOL) Project*. Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman.
- Harrison, I. (1996). Look who's talking now: Listening to voices in curriculum renewal. In K.M. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices from the language classroom*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leach, J. & Scott, P. (2002). Designing and evaluating science teaching sequences: An approach drawing upon the concept of learning demand and a social constructivist perspective on learning. *Studies in Science Education*, 38, 115-42.
- Malderez, A. & Wedell, M. (2007). *Teaching teachers: Processes and practices*. London: Continuum.
- Ministry of Education. (2001). *Basic Education in the Sultanate of Oman: The theoretical framework*. Muscat: Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman.
- O'Sullivan, K. (2000). *Independent evaluation of the Ministry of Education, Oman – University of Leeds BA Educational Studies (TESOL) Project*. Muscat: Ministry of Education, Sultanate of Oman.
- Warne, A., O'Brien, M., Syed, Z., & Zuriek, M. (Eds.). (2006). *Action research in English language teaching in the UAE*. Abu Dhabi: HCT Press.