

Issues in Communicating Mathematically in Rural Classrooms in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This study is about the concerns emanating from the strategies and the teaching skills teachers in rural schools possess and how they communicate these skills mathematically in the classroom in South Africa. The study was a generic qualitative research which was carried out in four provinces involving 240 schools in rural South Africa. Using teacher observations it sought to interrogate how mathematics is communicated in rural classrooms as well as how teachers ensure that learners acquire both procedural and conceptual understanding of the mathematics exposed to them. The findings were that most of mathematics is communicated in vernacular, teachers have difficulties providing correct definitions of mathematical concepts in vernacular and the communication is predominantly teachers centred. The assessment tasks set by teachers in class were relatively below the standards that engaged children in higher order and critical thinking. There was also very little time set for learners on mathematical tasks