

**THE CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE  
FACING RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**Lorraine Veronica Marneweck**

# **THE CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE FACING RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Lorraine Veronica Marneweck

1 November 2004

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the challenges a particular group of rural primary school teachers experienced as they implemented a national outcomes-based curriculum through the support of an external agent. It uses Fairclough's (1991) model of critical discourse analysis and his theory of critical language study as a framework to explore the discourses and practices of this group of South African teachers. Methodologically, this thesis is located in the qualitative paradigm, and uses interviews and observations to systematically probe teachers' understandings of curriculum and change.

Three themes are developed in this thesis. First, the theme of teacher collaboration is presented as a new social practice that the teachers creatively took up during a school development project. It shows that while social and institutional process determined the nature of the project as a social practice, at a situational level, the teachers played a much more determinative role as they shaped the project and its practices in several intriguing ways. Second, the curriculum roles that were discursively produced by the teachers as they struggled to transform their practice from isolation to collaboration are revealed. This demonstrates that while many of these roles were common to all schools, the role of the teacher as leader emerged in only two of the schools. And third, through analysing the lessons taught by this group of teachers in their classrooms, the tacit knowledge of pedagogy and content on which their practice was based is made explicit. These themes provide opportunities for certain common sense assumptions about teacher collaboration, leadership, learning and practice to be interrogated in terms of their applicability to the schools in the project.

The thesis concludes with a discussion of the possibilities that still exist for teacher educators to enhance understanding of what happens inside traditional rural schools.



## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love, to Alan, David and Steven.

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>COLP</b>	Culture of Learning Programme
<b>DET</b>	Department of Education and Training
<b>EMS</b>	Economic and Management Sciences
<b>FDE</b>	Further Diploma in Education
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training Band
<b>GET</b>	General Education and Training Band
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Department
<b>HSS</b>	Human and Social Sciences
<b>IS</b>	Integrated Studies
<b>MEC</b>	Minister of the Executive Council
<b>MR</b>	Member's Resources
<b>NUDIST</b>	Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising
<b>OBE</b>	Outcomes-based education
<b>PEI</b>	President's Education Initiative
<b>QRLS</b>	Queensland Reform Longitudinal Study
<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Programme
<b>SASA</b>	South African Schools Act
<b>SHC</b>	Sacred Heart College
<b>SHC R&amp;D</b>	Sacred Heart Research and Development
<b>TED</b>	Transvaal Education Department
<b>TLC</b>	Transitional Local Council
<b>VVOB</b>	Flemish Office for International Co-operation and Technical Assistance
<b>WSD</b>	Whole School Development
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development