

## IMPLICATIONS OF PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING FOR OMANI STUDENTS' SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Victoria Tuzlukova<sup>1</sup>, Saleh Al-Busaidi<sup>2</sup>, Samantha Burns<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sultan Qaboos University, <sup>2</sup>Sultan Qaboos University, <sup>3</sup>Sultan Qaboos University  
SULTANATE OF OMAN.

<sup>1</sup>victoria@squ.edu.om, <sup>2</sup>asad@squ.edu.om, <sup>3</sup>samantha@squ.edu.om

### ABSTRACT

*This paper aims to reflect on and discuss the implications of practice-based acquisition of written communication and critical thinking skills with the foundation program students at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in Oman. Pedagogy implemented to enrich students' learning experiences and encourage them to exert more effort into learning is explored in relation to teaching, curricular practice, students' profile and contexts of learning. The discussion of the community-based projects implemented with the foundation program students indicate the importance of designing and implementing practice-based teaching and learning activities that will shape the educational development of Omani students as individuals and skilled professionals.*

**Keywords:** practice-based learning, skill development, community-based projects, Oman

### INTRODUCTION

The educational concept of practice-based education refers to tertiary education that prepares students not only “for their practice occupations” but also for “the work, roles, identities and worlds they will inhabit in these occupations” [1, p.13]. According to Higgs (2013), practice-based education equips students with knowledge and skills “to become contributing members of society as well as members of their professional, disciplinary or occupational community” [2, p.3]. Experiential, situated and workplace learning as well as social learning theory and learning in communities of practice are the most influential and valuable theories for practice-based education [1, p.13], which is, “by definition, entwined with practice, being the purpose, context and medium for such education” [2, p.4].

Practice-based education pedagogy and related theories are rooted in reflexivity, participation and dialogue and are aimed at developing skills, capabilities and behaviors that will make it possible for the students “to contribute to local communities and society as responsible citizens and professionals” [3, p.2]. Nowadays, these theories already belong to the higher education mainstream in Oman and have produced research on curriculum and practice. This research is especially concerned with English language acquisition and development of critical thinking skills also referred to as skills of responsible thinking [4,5] via a range of classroom, community-based, classroom and virtual independent learning activities and tasks [6,7,8]. Moreover, there is a growing commitment to a more sufficient examination and contextualization of such pedagogy in English language education due to an increasingly important role that English plays in Oman's rapidly developing economy and its growing job market to enhance human resource performance and acquisition of knowledge, experiences and technical skills [7]. As a consequence, in the higher education context many English

language teachers now realize the importance of personalizing and individualizing students' learning experiences, adapting materials to integrated language skills' teaching and making critical thinking skills central, that is facilitating students' English language learning outside the classroom. However, the English language curriculum in many higher education institutions in Oman still consists - for the most part- of commercial textbooks that were not designed to cater to these needs and follow basic principles and beliefs of practice-based education that can have a major influence on English language teaching in Oman in the context of globalization and skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century development.

This paper seeks to gain a better understanding of how project work can be used as one of the key strategies of practice-based education pedagogy for enriching students' learning experience, encouraging them to exert more effort into learning and enhancing their written communication and critical thinking skills in a particular context of the English foundation program at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. The study focuses on examining the teaching context of the foundation program, students' profile and project work informed by practice-based education pedagogy that meets students' academic and personal needs. This focus is rooted in previous research conducted by the scholars in Oman who raised their concerns about students' low written communication and critical thinking skills that hinder their future academic and personal success [6, 9, 10]. It also coincides with the general mission and the fundamental purpose of education: "to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community and economic life" [11, p.9].

## **CONTEXT**

Research indicates that "every level of learning must lead to the next level progressively and successively and the transition from the basic entry level to undergraduate courses to the intermediate level must be as smooth and easy as possible" [12, p.103]. The foundation program at Sultan Qaboos University is one of the most important stages for providing such smooth transition from secondary to tertiary education and assisting students' adjustment to the university life. It is aimed at developing literacy, numeracy, computing and learning skills, allowing students a pathway into tertiary education and preparing them for their future academic studies and employability.

The foundation program at Sultan Qaboos University was designed in line with Oman academic standards in the form of learning outcomes for English, mathematics, information technology and study skills. The goal of the English language foundation program is to prepare students for their active participation in higher education studies and to develop their four main language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. The English foundation program at Sultan Qaboos University is a structured program of the English language courses offered by its Language Centre at six proficiency levels. The development of these courses and their smooth running demands a lot of effort to meet the needs of the students who were mainly educated in the government schools, where the language of instruction for all the courses was Arabic. Many of the students had limited contacts with English in real life situations and foreign teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds prior to university, except those who were educated in Muscat area with some exposure to English media and opportunities to communicate in English. These students quite often resort to using Arabic in oral conversations. For many of them, English speaking or writing practice is "fairly redundant" [13] as they have insufficient opportunity outside the classroom to practice what English they have learned in class and contact with English in real-life situations. They are often at a loss for English words both in speaking and writing, and encounter difficulties in conveying their thoughts and feelings in English. In addition, many of them face challenges

with workload, new and unfamiliar ways of interactions, need to deal with new knowledge, organize and present it. To support students and make learning motivating and more interesting, the English language foundation program courses are based on communicative student centered approach and combine the best in current methodology in language learning pedagogy with in-house materials. They involve traditional and virtual learning environment on Moodle platform and occur via classroom, flexible, independent and community-based learning where students are given various activities and tasks. These tasks are devised to help foundation program students become more inclusive partners in the process of developing their linguistic capabilities, study and generic skills. For example, they involve students' learning of how to express themselves for dealing with everyday personal situations and academic events, speak, write, read, talk and think in English, work independently and establish control over the direction of their study.

Writing is considered a crucial component of the English language foundation program. As a consequence, the English language foundation program curriculum emphasizes the enhancement of the writing skills and subskills of the students, including drafting, revising and editing of their own writing. It also focuses at familiarizing students with grammar structures pertinent to their writing tasks and helping students fulfil the prescribed tasks in writing by activating their passive grammar knowledge. According to the Foundation Program Curricula (2013), to teach students various writing skills and forms of writing and meet the requirements of different academic writing tasks a combination of approaches and techniques is implemented, e.g. a model-based approach [14, p.2]. At the lower levels of the foundation program, the writing component of the English courses focuses on informal writing on general topics and on extension for other language skills and sub skills, e.g., focus on the product, errors' correction, etc. At the higher levels the focus is on writing for academic purposes. This includes familiarizing students with morphological and syntactical structures relevant to their writing tasks, assisting them in activating their passive grammar knowledge to complete the tasks given by the teacher and engaging students with contexts of their future specializations and academic requirements. Students at both lower and higher levels are offered a variety of traditional and online writing resources and activities that mostly complement each other "to develop students' sense of curiosity and interest in language" [14, p.11]. Students at all proficiency levels are also provided with in-house writing materials and commercial books or integrated skills series, on-line writing materials, sample writing tests and exercises on Moodle learning platform. Moreover, they have access to the university's Writing Centre and Tutorial Centre, where they can get support from teachers and peer tutors. However, research indicates, that foundation program students' difficulty in writing is still one of the major barriers to their learning [9]. As reported in Al-Seyabi & Tuzlukova (2014), these students face multiple challenges in writing especially those which are concerned with implying critical thinking skills when writing [9].

Critical thinking skills is one of the learning outcomes expected of students at both low and high proficiency levels. It is clearly stated in the Foundation program curricula (2013) under a broad "Skills" category to convey to students exactly what is to be accomplished in terms of providing evidence for knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation and creativity. In line with Elder and Paul (1994) and Vaughn (2005), critical thinking can be interpreted as skillful and responsible thinking transferrable to any subject, content, or problem. Such thinking refers to the process of constructing meaning "in which individuals assess a situation or evaluate data" [15, p.930]. In addition to an attitude of being disposed to consider in a thoughtful way, critical thinking involves knowledge of the methods of logical inquiry and reasoning, and some skill in applying these methods [15].

Students' English language learning at Sultan Qaboos University's foundation program can be described as a dynamic process responsive to current developments in language pedagogy, methodology and innovative computer-based modes of content delivery that tend to focus on individual learners' needs [16]. Moreover, students have opportunities to live and study in a multicultural socio-cultural and academic environment where people of diverse cultures and nationalities are increasingly being asked to communicate and work together. Thus, learning outside the familiar and practice-based learning being global trends in English language teaching and learning acquire new local perspectives and tendencies in Oman both for the students and for the teachers. This is, for example, reflected in educational methodologies and activities for students, as well as in basic strategies for teaching materials that contribute to English language learning.

The foundation program students need a lot of support and guidance on how to consider new ways of learning writing and critical thinking skills. In their attempts to align the writing component with critical thinking skills and to make learning more realistic, teachers at the Language Centre focus on practice-based education pedagogy and ground their teaching on educational concepts that start from the presupposition that "social learning is a creative achievement which involves a degree of personal investment; it can only be achieved by active participation" [17, p.870]. They also pilot a wide range of "innovative and creative teaching approaches, methods, and methodologies that can have "positive and direct implications for influencing change" [7, p.20), which include, for example, in-class and out-of-class community-based projects that support students' consistent practice and development of their linguistic, generic and cognitive skills and "abilities to construct ideas into their thinking" [18, p.36]. These projects are embedded in foundation program students' academic and personal needs, cultural values, interdisciplinary knowledge, functional and situational contexts, specific language program, course and future major of the students.

## **STUDY**

This study aimed at identifying how foundation program students respond to pedagogical approaches currently implemented to enrich their learning experiences, enhance their skill development and encourage them to exert more effort into learning. It employed a monolingual questionnaire in English. One hundred eighty-five students who take foundation program English for Humanities courses participated in the study, among which 156 (84%) were female students and 29 (16%) male students. Both groups of students were between 19 and 22 years old. The future majors of these students were History, Sociology and Social Work, Geography, Arabic, Library and Information Science.

According to the students, most of them (131 students: 70%) favor good teachers in their language courses. They believe that teachers can help them improve their skills. This view is shared by 25 male students (86%) and 106 female students (65%). In particular, they favor teachers who have a sound knowledge of Arabic (82 students: 44% with 15 male students (51%) and 67 female students (43%). They also appreciate that they have good textbooks and in-house materials (72 students: 38%, including 20 male students (68%) and 52 female students (33%). However, the majority of the students believe that they need something more beyond the book. These needs include but are not limited to materials and activities related to their majors, technology based language learning and practice-based learning (ranging from 68% to 92%). For example, according to one of the students, "organization of educational trips might make learning practices more challenging as it will bridge the classroom with the real communication situations". According to another student, such trips can "enhance speaking practice that is needed" and create situations that "elicit opinions and ideas". The third student mentioned that educational trips help "challenge their thinking", and "overcome

the framework of the textbook”. The examination of the students’ opinions reveals their positive response to the course and course materials, however, the challenge for the teachers was to proceed with selecting and designing projects of academic and general interest to the students that would motivate them to learn English and that would be beneficial to them in the future from social and academic points of view.

## **DISCUSSION: FOCUS ON CONTEXTUALIZING PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING**

The focus on language learner’s developmental orientations and learning environment have always been prerequisites in theories of effective language learning [19]. However, in practice, there have always been limitations and contextual constraints to adjusting the language learning process to the needs of the students and the community [20]. In line with practice-based education pedagogy and constructivist tradition in language learning [21], the in-class and out-of-class community based projects for the English language courses at the foundation program were initially designed and implemented as interactive and collaborative language enhancement activities. These activities saw the four skills of language – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – as parts of a structurally integrated whole [22, p.212]. One example of an in-class project involves a two-week long interview-based project which comprises two parts: a speaking and a writing part. It can be described as a face-to-face interaction with someone with a job at university/in Muscat, the capital of the Sultanate of Oman/at home in English followed by a written report. In the project the students are requested to obtain information from people about their life and job, take notes, fill in forms and compile a written report. The project was designed not only to improve students’ knowledge of basic vocabulary and grammar but also to teach them to appreciate diversity and equality among people, encourage them to develop a sense of the importance of individual worth and enhance their critical thinking skills, e.g. asking questions, through project tasks and activities. Embedded in students’ social and cultural contexts and their individual interests, the project involved them in such activities as greeting people, responding to greetings, self-introduction, saying farewells, asking questions, interacting with people of different jobs, taking notes when people are talking, presenting clearly the information in completed forms and writing reports. However, the people interviewed were mostly family members. Sometimes students interviewed relatives who were probably not at work. This would require less effort on the students’ part and helped them in overcoming communicative barriers when interviewing people, they didn’t know at all. But unfortunately this did not increase confidence in the way that interviewing someone else would. When people at work were interviewed their limited number of jobs included teachers, doctors, shopkeepers, engineers, police/ army officers, etc. probably due to the fact that the students were mostly from villages and had not been exposed to many people outside their immediate environment. According to students and teachers in the program, in spite of some challenges (e.g. students’ shyness, lack of confidence, lack of vocabulary for expressing themselves properly, lack of knowledge in the language, difficulties with listening and speaking in a normal situation (often at a loss for words, often resort to using their native tongue), misinterpretation of the responses of the interviewees, poor ability in taking notes, immature written reports that did not often go beyond basic facts about the person interviewed), such projects make language learning motivating and enjoyable and create a positive attitude both to students’ learning experience and to understanding that a foreign language should not be learned just for the sake of the language itself. Additionally, students’ confidence in using the language boosts when they realize that it is all right to ask for something to be repeated and when they get something right and can understand people, and there is a dialogue. Moreover, the opportunity to try out what they know through using the language in real-life situations

becomes an important factor for motivating students and for their understanding of the relevance of learning the language better.

A visit to The Wave (Al Mouj), a property development in Muscat, is an example of the out-of-class community-based project that provided the students with opportunities to interact with members of Muscat's local and foreign communities and have meaningful and motivated exposure to English in use outside the classroom. The project was also aimed at effectively engaging students in writing and speaking (e.g. asking and answering questions; interviewing, telling other people about their university and college, writing a report, etc.) while enhancing their critical thinking skills and reducing the distance between the students and the language being learned [23]. It gave students the chance to meet and interact in English with the Wave staff (engineers, construction managers, re-sale managers, etc.) that include Omanis and non-Omanis integrating "community settings with meaningful learning" ... that is "age-appropriate to the skills of the students" [24]. As well as that students were provided with language learning experiences related to the topics in the core-book and in the in-house teaching materials. They were also assisted in better understanding of the value of English as an achievable challenge. The benefits of the project included embedding learning into real situations; putting what students learn in class into a context; practicing the language; increasing confidence in using the language; bringing the students closer together as a team and seeing their teacher in a situation outside the classroom where she/he talks to/deals with other people. Later this project was further developed as a multi-skill practice-based learning activity, which involved critical thinking and problem-solving skills' learning components embedded in the social and cultural lives of the students [25, p.101]. For example, students were asked to accomplish meaningful tasks and activities [26, p.6] that challenge critical thinking skills, elicit students' opinions and ideas and encourage them to construct a response, create a product, or demonstrate the application of knowledge in both classroom and out-of-classroom settings thus integrating socio-culturally sensitive and contextually responsive interdisciplinary teaching methodology into project work. To exemplify, the students' projects based on the visit to The Wave (Al Mouj) construction site included constructing questions which the students came up with themselves and which they asked during the visit; collecting data and information through interviews; note-taking and documenting responses; writing reports and a thank you letter if relevant among others. All these activities integrated well into the course, fulfilled its objectives and learning outcomes thus facilitating students' vocabulary and knowledge extension, and development of their skills in a meaningful context. In addition, the students' awareness of the different cultures prevalent in the workplace outside the university was heightened. They were able to ask questions in English and could hear excellent examples of other Omanis' English, with explanations in Arabic when needed. Moreover, students learnt why and how to take an active approach to the learning task at hand, as well as about the importance of being independent learners willing to take risks and communicate in the target language at all costs [27].

As for the assessment, each project earned the students 5% of their total grade for the course. Though only worth this small amount, the projects gave the students the opportunity to learn more about their own culture and other cultures. They also provided the students with the chance to discuss a number of things that are relevant to modern life in Oman. Therefore, the students had the opportunity to explore, read, listen, speak and write about what they saw.

## CONCLUSION

Practice-based education pedagogy can equip language teachers with the ways they “frame and enact their teaching and curricula practices” to enrich their learning experiences” [2, p.4]. One of the ways is students’ in-class and out-of-class community based project work that helps students enhance language skills, gain critical awareness, form opinions, express their positions and views, thus contributing to their future self-realization as professionals and citizens of Oman. Project work also encourages and motivates students. However, their motivation increases when the projects’ guidelines, tasks and materials (real life texts, assignments and exercises) conform to students’ everyday life, personal and academic needs, are clear to them and provide a clear and understandable entry into the ideas of the projects. It also boosts if projects emphasize problem-solving assignments and incorporate the “learning with others” learning strategy which includes different forms of cooperative learning and team work in order to focus students’ attention, enhance their responsibility for developing their language and generic skills and involve them in analyzing and reflecting on other students’ answers. Projects can also be helpful for enhancing students’ progress and providing them with more learning support and more linguistic, social and cultural models when learning outside the familiar. Other principles of practice-based language acquisition through projects, i.e. basic beliefs, theories or rules that have a major influence on the way the projects are designed and implemented, include personalizing and individualizing project work, addressing each student needs, finding examples from students’ own experience and culture, matching project materials with educational environment and content of learning and making study, critical thinking and problem-solving skills in addition to linguistic abilities central to project work and materials. This can be a perspective of renewed commitment to teaching language and critical thinking skills in line with the foundation program English language courses in order to broaden students’ horizons, enhance and foster their chances for success and achievement in both tertiary education and potentially in the job market.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors express their gratitude to The Research Council for supporting our study of skills for the 21st century training in higher education institutions in Oman with a research grant.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Sheehan, D. & Higgs, J. (2013). Practice-based education. Theoretical underpinnings. In J. Higgs, D. Sheehan, J.B. Currens & G.M. Jensen (Eds.). *Realizing exemplary practice-based education* (pp.13-24). Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
- [2]. Higgs, J. (2013). Practice-based education pedagogy. Professional pedagogy for professional education. In J. Higgs, D. Sheehan, J.B. Currens & G.M. Jensen (Eds.). *Realizing exemplary practice-based education* (pp.3-12). Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
- [3]. Higgs, J. (2011). *Professional and practice-based education at Charles Sturt University*. 2e. Sydney, Australia: 2e The Education for Practice Institute, CSU, Sydney Olympic Park.
- [4]. Elder, L., & Paul, R. (1994, Fall). Critical thinking: Why we must transform our teaching. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 18(1), 34-35.
- [5]. Vaughn, L. (2005). *The Power of Critical Thinking: Effective reasoning about ordinary and extraordinary claims*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- [6]. Al-Busaidi, S. & Sultana, T. (2014). Critical thinking through translated literature in the EFL Omani class. *International Journal of English and Literature*, 6(1): 16-22. Retrieved February 20, 2015 from [http://www.academicjournals.org/article/article1421847429\\_Busaidi%20and%20Sultana.pdf](http://www.academicjournals.org/article/article1421847429_Busaidi%20and%20Sultana.pdf).
- [7]. Al-Issa, A. (2014). Constructing grammar instruction in the Omani ELT system: A critical literacy perspective. *The Qualitative Report*, 19, 1-26. Retrieved February 23, 2015 from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR19/al-issa104.pdf>.
- [8]. Al-Mahrooqi, R. & Tuzlukova, V. (2014). English communication skills and employability in the Arabian Gulf: The case of Oman. *Pertanika*, 22(2), 473-488.
- [9]. Al-Seyabi, F. & Tuzlukova, V. (2014). Writing Problems and Strategies: An Investigative Study in the Omani School and University Context. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 3(4), 37-48. Retrieved December 12, 2014 from [http://www.ajssh.leena-luna.co.jp/AJSSHPDFs/3\(4\)/AJSSH2014\(3.4-05\).pdf](http://www.ajssh.leena-luna.co.jp/AJSSHPDFs/3(4)/AJSSH2014(3.4-05).pdf).
- [10]. Thakur, V. & Al-Mahrooqi, R. (2015). Orienting ESL/EFL Students towards critical thinking through pictorial inferences and elucidation: A fruitful pedagogic approach. *English Language Teaching*, 8 (2), 126-133. Retrieved February 23, 2015 from <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/viewFile/44508/24180>.
- [11]. Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (2000). *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. London and New York: Routledge. Retrieved May 1, 2013 from [http://www.english.umaine.edu/files/2009/05/A-Pedagogy-of-Multiliteracies\\_Ed.-by-Cope-and-Kalantzis.pdf](http://www.english.umaine.edu/files/2009/05/A-Pedagogy-of-Multiliteracies_Ed.-by-Cope-and-Kalantzis.pdf).
- [12]. Jayaraman, S. (2013). Articulating speech sounds - teaching English pronunciation. In S. Al-Busaidi & V. Tuzlukova (Eds.) *General foundation programs in higher education in the Sultanate of Oman: Experiences, challenges and considerations for the future* (pp. 103-118), Mazoon Press & Publishing, Muscat, Oman.
- [13]. Tuzlukova, V. (2009). Challenges and opportunities of using regional English language materials. Paper presented at the 5th VTTN National ELT Conference, *Learning English in a Changing World*. 16 - 17 January, 2009, Hanoi, Vietnam.
- [14]. [14] Foundation Program Curricula (2013). Retrieved May 25, 2013 from <http://www.squ.edu.om/Portals/28/CDU/FPEL%20Curriculum%20Document%202012-2013.pdf>.
- [15]. Hendricson, W., Andrieu, S., Chadwick G., Chmar, J., Cole, J., George, M., Glickman, G., Glover, J., Goldberg, J., Haden, N., Meyerowitz, C., Neumann, L., Pyle, M., Tedesco, L., Valachovic, R., Weaver, R., Winder, R., Young, S., Kalkwarf, K. (2006). Educational strategies associated with development of problem-solving, critical thinking, and self-directed learning. *Journal of Dental Education*, 70(9), 925 - 936.
- [16]. Byram, M. (1989) *Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Education*. Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.
- [17]. Blackler, F. (1993). Knowledge and the theory of organization: Organizations as activity systems and the reframing of management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 30(6), 864-884.

- [18]. Paul, R., & Elder, L. (2003). A miniature guide for students and faculty to the foundations of analytic thinking: how to take thinking apart and what to look for when you do: Foundation for Critical Thinking. Retrieved January 15, 2017 from [www.criticalthinking.org/files/Concepts\\_Tools.pdf](http://www.criticalthinking.org/files/Concepts_Tools.pdf).
- [19]. Aebersold, J.A. & Field M.L. (1997). *From Reader to Reading Activities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [20]. Tuzlukova, V. & Eltayeb, C. (2011). Tapping into students' culture, interests and needs. *LC Forum. Journal for teachers of English as an international language*, 55-69.
- [21]. Bishaw, A. & Egziabher, Y.G. (2013). Comparison of Traditional and Constructivist Teaching Approaches in Using English Language Learning Strategies; (Grade Eleven Students of Bahir Dar Preparatory School). *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Sciences*. 9(1), 1-14. Retrieved September 10, 2015 from <http://www.ajol.info/index.php/ejesc/article/view/104968>.
- [22]. Hamayan, E. (1995). Approaches to alternative assessment. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 15, 212-226. Retrieved October 1, 2014 from [https://resources.oncourse.iu.edu/access/content/user/fpawan/L540%20\\_%20CBI/Hamayan\\_95\\_alt-assess.pdf](https://resources.oncourse.iu.edu/access/content/user/fpawan/L540%20_%20CBI/Hamayan_95_alt-assess.pdf).
- [23]. Tomlinson, B. (2008). Language acquisition and language learning materials.' In B. Tomlinson (Ed.). *English Language Teaching Materials*, (pp.3-14). London: Continuum.
- [24]. Guerrero, M. (2013). Teaching Through Community-Based Projects. Faculty Focus. Retrieved September 1, 2015 from <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/teaching-through-community-based-projects/>.
- [25]. Fox, J. (2008). Alternative Assessment. In: Nancy H. Hornberger (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer US, 2240-2250.
- [26]. Herman, J.L., Aschbacher, P. R. & Winters, L. (1992). *A practical guide to alternative assessment*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- [27]. Thanasoulas, D. (2000). What is learner autonomy and how can it be fostered? *The Internet TESL Journal*, 6(11). Retrieved October 7, 2014 from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Thanasoulas-Autonomy.html>.