THE JOURNAL OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC AND ACADEMIC PURPOSES
Vol. 5, Nº 4, 2017, pp. 629−638

UDC: 811.111:371.3 DOI: 10.22190/JTESAP1704629K

SWITCHING IT UP: INVESTIGATING WAYS TEACHERS CHANGE THEIR PRACTICES TO REACH THEIR STUDENTS

David Knott

University of Exeter, UK
E-Mail: dk304@exeter.ac.uk

Abstract. *In the Arabian Gulf States, many Western-educated teachers spend their spare time around the water cooler complaining about how their students don't do this or that, or how they can't compare to learners in country x, y, or z. While it is anticipated that teachers arrive in a job with a certain amount of 'baggage' related to their experiences and background as both students and teachers, the question arises of whose responsibility is it to accommodate whom? Is it up to local students to transform themselves in order to meet the expectations of foreign teachers or vice versa? Most teachers would hope that there is a third, middle ground where teachers and students come together, as there is not one solitary way to teach and learn English. Investigating this issue leads to the critical pedagogy of Freire and Giroux, as well as the cultural concerns of ESL teaching identified by Canagarajah, Crystal, Kumaravadivelu, and others. The many theories are less of a concern to the actual teachers who day-by-day grapple with their students' strengths and weaknesses, constantly seeking better ways to succeed with those students. Therefore, rather than the unreality of water-cooler talk, the focus of this paper is on the reality of the ESL classroom in the Gulf States, investigating specific, concrete ways that committed teachers have tried to move beyond their own perspectives and limitations, working to democratize their classrooms, switching up their teaching to best engage and utilize the interests and aptitudes of their students. The study examines various teachers' ideas ranging from ice breakers, class activities, assessments and feedback. The goal is to demonstrate successful approaches that might encourage other teachers to critically evaluate their own practices and continue to push themselves to implement new and different pedagogies to help their students.*

Key words: *critical pedagogy, culture, alternative, teaching and learning*

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is directed at those teachers who may have lost their passion, who no longer feel inspired at the prospect of entering a classroom, or who believe that there is simply no way to connect with their students. In my five years of working in the region of the Gulf States in the Middle East, I have encountered a number of educators who feel jaded, with various grievances both real and exaggerated. Of course, I commiserate with such teachers, and it would be disingenuous of me to claim that I never feel dispirited or frustrated because of work. However, as educators, our prime duty is the ongoing search for how to teach our students, to work within John Dewey's laboratory approach to

Submitted September 10th, 2017, accepted for publication September 30th, 2017

education, involving "the study of past operations and results that have been successful, thorough acquaintance with current methods and tools, and careful scrutinizing of one's own attempts to see what succeeds and fails" (Hendley 2010, 17). This research aims to provide some resources to teachers in this context and beyond who might be searching for something a bit different, something that might spark their interest and, hopefully, that of their students.

2. Understanding and Framing the Issue

One of the primary drivers of the problem of not making connections between teachers and students is culture. Within any classroom, those cultural differences could be generational, gender-based, socio-economic, or many others; in the context of teaching English in the Gulf States, the most consistent cultural difference is that of cultural background, as most teachers are non-Arabs from Anglophone countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, or Australia. According to Karmani (2005), English language teaching professionals are mostly "an exclusive corps of Anglo-Western TESOL practitioners, most of whom (…) lack the most rudimentary knowledge about Islam or (…) the most basic structures of the Arabic language" (95). The expansive growth of recent decades in the higher education sector in the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has resulted in this situation, leading Syed (2003) to declare that "linguistic and cultural distance between learners and teachers is a serious factor in the Gulf EFL classroom" (339).

Along with different cultural backgrounds, local students in the higher education in the GCC must also bridge a pedagogical gap when making the step up from high school. Much of the education pupils receive in primary and secondary schools is still based on a framework of rote memorization which lacks guidance in critical thinking (House 2012; Seznec 2009). Furthermore, in most state schools, the medium of instruction is Arabic, in some cases Classical Arabic, with a fixation on grammar and syntax, leading students to become disinterested in languages (Hanif 2016). This compounds the difficulty many students face when entering universities where the language of instruction is English; in the United Arab Emirates in 2010, for example, 90 percent of the students applying to federal universities were not qualified to begin undergraduate level classes upon entry (Moussly 2012).

In such situations, it can be difficult for students to relate to their teachers and the curriculum. Without many local teachers, students are denied "young national indigenous role models" in the classroom, contributing to the low regard some in the region have for teachers (Davidson 2011, 111). A tradition of oral storytelling in the Arab world has led to the modern issue of a popular disinterest in reading: a 2012 report by the Arab Thought Foundation found that, on average, Arab children read for only "six minutes" a year (Al-Yacoub, 2012). Moreover, student motivation is an oft-cited issue for educators in the region (Syed 2003, 337), due partly to students' plans for post-graduation: some will not enter the workforce, while others merely seek a government position with high pay and low expectations (Abdulla & Ridge, 2010).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The dissemination of English has inevitable effects on learners potentially altering their worldview, affecting their identity and their sense of self. It may leave speakers in "a third place that is not part of any one defined culture," neither that of a culture associated with their L1 or their L2 (Baker 2009, 585). Phillipson (2004, 4) has coined terms like lingua economica, lingua Americana, and lingua bellica in attempts to illustrate exactly the ideology, interests, and influence that English as a "narcotic" holds for the world. Regardless of whether the spread of English is as nefarious as Phillipson believes, there is an unequal cultural relationship. There are colonial or post-colonial themes in the relationship between "Western culture" and the L2 speech community (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, 12).

The reproduction of power in social institutions is a focus of Foucault (1982), who states that power "applies itself to everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him (212, as quoted by Atkinson 1999, 634). In TESOL, that diffusion of power through educational institutions is seen first in how it is taught: the most prevalent English language teaching methods are concerned with communication, incorporating "interactional and sociocultural norms" (Hymes 1972, as cited by Kumaravadivelu 2006, 61), which may not be accessible for certain cultures or individuals.

The more teachers are aware of such conflicts or difficulties facing their students, the better equipped they will be to engage those students in meaningful ways. However, often when lecturers do venture to learn about their students, there can be reductionism, culturism, or stereotyping (see Holliday, 1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Holliday (1999) contrasts the essentialist, or large culture perspective that leads to such othering, with his conception of small cultures which are not bound by geographic or ethnic borders, are not prescriptive, but are dynamic and individualized. When addressing sociocultural factors in TESOL, Atkinson (1999, 648) similarly refers to individuals-in-context. Seeing students as individuals with multiple identities and cultural memberships is a key aspect of Atkinson's (1999) Six principles of culture for TESOL teachers.

Addressing many of these issues is the purview of Critical Applied Linguistics, an area of study with a view of "social relations as problematic," where identities and relationships are shaped by political and ideological powers beyond individuals' control, in a society that is effectively unequal and unfair (Pennycook 2001, 6). In critical pedagogy, Giroux (1988) exposes the cultural biases of school curricula and that those curricula do not necessarily serve the interests of the students themselves, entreating academics to become "transformative intellectuals" (as cited by Moore 2000, 99). Thus, introspection on the part of teachers is required to better understand where their own beliefs and decisions originate: investigating teacher cognitions and the twofold social process in which they are constructed (Borg 1998; Vygotsky 1997, as cited by Lantolf and Johnson 2007). Thereby, through reflection and efforts to be creative and distinctive, teachers can continuously strive to customize their lessons in ways that involve their students and keep learners at the center of the teaching process (Richards 2013).

4. METHODS

This study initially grew out of a place of criticality, a restive problematization of the status quo in some of the offices and classrooms I observed (Dean 1994, 4, as cited by Pennycook 1999, 343). It could more rightly be termed "a critical interpretivist methodology" as the objective is to aid readers in expanding "their repertoire of cultural engagement and carry(ing) practices from one society to another, to share underlying universal cultural processes with people from other societies, and to dialogue with the environment provided by national social structures" (Holliday 2011, 36-37). It is critical in a manner, since there is some attention paid to "asymmetries in power arrangements" in how classes are organized and presented, for example (Giddens 1979, as cited by Talmy 2010, 28). At the same time, as an exploratory study, this research focuses on teachers' own interpretations of their lessons and how they construct the reality in their classrooms, which are recorded through the subjective lens of the researcher, thereby producing qualitative data (Pring 2004; Dörnyei 2007). The research questions being investigated are as follows:

1. What are some ways that English teachers have successfully changed their practices with their students in mind?
2. What different aspects of English classes can teachers modify in this way?

5. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As mentioned above, the research is an exploratory study, meaning simply that there is not a clearly preconceived research agenda beyond the research questions. The structure of the research only took shape after the data had been collected. As with most other interpretive research, "the researcher is essentially the main measurement device' in the study" (Miles and Huberman 1994, 7, as quoted by Dörnyei 2007, 38). This means that the study is subjective, in that the inclusion of teaching practices is dependent on the preferences and judgments of myself as the researcher. The criteria for selection are lessons or approaches to teaching that are not typically included in teaching or professional development courses, which were reported by the participants as being well-received by their students, creating more engagement within the lesson, or empowering students within the classroom dynamic.

In most cases, the data was collected from colleagues working in my same context, predominantly in higher education in the GCC. Therefore, sampling could be considered convenience, as well as purposive sampling. Participants were chosen due both to their close proximity to the researcher and their earned status as innovative educators. Participants were informed of the nature of the research, and each gave their consent to include their ideas in the presentation/paper. Encounters were typically in neutral spaces such as classrooms, hallways, or offices; however, there was some contact via email. All efforts were taken to avoid any harm to the participants, for example either psychological or connected to their confidentiality, as well as to ensure informed consent to participation without participants feeling unduly pressured to take part.

Data was collected initially through informal observations around the higher education institutions where I have worked; this included seeing how other teachers prepared for classes, the sorts of objects they were carrying to and from class, the manner of their classes sessions, their shared course materials, or workshops/team meetings conducted. These beginning observations were typically followed up with a request for an interview to discuss the process of their lesson, which included gaining their consent. Interviews were the primary data

collection instrument in the study because they "capture rich and complex details" and provide "thick descriptions" of participants' views and insider meanings (Dörnyei 2007, 37-38). Interviews were short, generally less than ten minutes, and only notes were taken; there was no audio recording. They consisted of open-ended questions, keeping it "conversational and situational" (Patton 1980, 206, as quoted in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2005, 271). Much of this contact was followed up with email conversations or web searches for additional data, particularly for mobile apps or websites used in the lesson in question.

6. Results and Discussion

The results of the study indicate that there are opportunities to modify lessons in virtually every aspect of the teaching process, as regards the second research question. Therefore, this section is organized by those aspects: first classes, class activities (throughout the semester), and finally, assessments and feedback.

6.1. First classes

From the outset of the semester, it is possible to include students in the planning and the organization of the class at several stages. One method involves a class discussion or a brainstorm to establish the rules for the course. In this case, the teacher puts two categories on the board: one for student rules (or responsibilities), and the same for the teacher. The students are given a few moments to discuss amongst themselves, and then the instructor collects the ideas on the board in a standard manner of brainstorming, jotting down all of the ideas submitted without much commenting. This exercise can be led in a more jovial manner and as a result does receive occasional lighthearted suggestions like "forgive students for being late," or "don't give homework", which typically draw laughter from the students. This is concluded by going through all of the suggestions as a group and deciding which are viable rules, which are not, or even which are most important for teachers or students. Such an approach could also involve students in establishing assignment due dates, topics for readings, and assignments.

Further advice from the participants concerns the use of technology. First is using the mobile app *CamScanner* to record the information on the white board, which is beneficial because it enables users to immediately crop pictures, to save them as PDFs or JPEGs, and to group them or store them separate from the phone's photographs, making access much simpler than merely taking pictures with a smart phone's camera. In efforts to democratize the classroom, teachers can similarly employ *Google Docs* as a platform for students to take charge of certain aspects of their learning. *Google Docs* allow teachers to create spreadsheets or other documents that students can access and edit online, meaning they can suggest topics, web links for materials, due dates; they can sign up for presentation times, research topics, etc. This saves the faculty member the class time that would have been devoted to such processes and puts it in the hands of students.

There is also a negative side to technology: students' being distracted by mobile phones is an issue that many teachers confront in the first days of the semester. One colleague addresses this by collecting students' phones at the start of the class. The teacher constructed a box with numbered slots that he places on his desk at the front of the classroom, and students must place their phone in the corresponding slot to be marked present. I have found in my own first classes that merely showing the students a picture of

such a box gets their attention at how seriously I take students playing on mobile phones during class activities. When searching online for comparable approaches to phones in class, *Pinterest* has proven a very useful resource: there are "pins" of images of similar boxes or even more humorous techniques and objects, such as the "phone prison", which gives a clear message to students in a less serious manner.

6.2. Class activities

A colleague introduces his students to Australian Rules Football by showing them a ten-minute video clip of a match. After watching the actions of the players and referees in the clip, the students, who are divided into groups, then attempt to create a list of the rules of the sport without help. The instructor can make the focus of the lesson process analysis, modals, imperatives, action verbs, etc. depending on the course or the students' level. With high-level students, the lesson is concluded with a class discussion regarding different cultures, national sports, or even violence in sport. Such a lesson could certainly be adapted to other sports from different parts of the world, like hurling, curling, lacrosse, or even cricket.

Another teacher occasionally approaches reading as a group task in a way that enables his students to take charge of their learning. He starts with locally accessible materials, in this case, the "knowledge magazine" *Flashes*, published in the UAE by the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation. For the lesson in question, the teacher selected a text on the Dead Sea Scrolls, and as a warm-up created similar props with old receipts or documents, burning, soaking, fading, them to give the students a tactile connection to the topic and as a means to pre-teach key vocabulary. The text is divided into sections, and groups of 2-4 students are next asked to read their section, summarize it, and select 5-8 important vocabulary items. Time for the task is controlled using an egg timer, which, as a peculiar lesson feature, also draws the interest of the students. At the completion of the time, groups present their findings, which the teacher compiles into an assessment on the mobile app *Qzzr*. By taking advantage of a mobile app, it gives students the chance to use their mobile phones in an appropriate manner, and it allows the teacher to feature colorful graphics and more interesting visuals than would be possible on paper, as well as an automatic system for marking and tracking statistics for individual students, groups, or quiz items. This activity also stands out because of the participant's time commitment: over six hours of work outside the class buttressed the lesson.

Several other teachers have likewise adapted class materials or activities to mobile apps, taking advantage of students' desire to look at their phones during class time and giving students more control of their learning. One of the most dynamic activities involves using the program *Seppo*, which promotes itself as a means to get students "on the move" out of the classroom working in groups "in a real-life environment" ("Seppo" 2017). The teacher who demonstrated Seppo uses it as a competitive scavenger hunt, where students have to hunt for specific vocabulary items around campus, and once found, they take a selfie picture with themselves and the item; the picture is transmitted to the teacher, who can project it on the board or simply keep score. Two other apps that lecturers have used to gamify or create more interesting review activities are *Socrative* and *Kahoot*. *Kahoot* is a bit more colorful in its application, but both have a class review feature where a question is projected onto the large screen and students respond on their phones, and scores/responses are kept and tallied after each question and viewable by the

teacher. A different aspect of *Socrative* is a “space race” where students answer questions individually or in groups on their mobile devices and a representative space ship (or other avatar) races across the screen projected on the board. This was used as a test review in a class, with students in groups responding to review questions that push their rocket further. It was one of the more engaged review activities I have witnessed in an English class, as students seemed determined to get the correct answers or were shouting across the room to challenge other groups.

6.3. Assessments and feedback

There were also varied approaches that teachers use to assess their students that stood out. Portfolios are a common way for faculty members to collect students’ work; however, by exploiting a free blog website like *WordPress*, students can submit their work into an online portfolio in an ongoing manner, doing so throughout the semester. The benefits of this are threefold: students submit scans or photos of their work, so they retain the originals for study purposes; that is also a benefit for teachers, who no longer have to collect binders of physical papers and then make efforts to return them to students; finally, if students submit the links to their blog portfolios near the beginning of the semester (on a *Google Doc*, for example), then teachers can assess them regularly and give continuous feedback to the students, rather than only once at the end of the semester.

Other teachers used websites as a means for directly assessing their students. Students in one group created travel guides on the platform *Wix*, with the aim of using language to describe different places and things to do there, as well as demonstrating a cultural awareness of potential conflicts in other countries. They were able to create much more dynamic projects with multiple links and pictures, and any copying and pasting was also fairly simple to monitor because of the web-based nature of the project. Another site, *PowToon*, enables students to create their own cartoons. One teacher uses *PowToon* to assess students on their comprehension of key concepts from the course, making it a viable substitution for group presentations. According to the participant, their students are generally enthusiastic to produce their own cartoons using a wide variety of stock images, moving text, and the ability to provide their own voiceover; the process of grading is also more straightforward since the teacher can watch and re-watch students’ projects. For educators who are novices with such technology, the *PowToon* website and *YouTube* both have a multitude of sample videos or tutorials.

For an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course, another teacher has his engineering students literally attack their projects. In testing vocabulary on materials, the students bring inexpensive toys into class, and the faculty member reserves the workshop on campus so that the students can burn, crush, tear, or melt their toys in a controlled environment and prepare a report utilizing key vocabulary. With a group the teacher was having particular difficulty motivating, he was very pleased that they were ostensibly excited to test the toys in this way and states that they began bringing in toys weeks in advance in anticipation. Additionally, the quality of work for this project represented a substantial improvement from their prior assignment, according to the participant.

The final inclusion is also an assessment for an ESP course, but is included mostly because of the manner of feedback. The project is for English for media, where the students create their own magazine covers and then narrate a video where they point out the various aspects of the cover using the specific vocabulary being assessed. The videos are typically

created with *iMovies* or a similar mobile app and are then submitted through an online learning platform, in this case, *Blackboard*. In the original iteration of the project, the grade and feedback were also entered for the students to read. The participant reveals a great deal of frustration initially because he was doubtful of how many were actually reading the feedback. As a remedy, this educator began to audio record his feedback using a program called *Audacity* and then attach the audio file to students' assignments on *Blackboard*. The teacher states that time spent marking has increased substantially (50% is the estimate), but he feels confident that it is worth the time commitment. The number of students enquiring about specific points made during the audio feedback leads this participant to believe that a much larger number of students are actually listening to the feedback and retaining it.

7. CONCLUSIONS

As an exploratory study, no direction was established at the outset of the research, but one of the foremost conclusions emerging is that of the use of technology in connection with English language teaching. The majority of these intriguing teaching approaches include mobile or Internet technology, which the teachers use in varying means to engage their students or to allow them to take more ownership of their learning. Several of the educators whose ideas are included in this paper admitted to being technophobes, or at least to not be very confident with such technology, which leads to another conclusion for teachers: get out of your comfort zone. It is understandable that once lecturers have established lessons and materials with which they feel comfortable, they would prefer to continue using them in a consistent manner. However, a certain level of daring on the part of teachers is required to push beyond their typical cognitions and experiment in their classes using untried materials or technology. Administrators or head teachers can facilitate this by encouraging such practices in class and giving space in curricula to allow teachers to create their own materials and to put their own stamp on their lessons.

Additionally, most of the teachers admitted that their lessons were not wholly original and that they had first gotten the idea or the inspiration for the approach from colleagues. After attempting something new in a course, many had also discussed their successes and failures with other faculty members. Such collaboration, together with experimentation in class, is at the heart of Dewey's (1970) "laboratory model for schools where teachers engage in collective inquiry in order to weigh their practices and innovations against evidence and critical dialogue" (Wood 2007, 282). Furthermore, Dewey (1938, as cited by Lucas, 2012) promoted such an approach to teaching within a model of reflective practice, which Potter (2015) adapted into a five-stage reflective cycle of description of the event, feelings and thoughts (self-awareness), evaluation and analysis, conclusion (synthesis), and action plan. This research is a direct result of keeping a reflective notebook in attempts to develop lessons and assessments in such a systematic manner.

Future research on similar innovative approaches to classes or assessments could continue in a similar general, exploratory format, or it might feature a stricter focus on a single aspect like technology, looking directly at more specific applications of mobile phones in class activities or web projects for assessments, for instance. Such research projects could most likely take two forms: either a post-positivist study using quantitative data and possibly even more of an experimental form with a result-oriented approach to better understand if the students actually learn more effectively with such techniques;

another viable approach to such research would be an action research project where a teacher-researcher makes ongoing alterations to their course through the action research cycle of reflect, plan, act, observe, reflect, etc. (Zuber-Skerritt 2001, 15, as cited by Alrichter, Kemmis, McTaggart, and Zuber-Skerritt 2002, 130). Whatever the choice of paradigm or approach, further studies should certainly involve both teachers and students and seek to illuminate ways to bridge the gaps between the two so that students are more engaged in their learning and educators more professionally fulfilled.

REFERENCES

Abdulla, Fatma and Natasha Ridge. "Where Are All the Men? Gender, Participation and Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates," In *Towards an Arab Higher Educational Space: International Challenges and Societal Responsibilities: Proceedings of the Arab Regional Conference on Higher Education,* edited by Bechir Lamine, 125-136. Beirut: UNESCO Beirut, 2010.

Altrichter, Herbert., Stephen Kemmis, Robin McTaggart, and Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt, "The Concept of Action Research." *The Learning Organization*, 9, no. 3 (2002): 125-131, https://doi.org/10.1108/09696470210428840.

Al-Yacoub, Ikram. "Sum of All Fears: Arabs Read an Average of 6 Minutes a Year, Study Reveals." *Al Arabiya News*, July 12, 2012, https://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/07/14/226290.html.

Atkinson, Dwight. "TESOL and Culture." *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, no. 4 (1999): 625-654, https://doi.org/10.2307/3587880.

Baker, Will. "The Cultures of English as a Lingua Franca." *TESOL Quarterly*, 43, no. 4 (2009): 567-592, https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2009.tb00187.x.

Borg, Simon. "Teachers' Pedagogical Systems and Grammar Teaching: A Qualitative Study." *TESOL Quarterly*, 32, no. 1 (1998): 9-38, https://doi.org/10.2307/3587900.

Cohen, Louis, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison. *Research Methods in Education* (Fifth Edition). London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2005.

Davidson, Christopher M. "Higher Education in the Gulf States: From Traditional to Modern." In *The New Post-Oil Arab Gulf: Managing People and Wealth,* edited by Nabil Sultan, David Weir, and Zeinab Karake-Shalhoub, 97-116. London: Saqi Books, 2011.

Dörnyei, Zoltan. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Hanif, N. "Education Experts Highlight Ways to Improve Arabic Language Standards at UAE Schools." *The National.* February 28, 2016. https://www.thenational.ae/uae/education.

Hendley, Brian Patrick. *Dewey, Russell, Whitehead: Philosophers as Educators*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010.

Holliday, Adrian. "Small Cultures." *Applied Linguistics* 20, no. 2 (1999): 237-264, https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.2.237.

Holliday, Adrian. *Intercultural Communication and Ideology*. London: Sage, 2011.

House, Karen E. *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines – and Future*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012.

Karmani, Sohail. "Petro-Linguistics: The Emerging Nexus Between Oil, English, and Islam." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 4, no. 2 (2005): 87-102.

Kumaravadivelu, B. "Problematizing Cultural Stereotypes in TESOL." *TESOL Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (December 2003): 709-719, https://doi.org/10.2307/3588219.

Kumaravadivelu, B. "TESOL Methods: Changing Tracks, Challenging Trends." *TESOL Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (March 2006): 59-81, https://doi.org/10.2307/40264511.

Lantolf, James P. and Karen E. Johnson. "Extending Firth and Wagner's (1997) Ontological Perspective to L2 Classroom Praxis and Teacher Education." *The Modern Language Journal* 91, Focus Issue (December 2007): 877-892. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2007.00675.x.

Lucas, Patricia. "Critical reflection: What Do We Really Mean?" Paper presentation, Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN) National Conference, Geelong, VIC, October 2012.

Moore, Alex. *Teaching and Learning: Pedagogy, Curriculum and Culture*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Moussly, R. "Majority of Emirati Students Are Unprepared for University." *Gulf News*. May 27, 2012. https://gulfnews.com/news/uae/education.

Phillipson, Robert. "If Language Policy Issues Are Explosive, How Should They Best Be Handled?" Paper presentation, Il Mercator International Symposium: Europe 2004: A new framework for all languages?, Tarragona, Catalonia, February 2004.

Pennycook, Alastair. "Introduction: Critical Approaches to TESOL." *TESOL Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 329-348. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587668.

Pennycook, Alastair. *Critical Applied Linguistics: A Critical Introduction*. London: LEA, 2001.

Potter, Christopher. "Leadership Development: An Applied Comparison of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle and Scharmer's Theory U." *Industrial and Commercial Training* 47, no. 6 (2015): 336-342. https://doi.org/10.1108/ICT-03-2015-0024.

Pring, Richard. *Philosophy of Educational Research*. London: Continuum, 2004.

Richards, Jack C. "Creativity in Language Teaching." Paper presentation, Summer Institute for English Teacher of Creativity and Discovery in Teaching University Writing. Hong Kong, June 5, 2013.

"Seppo," Seppo, last modified 2017, http://seppo.io/en/home/.

Seznec, Jean-François. "The Gulf Economies and Globalization: The Effects of FTAs and the WTO." In *The Arabian Gulf: Between Conservatism and Change*. Paper presentation, Thirteenth annual conference of the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, Abu Dhabi, 189-214. Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2009.

Syed, Zafar. "The Sociocultural Context of English Language Teaching in the Gulf." *TESOL Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 337-341, https://doi.org/10.2307/3588508.

Talmy, Steven. "Critical Research in Applied Linguistics." In *Continuum Companion to Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Edited by Brian Paltridge and Aek Phakiti, 127-142. London: Continuum, 2010.

Wood, Diane R. "Professional Learning Communities: Teachers, Knowledge, and Knowing." *Theory Into Practice* 46, no. 4 (October 2007): 281-290.