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# Micro-teaching: A Basic Technique for Teacher Education Programme

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**Abstract:** *Increasing awareness of what is effective teaching has revealed that teaching involves more than cognitive and effective skills. It also involves psychomotor skills. Therefore, a teacher education programme that combines theory with performance tasks in the laboratory is desirable before teaching practice. In view of the above, the paper discusses micro-teaching as a basic technique for training teachers. The paper however examines the concept of Teacher Education, micro-teaching as a basic technique for Teacher Education Programme and conclusion.*

**Key words:** *Teacher Education, Micro-teaching, Micro-teaching process, Teaching skills*

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## Introduction

In any given time, it is the purpose for which education is given that determines the concept of the desirable teacher. Teachers are the distinct occupational groups of people specially equipped by training to undertake the task of educating, in institutions, socially assigned the responsibility for education. Teacher education therefore, refers to the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of people who desire to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens (Adewuyi and Ogunwuyi, 2002).

The traditional approach to Teacher education has been to load the student with theoretical facts and principles and then thrust him into the school classroom to grapple with the realities of a complex teaching situation what has been styled teaching practice. The above approach assumes that teaching involves only cognitive and affective skills.

Increasing awareness of what is effective teaching has revealed that teaching involves more than cognitive and affective skills. It also involves psychomotor skills. If teaching also involves psychomotor skills, it follows that a Teacher education programme that concerns itself with only theoretical work and outright student practical teaching in real classroom situations may be found wanting. If teaching is in part a psychomotor task, then mastering the teaching act is best accomplished through actual practice of the specific “things” that make for effective teaching. Therefore, Teacher education programme that combines theory with performance tasks in the laboratory is desirable before teaching practice.

The above has led to efforts on the part of innovative teacher educators to develop, refine and disseminate new approaches to Teacher education programme through different methods of stimulating teaching in wider laboratory conditions. It is as a result of such efforts that Micro-teaching technique was introduced into the Teacher education programme in the preparation of its pre-service trainee teachers and in-service trainee teachers.

Micro-teacher according to Ughamadu (1992, p.118) is:

“a procedure by which a teacher trainee teaches a small class of students a short lesson with specific objectives and teacher performance criteria, after which the replay (if video-taped) is evaluated by the teacher trainee, the students and the classroom teacher or expert teacher. The outcome of the evaluation will determine if there will be need for re-planning, re-delivery, another recording and evaluation of the lesson or if a new lesson and skill display will be carried out”.

The teaching skills that are emphasized in the Micro-teaching technique are as follows: set induction, illustration and use of examples, planned repetition, reinforcement, stimulus variation, questioning, communication, classroom management, use of chalkboard and closure. Teaching skills according to Hargie and Maidrel (1981) are specific teacher behaviours designed to help the classroom instructor become more effective.

Micro-teaching provides Teacher education an effective method of training teachers to acquire a variety of teaching skills. Micro-teaching provides trainee teachers the opportunity for immediate feedback and repetition for improving performance. It also provides in-service trainee teachers the opportunity for further skills acquisition. The onus of this paper is on the relevance of micro-teaching to Teacher education programme.

### **Teacher Education**

Teacher Education came as a result of policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behaviours and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school, the church/mosque and the society. Teacher Education is divided into three stages:

1. The initial teacher training (student teacher)
2. Induction (the process of providing training and support during first few years of teaching or the first year in a particular school)
3. Teacher development or continuing professional development (CPD) - an intensive process for practicing teachers (Ihedioha and Ituen, 2017).

Teacher Education is the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of people who desire to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens (Adewuyi and Ogunwuyi, 2002). This means that teaching is all-purpose profession which stimulates the development of mental, physical and emotional powers of students. Thus, they are people who are humane, equipped with peaceful co-existence, environmental management and democratic processes. Teacher education provides the resources and training for nation building. According to Oyekan (2006), the purpose of teacher education is to produce well-qualified teachers, conducive environment and well-disciplined pupils and students.

### **Micro-teaching technique**

Micro-teaching is a teacher training technique for learning teaching skills. It employs real teaching situation for developing skills and helps to get deeper knowledge regarding the art of teaching. Micro-teaching according to Akudolu (1996) is “a scaled down teaching encounter. It

is scaled down in terms of time, number of students, concepts taught and the teaching skills used". It is an attempt to use simulation techniques to break down the teaching process into smaller and more easily understood units for practice. This controlled practice is a simulation of 'real teaching', the classroom is brought into the experimental conditions of the university or college where various experimental parameters are controlled.

In the micro-teaching laboratory, the teacher trainee teaches a short lesson to about three to ten students for about five to twenty minutes emphasizing a particular teaching skill, such as reinforcement of pupil responses or stimulus variation. His short micro-teaching is video-taped and when the trainee finished the lesson, he receives immediate feedback in the form of a replay of his performance on a TV monitor during which time he is focused on the skill in question. He then re-plans the lesson incorporating the suggestions for improvement and re-teaches the same lesson to a different group of students. Another critique follows and the degree of improvement is determined. Thus each teacher-trainee completes a teach-re-teach cycle.

Micro-teaching has been described by Hargie and Maidrel (1981) as having a dual source of appeal. These according to them are as follows: for the practically minded teacher educator, it is a training technique which allows him or her to supervise the acquisition of desired behaviours by trainees. It is most often based on intuitive professional beliefs and judgments about issues such as the value of practice and feedback in skill acquisition and the ability of the teacher to give advice on appropriate behaviour or skill performance.

Underlying this is the belief that the trainee teacher can acquire a range of professional skills which will make him or her better teacher, the criterion of better teaching often being identified in terms of displayed teaching behaviours or presumed increase in pupil learning. For the researcher or higher degree student eager to demonstrate his or her ability in experimental design and data analysis, Micro-teaching is a training method which facilitates relatively easy manipulation and subsequent testing for effect of a range of variables deemed to be associated either with the technique itself or characteristics of teachers or learners. The indication of effect is usually taken from qualified measures of operationally defined dimensions of teacher behaviour.

Finally, micro-teaching is a proven method to attain gross improvement in the instructional experiences. Effective student teaching should be the prime quantity of a teacher.

### **Micro-teaching process**

From origin, micro-teaching is aimed at facilitating the practice of teaching through a gradual introduction of student-teachers into the actual teaching process. The micro-teaching process is flexible and hence can be repeated as often as necessary to develop and demonstrate skill acquisition and improvement.

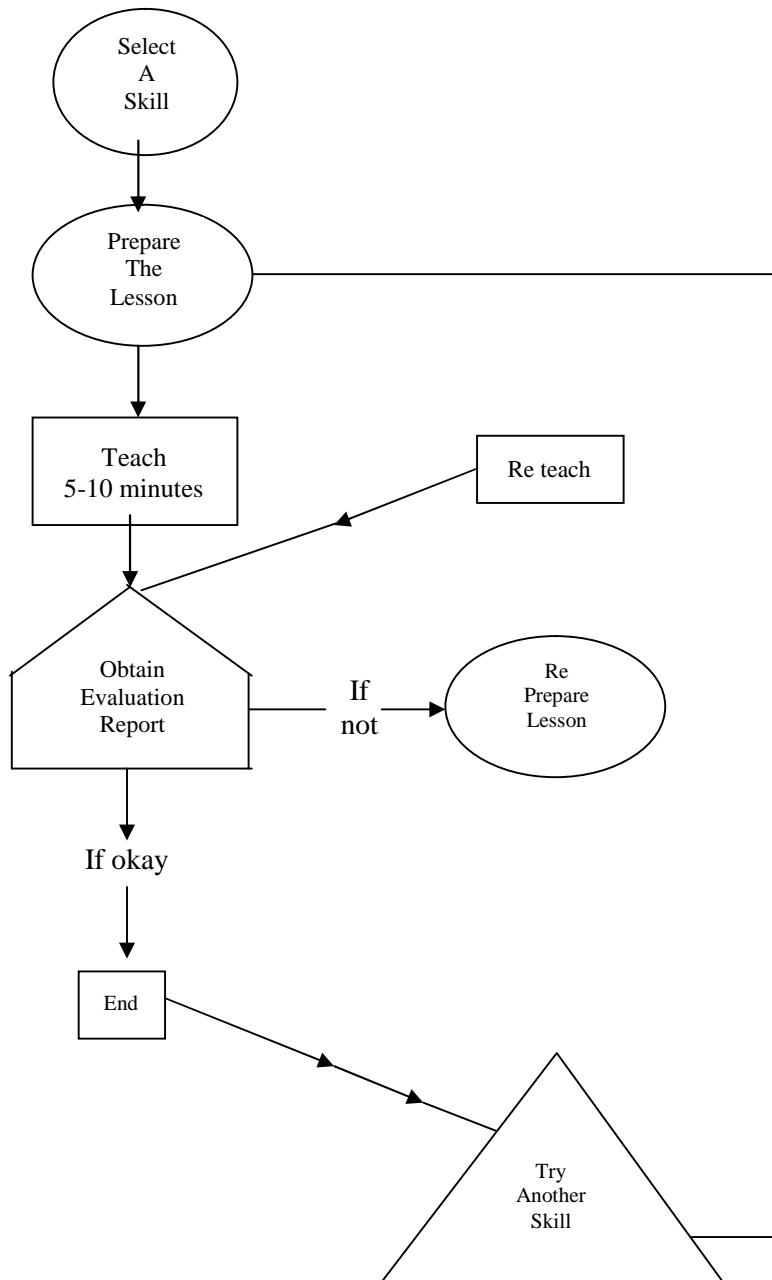
The original micro-teaching cycle as developed at Stanford University was organized as follows:

1. Lecture: Student-teachers receive lectures on specific teaching skills. They also view the videotaped models of how each skill is used.
2. Practice: student-teachers practice the skills by preparing and presenting short lessons on the specific skills to pupils or peers.
3. Feedback: Each student-teacher receives feedback on his performance. The feedback is received during discussion which follows the micro-lesson. The discussion is guided by

Skill Rating Schedules, the Stanford Teacher Competence Appraisal and the Video recording of a student-teacher's performance.

4. Re-teach: Based on the feedback, the student-teacher prepares and presents another micro-lesson. Micro-teaching at Stanford University was organized in a laboratory setting (Akudolu, 1996, p.130).

The micro-teaching process can be illustrated diagrammatically thus:



Micro-teaching process

### **Teaching skills encountered in Micro-teaching**

Teaching skills are behaviours teachers manifest to solve situational problems in the class. They are sometimes pre-determined in the sense that a teacher determines before starting a lesson how to behave if certain situations arise. Sometimes skills are manifested spontaneously to solve an unanticipated problem in the instructional process (Akudolu, 1996, p.141).

There are various teaching skills or lesson presentation skills that can be practiced during micro-teaching encounters. They are also to be used by student teachers during teaching practice in schools. In-service teachers are also expected to practice the skills in their everyday teaching. The teaching skills which include set induction, illustration and use of examples, planned repetition, reinforcement, stimulus variation, questioning, communication and closure will be examined.

**Set induction:** Set induction in simple sense, can be viewed as any device or procedure a teacher adopts at the beginning of a lesson or instructional programme so as to induce his students to be very attentive and thus make for better learning. According to Amajirionwu (1988),

“set induction in educational practices is pre-planned action by the classroom teacher to arouse the interest of his students, create an atmosphere of curiosity and motivation in a classroom and thereby energise, direct and sustain the learners through the lesson”.

The classroom teacher can establish a positive set induction or pre-instructional set at several levels: Introducing a course, introducing a unit of work or series of topic, introducing a simple lesson, before a discussion, before film shows, television and radio programmes.

**Illustration and use of examples:** The skill of illustration enables a teacher to clarify issues. Teaching and learning outcomes can be facilitated or enhanced by making proper use of examples. The use of concrete examples and illustrations aid the students in the understanding of abstract concepts. Examples are known to be necessary to clarify, verify and substantiate concepts. The major reason for using examples and illustrations is to help achieve instructional objectives of lessons.

**Planned repetition:** The skill of repetition is used to promote retention and to help learners connect what they are learning with what they have learnt. Repetition during the teaching-learning process can occur in variety of situations and in many ways. For this skill to be used effectively, the teacher should have clear objectives for using it. This will help him to know the type to use and when to use it. Classroom teachers can achieve or do this by making effective use of simple repetition, spaced repetition, cumulative repetition and massed repetition. Simple repetition is repetition of an idea, concept or statement immediately after the initial presentation. Spaced repetition is the repetition of a major point at various intervals during a lesson. Cumulative repetition involves repeating all the important points to present new points in a lesson. Mass repetition serves as a general summary of the lesson.

**Reinforcement:** Reinforcement according to Akudolu (1996) is “the process of increasing the probability that a given response will occur”. This is a very important skill because learners are encouraged to improve on their performances when their correct responses are reinforced. Reinforcement may be positive or negative. Positive reinforcement is the positive response by a

person to some other person's behaviour such that the possibility of that behaviour re-occurring at a subsequent time is increased. Reward is the means for positive reinforcement. On the other hand, negative reinforcement refers to the process of increasing the probability of learner giving the desired response by taking something away from the learner. Punishment and withholding of rewards are examples of negative reinforcement.

**Stimulus Variation:** Classroom teachers can help the students to remain actively interested in their lesson by varying the classroom situation and teaching style. A teacher can add variety to his teaching by moving around occasionally, varying speed, tone and pitch of his voice or use the chalkboard once in a while. All these are attention-producing behaviour that can be incorporated into classroom teaching.

**Questioning Skill:** The success of one's teaching depends more on the skill and judgment with which classroom questions are asked. According to Ughamadu (1992, p.138), a question is "usually a verbal utterance that seeks a response from the person to whom it is directed". Questioning skill refers to the teacher's ability to use a range of questioning technique at appropriate times and for a variety of instructional purpose. Questions vary in types and have different effect upon students, depending on their simplicity and complexity. Questions can be classified as: Prompting and Probing questions, higher order questions and divergent questions. Prompting questions consist of giving hints to assist the student. Probing questions are questions that help a student to think logically and also promote deeper understanding. Higher order questions are questions that require the student to manipulate factual information for some purposes. Divergent questions are questions that demand creative thinking.

**Communication:** During an instructional process, the teacher is constantly in communication with the learners. It is only through effective communication that the learners' behaviour can be changed in the desired way. Effective use of communication involves the appropriate use of verbal, non-verbal and extra-verbal communication skills.

**Closure:** Closure simply means "getting it together" part of what the teacher does. It can also refer to the teacher's ability to "wrap things up" at appropriate points in a discussion or instructional activity. Closure serves the dual purpose of making it clear to the learner that present task is a purposeful part of a "whole" and it provides the learner a sense of accomplishment of having finished or completed something.

### **Relevance of Micro-teaching to Teacher Education**

Teaching is a multi-dimensional activity that requires some vital skills on the part of the teacher for it to be effective and efficient. Therefore, micro-teaching is important to Teacher Education Programme in the following ways:

- Micro-teaching enables separate teaching skills to be practiced and perfected without the distractions of classroom management.
- Micro-teaching provides Teacher education an effective method of training teachers to acquire a variety of teaching skills.
- It reduces the complexities of classroom teaching. Classroom teaching involves many activities that are complex. Micro-teaching simplifies the complexities of classroom teaching by scaling down the lesson content, class size, teaching time and the skill.

- Micro-teaching helps Teacher education to achieve her aim of producing high quality skilled teachers. This is true because the aim of Teacher education is to produce quality teachers.
- Micro-teaching provides trainee teachers opportunity for immediate feedback and repetition for improving performance.
- It builds up teachers' confidence by providing relaxed and controlled secure environment for trainee teachers to acquire teaching skills.
- It helps trainee teacher perceive the relationship between education and practice.
- A trainee teacher who has experienced effective micro-teaching encounters will be confident enough to teach his students even without a qualified and experienced resident supervisor or teacher in his subject area (FME, 2007).
- A relevant skill for effective and efficient teaching is not what can be acquired completely at any stage by a teacher. This being the case, in-service trainee teachers even if they possess some relevant teaching skills, still need micro-teaching. The micro-teaching experience will enable them acquire newer skills, refine and improve their former skills for greater efficiency.
- In-service trainee teachers come from different schools and with different skills. The micro-teaching exercise will afford the trainees opportunity to demonstrate their unique skills. Good skills displayed can be recorded and played back for other learners. This will give them opportunity for further skills acquisition (Ughamadu, 1992, pp. 121-122).

From the foregoing one can conclude that there are many advantages that may be associated with micro-teaching and these advantages will be of immense help in Teacher education programme if micro-teaching is more widely used in the training of teachers.

### **Conclusion**

Teacher education is the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period of the preparation of people who desire to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens. Micro-teaching technique is a scaled-down teaching encounter in which a student-teacher teaches a small number of pupils or peers for a few minutes, practicing a skill. Increasing awareness of what is effective teaching has revealed that teaching involves more than cognitive and effective skills. It also involves psychomotor skills. Therefore, a Teacher education programme that combines theory with performance tasks in the laboratory is desirable before teaching practice. This paper has examined Micro-teaching as a basic teaching technique for training teachers. It examined the concept of Teacher education and micro-teaching as a basic technique for Teacher Education Programme.

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