



LITERATURE IN ENGLISH STUDIES: A THEORY OF HOW TEACHERS AND STUDENTS WITH THE SUBJECT

Murtdha Ayad Mohammed Dawood

Islamic University, Hilla, Babylon, Iraq

Murtadha.iyad@iunajaf.edu.iq

Ghaith Saleh Mahdi

Al-Mustaqbal University College, Babylon, Hilla, Iraq

ghaith.saleh@mustaqbal-college.edu.iq

Muntadher Ali Hussein Hashim

Islamic University, Hilla, Babylon, Iraq

Researcher.rt@gmail.com

Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: November 4th 2021 Accepted: December 4th 2021 Published: January 18th 2022</p>	<p>There is ambiguity in Singapore's Literature curriculum. A new study on the topic has highlighted this ambiguity and offered ways to rethink it in light of the contemporary environment and the influence of globalization (Choo 2004; Holden 2000; Choo, 2011; Holden, 2000; Choo, 2011; Poon, 2007). Data from Singapore's secondary schools examined literature's role in today's political, economic, social, and educational context. Using in-depth interpretative case studies done at five Singaporean school sites, this research examines students' viewpoints and delivers findings from in-depth interpretive case studies. Focus group interviews, written protocols, and document analysis have been used to gather data. The negligible impact of local literature on literature studies, the low status of literature, and the lack of interest in literature as a course of study have led to the formulation of four basic premises that underpin the idea of how students in Singapore secondary schools approach literature. Theoretical, policy, and practice benefit from the findings that student' empirical research yields.</p>

Keywords: Literature curriculum, economic, social, and educational

BACKGROUND

Literature in English in secondary schools has long been a focus of Singapore's Ministry of Education (MOE). This study intended to understand how students felt about its value and relevance in Singaporean society, politics, economy, culture, and society as a whole.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

Singapore has historically encouraged multi-national firms globally to participate in the country's economy to compete and develop as an independent nation (Lee, K.Y., 2009, p. 2). There are several ways in which the forces of globalization have affected literary studies. It is vital to look at the consequences of globalization on the study of Literature because this research has located in the perspective of global tendencies toward knowledge-based economies (Miller, 1998, 2002).

Globalization and economic challenges have always led to adjustments in Singapore's education system. Education programs have been established to suit the country's economic and workforce demands. For the sake of Singapore's global competitiveness, the government has reorganized the educational system (Goh & Gopinathan, 2006, p. 51).

Using "innovative use of ICT in teaching and learning," schools were directed "toward innovation" to prepare students for the "fast-evolving better and demanding future" (Lui, 2007, para 2, 24). Singapore Literature education was analyzed by emphasizing technology and skills in the educational system.

Using "innovative use of ICT in teaching and learning," schools were directed "toward innovation" to better prepare students for the "fast-evolving and tough future" that they were facing (Lui, 2007). Literature education in Singapore was studied in light of an increasing focus on technology and skills in the educational system.

At its core, meritocracy is an essential part of Singaporean politics, and it has permeated practically every aspect of daily life. This emphasis on personal achievement encourages students to strive for excellence and ensures that all students have equal access to education. Students pick their majors and specialties depending on what they

think they can accomplish well and feel their economic needs are. On the other hand, opportunities have been intimately tied to the political and financial goals of the country. Because Literature has been considered a "difficult topic for an elite few" (Poon, 2007, p. 7), many people perceive it to be an indulgence.

In Singapore, meritocracy is an inherently political idea practiced in practically every element of daily life. This emphasis on personal achievement encourages students to strive for excellence and ensures that all students have equal access to education. Students pick their majors and specialties depending on what they think they can accomplish well and feel their economic needs are. On the other hand, opportunities have been directly tied to the country's political and financial ambitions. Because Literature has been considered a "difficult topic for an elite few" (Poon, 2007, p. 7), many people perceive it to be an indulgence.

Mathematics and science have been regularly brought up in political and economic discussions in Singapore (Lee, H.S., National Day Rally speech, 2010; New Year Message, 2010). The emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship placed by Think Schools Learning Nation (Goh, C.T., 1997) has resulted in achievement in the fields of mathematics, science, and technology. 's on innovation and entrepreneurship Despite these changes; there is still a question mark regarding Literature's place in the educational curriculum. Teachers and students alike have suffered due to the devaluation of Literature as a subject.

Creating a shared cultural identity in Singapore is challenging because of the country's multicultural population, which includes citizens of four major ethnic groups (Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Eurasian) (Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Eurasian). Adding to this, although calls for syllabus modifications and reforms, Singapore's ongoing ties to its colonial past may be seen in the prevalence of British works in the Literature curriculum (Holden, 2000; Choo, 2004; Poon, 2007, 2009). Post-colonial Literature has been incorporated into the "O" and "A" level syllabuses; nevertheless, because they are part of a foreign country's national curriculum, they "transplant(s) awkwardly to the Singapore setting" (Holden, 2000, p. 40). (Holden, 2000, p. 40). Because of this, it's possible that secondary students did not have a strong sense of connection to Literature.

Mother tongue languages have frequently been referred to as the languages of heritage and identity in statements on language and language policies (Silver, 2004, p. 61). For students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, studying Literature in English is a daunting endeavor. Iraqi Literature may serve as a bridge to unite people of many cultural backgrounds.

The problem of national identity is equally significant. The transition of Singapore from a city-state to a nation has described in Velayutham (2007). When Singapore became a "Newly Industrialized Economy," it was deemed a threat to its social cohesion because of its increased interaction with the "Global" and the West (ibid., p. 203). Literary studies have been associated with the West for a long time due to a fear of the 'evil' impacts of the West.

As Singapore evolves as a nation, the unifying power of literature becomes more apparent. Literature has long been considered taboo in Singaporean society, such as novels and poetry. In Singapore, however, the relatively slow response to changes in the Literature curriculum is out of sync with the rapid development of the local cultural sector. Culture and the arts are crucial to Singapore's objective of becoming a worldwide arts city by the end of this century. This goal can be furthered and perhaps expedited by the study of literature. One of the subjects of this investigation was the importance of literature in supporting the arts and culture in general.

EDUCATION POLICY FACTORS

A long-awaited update to the Literature curriculum in 2008 saw specific Singaporean texts in the syllabus, introduced in 1891. Post-colonial literature has now been added to the Cambridge test syllabus. Amid a global debate over the future of "traditional literary study," Singapore's literature curriculum underwent only minor revisions (Miller, 2002, p. 10). this study investigates global trends and circumstances in literary studies and places them at the forefront of the conversation.

Ordinary and Advanced levels of the Cambridge University General Certificate of Education (GCE) have been taken by students in Singapore. Revisions to the secondary-school literature syllabus have included local authors and more diverse texts. The inclusion of "Off Center" by local playwright Haresh Sharma as an 'O' level examination text in 2008 was a bold move to incorporate more Singaporean Literature into the syllabus.

A 42.4 percent reduction in seven years (1990-1997) in the number of secondary school students studying Literature alarmed educators, researchers, writers, and the general public, who called for immediate steps to halt the dangerous trend before Literature as a discipline was extinguished entirely (The Straits Times, 1997). While this is the overall trend in most schools, some independent and government-aided schools appear to have a tradition linked with the study of Literature. Is Literature designed to be studied just by those regarded as 'excellent enough to do so, and not by the entire population? This study uncovered the low interest in English Literature among high school pupils.

As a result of these opportunities, several of Singapore's writers have attended major worldwide literary conferences and joined local academic associations. The National Arts Council has also promoted literary arts through various programs and projects. "Singapore as a global arts city a key city in the Asian Renaissance of the 21st century and a cultural center in the globalized world" was the first goal of the Renaissance City Report (Ministry of Information and Arts (MICA), 1999), which stated that "to inculcate an appreciation of our heritage and strengthen the Singapore Heartbeat through the creation and sharing of Singapore stories, be it in film, Tv, or literature" (ibid., 1999, p. 4). For this reason, recent research studied how Singaporean authors have incorporated them into secondary school literature courses.

To "nurture Singapore's artistic and creative leaders for the future" (Lee, B.Y., 2005), the MICA established the specialized School of the Arts (SOTA) in 2008 to provide "a vibrant environment for learning that has uniquely anchored in the arts." Literature classes in schools need to be revamped in light of the current thriving arts scene so that students can be influenced by it and thus help foster a more engaged, critical society (Shanmugaratnam, 2005).

Young people must be encouraged to participate in the arts, both as producers (writers, directors, actors, etc.) and consumers. Secondary school students' views on the status of literature studies and their potential to open doors to employment or participation in the arts have been presented here.

Other than a few research papers on the state of Singapore's Literature education, no empirical studies have been conducted in secondary schools in English (Choo, 2004, 2011; Poon, 2007, 2009). It can perform future research and improve present procedures and curriculum. This study's conclusions are also helpful in establishing the credibility of the earlier investigation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It was utilized as a theoretical framework to study the tight relationship between English and literature by O'Neill (1995) and Ball, Kenny, and Gardiner (1990). It used O'Neill's quadrant approach to assess the course objectives for the MOE Literature secondary school curriculum in the United Kingdom. Some of the model's most essential beliefs are Functional English, English as a Great Tradition, Progressive English, and Radical English. There are different goals and objectives in the literature syllabus for each orientation.

For example, the "retail model of higher education" may jeopardize literature's place in school curricula and beyond, as Chambers and Gregory (2006) discussed. On globalization and literary studies, Miller (1998) wrote. Globalization has brought about massive changes in economic, political, and technological aspects of literature, he concluded, including the rise of new forms of non-print media that alter the way literary language and narrative techniques are transmitted.

McGregor (1992) discusses the function and relevance of literature in the curriculum, recognizing the role of literature in the formation of values. Students' experiences with literary works have also been explored by Chambers and Gregory (2006). While Singh and Yeo (1999) investigate the Singapore Literature curriculum, Holden (1999) proposes a post-colonial curriculum reform that includes changes to the way and rationale of the study, as well as the types of literary texts studied (1999).

used countries like Australia and Canada to compare. Similarly, Malaysia has chosen a post-colonial South-East Asian nation that made unique EL/L teaching and learning decisions. With the introduction of Social Studies as a required humanities course, schools have opted for History or Geography electives instead of Literature (Choo, 2004; Poon, 2007, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

The study uses interpretive grounded theory. Multiple cases demanded collective case studies. Focus groups, written protocol, and papers were employed to obtain data for each school. It chose three autonomous, one government-aided, and one mainstream secondary school at random to participate in the study. The sole stipulation was that they teach Literature in upper secondary. As a result of the inductive analysis (O'Donoghue, 2007), the cross-case study generated propositions that aided in developing a theoretical framework.

The following two central research questions were addressed in this study:

- The main research question: What are the meanings and values that Singaporean teachers and students attach to the study of English Literature today?
- Policy and curriculum change significantly impact the selection of Literature in English as a desirable course of study. Many guiding questions have developed.

Students participated in semi-structured focus groups. Which posed the same questions to all groups, but their requested order may not have been the same. Discussion points for elaboration and clarification have opened up due to this. There were only five students in each focus group, so the interviews lasted around 40 minutes. Teachers picked names at random for the groups. Interviewees have requested to fill out seven Likert-type items in the form of sentences. Students had to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a four-point continuum. Students' comments have been used to corroborate the focus group interviews' conclusions, which addressed text selection and the value of literature. There was a summary document from the focus groups outlining the essential themes. We checked it and asked the student interviews' findings against the statements students to reply to make sure they were accurate. The written procedure has been used. The 89 students who took part in the research project provided enormous data. Thus it was essential to utilize written protocols to manage it.

It gave an open-ended survey to two literature teachers from each of the schools in question, and It solicited their responses. In-depth interviews with department heads were also conducted (HODs).

DISCUSSION

Due to Singapore's open economy, foreign and domestic policies have aligned to maximize growth and produce "the world's best workforce" (Lee, K.Y., 2009). Human resource development requires education and training. The MOE's education policies have been created to satisfy shifting global economic demands.

The Global Financial Crisis, which began in mid-2007 and continued well into 2008, was the backdrop for this research. The findings must be interpreted in light of the current economic climate's uncertainty. The revised O and N-level exam syllabuses included texts from more diverse sources. Anxieties about curriculum shifts have heightened, it seemed, by the current state of the economy. Participants' answers to some of the questions posed in the interviews did reflect these economic concerns. Literature was long considered a difficult subject in Singaporean schools because of the widespread belief that getting good grades in it was nearly impossible (The Straits Times, 30 May, 16 August 1997.)

Because it was easier to earn distinctions in history and geography than in literature, these two subjects were substituted. Literature has still been seen as a limiting factor in a student's overall academic standing, despite introducing the Humanities subject and changes to the school ranking exercise⁴ and its flexible combination of issues. In a meritocratic society like Singapore, this has implications. Students are discouraged from pursuing Literature studies at secondary school because of the widely held belief that Literature graduates will not find employment in an uncertain economic climate, where the demand is in the financial, technological, and scientific sectors. In Singapore, literature education has no longer been seen as relevant.

SOCIETAL INFLUENCES: POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

As teachers and students talked, it was apparent that Literature is an essential subject in high school. They said that it helps people think more carefully and be more creative. The findings also showed that the school's vision and mission and how well it did in the School Achievement Table (SAF Review, 2006) affect how important students place the subject. Literature classes were more appealing to students at the best schools, shown by their positive feedback and opinions.

Most of the students said that Literature helped them improve their English language skills. It has been agreed that studying Literature in English helped students improve their English language skills. Because of this, Literature has been placed in the English as Skills quadrant (O'Neill, 1995), which shows that the government and the MOE took an authoritative and very authoritarian approach to education issues.

The main goal of literary studies is to learn how to read and analyze texts, literary devices, and techniques (CPDD, 2007). The objectives of the syllabus have been met. In this study, most of the people who took part in it agreed that literature is essential for speaking English better.

Participants agreed that Literature could significantly impact the general education of young people. Aesthetics and linguistics were the focus of the curriculum. The study of Literature could help to spread the values of National Education. However, it has not been taught in school. According to a new study, social studies may have replaced Literature as the primary way schools teach moral and social values.

Literature did not have a good place in secondary school, compared to other Humanities fields. Pupils in Singapore thought the subject was not relevant to today's country. The country's political and economic "way" is to the outside. In addition, schools were not willing to teach the subject at the 'O' level. Science and technology may be taking over literature, which is terrible.

As a center of excellence in mathematics and science, Singapore and promoting a knowledge-based economy changed students' concentration away from Literature. These lectures routinely highlight Singapore's educational triumphs in science and mathematics, as well as the MOE's attempts to increase Singapore's worldwide competitiveness through the construction of specialized schools and institutions. Future Schools emphasized math, science, and technology (2007, 2008, 2011).

A meritocratic system makes businesses and schools more competitive. People are the essential thing in Singapore. Everyone wants to help keep Singapore's "competitive advantage" over its neighbors, so they all want to do their part. Students are not encouraged to finish their literary studies because they won't find work in a knowledge-based economy. A study found that math and science majors were more likely to get jobs.

Journalism, broadcasting, public relations in banks and other businesses, teaching and publishing are some jobs that writing majors at the National University of Singapore can get (NUS website 2010). Most people said they didn't like these jobs because of their prestige or pay.

Proposition 1: Despite teachers and students acknowledging Literature's value in its functional and moral significance, they do not see it as an economically viable option.

POLITICAL ACTION, TEACHERS

Syllabus and test reforms appeared to be driving change in Singapore's education system. They knew there was a difference in the syllabus, but only one HOD could explain why because they had been on the review committee.

The lack of communication between policymakers and teachers in schools has been shown by the lack of information about Literature study options after high school. Secondary school students don't seem to be interested in Literature as a class because teachers and departments haven't been able to tell them about opportunities for more study.

In a speech, Lee Hsien Loong said that the introduction of local Literature was a great way to build harmony and strengthen local relationships in multi-racial communities (Lee, H.L., 2009). On the other hand, Literature has a lot in common with History, Geography, and Social Studies. A requirement that students choose Social Studies at the high curriculum level makes Literature less important in teaching moral and social values because it doesn't have to.

People who took the 'O' Level Literature class now have to read a piece from their area. For example, Choo (2004)

says that the ambiguity of the subject Literature has caused by ideological disagreements inside the subject, social groups that don't agree with each other, and colonial heritage texts and judgments. Associate Professor Kirpal Singh, who was then the head of Literature and drama at the Singapore National Institute of Education, wanted to include more foreign works in the syllabus for 2008. It only had local jobs in the syllabus for 2008. Many people said that Singaporeans didn't believe in their Literature (ibid.). Poon (2009) thinks that current Literature syllabuses don't cover global social, political, ethical, and cultural issues that are important. Examining MOE Literature syllabus statements showed that there were minor changes over time. More books from different cultures and countries are needed to help Poon achieve his goal of being a cosmopolitan. Some of the students agreed. They said that they had positive reactions to local Literature. Students have had mixed feelings about adding texts from their own country to the class. Because of Singapore's strict control over education, it can only make changes like adding local texts to the Literature curriculum or making Social Studies a school subject from the top.

Teachers and students, based on their answers to Central Research Question 2, respond to policy changes that have been made by policymakers, who then make policies based on society and the global economy, which in turn make policy.

All of the world's literary works had surpassed the traditional British canon. However, even though teachers and HODs chose "traditional books" and "classics," most students didn't understand the idea. Most of the people at the meeting favored including local Literature in the traditional texts. Students should not be exposed to Singlish in texts in their area. Local people, teachers, and students disagree with the government's strong push for Standard English. Teachers and students may have changed their regional literature views because they didn't like Singlish. Students didn't want to study local Literature because it was there.

It might be seen as a way for Singapore to show its national identity by using local texts to get students to connect with them "on an intimate and personal level." The friction between Singlish and Standard English may mean that identity remains controversial.

Contrary to what most people think, there is no connection between the performing arts and the literary worlds. The city's rich cultural arts program and goal to become a global arts city don't seem to help the literary scene grow in schools, where local Literature isn't as well-known as it should be.

This is the case because local Literature hasn't had a significant impact on secondary school students to encourage them to study Literature.

According to the interviews, the culture of the school affects the curriculum. Leaders can impact how learning programs are run by changing vision and mission statements. One HOD made Literature more popular at his school, making students more interested in it. Secondary 1–4 students could choose Literature as a subject or an extra class because there has been a significant rise in Literature students since 2001 because of the HOD's outreach to parents and students. School administrators might start making changes to school-wide programs and courses of study.

CONCLUSION

Studying Literature in modern Singapore has a lot of different meanings and values, which this study looked at. It also looked at how educational policies and curriculum changes made Literature more popular as a curriculum subject. Because teachers and students are not very excited about how Literature is taught and studied in school, this thesis claims they aren't enthusiastic about it. They do not know that they need to research Literature after high school. The subject has been referred to as an "elite" subject, only for students who go to high-achieving schools. Even though Literature is essential to the local cultural and literary environment, it has been considered insignificant. For this topic to last for a long time, policymakers at the institutional and governmental levels must make policies that are easy to follow at the secondary school level.

A key finding of this study is that establishing a literary culture takes time, particularly in post-colonial countries that still adhere to colonial educational methods and standards. It should develop a multi-racial literary culture in Singapore at this time. Singapore has grown into a regional financial and technological hub due to its rich cultural milieu, particularly in the performing arts. In this stable environment, an academic program that is interesting, relevant, and vital would only help one of the highest-performing school systems in the country.

WORK CITED

1. Ball, S., Kenny, A., & Gardiner, D. (1990). Literacy, Politics and the Teaching of English. In Goodson, I., & Medway, P. (Eds.), *Bringing English to Order* (pp. 47-86). London: The Falmer Press.
2. Chambers, E., & Gregory, M. (2006). *Teaching and Learning English Literature*. London: Sage Ltd.
3. Chew, K., & Wong, M.W. (1999). A Literature Syllabus for Secondary Schools in Singapore.
4. In Chua, S. H., & Chin, W. P. (Eds.), *Localising Pedagogy: Teaching Literature in Singapore* (pp. 90-95). Singapore: National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University.
5. Choo, S. (2004). Investigating Ideology in the Literature curriculum in Singapore. Unpublished master's thesis. Department of English Language and Literature: National University of Singapore.
6. Choo, S. (2011). On literature's use(ful/less)ness: reconceptualising the literature curriculum in the age of globalisation. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 47-67). London: Routledge.
7. Curriculum Planning and Development Division. (2007). *Literature in English, Teaching Syllabus*. Ministry of Education: Singapore.

8. Goh, C. B., & Gopinathan, S. (2006). The Development of Education in Singapore since 1965. Background paper prepared for the Asia Education Study Tour for African Policy Makers, June 18 – 30. Retrieved July 8, 2007, from http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1121703274255/1439264-1153425508901/Development_Edu_Singapore_draft.pdf
9. Goh, C.T. (1997). Speech at the opening of the 7th International Conference on Thinking 2 June 1997.
10. Holden, P. (1999). The Great Literature Debate: Why Teach Literature in Singapore? In Chua, S.
11. H. & Chin, W. P. (Eds.), *Localising Pedagogy: Teaching Literature in Singapore* (pp. 79-89). Singapore: National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University.
12. Holden, P. (2000). On the Nation's Margins: The Social Place of Literature in Singapore. *SOJOURN: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Volume: 15 Issue: 1 Page: 30.
13. Lee, B. Y. (2005). Minister For Information, Communications And The Arts, Speech At The Opening Of The School Of The Arts, 2 January 2008, 8:00am At 90 Goodman Road. Retrieved October 9, 2006, from
14. <http://app.mica.gov.sg/Default.aspx?tabid=79&ctl=Details&mid=540&ItemID=181>
15. Lee, H. L. (2010). National Day Rally speech 29 August 2010. Retrieved January 11, 2011, from http://www.pmo.gov.sg/content/pmosite/mediacentre/speechesinterviews/primeminister/2010/August/national_day_rallyspeechenglishbyprimeministerleehsienloongon29a.html.
16. Lee, H. L. (2010). New Year Message 2011. Retrieved January 11, 2011, from http://www.pmo.gov.sg/content/pmosite/mediacentre/speechesinterviews/primeminister/2010/December/prime_minister_snewyearmessage2011.html.
17. Lee, K. Y. (2009). The Fundamentals of Singapore's Foreign Policy: Then and Now. Speech at the Rajaratnam Lecture 9 April 2009. Retrieved September 15, 2010, from
18. http://www.news.gov.sg/public/sGPC/en/media_releases/agencies/pmo/speech/S-20090409-1.html.
19. Lui, T. Y. (2007). *Gearing Up for the Future: Innovation in Singapore's Education System*. Speech at IBAP Teachers Conference 31 March 2007. Retrieved July 12, 2009, from <http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/speeches/2007/sp20070331a.htm>
20. McGregor, R. (1992). Imagining realities: values and literature. In Thomson, J. (Ed.), *Reconstructing literature teaching: new essays on the teaching of literature* (pp. 137- 148). Norwood SA: Australian Association for the Teaching of English.
21. Miller, H. (1998). Effects of Globalisation on Literary Study. Paper presented at conference on Literary History and Comparative Literary Studies, May 7 1998. Retrieved January 26, 2011, from
22. <http://litteraturhistorie.au.dk/fileadmin/www.litteraturhistorie.au.dk/forskning/forskningspublikationer/arbejdspapirer/arbejdspapir16.pdf>
23. Miller, H. (2002). *On Literature*. London: Routledge.
24. Ministry of Education. (2007, May 22). MOE Selects First Five FutureSchools@Singapore [Press release]. Retrieved November 12, 2007, from http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/2007/pr20070522_print.htm.
25. Ministry of Education. (2008, March 3). New School of Science and Technology to Open in 2010 [Press release]. Retrieved May 4, 2008, from
26. <http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/press/2008/03/new-school-of-science-and-tech.php>.
27. Ministry of Education. (2011). Gifted Education Programme: Integrated Programme.
28. Retrieved January 30, 2011, from <http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/programmes/gifted-education-programme/integrated-programmes>.
29. Ministry of Education Corporate Brochure. (2010). Education in Singapore. Retrieved
30. October 12, 2010, from <http://www.moe.gov.sg/about/files/moe-corporate-brochure.pdf>
31. Ministry of Education. (2011). National Education (2011). Retrieved January 22, 2012, from
32. Ministry of Information and the Arts. (1999). *Renaissance City Report: Culture and the Arts in Renaissance Singapore*. Ministry of Information and the Arts, Singapore. Retrieved 20 January, 2010, from http://app.gov.sg/Portals/0/2_FinalRen.pdf.
33. Ministry of Manpower. (2010). Strategic Skills in Demand. Retrieved January 12, 2011, from <http://www.mom.gov.sg/skills-training-and-development/skills-in-demand/Pages/skills-in-demand.aspx>
34. National University of Singapore. (2010). Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. English Literature.
35. Retrieved December 15, 2010, from <http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/prospective/faqs.html>
36. Ng, Eng Hen. (2010). FY2010 Committee of Supply Debate: 1st Reply by Dr Ng Eng Hen,
37. Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence on Strengthening Education for All. Retrieved March 10, 2010, from <http://www.moe.gov.sg/media/speeches/2010/03/09/fy-2010-committee-of-supply-de.php>.
38. O'Donoghue, T. (2007). *Planning your qualitative research project: an introduction to interpretivist research in education*. London; New York : Routledge.
39. O'Neill, M. (1995). *Variant Readings: A Cross-Cultural Study of Reading Comprehension And Literacy Texts*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Murdoch University, Western Australia.
40. Poon, A. (2007). The Politics of Pragmatism: Some Issues in the Teaching of Literature in Singapore. *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education* 14(1): 51-59. London: Routledge.

41. Poon, A. (2009). Introduction: 1990- present. In Poon, A., Holden, P., & Lim, S. (Eds.), *Writing Singapore: An Historical Anthology of Singapore Literature* (pp. 359-379). Singapore: NUS Press and National Arts Council of Singapore.
42. Poon, A. (2010). Constructing the Cosmopolitan Subject: Teaching Secondary School Literature in Singapore. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 30, (1), 31-41.
43. Rubdy, R. (2007). Singlish in the School: An Impediment or a Resource. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 28, (4), 308-324.
44. Shanmugaratnam, T. (2005). Speech at National Arts Council's Golden Point Award Night.
45. Retrieved June 7, 2007, from http://www.moe.gov.sg/speeches/2005/sp20050831a_print.htm Sharpe, L., & Gopinathan, S. (2002). After effectiveness: new directions in the Singapore school system? *Journal of Education Policy*, 17(2), 151-166.
46. Silver, R. E. (2004). The Discourse of Linguistic Capital: Language and Economic Policy Planning in Singapore. *Journal of Language Policy*, 4(1): 47-66.
47. Singh, K. (1999). Literature in the Singapore Curriculum: Challenges for the Future, in Chua, Seok Hong & Chin, Woon Ping (eds) *Localising Pedagogy: Teaching Literature in Singapore* (pp. 62-67). Singapore: National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University.
48. The Straits Times. (1997). 'Myopic' to make students give up literature. 30 May 1997 (p. 53). Singapore: Singapore Press Holdings.
49. The Straits Times. (1997). Big drop in students studying O-level literature. 16 August 1997. p.77 Singapore: Singapore Press Holdings.
50. Velayutham, S. (2007). *Responding to globalisation: nation, culture and identity in Singapore*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
51. Yeo, R. (1996). The Literature Curriculum, Literary Theory and Teaching in Singapore. NIECER Research Paper 17. Singapore: National Institute of Education.
52. Yeo, R. (1999). National Education and the Literature Curriculum in Singapore Schools. In Chua, S. H., & Chin, W. P. (Eds.), *Localising Pedagogy: Teaching Literature in Singapore* (pp. 68-78). Singapore: National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University