

**DETERMINANTS OF PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH FIRST
ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN THE FET PHASE OF GRADE 12
LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN VHEMBE
DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the subject of English, Department of English, School of Human and Social and Human Sciences.

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Submitted : May 2017

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Abstract

The generally inadequate performance of Grade 12 learners in the national matric examinations has drawn attention to a number of issues, among which are the determinants of linguistic success. Studies on learner performance have focused on various factors; this study focuses on external factors that influence the performance of Grade 12 learners in English First Additional Language in Vhembe District. The competence and performance of learners in English language are a function of many factors such as the characteristics of English in the curriculum, teacher qualification and teaching style, school resources, second language learners, as well as factors external to the school. Grade 12 performance in English language is reported to be inadequate. The assumption of this research is that the factors internal to the classroom such as the curriculum, teacher qualification, and resources influence learner performance positively or negatively. This is confirmed by the available literature on language teaching and learning. Ideas from the Socio-cultural theory and the Input hypothesis underpin this study and help in understanding the role of teachers, curriculum and resources in literacy learning. A qualitative case study design, using a mixed method approach of a questionnaire, interview and document analysis, was used in this study. The population of the study comprises the FET teachers of English First Additional Language in Vhembe District, and using purposive sampling, teachers from ten schools (five performing and five less-performing schools) were selected for this study. A questionnaire was administered to 30 teachers, and, for practical purposes, a total of four teachers (from two performing and two less performing) in English First Additional Language were purposively sampled and interviewed to express their views about teachers, curriculum and resources. The data obtained from the questionnaire, and interviews and document analysis were presented and analysed using a thematic approach. The findings confirmed that teacher effects, curriculum and resources influenced learner performance. Recommendations for improved learner performance were made with the emphasis that the teacher is still a key player in the teaching and learning matrix. Concerted effort among the stakeholders: parents, teacher, learners and community is, therefore, imperative.

Key terms: literacy, second language, language teaching and learning, determinants of performance, curriculum, teacher and resource effects.