

Impediments To the Use of ICT in Intermediate Phase Language Classrooms: A Case of South African Township Schools

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Abstract

Language is a critical subject, and South African township learners have English and a home language as prescribed subjects, with English becoming the Language of Learning and Teaching for most. Research reports on the assessments aimed at determining reading and comprehension levels among intermediate phase learners in South Africa, have consistently reported on poor reading and comprehension levels. There have been suggestions that technology can mitigate reading and comprehension challenges in language classrooms. In response to that suggestion, the current interpretive project seeks to equip the township intermediate phase language teachers with the requisite skills, for them to be able to factor in ICT in their reading lessons. This ongoing project, which is conducted in line with Participatory Action Research, and premised on the theory of connectivism, confirmed that many intermediate phase language teachers do not possess adequate ICT skills, making it difficult to infuse technology in their classrooms. Furthermore, many schools do not have the necessary ICT tools, while in some schools the ICT tools and associated software are outdated. Schools also have challenges about electricity and internet access. The opportunities associated with the use of ICT may not be enjoyed if the status quo remain, hence the project capacitate participants with the ability to infuse ICT in language classrooms, and on to circumvent impediments mentioned.

Keywords: Comprehension; ICT, intermediate, language, reading