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An exploration of alignment of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) with the Annual National Assessment (ANA) :how curriculum and assessment are translated into pedagogy

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Abstract

South Africa is a country that spends the majority of its national budget on its education system. With South African learners underachieving on internationally benchmarked tests for numeracy, literacy and science, it is clear that this spending on education has not translated into improved quality of education (Taylor, 2011). In a bid to diagnose the problems that plague the education system the South African government instated the Annual National Assessments (ANA). These assessments are standardised accountability assessments that are meant to indicate curriculum coverage deficiencies in schools. The ANAs have been met with wide resistance from teacher unions and education districts who cite technical flaws in the assessments. This study explores this claim by investigation the alignment properties between the grade 9 Annual National Assessment (ANA) English FAL test and the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The study also seeks to explore how alignment properties translate into pedagogical practices by using a focus group of teachers who talk about how the Annual National Assessment's alignment properties affect their classroom practice.