

# Primary School Teachers' Instructional Competences in Teaching Integrated Social Studies Subject in Rungwe District, Tanzania

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## Abstract

*This study is designed to examine primary school teachers understanding of integrated Social Studies subject and how they negotiate content and pedagogy in the in actual classroom situation. A qualitative case study research design, guided by an interpretive research paradigm, was employed in order to get an in-depth understanding of the integrated Social Studies subject implementation process. Data were gathered through interview, review of curricular and policy and classroom observations. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic open coding. The study reveals that, teachers' instructional practices contradicted their understanding of integrated Social Studies subject teaching that emphasises invisible pedagogic practices, which leave pupils passive recipients of knowledge. The study recommends that primary school teachers need to be accorded with contextual cues to explain integrated Social Studies subject successfully.*

**Keywords:** instructional competences, social studies, teachers' understanding,

## Introduction

The teaching of Social Studies as an integrated subject in primary schools has been evolving globally, regionally, and at national level including in Tanzania. Historically countries like British, Germany and Australia have implemented integrated Social Studies subject in school. Although the goal has been the same, the approaches adopted to integrate and teach the subject have differed between individual continents and countries as a result of differences in historical backgrounds of education systems and characteristics of Social Studies teachers (Adeyemi, 2016). The teaching of integrated Social Studies subject was favoured due to the claim that it has significance in improving pupils' acquisition of necessary integrated content knowledge and skills suitable for their environment and culture ( Sivakuma,

2018) critical thinking and problem solving (Sahin, Akbasli, & Yelken, 2010) and understanding of interactions in the world they live in. Hence producing competent pupils who are more competent as per society's needs (Sivakuma, 2018). The teaching of integrated Social Studies subject was successful in most of the European countries specifically, in producing competent graduates (Adeyemi, 2016). Due to success of integrated Social Studies teaching in America and Europe, in the year 1960s African countries including Tanzania under the international organization example (African Social Studies Program [ASSP]) adopted it and shaped forces in curriculum reforms in Africa. The curriculum reforms stressed two major things (i) the need of changing school curricula to integrate the concepts and orientation of all social science subjects and humanities (ii) changing the teaching-learning process into more learner-centered approaches (Meziobi & Meziobi, 2016). Due to the fact that, an integrated Social studies subject involves some changes in pedagogy, which include instructional and assessment approaches in order to incorporate outcome based learning rather than a theoretical understanding of concepts (content-based curriculum) as addressed by (ASSP) (Meziobi & Meziobi, 2016). Teachers need to implement integrated Social Studies subject with great care to achieve the intended aims of the curricula. Malik (2018) claims that the successful implementation of educational change always depends on the extent to which teachers are prepared to implement the change. Having highlighted the education (and curriculum) policy context at the international ground, let us now turn the focus to a more concrete ground at a national level – the Tanzanian context.

### **Curriculum changes and integration of Social Studies subject in Tanzania**

Tanzania, as one of the ASSP member-states, has responded to the global by integrating the Social Science subject in the primary school curriculum (Kopweh, 2014) based on the argument that teaching the subjects separately in primary schools failed to produce pupils with adequate qualities to meet the education goal of self-reliance and Tanzania Vision of 2025 (Ministry of Education Science and Technology [MoEST], 2016). According to MoEST (2016) it was expected that the gap would be reduced by the introduction of integrated Social Studies subject in primary school education. Although the integration has been adopted, very few teachers receive orientation on the changes made, which consequently makes it difficult for them to connect and explore information across topics (Kopweh, 2014). Further, Fullan (2005) highlighted the absence of a known standard of knowledge and instructional competencies needed by teachers; allowing for the misconception that any smart person can teach. As a result, in 2006 the Ministry of Education and Culture of the United Republic of Tanzania updated the contents

and number of subjects in primary school education curriculum (MoEVT, 2006) which previously, overloading teachers with subjects was one of the issues that affected the level of competency of primary school teachers and made learning more difficult for pupils as most teachers lacked the knowledge or ability needed to teach all the subjects assigned to them.

In 2014 the revised ETP excluded Civics subject from integrated Social Studies curriculum forming integration of only History and Geography (MoEST, 2016; MoEVT, 2014) where teachers' were advised to use social constructivism theory that incorporates methods that encourage the use of learner-centered instructions. The introduction of Social Studies subject in primary schools targets for development of pupils tomorrow's citizen, and understanding attributes that are necessary for society at a large. In this regard, the teaching of Social Studies subject can be done only by competent teachers due to the fact that Social Studies curriculum involves some changes in content, teaching and learning pedagogy, materials and assessment approaches. Despite the fact that Social Studies curriculum has been reformed about six years since its inception in primary schools in Tanzania, since inception of Social Studies curriculum little attention has been paid to supporting Social Studies teachers in terms of professional development. More emphasizes has been put on science subject. Studies by Nzilano (2015), and Namamba and Rao (2017), which targeted Tanzania's teachers, training colleges revealed that Social Studies subject remained taught as a single subject rather than an integrated one. Based on these studies, tutors seem to struggle when conceptualizing Social Studies subject concepts while teaching student teachers. This directly puts into question the integrative knowledge and skills that primary school teachers acquire from their training and their eventual application in teaching. Unfortunately, the studies did not measure the Social Studies instructional competencies of primary school teachers that went through the aforementioned experience in the colleges studies. As such, the adequacy of Social Studies teaching competencies of teachers' and how well the subject is taught in Tanzania's primary schools continue to be uncertainties. Thus, there was a need to conduct the study that aimed to accomplish the following aim by investigating primary school teachers' instructional competencies in the teaching Social Studies subject in Rungwe district, Tanzania to bridge the knowledge gap. To achieve the intended purpose, this study is guided by the following research question: How do primary school teachers negotiate pedagogy instructions in teaching of Social Studies subject.

## **Related Literature Review**

This section reviews the contribution of other studies on the issues of teachers' competencies in the teaching of Social Studies subject. To achieve this, a review of relevant literature discussing the teaching and learning approaches relevant for Social Studies is presented.

The main aim of having a competent teacher is to make teaching and pupils' learning effective. To ensure this, teachers need a profound understanding of learning theories that describe how teaching and learning can be made effective to foster pupils 'learning (An, 2017). Thus, studying primary school teachers' instructional competencies in Tanzania is based on promoting and developing self-reliance education. As such, policies require primary school teachers' constructivism theory as focus on integrative principles guided by problem-solving, interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approaches, use of pupils' environment, and practical active teaching (MoEVT, 2014; MoEST, 2016). Integrative and active teaching enables pupils to construct their own knowledge from their respective social cultural experiences, and historical and geographical environments (Di Biase, 2019). This is the emphasis of Social Constructivism theory (Vygotsky, 1978). The theory suggests that individuals with teaching competencies consider pupils interests, environments, and meaningful interactions as opposed to cat and rat relationship (Freire, 1971). The major aspect that holds the study is the way in which the primary school teachers are aware that they are demonstrating integrated Social Studies subject and they need to know what is emphasised in it. This includes awareness and understanding on integrative Social Studies subject objectives and suggested teaching methods, teaching and learning materials as well as assessment methods. Kanyonga, Mtana, and Wendt (2019) argue that for any new or changed curriculum, the awareness and understanding depends on teachers' competences in order to enlighten them about the changes made. This was supported by Bakah, Voogt and Pieters (2012) who argue that regular training for teachers is very important since it enables them to acquire competence teaching knowledge and skills to effectively implement the curriculum, which in this context is the integrated Social Studies subject. Kitta and Tilya (2010) clarify that, in more general terms, competence is regarded as the integrated abilities required to cope with complex tasks. In general, the concept of competence centres on the ability to do, which, in turn, focuses attention on the attributes that comprise this ability. Therefore in this study focused on investigating knowledge and skills in three major areas: teachers' " knowledge and skills in teaching methods, selecting and using teaching and learning materials as well as in assessment during teaching and learning.

## Teachers' knowledge of the methods and skills of teaching integrated Social Studies subject

Teachers need to be aware of the process of selecting suitable teaching methods that match with the contents to be taught or skills that need to be developed among pupils during the process of teaching and learning. The methods that teacher need to select should foster the acquisition of knowledge, skills, understanding and wider attributes for pupils as these are addressed in the curriculum and Social studies syllabus as teachers are usually needed to use learner-centred teaching methods due to the fact that a Social Studies subject is learner-centred (MoEST, 2016; TIE, 2013). Although sometimes teachers can “use both the teacher-centred and the learner-centred approaches, the emphasis is more on the learner-centred approaches” (Di Biase, 2019). Therefore, teachers need to have knowledge and skills of using well learner-centred methods rather than teacher-centred methods. Learner-centred teaching methods include but are not limited to scaffolding, small group discussions, problem-solving, demonstration, question and answer, presentation to peers, mind discovery learning, projects, visits or field trips, and role plays (Kissling & Bell, 2020). Prasetya, Segara & Imron (2020) revealed that a teacher that is rich in integrative methods must be well versed in the use of a variety of teaching methods and strategies besides the possession of adequate knowledge in several disciplines. It means that, teachers should be knowledgeable about various disciplines and employ varieties of methods by involving pupils to cause a change in the behaviour. Conversely, if a teacher is not competent in the content area, integrated lessons will primarily present one subject area and the other will play a minor role in the lesson (Shifflet & Hunt, 2019).

The findings are similar to those by Dowden, Fogarty-Perry (2017) which advocates for the use of individual skills. Teachers that highly use learner-centred pedagogy should be more adept at developing pupils Social Studies meaningful knowledge. However, Mtitu (2014) and Nzima (2016) note a typical pedagogy which is rooted within teachers and students' culture, in which a formalistic, teacher-centred pedagogy has historically and traditionally been a norm. In the case of Tanzania, elders were historically believed and respected to be the source of knowledge and wisdom. Traditional education, therefore, developed authoritative power and autonomous behaviours amongst teachers and led to inferiority complexes among students. These things may directly or indirectly affect the successful teaching of the Social Studies subject. Stockyard, Wood, Coughlin, & Rasplika Khoury (2018) analysed teachers' effectiveness in Social Studies and pointed out ten general principles found to be important in teaching and subject effectively. These include:

- i. Clarity of presentation,
- ii. Variety in strategies and activities used,

- iii. Staying on tas
- iv. Engaging student's activities in learning processes without disruptions,
- v. Providing clear structure in teaching,
- vi. Engaging students in cognitive development,
- vii. Expanding upon the knowledge base students' have,
- viii. Promoting and building upon student self-confidence,
- ix. Students participation,
- x. Techer enthusiasm of the subject matter being taught.

### **Teachers' knowledge of selecting and using teaching and learning materials**

Heafner (2018) posited that instructional materials promote teachers' efficiency and help pupils to actively participate in a lesson. Teachers in Social Studies should be innovative and creative by developing their own teaching materials linked to their practice (MoEST, 2016). Thus, Social Studies teachers need to use teaching and learning materials that make learning more permanent, facilitate registration of a high degree of interest among pupils, and provide experience as opposed to chalk-and-talk method (Heafner, 2018)). Study by Altinyelken (2011) stressed that poor conditions and insufficient knowledge of material provided can limit the performance of learners and even the competent teacher practice.

A study by Saglam (2011) titled "An investigation on teaching materials used in Social Studies lesson in Turkey" noted that out of 145 subjects, 126 (87.1%) indicated that they used modules and books to teach Social Studies for tests and examination preparation. Also, Bittman, Russell, Kenna, Beckles and van Zandt (2017), in the study titled, "The state of Social Studies Teacher Preparation in the United States" revealed that most (64%) Social Studies teachers faced difficulties in teaching while using relevant teaching Social Studies aids; they used textbooks of their own interests to teach. These reflections verified that teachers' use of teaching materials to enhance collaboration, reflection, building on pupils' prior knowledge, and promotion of activities that allow pupils to master Social Studies knowledge is questionable. However, with the curriculum, the responsibility of providing teaching materials is left to schools (MoEVT, 2014; MoEST, 2016).

### **Teachers' knowledge and skills of assessment**

Teachers need to have sound knowledge and skills on the assessment and evaluation methods due to the fact that, it is the one that provides assurance of the validity of all the processes conducted in the implementation stage. Thus, assessment,



which checks a wider range of skills, knowledge, understanding and competencies combined together to successfully complete practical workplace tasks is needed to be applied by teachers (Kitta and Tilya, 2010). Desimone and Pak (2017) argue that the choice of methods should be guided by a criterion implying which method is more capable of assessing competence holistically, e.g. one that combines theory and practice. Since formative assessment is essential and important, a complete record of competence development should be recorded for each learner (Huck, 2019). A study conducted by Poznanski, Hart, and Cramer (2018) provides evidence of teachers' capability to apply instructional assessment in classes with the purpose of developing prior knowledge, academic knowledge, and lifelong learning. The researchers used social constructivism inspired instructions to effectively develop pupils' literacy skills. Their findings revealed that more than three-quarters of the participating pupils were unfamiliar with learning tasks. Surprisingly, after teachers repeated lessons by involving them using social constructivist-inspired activity reflections, they saw a more positive change as pupils contributed to the development of meaning and successfully grasped the lessons. The most suggested useful assessment approach in Social Studies is that which checks a wider range of knowledge and skills of learners in a bid to grasp multiple practices in society. A study by Saweyer (2018) assessed the relationship between primary school Social Studies teachers' knowledge of the purpose and the aim of education in New Juaben Municipality in Eastern Region of Ghana. The study used a sample size of fifty-five (55) primary school teachers. The study found that there was a strong tendency of teachers to use teacher-centred assessment approaches when conducting formative assessment. In other words, teachers ought to know different phases of teaching and how assessment can be applied for pupils to learn effectively when content is presented in a particular manner and format. This is because assessment provides hope of the strength of all processes conducted in the teaching stages.

### **Research Methodology and the Scope of the Study**

This study employed qualitative research approach informed by the interpretive paradigm through the use of case study design. The use of case study was motivated by the fact that it allows for knowledge to be connected to the context, theories to be connected to practice, and abstractions to be connected to tangible experience (Cresswell, 2014; Sanga, 2016). Government teachers teaching Integrated Social Studies subject in Rungwe district council were selected as respondents of the study based on the following criteria: Firstly, specialization- This was found to be an important criterion to consider. Nywage (2007) reported a challenge that more than 90 percent of primary school teachers in the district teach subjects that they are not

specialised in (e.g. Social Studies, Mathematics and science or language). In the same line of thinking, Ibengwe (2013) reported that illiteracy cases among primary school pupils in Rungwe district were contributed by lack of teachers' pedagogical competencies in planning classroom teaching. Secondly, experience- This was an important criterion considered by the researcher. Purposive sampling was used to select Social Studies teachers in the six sampled primary schools focusing on who were teaching Social Studies subject in Standard III and had a minimum of two years of teaching experience. Hence they were assumed to be well resourced and having educational backgrounds and experiences from the disciplines of social and natural sciences who could provide relevant information to the study.

A semi-structured interview and classroom observation was employed as methods for data generation. Semi- structured interview format was considered suitable for this research because it allows the generation of rich qualitative data due to its flexibility, but is still focused and time-effective (Creswell, 2014). Classroom observation was preferred because it offered the possibility to follow the actual instructional strategies and the way the primary school teachers employed them, instead of depending on self-reported behaviour from the interviews alone. For the ethical issues, schools were named by letters from "A", to "F" while Teachers' names were given letter from "TA" to "TF". Teacher's names are referred to by a combination of school letter, such as "TA" for teacher school "A."

Data from interviews were subjected to thematic analysis. Data from classroom observation were analysed by content analysis method. Thematic analysis method was preferred due to its flexibility in the sense that it allowed both deductive and inductive approaches, as is the case in content analysis when searching for themes (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). To achieve a complete understanding, the hermeneutic methods which denote a back and forth movement between data and which involve understanding of the phenomenon (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) were considered. To ensure that the interpretation was consistent with the data to make the data comprehensive in more abstract patterns, techniques such as repeated reading of the data terms, noting patterns, making comparisons, making conceptual theoretical coherence, and inter-subjective agreement (e.g., involving colleagues to check and comment on categories generated against data) were used.

## **Study Findings**

Classroom observations, interviews and the analysis of the teachers lesson plans, schemes of work were used as sources of data which helped the researcher to understand teachers previous and current instructional practices. The study



focused on teachers' knowledge and skills of doing the following teaching and learning activities, which fall under three major thematic areas: use of instructional methods/ strategies; use of teaching and learning materials and assessing pupils during classroom learning.

### **Primary School Teachers' Knowledge of Instructional Strategies when Teaching Social Studies subject**

Finding from the interview in all six (6) primary schools revealed that Social Studies teachers used a combination of strategies in the T/L Social Studies subject. Commonly used strategies were: questions and answers, group discussion and lectures. The majority of the teachers reported that they used lectures as the main method supplemented by questions and answers, and group discussions. However, only a partial understanding of applying these methods was realised as some teachers considered their lectures as 'participatory lectures', because they allowed as much interaction as possible through questions and answers. Using this type of lectures, the Social Studies teachers considered themselves to have been employing participatory methods, too, though of low quality, as one of the TC in School C commented: "I call these lectures participatory because it allows some interaction between pupils and myself through things like questions and answers..."

Classroom observations data revealed similar findings; there was an overall predominance of lecture-dominated instructions. Most lessons were characterised by Social Studies teachers -fronted interactions made up of explanations, questions and answers, and the use of the blackboard, which dominated most of the instructional time. The detailed findings of Social Studies teachers TA, TB, TC, TD, TE and TF in classroom practices are summarized in Table 4.1.1

Table 1: *The Sample Summary of Classroom Observations*

Stages	Teacher	Topic	T/L strategies used	Researcher's comments
Introduction of the lesson	TA	To conserve the school environments	TA asked questions about the previous topic. E.g. did you understand the previous lesson?	Most of the questions demand chorus answers and were not focused to understand actual pupils' knowledge. Questions did not allow the teacher to know who was wrong or right.
	TB	Exploring understanding school environments	TB mentioned names of four pupils to remind them about the previous topic.	TB lacked knowledge and techniques to involve all pupils in the lesson.
	TC	Clean schedules	TC wrote a topic on the chalkboard and then asked pupils to define concepts of the title.	TC used questions that could not require pupils to participate or interact with the lesson.
	TD	School environments	Asked questions about the previous topic.	The questions demanded chorus answers but did not allow pupils to challenge or question.
	TE	School environments cleaning schedules.	Asked questions about the previous topic.	Pupils answered the questions but were not allowed to challenge or question.
	TF	School environments	Introduced the lesson by asking pupils to define concepts.	Answered the questions but pupils were not allowed to ask questions or challenge.

Development of the new knowledge	TA	School environments	TA started with writing the topic then, continued with oral explanations after had written the topic.	Not all pupils answered questions or asked questions.
	TB	Exploring and the understanding school environments.	TB used lecture strategies. E.g. TB. Explained steps of planting flowers.	Pupils were passively involved to explore the school environments.
	TC	Cleaning schedules.	Questions and answers and lecture methods.	T/L processes did not lead to discovery.
	TD	School environments.	TD started with a lecture and then used follow up questions.	The methods did not help the pupils towards creativity and discovery.
	TE	School environments cleaning schedules.	TE started with lecture, questions and answers.	The strategies used did not lead the pupils to challenge.
	TF	School environments.	Started with lecture methods explaining “things that constitute school environment”	These questions couldn't lead pupils to construct their meanings as per the topic.

Application of constructed knowledge	TA	School environments.	TA asked pupils questions. E.g. Who can tell us about things constituting school environments?	Pupils failed to engage in the questions and answers sessions.
	TB	Exploring and the understanding school environments.	TB employed oral questions. E.g. Who can mention stages of planting flowers	Little collaboration during questions and answers, and discussions.
	TC	Cleaning schedules.	TD asked questions. E.g. Can you define the term cleanliness?	Pupils were not engaged in collaborative questions and answers, and discussions.
	TD	School environments.	TD employed oral questions. E.g. who can mention examples of school environments?	TD questions were based on the topic taught not pupils real- life practices, knowledge, skills, observations and experiences.
	TE	School environments cleaning schedules.	TE employed oral questions. E.g. who can try to mention the importance of cleaning environments?	Little collaborative learning and pupils were not allowed to ask questions.
	TF	School environments.	TF advised the importance of the lesson.	Not connected to pupils' real-life knowledge, skills, observations and experiences.

Concluding the lesson	TA	School environments.	Asked many questions that were related to the summarization of the lesson and advised pupils to complete writing some notes. E.g. Any questions before I give you an exercise?	Emphasized to do not to understand the lesson contents and relate to pupils' knowledge and experiences.
	TB	Exploring and the understanding school environments.	TB revised the topic through questions. E.g. Is there anyone with doubt in the mentioned examples?	Pupils were restricted to finishing the topics and not to the contextual understanding of the pupils.
	TC	Cleaning schedules.	Wrote two questions on the chalkboard for pupils' exercise.	Pupils' exercises were restricted to their schools and not contextual environments at their homes.
	TD	School environments.	Provided pupils with exercises.	The exercises restricted pupils to the topics and not to the contextual understanding of the pupils over their school environments.
	TE	School environments cleaning schedules.	Teacher-directed pupils to copy down some notes.	The exercises were restricted to the completion of the topics and not to the contextual understanding of the pupils.
	TF	S c h o o l environments	The teacher provided exercise found in the pupils' textbooks.	Emphasized to do not to understand.

Source: Field Data, 2019.

As can be seen from Table 1, there were almost similar features in terms of teaching strategies. Nevertheless, data reveal that, although the lessons contained similar features in terms of teaching strategies, there were some differences in the way the Social Studies teachers unfolded the lessons and used such dominant practices. The following few examples illustrate this point. At school C in the lessons conducted by teacher TC, use of the blackboard to provide illustrations took up nearly the whole period. Teacher TC began the lesson by writing the sub-topic. Later on the teacher asked the pupils, “Pupils remained silent”. TC continued writing the meaning of the word ‘cleanliness’ and examples of school cleanliness rules on the board. See Figure 1 for more insights.



Figure 1: *Teacher Writing some Rules about School Cleanliness*

The findings show that the teachers had no other strategies that could enable the pupils to identify specific concepts and ideas of the lessons. The lesson was occupied by talking and writing with facts which encouraged memorization of Social Studies concept rather than the building of new learning through pupils' prior knowledge. In this case, Social Studies teachers play the role of directing everything in their classes and pupils have to abide to the teachers' superior orders.

The lesson development stage, for example, did not materialise noticeably in the sessions of this teacher. Teacher TA, on the other hand, mainly employed group discussions as well as questions and answers as the main methods and lectures as a supplementary method. But some of the groups constituted an unequal number of pupils without group leaders, guiding questions for the discussions and follow-ups to understand groups which had completed the assignments. This ignores the



essence of group discussions, which help to create pupils' motivations to acquire skills, knowledge, experiences, attitude and behaviours.

Therefore, the findings indicate that Social Studies teachers had not yet embraced the holistic strategies to teaching and learning processes as required by Social Studies curriculum, syllabus and the use of a variety of active learning methods and knowledge sources in the cultural context. This is contrary to MOEST (2016) which suggests Social Studies teachers to use holistic teaching strategies in which various aspects of Social Studies subject are to be understood in an integrative way.

### **The use of T/L Materials to Support Teaching of Social Studies**

With respect to the instructional materials, findings revealed different experiences between what was reported and what was actually observed in the classrooms. Interview data revealed Social Studies teachers saying the right thing and doing the wrong thing as teacher TB from school B stated:

T/L materials enable pupils to produce their thinking. Unfortunately, we don't use them effectively to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. However, the new Social Studies syllabus standard III-VI curriculum hasn't enough information for the teachers to use teaching and learning materials. What we do is to get the topics from the syllabus and go back to the old textbooks to get more information.

The findings indicate that new Social Studies syllabus did not recommend any T/L materials. It is noted that the syllabus, text and reference books were inconsistent with the Social Studies curriculum, syllabus and T/L materials were inadequate. Besides, very few Social Studies teachers attended them, making it difficult to organize the same to other Social Studies teachers. The time used for training (seven days) leaves a lot of questions to whether Social Studies teachers were really well equipped with the knowledge and skills of teaching Social Studies effectively. Teacher TE from school E in the interview said:

Some T/L materials are difficult to prepare. Also, the big problem is that there are no enough Social Studies books here ... We have a few books to read and compare knowledge. Pupils depend on lecture notes from the teachers.

In classroom observations data revealed a slightly different experience. The common teaching-learning aids employed by the majority of the Social Studies teachers were reading books, blackboards and chalk. The detailed findings of Social Studies teachers TA, TB, TC, TD, TE and TF in classroom practices are summarized in Table 4.2.1

Table 2: T/L Materials Observed in Two Classrooms

Teacher	Subtopic	Lesson one	Lesson two
TA	School environments	TA used the book to read. Then wrote the things on the chalkboard and Pupils copied them.	TA. Used the book to read. Also, teacher TA copies exercise from the book for pupils to do.
TB	Exploring and the understanding school environments.	Teacher TB used the book to read and explain. Then allowed pupils to copy notes from the chalkboard	Teacher TB used the textbook to read. Then wrote notes on the chalkboard.
TC	Understanding the school environments	Teacher TC used a textbook to read the definitions and then “wrote on the Chalkboard and pupils copied them.	Teacher TC directed the pupils to read aloud the steps of cleaning toilets. Wrote questions on the chalkboard and pupils copied.

Teacher	Subtopic	Lesson one	Lesson two
TD	Cleaning schedules	Teacher TD used lesson notes to read “the importance of cleaning environments”. Then assigned pupils to find exercise from the textbook.	Teacher TD used the book to read. Then assigned the pupils to attempt questions from the textbook
TE	School environments	Teacher TE wrote on the board the “importance of cleaning environments”. Then assigned pupils to write notes from the chalkboard.	Teacher TE wrote stages in planting a tree on the chalkboard. Then assigned the pupils to take notes.
TF	School environments	Teacher TF wrote things that constitute school environments on the chalkboard and then assigned pupils to attempt Question, 1-6 from the textbook on page 18.	Teacher TF wrote the examples of grounds and then wrote an exercise of three questions on the chalkboard

Source: Field Data, 2019

Table 2 indicates that Social Studies teachers did not use suitable T/L materials which enable pupils to be actively engaged with challenging of their real environment. The findings reveal that Social Studies teachers had limited T/L materials during classroom teaching activities. This suggests that Social Studies teachers lack creativity to utilize their environments to impart the required competences as stipulated in the Social Studies Curriculum. It further suggests that Social Studies teachers were against Social Constructivism views which emphasize the utilization of local resources to make teaching simple and interactive.

### **Social Studies Teachers' Knowledge of Assessing Pupils Learning in the Classroom**

The results showed that the assessment practice in primary school is mostly theoretical, based on written or traditional paper and pencil work. Interview data revealed that Social Studies teachers were normally assessing pupils through questions and answers during and at the end of the T/L processes. This raised a concern that teachers did not allow pupils to comment on concepts, disagree or raise more questions about the lesson. Hence, the interactions between pupils and the lesson did not provide opportunities for teachers to evaluate the extent to which the lesson was whether clear to pupils or not. Teacher TB during interview with the researcher claimed:;-“I assess pupils during the process of teaching whereby I provide exercise on the contents covered”. (Interview response from TB)

Observations of practical work/activities were reported to have been rarely used; all the Social Studies teachers provided written assignments e in form of short home assignments. Assessment strategies frequently included oral questions in the classroom, home assignments and tests. In general, the findings indicate that in Tanzania Social Studies teachers seem to have limited instructional competences, pedagogies, experiences, knowledge, information and skills in teaching of Social Studies.

## **Discussion**

### **Teaching and learning methods**

During the class observations, the researcher observed that most of the teachers employed Freire's teaching model, which is also known as the banking model. The teachers teach their learners by talking to them and merely transferring knowledge, while the learners simply have to listen to them. Most teachers presented their

lessons while the learners were listening. In this research, it was noted that learners were not considered or asked to give their views about the lessons. This approach may be demotivating and may impact negatively on learning. Learners may be bored if they are not given a chance to participate in the lesson and teachers cannot assess whether or not they understand the lesson that was taught. This is contrary to the Social Studies Basic Education Curriculum (BEC)'s of 2016 expectations for standard III-VI. MoEST (2016) argues that teachers are advised to use a teaching and learning process that recognises young people as active rather than passive participants. An effective teaching and learning process is the one through which learners investigate, explore and express ideas and skills to apply to new situations. This study regards this approach as learner-centred because in the learner-centred approach learners are expected to be more involved in the lesson by exploring and expressing their ideas and providing their views about the lesson.

This led to the question of how the teachers follow up to ensure that learners have understood the content of the subject and the given task.

#### *Teaching and learning materials utilised*

According to the researcher's lesson observations, a Teacher in school A-F was using chalkboards and textbooks as their teaching materials for both lessons. The chalkboards were used for writing short summaries for the learners, which the learners merely copied and wrote in their books. In the first lesson presented by Teacher E, she allowed the learners to read together at the same time from the textbook. There was no additional material or proper explanation after the reading. After the reading session, the learners were only instructed to copy down the short summary on the chalkboard. It seemed to the researcher that Teacher E was not well prepared to teach that day. The wall and the notice board of these classrooms were empty; there were no teaching aids displayed to stimulate the learners to learn effectively. Furthermore, Social Studies teachers demonstrated that the T/L Social Studies has a limited T/L material against the demands of Social Constructivist Theory which demands environments rich in teaching resources. The findings agree with the studies by Kopweh (2014) which reported a similar situation that T/L materials in Tanzanian schools are insufficient. This is in contrast with the study by Okobia (2011) which stated that T/L materials are essential to ensure that the new curriculum and syllabus are well implemented. Similarly, in depth-learning occurs when pupils construct knowledge through T/L materials rather than quickly moving from topics to topics (Kopweh, 2014).

## **Knowledge and skills of assessment**

The results showed that the assessment practice in primary school is mostly theoretical based on written or traditional paper and pencil work. Primary school teachers mostly employed such strategies as oral questions during classroom instructions and written assignments in chalk board. The purpose of assessment should not simply end up in making judgment on how well the student, class or school is performing, but the process should rather be completed when the assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning (Kitta & Tilya, 2010). Moreover, Social Studies teacher background appeared to hinder the assessment and evaluation of the T/L processes. The findings revealed that Social Studies teachers did not have instructional competences for assessing and diagnosing pupils learning progress as recommended in the Social Studies curriculum. Social Studies curriculum requires teachers to act as facilitators, coaches and mentors of pupils learning through supervision according to the degree to which set of objectives are achieved by looking at activities done by pupils (Kopweh, 2014).

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, Social Studies teachers did not fully demonstrate the instructional competences required as recommended by Social Studies curriculum and various studies. This signified that Social Studies teachers were not competent enough to identify the important tasks to accomplish, examine alternative ways to accomplish the objectives, establish adequate resources to assist in achieving goals and assess the outcome of the plan to help pupils acquire the expected Social Studies competences. As a result, pupils had a limited opportunity to participate in instructional activities during the teaching and learning processes. Besides, Social Studies teachers failed to plan and prepare different learning activities through which pupils could construct new knowledge to acquire the expected subject competences. Social Studies teachers face various challenges such as shortage of teaching and learning materials and lack of preparation, which hindered their ability to demonstrate instructional competences which embrace learner-centred teaching methods.

It is thus recommended that professional development initiatives should be undertaken to support Social Studies teachers with instructional competences. There is a need for MoEST through TIE to ensure teachers are equipped with relevant pedagogical and content knowledge demonstrated in the curriculum to build teachers' pedagogical competences, creativity and interest.



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