

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The 2011/2012 volume of the VISTAS Journal is a collection of research articles on English in Sri Lanka published to celebrate the contribution made by Ryhana Raheem to the field of English language teaching (ELT) and English education in Sri Lanka. Ryhana Raheem, in a career spanning forty years as a university teacher and Applied Linguist, has given leadership and contributed significantly to the development of policy and to innovations in English language teaching and English education in Sri Lanka. She has also played a role in shaping English Language Teaching (ELT) in Asia – as a founder member of the Asia TEFL organization and as a language policy consultant to other South Asian countries.

Ryhana Raheem has played a considerable role in the development of the Open University of Sri Lanka as Head of Department, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Member of the Senior Management Committee and as a Council Member. In recognition of her academic stature and her services to the university and its growth, over a period of 22 years, the Council of the OUSL conferred on her the title of Professor Emeritus, in 2012. It is against this backdrop that the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Open University and the Editorial Board of VISTAS decided to honor her contribution to the university and the field of English Language Teaching in the country, by dedicating a volume to English Education in Sri Lanka. I wish to thank all the contributors to this volume who have worked closely with her as colleagues, students and friends.

The 18 research articles in this volume have been arranged under several broad headings. Papers which consider pedagogical issues have been divided as language programme evaluation and, teaching and learning English as a second language at tertiary level. The second group of articles examine Sri Lankan English and contemporary attitudes towards English in the country while the articles in section three focus on a relatively new area of research in Sri Lanka – how Sri Lankans use the language resources available to them in teaching / learning and other interactions. The articles in the last section look at the way in which socio-political beliefs and attitudes are reflected in and shaped by the language used by writers.

The diversity of issues dealt with in the papers in this volume affirm that despite the paucity of resources, research and scholarship has been undertaken in widely varying topics and themes. It is evident that many researchers from all parts of the country are making a significant contribution to the advancement of the field.