

Managing Teaching and Learning for Reading English as a First Additional Language

R.N. Marishane¹ and J. Motona²

¹*Department of Education Management and Policy Studies, University of Pretoria,
Private Bag X20, Hatfield 0028, South Africa*

²*Postnet Suite 278 Private Bag X9307 Polokwane 0700, Limpopo,
Department of Education, South Africa*

E-mail: ¹<nylon.marishane@up.ac.za>, ²<motona@vodamail.co.za>

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ABSTRACT Literacy is a critical aspect of learning in primary schools and forms a foundation for learners' education. Studies, however, show that many learners in Grade 3 cannot read at the expected levels. This problem has generated increasing public demand for schools in South Africa to produce learners who can read for pleasure, learning and enrichment. It is against this background that this study aims to examine the management of an instructional programme for reading English as First Additional Language in Grade 3. To achieve this aim, a qualitative research approach was followed to collect data through interviews, observations and document analysis. The results revealed weaknesses in the instructional leadership of School Management Teams, which the study attributes to a limited understanding of their roles in this area. The study concludes by calling for professional development programme for those involved in the teaching of English as a First Additional Language.

INTRODUCTION

James and Pollard (2006: 9) maintain that the main goal of teaching and learning should be the promotion of learners' independence and autonomy. This involves acquiring a repertoire of learning strategies and practices, developing positive learning dispositions, and learners having the will and confidence to become agents in their own learning. In other words, teaching and learning requires effective management. Bush et al. (2009: 3) hold the view that the responsibility for managing teaching and learning is shared amongst principals, School Management Teams (SMTs), Heads of Departments (HoDs) and classroom educators. Educators manage curriculum implementation in the classrooms; HoDs have the responsibility to ensure effective teaching and learning across their subjects or phases, while principals and HoDs carry out a whole-school management and leadership role. In South Africa, many children start using English as their first additional language as well as their language of learning in Grade 4. This means that they must reach a high level of competence in English by the end of Grade 3. Since they need to be able to read and write well in English, their progress in literacy must be accelerated in Grades 2 and 3 (Department of Basic Education 2011: 8). It is against this background that this study sought

to examine how the management of an instructional programme for reading English as First Additional Language in Grade 3 is carried out in some South African schools.

Theoretical Background to the Management of Reading English as First Additional Language

This section focuses on an instructional leadership theory as a theory that underpins the management of an instructional programme for reading English as First Additional Language. The theoretical grounding in this section is followed by practical implications of the theory for school leaders. The discussion on the latter covers aspects such as the principal as an instructional leader, roles and responsibilities of HoDs as instructional leaders, curriculum support for the teaching of English as a first additional language, professional development for language teachers, and educator appraisal for teaching reading.

Instructional Leadership

Masumoto and Brown-Wetly (2009: 3) define instructional leadership as the instructional leaders' role on learner achievement, their positive influence on teachers and the teaching

outcomes that impact learners' academic performance. According to Loveless (2016), principals as instructional leaders set instructional goals and monitor teachers' implementation thereof. Phillips (2009: 2) states that instructional leadership involves goal setting, resources provisioning, curriculum management, lessons planning monitoring and teacher evaluation. It implies that the SMTs should carry management responsibilities accountably in order to provide quality teaching and learning in schools. In discharging their duties, they should set goals, provide resources, manage curriculum, monitor lesson planning and evaluate teachers. Therefore, one would believe that in managing an instructional programme for reading English as First Additional Language, instructional leaders need to ensure that there are effective classroom practices, provision of teacher-learner support materials and positive leadership and management. A different view of instructional leadership focuses on organisational management for instructional improvement rather than daily teaching and learning activities.

Factors such as employing teachers, allocation of duties, teacher retention strategies and teacher development programme, have a positive impact on learner achievement (Horng and Loeb 2010: 66). Organisational Management means having quality teachers, appropriate support systems and sufficient teacher-learner support materials (TLSM) to facilitate quality provision of teaching and learning. In order to produce the intended academic results, the principal needs to give some time to organisational management activities. Schools that have good organisational managers produce best academic achievement (Horng and Loeb 2010: 66).

Newman et al. (2008: 2) state that as instructional leaders have to follow a planned instructional programme, they should develop a set of indicators with clear purpose and goals to measure teaching and learning activities across grades and various subjects. Good instructional leadership encompasses the following dimensions; common instructional strategies and assessments, coordination of curriculum and assessments, remedial instruction, professional development and school improvement planning.

Hallinger's Instructional Leadership Model

Hallinger (2009: 1) describes instructional leadership role of the principal's as crucial to

school effectiveness and their professional leadership as crucial to school success. The purpose of referring to the model is to explain what instructional leadership entails and how it relates to leadership for learning. The model strives to reveal the positive impact instructional leadership has made over the years (Hallinger 2009). Hallinger (2009: 7) presents a model of instructional leadership that consists of ten functions within three broad categories:

- ♦ Defining the school's mission
- ♦ Managing the instructional programme
- ♦ Promoting a positive school learning climate

Defining the School's Mission

It involves the principal's role of determining the main purposes of the school in collaboration with the teachers. It embraces the principal's task in staff management to ensure that the school has specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound goals which are aimed at learners' academic achievement. The principal also has the responsibility to clearly and widely communicate the school's mission to the school community so that it gets supported and incorporated into its daily operations. In defining the school's mission in teaching English reading, the principal should consider the following areas: (1) learner achievement competences and achievement targets, (2) action plans for whole-school monitoring of the teaching of reading and (3) requisition and management of literacy resources, such as textbooks, workbooks, readers, library books and teachers' guides. Principals should ensure that all stakeholders, such as teachers, learners, parents and the community at large understand the value of reading.

Managing the Instructional Programme

The principal has to incorporate three management functions which are, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring learners' progress. It is a requirement that the principal and the SMT should always be engaged in monitoring teaching and learning. The principal should have the necessary expertise in instructional matters as well as the school improvement commitment. This implies that the principal as the head of the school has to foster teacher capacity building, better teaching practices and learner support

system. Principals should ensure that their schools have a reading policy and programme, adherence to it by the teachers, learners and the school community. They should also observe reading lessons, identify teachers' needs and have a budget for procurement of reading materials.

Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate

The principal is responsible for ensuring that educators get opportunities to teach while learners get opportunities to learn. Clear aims and values that direct teachers and learners towards successful teaching and learning should form the schools' culture. The school must be an orderly and disciplined environment in which codes of conduct are complied with so that quality teaching and learning occur. In creating a positive reading culture amongst teachers and learners, principals must set achievable reading goals, high expectations, recognise and reward achievements. There should also be staff development programme on reading and encouragement of working together with parents and the community to promote a reading culture.

In summarising the discussion above, it is important to state that principals are key players in managing an instructional programme for reading. In overcoming the challenges, they might be confronted with, there needs to be a coherent instructional programme for reading across all the school grades to guide teaching, learning and assessment.

The Principal as an Instructional Leader

As instructional leaders, principals play an important role in ensuring that the school's focus is on teaching and learning and that all activities, systems and procedures are confined to this core business of the school. Principals are bound to be directly involved in teaching and learning by creating an environment conducive to effective curriculum delivery. They should also ensure that effective teaching and learning strategies are developed and implemented. As instructional leaders, they ensure that teaching and learning are the main activities of the school and lead by example. To lead by example, many principals believe that they should take a class for teaching as it is a positive motivating factor (Department of Education 2008: 17).

Playing an Influential role in Teaching and Learning English Reading

The principal as an instructional leader in the school has to develop a coherent instructional English reading programme. The programme has to cover areas such as reading goals and strategies, literacy instructional framework linked to learners' reading achievement and literacy professional development. Southworth (2004: 78) adds that the influence of the principal on teaching and learning takes three forms:

- ♦ Direct effects – the principal has to directly act as a role model to the school community in order to impact positively on school activities.
- ♦ Indirect effects – the principals' constructive monitoring role leads to teachers' improvement in teaching activities.
- ♦ Reciprocal effects – it involves exchange of ideas, whether formal or informal, which are aimed at positive classroom practices.

In light of the points raised above, the principal needs to ensure that the learners' English reading competences are improved. This can be achieved by providing effective instructional strategies, creating expanded opportunities for struggling learners and involving the entire school community in literacy improvement. Tiemensma (2007: 48) outlines the school leaders' influence through three strategies, namely, modelling, monitoring and dialogue in the following manner:

Modelling is about the principal being a very good example. Principals who want to be successful should behave appropriately in order for their subordinates to pursue the same behaviour. Whatever they ask of the educators, they must first do. Effective leaders know that they are on show, so their actions and behaviours should be in accordance with what is required by their professional positions. Principals have to be the driving forces in improving reading skills. Principals should model reading by letting learners observe them reading. Because when learners see the principal reading books for them at times, they will also want to read themselves. Even if it is not in a classroom context, the principal can read for learners at morning assemblies, enforced religion and newspapers which help them gain information about their country and world events. Principals are key role players in modelling reading to learners

and inculcating a positive reading attitude in them.

Monitoring involves the principals' role of analysing and checking learners' achievement. Leadership is more effective and efficient when it is determined by information on learners' academic achievements together with sound teaching and learning practices. It should involve classroom visits, teachers' observation and constructive, transparent feedback. Principals have to monitor the reading activities regularly at the school. They should ensure that they interact with language teachers on a continuous basis in order to track record of reading activities inside and outside the classroom, such as participation in Readathon competitions. At times, they should observe reading lessons in practise attend school-based reading activities and enter their schools in various language and reading events.

Dialogue is about conversation opportunities created amongst teachers and the principal about teaching and learning activities. The principal together with other SMT members has to create an environment conducive to meeting with colleagues in order to discuss instructional matters and students achievements. Such discussions should include encouragement, feedback and teaching questions. Teacher-leader talks stimulate teacher reflection about teaching methods, learner performance results and teachers conduct. This implies that, principals and SMTs responsible for languages have to meet regularly with language teachers to discuss issues, such as, reading strategies, relevant reading books, library outreach programme, learners' reading capabilities and appropriate intervention strategies. Intervention strategies can include creating conducive school and home reading environments for learners.

The strategies outlined above carries at least two implications for the school principals. The first implication is that principals should ensure that the school has a reading programme in place. The second implication is that there should be a continuous implementation and monitoring of the reading programme. In the course of such implementation and monitoring, there should be continuous feedback discussions with the teacher to reflect and measure progress. This has the potential to assist whenever the programme has to be reviewed, giving reflection on the positive impact it makes on learners' reading competence levels.

Giving Curriculum Support for the Teaching of English as a First Additional Language

Nieuwenhuis (2007: 137) claims that the principal as an instructional leader must ensure that curriculum implementation is supported. What this implies is that instructional leadership should provide resources needed for the teaching of English as a first additional language in order to produce competent readers. This requires support for English language teachers to strengthen the teaching of literacy by giving curriculum support. They should organise literacy workshops, procure suitable resources and enter their schools in literacy and reading competitions.

The Gauteng Department of Education (2010: 17) supports the teaching of literacy in the following ways:

Literacy Milestones: Teachers need to be guided on how to design English reading lesson plans in line with Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and Foundation for Learning in order to attain expected reading levels in the Foundation Phase.

Provision of Literacy Resource Packages: Teachers should be assisted to select and use high quality English reading textbooks, workbooks and readers.

Learner Support Literacy Programmes: Reading programme should not only be school-based, they need to be extended outside the school. Principals should co-ordinate outside school activities, such as, reading at home, parental and community involvement and establish links with local libraries.

Coaching: There should be teaching reading trainings which are aligned to curriculum policy guidelines and the literacy materials. Capacity building workshops need to be conducted for English teachers around new teaching reading practices.

Management of Literacy Teaching and Learning: Leadership and management of classroom practices, in teaching reading is essential for the purpose of enhancement of reading competences and accountability. Principals have to ensure that HoDs and teachers use correct reading assessment techniques and that there is proper use and monitoring of reading resources and continuous implementation of the reading programme

Roles and Responsibilities of Heads of Departments as Instructional Leaders

Heads of Departments (HoDs) are part of the School Management Teams. They have many roles to play in the execution of their duties. Their roles include teaching learners in their grades and providing professional assistance to teachers in their departments. The HoDs have the responsibility of ensuring that they manage their departments effectively and efficiently (Nkabinde 2012: 36). The HoD, as an instructional leader, must ensure that there is a link between teaching, learning and assessment in order to get good learner achievements. Nkabinde (2012: 42) indicates that HoDs are responsible for the planning and organisation of their departments to ensure that departmental subjects are taught effectively and efficiently. In relation to English reading, their responsibilities include formulation of departmental literacy policies, availability and utilisation of literacy resources and teacher literacy development. They need to have reading policies, plans and programme so that they could guide and advise teachers to introduce new changes in teaching English reading, which include computer-integrated education. Odera (2011: 239) argues that HoDs should assist and advise teachers on better teaching reading methods, effective assessment methods, learner record-keeping and selection of useful learner-teacher reading support materials. Applied to the teaching of reading English, the Limpopo Department of Education (2007: 1) suggests that HoDs have to exercise the following key responsibilities:

Developing and Using Learning Programmes:

Work-schedules are monitored regularly and accommodate learners of different reading abilities and teachers' reading lessons plans cover appropriate reading strategies.

Classroom Practice: Teachers and learners arrive punctually and literacy contact time is observed, teachers get learners to read, teachers use appropriate teaching reading strategies and use reading resources effectively.

Assessment: Learners are assessed according to appropriate reading strategies, teachers to use a variety of assessment forms, formal assessment tasks are of acceptable standards and results are analysed to improve teaching reading methods and learners' reading abilities.

Learner-Teacher Support Materials (LTSMs):

Teachers are guided in selecting reading books

and materials effectively, teachers and learners possess and use reading books and other materials, such as, posters, self-made resources productively, learners work are displayed in the classroom and proper records of LTSMs are kept.

Nkabinde (2012: 40) points out that the success of any school depends on teaching and learning activities. In other words, learners' performance is a reflection of the nature the teaching and learning taking place in the classroom. This implies that HoDs should have the necessary competencies in curriculum content and delivery for the realisation of the school's set goals. Monitoring teaching and learning is one of the key competencies that HoDs should possess in this regard. A visionary HoD will strive for delivery of appropriate content knowledge, giving standardised assessment tasks and using information derived from class visits to develop an effective instructional intervention programme.

Professional Development for Language Teachers

Professional development is a strategy applied to expand teachers' knowledge and skills and strengthen their performance levels (Mizell 2010). It involves prioritization of student learning by engaging SMTs and teachers in various developmental programmes which enhance their management styles and teaching techniques. This serves as a point of departure for their ongoing professional development programme. To achieve better learner reading achievement, Department of Basic Education (DBE) in South Africa is responsible for initiating language teachers' development through training in teaching reading. Such training needs to cover areas such as the application of different teaching techniques utilisation of reading materials and good classroom language practices. Although DBE in various provinces in South Africa organizes workshops as a form of in-service training (INSET) for teachers, such training seldom targets teaching reading. Studies suggests various ways in which teachers can be developed. These include providing opportunities for them to attend conferences, workshops and face-to-face events on teaching reading and on language assessment issues. Studies also point out the importance of exposing teachers to published conference materials in various forms such as

audio or videotape, DVDs and CD-ROMs (Coombe et al. 2012: 126). Coombe et al. (2012: 127) assert that teachers can enrol for distance learning with colleges and universities. This includes taking a computer-aided or internet-based course like the state-of-the-art video-conferencing technology. Language teachers can do assessment course work through personal computers and computer technology, irrespective of where they are staying.

Continuous professional development of English language teachers depends on individual and group development activities. Effective professional development strategies include peer coaching, study groups, action research, mentoring, teaching portfolios, team coaching and in-service training. Teachers need assistance and support from their peers and managers so that they can exchange experiences and expertise, which will help them to reflect on their own teachings. Supervision by SMTs also serves as a co-operative problem-solving process in English teachers' professional development. Principals also play a supervisory role in teachers' professional growth by encouraging them to register with institutions of higher learning (Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu 2010: 17).

Educator Appraisal for Teaching Reading

According to Coerns and Jenkins (2000: 123), performance appraisal occurs when the supervisor takes responsibility for the development of the subordinate and exercises that responsibility through a discussion on strengths and weaknesses of the subordinate. In relation to this study, SMT members need to be responsible for the development of the English teachers by observing them when teaching reading lessons and then discussing strengths and weaknesses they identify in order to assist them in developing personal growth plan in areas of weaknesses. This implies that the instructional

leader together with the teacher need to openly and constructively discuss the evaluation process and personal development plans to improve the teaching of English reading. The performance standards which should be given particular attention during appraisal are: (1) creation of a positive learning environment, (2) knowledge of curriculum, (3) lesson planning, preparation and presentation, and (4) learner assessment (Education Labour Relations Council 2003).

Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007: 250) present two different approaches to appraisal. Both approaches focus on improving the quality of teaching in the classroom. However, the approaches differ extensively. The first approach is judgemental and more threatening, while the second is developmental. Table 1 summarises the differences between the two approaches.

According to the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) (2003: 3), the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) plays a key role in ongoing improvement of educators as evaluation of educators forms an integral part of the educational process. Three programmes, which need to be in place in order to enhance and monitor performance of the education system are:

Developmental Appraisal (DA): Its purpose is to appraise individual educators in a transparent manner in order to determine their strengths and weaknesses and to develop programme for individual development.

Performance Measurement (PM): Its purpose is to evaluate individual educators for salary progression, grade progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards and incentives.

Whole School Evaluation (WSE): Its purpose is to evaluate the overall effectiveness of a school, including the support provided by the District, school management, infrastructure and learning resources, as well as the quality of teaching and learning.

The IQMS program presented here is directly related to educator appraisal and instruction-

Table 1: Approaches to educator appraisal

<i>The judgemental approach</i>	<i>The developmental approach</i>
1. Focuses on weaknesses	1. Focuses on strengths
2. Appraisee not involved in process	2. Appraisee involved in the process
3. Summative – judgement is final	3. Formative – guidelines to improve practice
4. Emphasis on output/products e.g. lesson plans, mark books, records	4. Emphasis on process, contexts, teaching as a complex process
5. Tends to be negative	5. Tends to be positive

al leadership because it appraises and ensures teachers' development. After teacher evaluation, personal growth plans (PGPs) are developed. Personal Growth Plans are consolidated into School improvement Plan (SIP). The SMT, in particular the principal has a key role in the successful implementation of the SIP. The principal is accountable to the School Governing Body and the Department of Education on school improvement and development. In addition, the SMT has a legitimate responsibility to ensure that the school functions efficiently and effectively to attain its educational goals (ELRC 2003: 13).

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine how school principals and members of their school management teams manage the instructional programme for reading English as First Additional Language in Grade 3. To achieve this, aim five research questions were raised as follows:

- ♦ How do principals and Heads of Departments supervise English teachers' reading lessons?
- ♦ What problems do principals and Heads of Departments encounter in teaching of English reading?
- ♦ What management skills do Foundation Phase HoDs needs to ensure effective teaching of English reading of English Reading
- ♦ What skills do Grade 3 teachers need to teach English reading lessons effectively?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative case study method was used for this study. The choice for this method was based on its ability to provide a detailed understanding of the phenomena (Lapan et al. 2012: 243). The sample for this study comprised three principals, three Foundation Phase Heads of Department and three Grade 3 teachers drawn from three primary schools in the Capricorn District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. A qualitative research data was collected through interviews with participants. A thematic analysis advocated by Braun and Clarke (2006: 79) was carried out to analyse data collected through the three instruments. This form of analysis was chosen because of its ability to identify, organize, describe and report in detail the the themes within the collected data.

RESULTS

The results and discussion of the study are presented here according to the five identified themes.

Theme 1: Principals' and HoDs' Management of Teaching English Reading

The focus here was to establish whether principals and HoDs exercised their role as instructional leaders in the teaching of English. It emerged from the interviews that some principals did not have a clear understanding of their role as instructional leaders who should supervise, motivate and support teachers. Though some of them have strategies in place to support learners, they appear to be detached from what actually happens in the classroom. A couple of issues emerged from the HoDs' responses to the question relating to the management of the teaching of reading. The first issue was that while the Department of Education prescribes the responsibilities which HoDs must exercise in managing curriculum as instructional leaders, they were to a large extent unable to comply with what the policy requires, because of their heavy workload. The second issue was that while HoDs agreed that workshops were conducted on how reading in English as FAL should be taught, such workshops were still not sufficient as evidence of their effectiveness was not found in the sampled schools.

Theme 2: Problems Principals and HoDs Encounter in the Teaching of English Reading

The findings from the interviews with principals and HoDs revealed that schools had learning and teaching challenges when it came to the teaching of reading. Learning challenges included mixing of Home Language and English words, pronunciation, fluency, inability to read, mentally challenged learners, family backgrounds and socio-economic factors. Teaching challenges included heavy workload and non-compliance with reading time stipulations. Regarding the learner challenge such as mixing languages during lessons, Principal A pointed out to "addictive bilingualism" as a cause. On the other hand, Principal B ascribed English teachers' non-compliance with Department of Basic Education's time stipulations for reading to teacher work-

load by saying that *“They do reading today; tomorrow they continue with other things, because the workload is too much.”*

Time allocation for English as illustrated in Table 2 supports the expressed view that one of the reasons for English reading problems is insufficient time as prescribed by policy. To support this view with reference to time allocation provided by the Department of Basic Education (2011: 9), which is represented by Table 2, one HoD pointed out that maximum instructional time for reading in First Additional Language is 1 hour 30 minutes and minimum instructional time is 1 hour per week.

Table 2: Time allocation for Grade 3 subjects

Subject	Grade 3 (Hours)
Home language	8/7 (maximum/minimum)
English (First Additional Language)	3/4 (maximum/minimum)
Mathematics	7
Life skills	7
Total	25

Theme 3: Management Skills Foundation Phase HoDs Need to Ensure Effective Teaching of English Reading

The focus here was to establish how principals rated the management skills of their Foundation Phase HoDs in the teaching of English reading in their phases. It emerged from the interviews that some schools had a challenge with the HoDs execution of duties in relation to managing reading. For example, principal of School A confirmed this statement as he remarked that, *“We have only one HoD who is running the show in the whole school. Intermediate and Senior Phases are altogether on the same person and he is just generalizing.”* The opposite was with School B and C, as their HoDs were doing their utmost best. At School B, teachers were practising READ method to teach reading, according to the principal, while at School C the HoD held regular meetings to develop teachers on new developments in the teaching of English reading. For example, the principal of the latter school remarked that, *“The Head of Department holds meetings with the Foundation Phase educators to teach them about the new developments in teaching English reading.”* The response from one interviewee indicated that

schools which do not have HoDs assigned to specific phases are unable to manage their departments optimally by ensuring effective curriculum delivery.

Theme 4: Skills of Foundation Phase Teachers in Teaching English Reading

It emerged from the interviews that teachers who were responsible for the Foundation Phase English were applying methods recommended for their grades to ensure that learners could read properly. For example, the HoD at School A remarked, *“Most of the teachers were exposed to READ method. They are applying it in their classrooms and children are benefitting.”*

DISCUSSION

English teachers' lack of supervision, motivation and support by some principals and Heads of Department may negatively influence learners' ability to read. This stands in stark contrast to literature (Hallinger 2009: 7) that suggests that the principal as an instructional leader should focus on supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring progress. Literature also reveals that principals as educational leaders do not have a direct influence on learner achievement but influence such achievement indirectly by supporting and motivating teachers in their work situation (Leithwood et al. 2006). It emerged from the interviews that if principals do not focus on motivating teachers to teach learners to read English, the achievement of learners in this area will be negatively affected. This is because teachers are less likely to be inspired by leaders who do not identify with and show interest in what they teach and how they teach learners in the classroom (Marishane 2011).

In the light of responses from school principals interviewed in this study, English reading should include formulation of departmental literacy reading policies, availability and utilisation of literacy resources and teacher literacy development. Similarly, Nkabinde (2012: 42) maintains that HoDs are responsible for the planning and organisation of their departments to ensure that departmental subjects are taught effectively and efficiently. It emerged from this study that some HoDs thought because teachers are exposed to programmes such as *READ*,

they will teach effectively without their supervision. It was for this reason that work schedules were not checked regularly to determine whether reading lessons covered appropriate reading strategies and accommodated learners with different reading abilities. This suggests lack of proper monitoring of teachers' work. This contrasts sharply with the view that HoDs should provide teachers with academic support (Odera 2011: 239). Without this support through monitoring, it would be difficult to know learners' progress in reading or to take appropriate remedial actions to improve on such progress.

CONCLUSION

This study found that School Management Teams experience challenges in managing the teaching of English reading in schools. The study calls for continuous professional development for primary school principals and English teachers on the methodology of teaching English First Additional Language as well as training of Curriculum Advisors. The research findings determined that SMTs have a role to play as instructional leaders who supervise and support teachers. SMTs should fulfil their curriculum management role by ensuring that they supervise and evaluate teaching and learning, co-ordinate curriculum and monitor progress. From the interviews with principals, it appeared that some principals do not have a clear understanding of their role as instructional leaders who should supervise and support teachers. They have strategies to support learners but they appeared to be detached from what actually happens in the classroom. From the interviews with HoDs, it was noted that while the Department of Education prescribes the responsibilities which HoDs have to exercise in managing curriculum as instructional leaders, they were to a large extent not complying with what policy requires. Furthermore, while workshops are conducted on how reading in English should be taught, such workshops were still not sufficient as it was evident that HoDs are not managing the teaching of reading English in terms of their core responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations based on the study findings and they address key aspects of managing teaching and learning with special reference to English:

Professional Development

It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education should train SMTs in educational leadership and management. SMTs should be well trained on how to manage teaching English reading in order to address the professional development challenges teachers encounter in this area.

Capacity Building for Principals and HoDs

There should be training in the best methodology of teaching English (FAL) as part of School Leadership and Management programmes.

SMT Support for English Teachers

SMTs should mentor, monitor and evaluate the implementation of CAPS, appraise teachers and establish school-based staff development programmes for English (FAL) with special attention to reading.

Curriculum Support by the Department of Basic Education

DBE should establish intensive and continuous professional capacity building programmes focusing on the implementation of CAPS, rather than focusing on once-off workshops as modality for training teachers.

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