



**The influence of schooling conditions
and teaching practices on curriculum implementation
for Grade 4 reading literacy development**

by

Lisa Zimmerman

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**Supervisor: Prof. Sarah J. Howie
Co-supervisor: Prof. Brigitte Smit**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
AS	Assessment Standard
ASs	Assessment Standards
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAQDAS	Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CEA	Centre for Evaluation and Assessment, University of Pretoria
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DoE	South African National Department of Education
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EFL	English as a First Language
ESL	English Second Language
FDE	Further Diploma in Education
GET	General Education and Training
HED	Higher Education Diploma
HoD	Head of Department
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
INSET	In-service Teacher Education and Training
IRA	International Reading Association
JPTC	Junior Primary Teaching Certificate
KMO	Kaiser- Myer- Olkin
LiEP	Language in Education Policy (DoE, 1997)
LO	Learning Outcome
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LSEN	Learners with Special Educational Needs
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NICHHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, U.S.A
NRP	National Reading Panel
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development



OTL	Opportunity-To- Learn
PCA	Principal Components Analysis
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PGCE	Post- Graduate Certificate in Education
PRESET	Pre-Service teacher Education and Training
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACMEQ	Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SES	Socio- Economic Status
SPTC	Senior Primary Teaching Certificate
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Note: Owing to their size, the appendices are located on the CD in an envelope at the back of this thesis.

- APPENDIX A:** *Grade 4 English home language learning outcomes*
- APPENDIX B:** *Grade 4 English additional language learning outcomes for the learning outcome reading and viewing*
- APPENDIX C:** *Grade 4 Foundations for Learning reading milestones and assessment tasks*
- APPENDIX D:** *PIRLS 2006 teacher and school questionnaires*
- APPENDIX E:** *Opportunity-To-Learn questionnaire*
- APPENDIX F:** *Head of Department and teacher interview schedules*
- APPENDIX G:** *PIRLS 2006 school questionnaire data tables*
- APPENDIX H:** *Photographs of literacy resources at case study schools*
- APPENDIX I:** *PIRLS 2006 teacher questionnaire data tables*
- APPENDIX J:** *Data tables for factor analysis and significance testing of selected teacher questionnaire items*
- APPENDIX K:** *Reading comprehension texts and questions for classroom observation*
- APPENDIX L:** *Analysis of reading comprehension lessons observed*

SUMMARY

The influence of schooling conditions and teaching practices on curriculum implementation for Grade 4 reading literacy development

The findings of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006 highlighted concerns about support for and the quality of reading literacy teaching in South African primary schools. In South Africa there is a paucity of research outlining schooling conditions and teachers' reading literacy teaching practices especially in the Intermediate Phase. The aim of this mixed methods study was to explore schooling conditions and teaching practices for the implementation of the curriculum for Grade 4 learners' reading literacy development across a range of education contexts.

Two research sub-questions explored in two research phases were used to investigate the overall question which was: *What influence do schooling conditions and teaching practices have on curriculum implementation for Grade 4 reading literacy?* In phase one, PIRLS 2006 principal and teacher questionnaire data were re-classified for secondary analysis according to language of instruction (English First Language or English Additional Language) and the mean performance of each participating class of learners on the PIRLS 2006 international benchmarks and further benchmarks established to reflect the performance of the majority of South African learners. Response distributions on selected classroom level variables detailing teacher characteristics and reading literacy teaching practices as well as selected school level variables describing teaching conditions impacting the teaching of reading literacy were compared across each reclassified benchmark sub-sample. In phase two, six school and teacher case studies were purposively selected from each of the sub-samples to complement and extend the findings from the analysis of the survey data using multiple qualitative data sources.

The findings revealed that differences in schooling conditions and teaching practices across the PIRLS achievement spectrum were generally aligned to differences between advantaged, high achieving schools and disadvantaged low-achieving schools. Thus, the study provides insights into the high levels of between-school inequalities for the

development of Grade 4 reading literacy and school and classroom level reasons for such inequalities. On the basis of the findings, recommendations for policy, teacher practice and teacher education, and further research are provided.

Key words:

- *the Progress in International Reading Literacy study (PIRLS) 2006*
- *partially mixed equal status mixed methods research design*
- *Grade 4*
- *Intermediate Phase*
- *reading literacy*
- *schooling conditions*
- *teaching practices*
- *curriculum implementation*
- *English First Language learners*
- *English Additional Language learners*

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