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*University of Notre Dame Australia*

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Publication Details

Pereira, M. D. (2006). The Effectiveness of a Literature-Driven English Programme in Improving the English Language Skills of Secondary One Students in Singapore (Doctor of Education (Ded) article). University of Notre Dame Australia.  
<http://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/5>

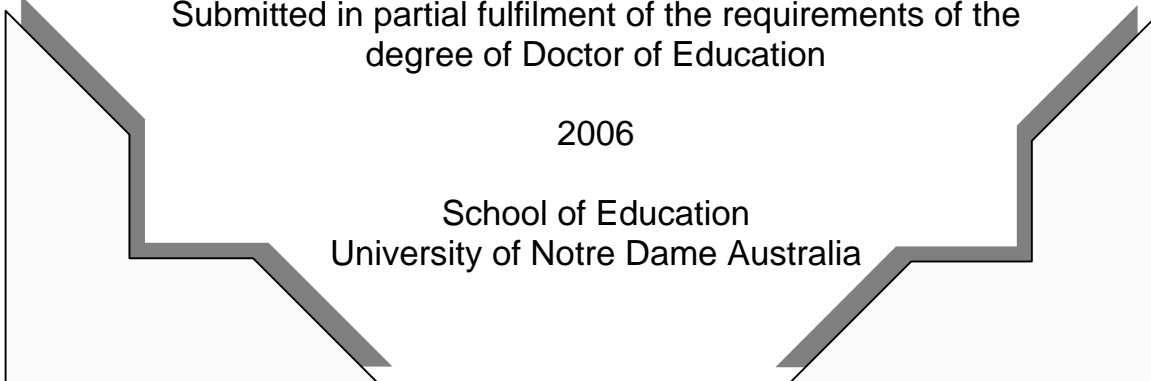
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**The Effectiveness of a Literature-Driven  
English Programme in Improving the  
English Language Skills of Secondary  
One Students in Singapore**

**Mary Delfin Pereira**



Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
degree of Doctor of Education

2006

School of Education  
University of Notre Dame Australia

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the research was to discover whether an integrated Literature and English curriculum would be effective in enhancing the English language skills of students in schools. The curriculum initiative project was conducted as multiple site case studies in four secondary schools in Singapore over a span of five to six weeks during 2004. These schools included a girls' only school, a boys' only school and two co-educational schools. These schools were also of different types: independent, government-aided and government schools. The sample within and across the schools provided: different levels of performance in a graded situation; multiple teachers and classes; and control and experimental conditions for the curriculum implementation. Thus, the curriculum was tested in naturalistic conditions with all the variables of an operational education setting.

The experimental curriculum was a Literature-Driven English Curriculum which was adapted to suit the local circumstances of each school. Though the curriculum utilised a literature text as a tool to teach language skills, it did not require a specific text. Therefore, the lesson duration and textual material were adapted according to the requirements of each school. The multiple site case studies were selected to test if the Literature-Driven English Programme could be an effective means of equipping diverse students with relevant skills to write a piece of narrative and to comprehend a given text. The teaching methods included explicit and implicit modes of teaching.

In the analysis of the findings, it was found that the Literature-Driven English Programme was effective in improving the narrative writing and reading comprehension skills of students across a wide range of variables. It is anticipated that these findings would inform a wider use of a Literature-Driven English Curriculum.

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## Declaration of Authorship

This thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other institution.

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Selfe". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line. A vertical red line is drawn to the right of the signature, extending from the top of the signature down to the horizontal line.

Candidate's Name

12/10/06

Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am indebted to many individuals and institutions without whose help I would not have completed this thesis.

First and foremost, I thank my supervisor, Professor Roger Vallance for his invaluable guidance and assistance. He has been a friend and mentor who has been very supportive and from whom I have learnt much.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the following individuals:

- Prof. Don Watts and Dr Helen Middleton who have always been very generous with their time, advice and assistance;
- Fr Greg Watson, Chaplain at University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA), who along with Prof. Vallance, my friends and family helped me cope with the sudden demise of fellow postgraduate student and friend, Regina Gitau;
- Prof. Tony Ryan for his assistance, including his very useful feedback on parts of my thesis;
- The respondees to my proposal, A/P Richard Berlach and Dr Newhouse-Maiden from Edith Cowan University for providing valuable feedback on the proposal;
- From the School of Education, Prof. Michael O'Neill for kindly agreeing to review my Literature Review. I thank him also for soliciting feedback on my behalf from the Assistant Provost, A/P Susan van Leeuwen and Prof. Tony Ryan. I would also like to specially thank Mrs Helen Budge for kindly agreeing to review my lesson outline and for taking time to go through it with me before my field research. I am also grateful to Mrs Claire Donaldson, secretary at the College of Education, for her assistance;
- The Research Committee of the School of Education, consisting of Prof. Michael O'Neill, Prof. Tony Ryan, A/P Richard Berlach, A/P Maureen Mears, and Dr Carole Steketee, as well as A/P Susan van Leeuwen for their valuable feedback;
- Prof. Jennifer Nichol for her assistance, especially for her feedback on the Literature Review during the composing of the proposal;
- Dr Caroline Mansfield from Murdoch University for her assistance during the conceptualisation of the research proposal; and
- Dr Jo Vogel, for editing two of the chapters and my father, Mr Benjamin Pereira for proof-reading the thesis.

I would like to express my appreciation to the following institutions:

- The Commonwealth Government and UNDA for granting me the IPRS;
- The Ministry of Education in Singapore for granting me permission to conduct research in Singapore;
- The schools and the teachers and students in the four participating schools for willingly taking on board the research project and generously agreeing to devote time and energy to the project; and
- The School of Education and UNDA for allowing me the use of the facilities.

Next, I remember with gratitude my friends Beatrice, Sophie, Martin, Budi and especially the late Regina, from whose friendship and academic knowledge I had gained much. Last but not least, I acknowledge my extended family for being supportive, helpful and encouraging.

I thank those mentioned above and other friends and acquaintances for making this research journey smooth and enriching.

