Purpose of the Study

To shed light on how teachers were using scripted lesson plans in their classrooms to better understand the ways in which...

...the trainings and the materials were supporting teachers

...the trainings and materials could be refined.
Research Questions

What patterns do we see in the modifications teachers make as they implement the scripted lesson plans in Standards 1 and 2?

In what ways do these modifications support student learning?

In what ways do these modifications hinder student learning?

In what ways do teachers understand and explain the modifications they make?
Data Collection

Observations in 6 schools (low, medium, and high performing schools)
3 days of English and Chichewa Lessons- Standards 1 and 2

3 observers in each classroom, each with a different tool, looking at modifications through the lens of:

- Comparison to teachers’ guide
- Pacing
- Open-ended notes
- Modifications were triangulated at the end of each day

Interviews

17 teachers
Explanations of why teachers made some of the modifications noted
Analysis

886 modifications documented
Coded for patterns through iterative refinement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Modifications</th>
<th>Structural Modifications</th>
<th>Classroom Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
<td>I do</td>
<td>Energizers and songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omissions</td>
<td>We do</td>
<td>Changes to use of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipped activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Changes in time allotted to activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combinations</td>
<td>You do</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal assessments</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
**Methods — Analysis**

Also assigned a code of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help: Modifications that contributed to the objective of the activity</th>
<th>Hinder: Modifications that did not contribute to the objective of the activity</th>
<th>Neutral: Modifications that did not help or hinder the objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Overall Results

- **Classroom Management:**
  - Help: 48%
  - Hinder: 34%
  - Neutral: 18%

- **Structural Modifications:**
  - Help: 8%
  - Hinder: 16%
  - Neutral: 16%
Results by Language

- **Chichewa**
  - Classroom Management: 55%
  - Structural Modifications: 23%
  - Content: 22%

- **English**
  - Classroom Management: 49%
  - Structural Modifications: 22%
  - Content: 29%
Results by Grade

Standard 1
- Classroom Management: 21%
- Structural Modifications: 21%
- Content: 51%

Standard 2
- Classroom Management: 21%
- Structural Modifications: 24%
- Content: 55%
After the activity the teacher conducted a check for understanding by asking learners several times: “This letter is what?”

Provided understanding of learner progress
Results
Sample Content Modification That Contributed to Objective of Activity (Standard 2 Chichewa)
Results
Sample Content Modification That Did Not Contribute to Objective of Activity (Standard 1 Chichewa)

Unit 4, Lesson 3

Identifying letter sounds: Today we will learn a new letter sound. I will say a letter sound. Then I will say one word at a time. If the word begins with /t/, point your thumbs up. If the word does not begin with /t/, point your thumbs down.

Teacher
- The sound is /t/
- The first word is tuta. The word begins with /t/, so I put my thumb up.
- The next word is atate. Atate does not begin with /t/, so I point my thumb down.

Teacher and Learners
- Let's say /t/ together
- Learners and teacher say /t/
- Repeat with learners 2 or 3 times.
- Now I will say a word. If it begins with /t/ we point our thumbs up. If the word does not begin with /t/, we point our thumbs down.
- The first word is ena. (teacher and learners point thumbs down).
- Continue with other examples; timati, tuma

Learners
- Now you will say the letter sound on your own
- The letter sound is …
- Learners say /t/.
- Now I will say a word. If it begins with /t/ you point your thumbs up. If the word does not begin with /t/, you point your thumbs down.
- The first word is mutu. (learners point thumbs down).
- Continue with other examples; make, atate, tuma.
Results
Sample Structural Modification That Contributed to Objective of Activity (Standard 1 Chichewa)

Word segmentation
Now we will segment words into sounds. I will say a word and you will say its sounds.

Mphunzitsi
• The word is moto. I say its sounds /m/ /o/ /t/ /o/.

Mphunzitsi ndi Ophunzira
• Let's do it together.
• The word is dana. Teacher and learners say /d/ /a/ /n/ /a/.

• Continue with the following examples:
  ndodo, /nd/ /o/ /d/ /o/;
  doko, /d/ /o/ /k/ /o/.

Ophunzira
• I will say a word and you will say its sounds.
• The first word is ndani. /nd/ /a/ /n/ /i/.
  Continue with the following examples:
  onani, /o/ /n/ /a/ /n/ /n/ /i/;
  dana, /d/ /a-/ /n/ /a/;
  ona, /o/ /n/ /a/
Results
Sample Structural Modification That Did Not Contribute to Objective of Activity (Standard 2 English)

During the *We do* section, teacher and learners did not read together. Instead, the teacher asked learners to repeat after her, effectively taking away the scaffold for the *You do* section.
Classroom Management Modifications

Singing songs
Clapping

Call and response

Physical activities to redirect attention, mark transitions, build community, celebrate learning, and address low engagement

Impact on instructional time
Access and flow of materials
Results
Sample Neutral Modification — Changes to Use of Resources (Standard 2 English)
Teacher Explanations:

**Difficulty:** “The *You do* should be omitted in Standard 1 because it is too difficult for students to do on their own.”

**Inappropriate Content/Structure:** “Children should see the letter *h* in the context of a whole word.”

**Extra Practice:** “Students need extra practice.”

**Time:** “The learners were tired…reading comprehension should be a lesson on its own.”
## Results

### Teacher Explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tr>
<td>Too Difficult (n=31)</td>
<td>Teachers said they modified the lesson because either the content and/or the structure was too difficult for the students.</td>
<td>Teacher 11 (Standard 1, Chichewa, LP school) was teaching a lesson about segmenting words. She omitted the You do section, and explained that she thought the You do should be omitted in Standard 1 because it is too difficult for students to do on their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Content and/or Structure (n=40)</td>
<td>Teachers said they modified the lesson because the content and/or structure was either too easy, or somehow inappropriate or missing an element (e.g., a particular word was not aligned with the goal of the lesson, students should also be writing a letter in addition to reading it), there was a song that fit the goal of the lesson better than the one in the teacher’s guide or the content in two separate activities was better paired together than separated).</td>
<td>Teacher 14 (Standard 1, English, HP school) was teaching the activity “Naming Objects Beginning with the Letter h.” During the We do section, instead of asking two learners to come to the front of the classroom for questions and answers, the teacher called on various students to point to words on the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Practice (n=48)</td>
<td>Teachers said they modified the lesson because students needed extra practice. These modifications were in both content (e.g., adding extra words) and structure (asking multiple students to demonstrate), and included checking for understanding.</td>
<td>Teacher 1 (Standard 2 Chichewa, MP school) was teaching a lesson on reading words that begin with mf. The teacher added 5 words during the I do section, and explained that one example was not enough for students to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide Is a Suggestion (n=10)</td>
<td>Teachers stated that the teacher’s guide is only a suggestion and that teachers should modify the content as they see fit.</td>
<td>Teacher 6 (Standard 1, Chichewa, LP school) substituted words during an activity identifying words beginning with the letter f. The teacher explained that the guide is just a guide, and that they can use any words they want to as long as they are doing the intended activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results

#### Teacher Explanations

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<td>Redirect</td>
<td>Teachers said they needed to redirect student attention, often through a song or break.</td>
<td>Teacher 11 (Standard 1, Chichewa, LP school) had learners sing a song before Activity 7. The teacher explained that the learners were very tired at this point and needed a break.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Teachers said they modified use of a resource because it could not be used as stated in the teacher’s guide.</td>
<td>Teacher 8 (Standard 1, Chichewa, HP school). The learners were asked to review syllables. The teacher wrote the syllables on the board instead of having learners read them in their book. The teacher explained that the learners were getting confused with the book because they sit too close to each other and are distracted when they hear other learners reading out loud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Teachers said they modified an activity due to a lack of time.</td>
<td>Teacher 14 (Standard 1, Chichewa, HP school) skipped the comprehension activity, which was activity 12. She explained that the learners were tired, and that comprehension should be a lesson on its own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgot</td>
<td>Teachers said they forgot to do a particular part of the lesson.</td>
<td>Teacher 12 (Standard 2, English, LP school) omitted a word during the <em>I do</em> section. The teacher explained that he forgot the word.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Application of Research Findings: MERIT Teacher Guide

- Do a **quick visual check** of responses to get a quick glance of ability. For example, have learners put their thumbs up (positive response) or down to (negative response) respond to an item.

- In general, ask learners to **justify their responses**. Can they explain why they answered that way? If so, this suggests that they are genuinely understanding the concept rather than just repeating previous responses that they heard from you or their classmates or making random guesses.

Throughout each lesson, keep mental notes (or if you have time, jot them down on paper or a small card) about what parts of the lesson seem to work better than others, what the learners find easy and do well, and what they find difficult and struggle with. At the end of each day, write down these observations in response to the daily reflection prompt. When you are with other teachers you can swap strategies and help each other.
### Table 2. What to Look for in an Effective Lesson Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson delivery</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Using the I do, We do, You do Model

1. Did the presenter follow the I do?

2. Did the presenter follow the We do? (done in unison with the learners)?

3. Did the presenter follow the You do?

4. Did the presenter follow the sequence of every lesson activity? (not skipping activities)

   a. List 2 things the presenter did well during the implementation of the I do, We do, You do model:

   b. List 2 things the presenter can improve in the implementation of the I do, We do, You do model:
To a learner who usually does well:
The coach says enthusiastically, “Excellent effort! Think of a word that starts with the letter o. Draw a picture of the word. Then, look at the words on the wall and see what words have the letter o.”

To a learner who struggles:
The coach says enthusiastically, “Excellent effort! The letter o is like a circle. (The coach shows the learner how to write the letter o.) Watch how I start from the top, curve as I go down…then back up again to meet the point where I started. Try doing this three more times as you say the name of the letter.”
Conclusions and Implications

Utility of open-ended observation instruments to capture what is happening in classrooms

• Fidelity to methodology, not fidelity to the lesson plans
• Teachers made deliberate modifications to the scripted lessons to suit the immediate needs of the classroom context.
• Fidelity of implementation in relation to impact on learning
• Procedural orientation and conceptual orientation (Valencia et al., 2006)
The qualitative research study contributed to an understanding **how** and **why** certain elements of projects were working or not working.

- Identified types of modifications teachers were making that supported and did not support lesson objectives.
- Shed light on how teacher training and coaching were successful and where there was room for improvement.
- Highlighted the ways teachers used their professional judgement to inform their teaching.
- Included teachers’ perspectives on teaching and learning.
- Informed materials content, training, and coaching.
- Served as a means to recognize, validate, and build on local knowledge.
Malawi Institute of Education. (2016). *English standard 1 teacher’s guide*. Prepared with assistance from USAID and RTI International under the Malawi Early Grade Reading Improvement Activity (MERIT), Contract No. AID-OAA-I-14-00044. Lilongwe, Malawi: Institute of Education.

Malawi Institute of Education. (2016). *English standard 1 training manual*. Prepared with assistance from USAID and RTI International under the Malawi Early Grade Reading Improvement Activity (MERIT), Contract No. AID-OAA-I-14-00044. Lilongwe, Malawi: Institute of Education.

Malawi Institute of Education. (2016). *Literacy coach resource handbook*. Prepared with assistance from USAID and RTI International under the Malawi Early Grade Reading Improvement Activity (MERIT), Contract No. AID-OAA-I-14-00044. Lilongwe, Malawi: Institute of Education.


Thank you!

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