

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the importance of the English language for specific purposes, and the importance of reading for academic purposes. It also explains the importance of English in the Sultanate of Oman and problems in the curriculum alignment and preparation of students for academic reading at the university level. The purpose of the research, the research questions, and its significance are also presented. The chapter concludes by presenting the theoretical framework, scope, and limitations of the study, followed by definitions of research terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a global language that dominates international relations, science, international business, tourism, commerce, trade, aviation, technology, peacekeeping, diplomacy, medicine, the Internet, and popular culture (Canagarajah, 2006). Also, English is presented in all existing media. With its immense functional flexibility, English represents a lingua franca. Moreover, according to Yamagami and Tollefson (2011), English is essential for participation in the global economy. The main reason behind this expansion has been the role of non-native speakers of English and their acceptance of the language, where the proportion of those speakers is increasing rapidly (House, 2002).

Learning the English language is essential to the progress of globalisation in the society and economy, and has become a critical issue regarding future development (Morita, 2014). Countries have noticed that it is essential to include

English language learning in their education systems, beginning from the early stages of education (Graddol, 1998). Furthermore, English language teaching is considered an important global activity and a large industry for the past five decades that it plays a major role in world politics and economics (Sidek, 2010). According to Lazaro and Medalla (2004), English has occupied a vital role as a common international language, connecting people from all corners of the world who speak different languages. Although it comes as a second language according to the number of speakers, English is the most popular language used worldwide. It is the official language in 52 countries and many small settlements and regions. Furthermore, one-fourth to one-third of the world's population can speak or understand English at various levels (Lazaro & Medalla, 2004). As a result, many non-English-speaking countries promote English proficiency as an effort toward modernisation and internationalisation (Sidek, 2010).

1.2 Importance of English for Academic Purposes

In a world awash with information and global commercial exchange, it is necessary to have a universal language. English is considered to occupy this role, where it has become a common language of science and technology, and an international language of business, economics, and communication. It is also the language of computing, with more and more students having access to computers. It is considered a second literacy, as the colloquial English phrase 'computer literate' demonstrates (Mocanu & Vasiliu, 2012). Lazaro and Medalla (2004) stated that knowing English makes travelling more convenient for people, as it is now the de facto lingua franca of diplomacy.

The number of English speakers regarding first and second language is estimated to be around five hundred million (Cohen, 2012). English will sustain its development and supremacy, shifting from a sign of the best languages during past years, to a fundamental skill required for the whole labour force, especially given that literacy has transformed in the last two centuries from an elite honour into a key requirement for informed citizenship (Cohen, 2012).

In Asia, there is a long-established assumption that English language proficiency is an essential requirement for entry into the global economy; thus, English is necessary to the curriculum of most Asian countries. For example, the number of students studying English in China alone outnumbers that of students in North America (Robertson et al., 2013).

Another example of how English is acknowledged as an important language in Asia is that an important part of the Japanese Government's economic success is linked to English competency (Robertson et al., 2013). The Ministry of Education in Japan cited in Morita (2013, p.32) states, "With the progress of globalisation in the economy and society, it is essential that our children acquire communication skills in English, which has become a common international language for them to live better in the 21st century. This has become a critical matter both regarding the future of our children and the future development of Japan as a country".

Furthermore, poor EFL literacy skills can affect educational and economic development and opportunities among EFL countries in terms of competitiveness in an era of globalisation. Considering that education is fundamental to the transition to

social, economic, and political success, the impact of English language literacy on academic success deserves further exploration (Sidek, 2010).

1.3 The Importance of Reading at the University Level

English is currently the medium of instruction at most universities around the world. Parizeau (2000) claims that English will always be necessary for higher education, technology, and mobility, especially after regional competitors have undergone their growth spurts. According to Baniabdelrahman (2006, p. 10), “English has become a necessary language for every student to progress academically in most Third World countries”.

He also said that in most of the world’s universities, if not all, all subjects are taught through the medium of English. Realising and considering the significance of the English language skills of students for academic progress, universities regard the English proficiency test as a vital criterion for enrolment (Dooey 2010; Heo et al., 2011; Murray 2010; Sidek, 2010).

One of the most valuable skills among the four language skills, which affects academic literacy and success, is reading. Mozayan et al. (2012) stated that in any teaching method of a second language, there are four essential skills, and reading comprehension is the most important of these for university students since they need to study subjects written in English. Also, most of the references required for writing essays and assignments are written in English. The proportion of the world’s books annually published in each language, as shown in Figure (1), indicates that 28% of the printed books are written in English. This suggests that at least 28% of academic

references as well as textbooks are offered in English (Graddol, 1997 as cited in Zughoul, 2003). Therefore, being able to read and comprehend in English is a core element for any university student desiring to achieve a high level of academic progress.

Sidek (2010) and Hermida (2009) specified that students' ability to read well becomes imperative for academic success if their reading ability translates to information literacy. In addition, the higher education (HE) sector considers information literacy to be of great importance. Students, academics, librarians, and administrators should concentrate on obtaining the required skills for evaluating, managing, accessing, and using information in an efficient manner, since available information is increasing in complexity and volume. Information literacy is required to meet this increase (Boon et al., 2007). The ability to read and understand textbooks at university level is a necessary skill for any student. For many university students, reading is regarded the most important among the four skills in the second language (SL) or a foreign language (FL) (Amer & Khoussam, 1993; Hussein, 2012). University students often cannot comprehend specific concepts, and technical terms found in textbooks that are crucial to master academic content (Ambe et al., 2004; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000 as cited in Bifuh-Ambe, 2011).

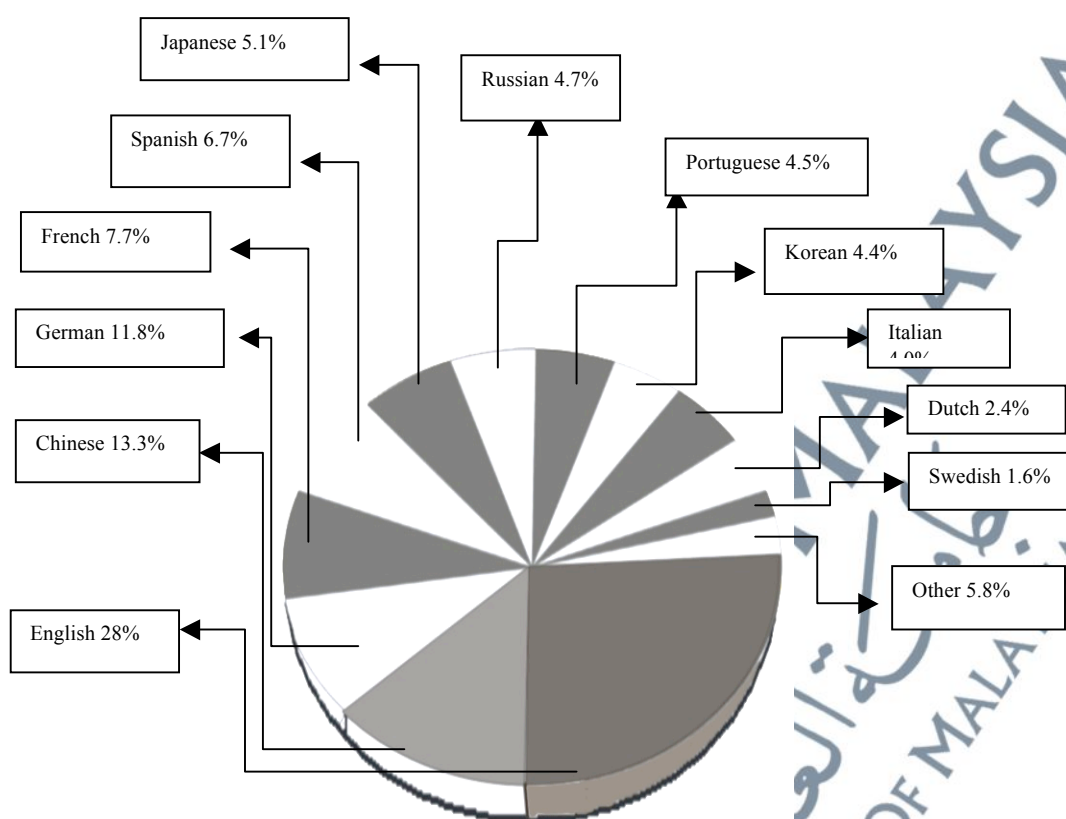


Figure 1: (Pie Chart) The proportion of the world's books annually published in each language (Graddol, 1998 as cited in Zughoul, 2003)

1.4 Importance of English in Oman

The Sultanate of Oman is a developing country that has greatly emphasised the importance of English as an international language and an achievement tool for various purposes. When His Majesty the Sultan began his rule of Oman in 1970, the government designated English as the official foreign language and “allocated huge budgets and resources for its implementation through education” (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012: 144).

However, four decades later, it was reported that students exiting the ELT system in Oman suffer from various inadequacies in their English language proficiency, which have had negative implications for Oman's national development (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012). Therefore, in 1995 the Ministry of Education in Oman began an ambitious project to reform the educational system, aiming at addressing the needs of the new generation (Al-Lamki, 2010).

The majority of public school students enrolled in colleges and universities have a lack of linguistic and communicative skills required for their academic or professional success (Al-Mahrooqi & Asante, 2010; Moody, 2009 as cited in Al-Mahrooqi, 2012). Therefore, the majority of students entering higher education institutes need an English foundation programme (Al-Issa, 2011). According to Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2012), reports and observations about ELT in Oman show that the large majority of students enrolled at different higher education institutions lacked the ability to use language efficiently and suitable for daily living comprising social, school, personal, and work situations among others.

Like other EFL students, students in Oman experience difficulties learning English, particular reading. Al-Ajmi (2003) reported 46 reading difficulties faced by Omani students, one of which is related to reading skills. The necessity for appropriate teaching and learning materials, therefore, becomes an important matter for teachers and concerned educators to help students overcome these difficulties. Regarding the reasons behind reading difficulties faced by Omani students, Al-Salmi (2005) states that the curriculum is the main source of reading difficulties.

Many students who study abroad in English-speaking and non-Arabic countries experience the same issues with English (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012). As an Omani citizen working as an educational researcher in the Ministry of Education in Oman (MOE), the researcher notices the great effort and budgets devoted by the government to the teaching and learning of English. The Omani government is playing a sparing no expense or effort to make its citizens proficient in English. English is an important tool for the country to interact and integrate with the rest of the world and for the “Omanization” process, in which the government seeks to encourage nationals to join the workforce, rather than expatriates (Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2010).

Reading is considered an important part of language proficiency, and within the tertiary academic context, it affects academic literacy and success. This is because university students should have the ability to read academic texts (Levine et al., 2000). Thus, the ability of students to read well is vital for academic success, given that their reading ability will translate to information literacy, which is defined by Rockman (2004) as a higher level of reading comprehension in which students can identify the information that they need to acquire. The suggested educational reforms were designed for achieving the knowledge and mental skills and attitudes, which young Omanis may need for learning, and adapting to the very different future most of them will face.

1.5 Problem Statement

Al-Issa (2007, 199-200) stated, “Oman needs English – the only official foreign language in the country – as a fundamental tool for ‘modernisation’,

‘nationalisation’ and the acquisition of science and technology”. English is also important for the internationalisation of the country’s higher education system. In the Omani labour market, mastering English communication skills is essential (Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2010; Al-Issa, 2007). According to Al-Belushi and Al-Kitani (1997), private institutions consider English a critical standard for job recruitment. As a result, the Omani government has spent vast amounts of money on teaching English at all school levels, from first grade to undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Al-Mahrooqi & Asante, 2010). According to above, the English is used for teaching in many different area science-based majors at most Omani higher education institutions, whether private or public, in addition to many disciplines in the humanities, such as education and arts.

Unfortunately, the government’s investment has not yet reached the potential aims and results, as students graduating from high school still face many problems regarding their academic studies (Al-Mahrooqi, 2012). This is why the majority of students spend two years studying English at the university level before choosing their majors. These two years are called the foundation programme (Al-Issa, 2011 cited in Al-Mahrooqi, 2012). The biggest problem with the foundation programme is that it adds two more years to the period the students require to accomplish their study at a university. For instance, a student with a good English level can graduate in four years, while others with low language proficiency will need two more years for a total of six years (Al-Mahrooqi, 2012).

Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2012: 142) comment regarding ELT in Oman that the “vast majority of the students” who finish grade twelve and join different public and private higher education academic institutions “lack the ability to use language

effectively and appropriately in all four skills throughout the range of social, personal, school, and work situations required for daily living in a given society". The same situation is also applicable to a large number of students who annually obtain scholarships to study at universities in English-speaking and non-Arabic speaking countries to study for their first degree (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012:142).

The ministry established the English Integrated Curriculum in 2005-2006 in order to develop the level of English among students on a pilot basis, beginning with two schools before expanding it to ten schools in Muscat. As shown by Chapman et al. (2012), the Integrated Curriculum was introduced in two schools in twelve regions. Interestingly, none of the reforms has produced positive academic results. This supports the survey carried out at a college of engineering in Oman by Sivaraman et al. (2014), which showed that Omani students face difficulties understanding engineering subjects, as English was their foreign language in which they lacked the requisite proficiency.

According to Chapman et al. (2012), it was assumed by university lecturers that language competency and success at the university are correlated with each other. However, "it becomes a real concern, when the native students have to comprehend the concepts fully in a professional college taught in a non-native language and later on have to practice them in the field" (Sivaraman et al., 2014, p.29). Students' academic performance, especially at universities, depends heavily on acquiring the required content through reading comprehension that leads to information literacy. Although EFL students are prepared in post-basic schools, yet they still encounter difficulties in reading at the university level (Sidek, 2010; 2010b; 2011; 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; 2012d; 2013a; 2013b; 2014; Sidek, Abdullah & Rahim, 2013b; Sidek,

Abdullah, Rahim & Mohamed, 2014). According to Sivaraman et al. (2014), the medium of instruction in Omani basic and post-basic schools is not English, but it is the medium of instruction at universities. In effect, Omani students at universities lack proficiency in English especially in reading English language academic materials of which phenomenon affects their overall academic performance.

The Ministry of Education in Oman has developed general objectives for the Grade Twelfth English Curriculum. The reading curriculum for grade twelfth aims to enable the learners to read a variety of text types and genres, such as magazine articles, short stories, newspaper articles, instructions rules, informational texts, e-mails, charts, and notes (Ministry of Education, Oman, 2010).

Buly and Valencia (2002) indicate that the low proficiency of English leads students to face literacy issues when the printed language is in English in their content areas. This creates disequilibrium between learning the content and acquiring the language. According to Sidek (2010: 8), “in a condition where literacy skills in the foreign language should be used as vehicles to acquire content knowledge, students often have to struggle with language learning at the expense of content acquisition”.

If university students have been given suitable training in EFL literacy and are prepared well at the post-basic school level, they should be able to meet the stricter challenges in the academic world. Furthermore, it has been noted that while teachers at a private university in Oman are aware of the lack of English language competency among Omani students, they are not conscious of the degree of effectiveness of their lectures. Moreover, it has been argued that teachers at Omani universities assume all students understand their teaching clearly, as Omani students may not clarify their

doubts in class for fear of expressing themselves incorrectly in English (Sivaraman et al., 2014).

University students need to have the ability to read and know how to acquire the information that they require when reading English texts. This is especially important because most of the scientific books and scholarly journals and articles are printed in English (Genç & Bada, 2010).

In view of the importance of English in different level of education this study aimed to determine the comprehensive approaches reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelfth reading curriculum to foreign language (L2) reading instruction, in addition to investigating how this curriculum prepares students for the appropriate level of academic reading skills required by universities. This research was aimed at defining the theories of and instructional approaches to SLA and foreign language reading, reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelfth reading curriculum.

It also determined the types of learner and teacher roles reflected in the curriculum, the frequency of reading skill being mentioned explicitly as a vital means for the achievement of the Omani EFL grade twelve curriculum outcomes, the types of reading tasks and their levels of cognitive demand, the types and lengths of reading passages included in the textbooks, and the lexical diversity level of EFL grade twelve reading texts based on *D* measure.

1.6 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to determine the alignment of the Omani English Curriculum with the communicative approach as indicated in the he Omani EFL grade twelve English language reading curriculum. How this curriculum prepares students for

academic reading skills required for reading at the university level was also examined.

This research aimed at achieving the following objectives:

Part I (Curriculum Alignment with the Communicative Approach)

1. Examine the theories of, and instructional approaches to, SLA and second language reading reflected by the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.
2. Determine the types of learner roles reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.
3. Identify the types of teacher roles reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.

Part II (Preparation for Reading in English at the Higher Education Level)

4. Determine how frequently the reading skill is mentioned explicitly as a vital means for the achievement of the outcomes stated in the Omani EFL grade twelve curriculum textbooks.
5. Identify the types of reading tasks that are used in the EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.
6. Identify the levels of cognitive demand of the reading tasks reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.
7. Identify the types and length of reading passages included in the *Engage with English* EFL coursebook.
8. Determine the lexical diversity level in the reading passages in the EFL grade twelve textbook.

1.7 Research Questions

The current study intended to analyse the grade twelve reading curriculum of the Ministry of Education in Oman in order to investigate how it prepares students for the appropriate level of academic reading skills required at the university level. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

Part I (Curriculum Alignment with the Communicative Approach)

1. What theories approaches to, SLA and second language reading are reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum?
2. What instructional approaches to, SLA and second language reading are reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum?
3. What types of learner roles are reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum?
4. What types of teacher roles are reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum?

Part II (Preparing Students for Reading in English at the Higher Education Level)

5. How frequently are reading skills mentioned explicitly as a vital means for the achievement learning outcomes of the Omani EFL grade twelve curriculum?
6. What types of reading tasks are used in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum?
7. What levels of cognitive demand for reading tasks are reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum?

8. What types and length of reading passages are included in the *Engage with English* coursebook?
9. What is the level of lexical diversity in the reading passages in the EFL grade twelve textbook?

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in providing a better understanding of the current state of grade twelve EFL reading curriculum in Oman that will benefit all relevant stakeholders. Details of this significance are as stated below:

- To provide insights to EFL researchers in Oman into the causes of EFL reading problems with regards to the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.
- The results of the study might be of value to the EFL teachers to help their students learn better and improve their EFL reading skills.
- The outcome of this study might contribute to the improvement of the teaching of reading in Omani schools and a better understanding of the approach that should be implemented in the EFL reading classrooms.
- The current study is useful for the revision of the EFL reading curriculum at the ministry level.
- This study may serve as a route map for curriculum designers to start taking note of how to prepare students for the tertiary level for the EFL reading.

In addition to the above implications, the Ministry of Education in Oman has made considerable efforts in developing English language curriculum in order to prepare its youth for life and work in the new conditions of the modern global

economy (Ministry of Education, Oman, 2010). The findings of this research support these efforts and seek to improve the Omani English language reading curriculum of grade twelve.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The purposes of this study are:

1. To obtain the overarching instructional approaches to EFL reading instruction reflected in the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum.
2. To determine the alignment of the curriculum with its communicative goals.
3. To ascertain how this curriculum prepares students for reading in EFL at the university level.

In analysing the Omani EFL grade twelve reading curriculum, this study adopted Sidek's (2010) model, which is influenced by Richards and Rodgers' (2001) model. According to Richards and Rodgers' (2001) model, language teaching can be examined at the basic level regarding *approach* (foundational theory), *design* (e.g. learners' roles, selected language skills, learning tasks), and *procedure* (e.g. classroom observations, teachers' interviews). This model represents a theoretical framework for language teaching.

Sidek's (2010) model was revised to provide a reading instruction conceptual framework that applies to the study. In addition to the approach and design levels, this study included the procedure level because the current study examined classroom instruction. The present study added to Sidek's (2010) model at the degree of design to include a component of the lexical diversity of the reading passages found in the Omani grade twelve EFL textbook. It also included the procedure level. Figure (2) shows the analytical framework for the current study.

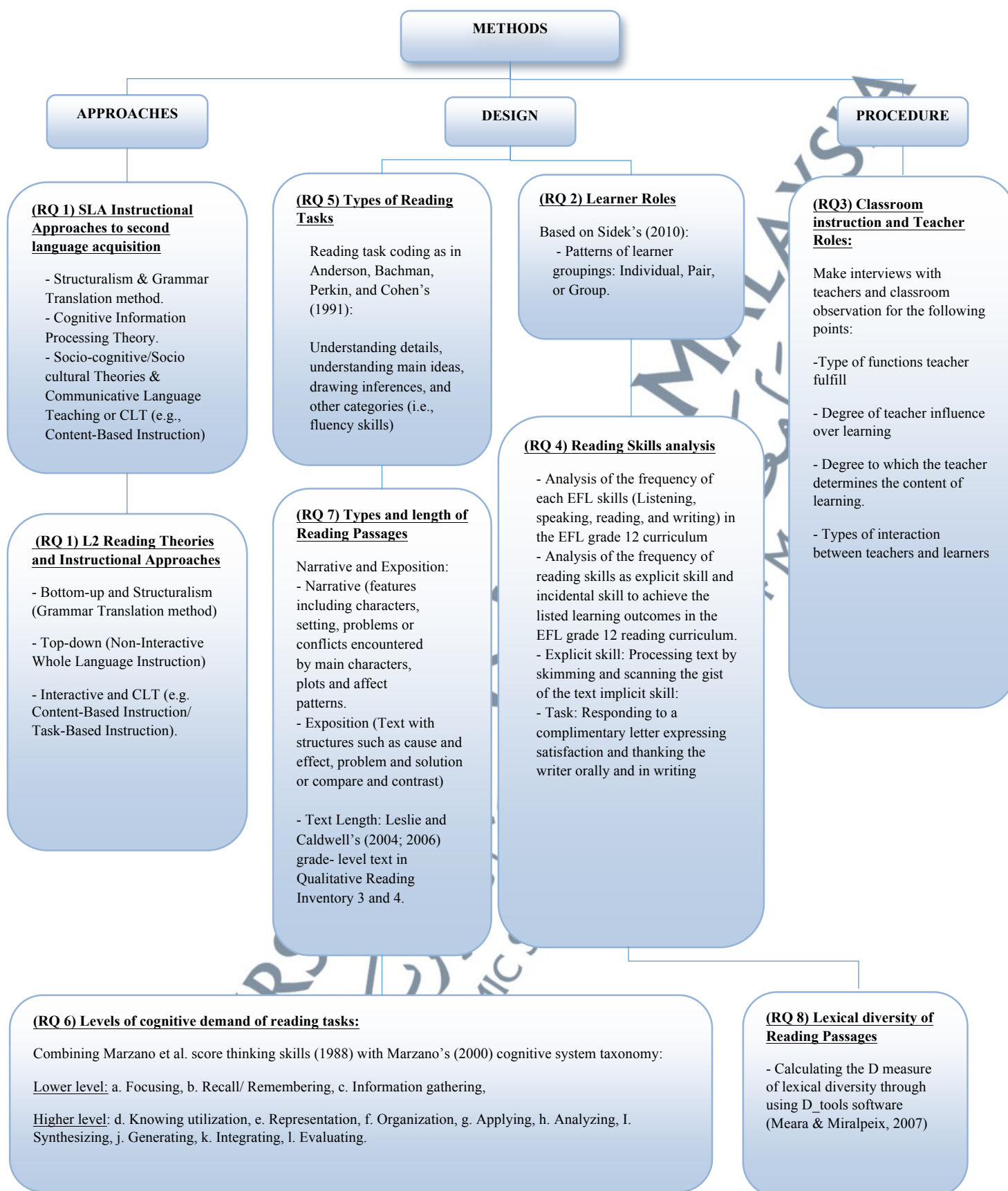


Figure 2: Revised Analytical Framework of Sidek (2010)

1.10 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on the analysis of the grade twelve reading curriculum of the Ministry of Education in Oman during the 2013-2014 academic year. The current study was undertaken with the following limitations:

- 1) The researcher focused only on analysing the EFL grade twelve coursebooks.
- 2) The researcher analysed only the EFL reading skill and did not cover the other language skills.
- 3) The researcher analysed only the EFL coursebook assigned for post-basic education schools titled *Engage with English*.

1.11 English Language Curriculum

A curriculum “is the plans made for guiding learning in the schools, usually represented in retrievable documents of several levels of generality, and the actualisation of those plans in the classroom, as experienced by the learners and as recorded by an observer; those experiences take place in a learning environment that also influences what is learned” (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2005, 4). Moreover, a school curriculum “is intended to provide children and young people with the knowledge and skills required to lead successful lives” (Williamson & Payton 2009, 1). Furthermore, the curriculum is the base of the teaching-learning operation. The improvement of programmes of study, learning and teaching resources, lesson plans, assessment of students and teacher education, and learning and teaching resources are all founded on the curriculum.

Curriculum and curriculum improvement at first glimpse seem to be of principal concern to governments, educators and parents and both have relevance and affect the betterment of communities and success (Brady & Kennedy, 2013). According to Brady and Kennedy (2013, 1), “Curriculum, more than ever before, is now viewed as being at the centre of daily life and the responsibility of society as a whole”.

The curriculum is founded on psychology and philosophy of teaching and learning that is rooted in the most progressed educational theory and practice. It gives equal importance to what the student learns and to the procedure by which he or she studies it. One of its necessary characteristics is an acknowledgement of the principle that there are different kinds of studying and that individual students learn in a variety of ways. The curriculum formulates not just the content to be studied and the results to be accomplished, but a broad range of methods to studying. It aims to ensure that a student’s experience of school will be such that he will value studying and will improve his ability to study independently. Most significantly, it aims to increase the enjoyment of studying and the motivation to study (Oideachais, 1999).

One aspect of designing the school curriculum is selecting a group of subjects to be taught each year and planning a successive programme for each year of schooling. Certain basic requirements are important keys to a successful curriculum plan (Education & Schools Resources, 2014):

- (1) Delivering a broad, balanced, coherent, and consistent programme of learning with clear and smooth progression routes designed for the needs of all learners.
- (2) Supporting the development of learners and teachers who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative, and engaged.

- (3) Providing learners and educators with inspiring and relevant content and an appropriate breadth of subject knowledge and skill development commensurate with the student's developmental stage.
- (4) Recognising the language background of learners and providing them with the support they need to access the curriculum. Subjects taught in the medium of English should be accessible for learners with English as their second language.
- (5) Performing assessments of the educational process, including assessment for learning (providing feedback in support of the learning process), and summative assessment (determining a learner's level of performance).
- (6) Assessing educational standards to ensure accurate measurement of progress and achievement, allowing for international benchmarking and comparability.
- (7) Increasing the quality of teaching.
- (8) Carrying out reflective practice supported by professional development that is an essential and continuous part of a teacher's life.
- (9) Enabling learners to achieve their maximum performance using curricula and assessments based on active learning.
- (10) Instilling strong leadership so schools can improve and develop curriculum.
- (11) Moving forward the process of evidence gathering and evaluation for curriculum.

In this research, the term "curriculum" refers to the grade twelve curriculum *Engage with English*. This curriculum was prepared by the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman (MOE). It consists of five themes. Each theme contains five units. The four skills are covered in the units. The curriculum includes Workbooks

(Part A and B), Coursebooks (Parts A and B), and Teacher's Guide (Parts A and B). The *Engage with English* coursebook shares the stimulus materials for the classroom with the workbook. Students use exercise books for their writing activities, allowing more room on the pages of the coursebooks for colourful pictures, illustrations, texts, activities, and exercises to help them further their language comprehension in a more sophisticated and graduated way. Each unit also consists of a self-study section with lighter topics called *Across Cultures* (designed to introduce students to places and cultures around the world) and *Reading for Pleasure* (written works in various genres including a number of topics), ultimately encouraging students to read more in English (MOE, 2010).

The *Engage with English* workbook provides the students with pen-and-paper activities as well as longer exercises that they can complete in their exercise books. The exercises are directly linked to the lessons in the course book, providing a broad range of topics and language exposure. Two pages in each unit are also dedicated to accompanying the *Across Cultures* and *Reading for Pleasure* section in the Class Book. The final page of each unit provides an opportunity for students to self-assess and review key items learned. The last part of the workbook includes a reference section to help students further their knowledge of writing, grammar, listening, and vocabulary (MOE, 2010). The Teacher's Book aims to provide full support for the teacher in planning his lessons for the semester. The curriculum introduction describes the objectives of the curriculum and gives a rationale for the adopted approach to language teaching.

The book also suggests ways of managing different types of activities, using the routines of classroom interaction as a context for language learning. The Teacher's Book provides step-by-step lesson notes for each unit, which help teachers create suitable environments for efficient and enjoyable language learning (MOE, 2010).

1.12 Operational Terms

1.12.1 Academic Reading: In this study, "Academic Reading" is defined as reading an advanced text that requires the skills of critical thinking and reading comprehension. It offers approaches for reading in the main academic specialisations such as mathematics, social sciences, humanities and literature, natural sciences, business, and the technical fields provided in common universities and colleges.

1.12.2 Approach: An approach according to Anthony (1963) mentioned in Richards and Rodgers (2001:16) refers to "theories about language learning, which are regarded as the source of practices and principles in language teaching".

1.12.3 Design: According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:20), design refers to "the level of method analysis in which the objectives of a method and how language content is selected and organised within the method are considered. In addition, it includes the roles of teachers and learners, in addition to the types of learning tasks".

1.12.4 Procedure: According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:31) "a procedure stands for the last level of conceptualisation and organisation within a method".

1.12.5 Curriculum is referred to in this research as the prescribed course of study. For this research, it refers to the grade twelve reading curriculum in the Sultanate of Oman.

1.12.6 EFL is defined in this study as English as a foreign language.

1.12.7 Teacher role in this research refers to the types of functions teachers fulfil, the degree of teacher influence over learning, and the degree to which the teacher determines the content of learning and types of interaction between teachers and learners.

1.12.8 Learner role in this research refers to the types of learning tasks in the form of patterns of learner groupings that are recommended for either individuals, pairs, or groups.

1.12.9 Curriculum Analysis in this research refers to the analysis of the course of study. For this research, it refers to the Grade Twelve Reading Curriculum in the Sultanate of Oman.

1.12.10 D measure: According to Malvern et al. (2004), it is a programme that calculates a statistic displaying the lexical richness of a text.

The following chapter reviews theories and approaches to second language instruction and concentrates on previous studies on theories and instructional approaches to L2 reading, Omani EFL educational policy, approaches to the Omani EFL/English for Specific Purposes (ESP) secondary curriculum, and reading issues at the Omani upper secondary level.