

*Dwight*

## **MICRO-TEACHING**

The term micro-teaching was first introduced in 1963 by Dwight W. Allen of Stanford University, USA. While in India, first attempt was made in 1974 to spread micro-teaching. Micro-teaching is defined as an effective technique to train the inexperienced teacher in the art of teaching. It reduces the complexities of real (actual) classroom teaching in terms of class-size, time-duration and content.

Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching encounter where a teacher-trainee teaches a single concept of content, using a specified teaching skill for a short-time (5-10 minutes), to a very small group of pupils (5-10 members) in a mock classroom situation. In this way the teacher-trainee practices the teaching skill in terms of definable, observable, measurable and controllable form with repeated cycles till he attains mastery in the use of skill. In another way, teaching skill is defined in terms of teaching behavior and its objective is to modify the behavior of trainees. Micro-teaching, therefore, offers helpful setting for an inexperienced teacher to acquire new teaching skills and to refine old ones. Thus, doing this practice will naturally boost the confidence among teacher-trainees.

During the process of micro-teaching, trainee is first asked to prepare a short-lesson plan (usually 20 minute) based on a particular skill and then applies this skill in a planned series (5-10 minutes) of teaching encounters with small group of students (5-10 members) in a mock classroom situation. Subsequently, the feedbacks are provided to trainee on the basis of observation made by the supervisors (trainer and fellow trainees). Sometime the feedbacks are provided with the help of videotape (CCTV), which is installed to observe the classroom activities. Obviously, micro-teaching helps in developing confidence among the teacher-trainees to face the challenges of real classroom.

The videotape as a feedback device was first introduced by Keath Acheson, a research worker, who investigated the utility of videotape in the development of technical teaching skills. This instrument could be used for recording the class interaction and the behaviors of the trainee vividly and accurately. This can lead to the development of a systematic and accurate method of giving feedbacks to the teacher-trainee.

**D. W. Allen (1966)**, *"Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching encounter in class size and time"*.

**Allen and Eve (1968)**, *"Micro-teaching is defined as a system of controlled practice that makes it possible to concentrate on specific teaching behavior and to practice teaching under controlled conditions"*.

## **Characteristics of Micro-Teaching**

On the basis of above discussion lead us to conclude the following important characteristics of micro-teaching.

- Micro-teaching is a training technique (not a teaching technique) to prepare the effective teachers. It is designed in such way which plays a significant role in developing teaching skills among the teacher-trainees.
- Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching (miniaturized teaching). It reduces the complexities of the real classroom teaching in terms of the number of students (5 to 10 pupils), amount of time (5 to 10 minutes) and amount of learning contents (a single concept at a time).
- Micro-teaching provides immediate feedbacks to teacher-trainee after the completion of his/her lesson. In this way the trainee receives meaningful feedbacks from teacher-trainer, fellow-trainees and with the help of electronic gadgets like videotape (CCTV) and audio tape.
- Micro-teaching is a highly individualized training device. It offers better control over practicing teaching activities. Thus, many factors can easily be manipulated in attaining the mastery over the teaching skills during training.

## **Components of Micro-Teaching**

There are seven important constituents involved in the process of micro-teaching. In the absence of any component the success of this technique is doubtful.

### *(i) Teacher-trainee*

The first and foremost element of micro-teaching is learner. The student who gets the training of a teacher is called teacher-trainee. During the training various capacities like teaching skill, class-management, maintaining discipline and organizing different programs at school etc., are developed among trainee.

### *(ii) Teaching skills*

Micro-teaching provides a practical platform to the students for teaching. Various skills such as Introduction, Explanation, Questioning & Answering, Reinforcement, Stimulus Variation, Classroom Management, Use of Black board, Teaching Aids etc are taught through micro-teaching sessions. Students are required to teach a small group of students for a short span of time.

### *(iii) Micro lesson plan*

Micro lesson plan is essential ingredient of micro-teaching. Teacher-trainee prepares a short lesson after selecting a particular skill and content.

### *(iv) Classroom setting*

Similarly, setting of class is precondition for the success of micro-teaching. In this direction, the whole class is divided into number of groups, which should not be more than 10 students. Then time-duration (between 5 to 10 minutes) is fixed for each step and each trainee.

### *(v) Supervisors*

It is supervisor who play crucial role in behavior modification of trainee providing constructive feedbacks. The trainer and fellow-trainees both observe the performance of trainee and subsequently provide necessary feedbacks for the purpose of behavior modification. The term supervisor is comprised of teacher-trainer and fellow-trainees.

### *(vi) Feedbacks devices*

The feedbacks components of micro-teaching contribute significantly towards behavior modification of trainee in desired direction and acquisition of mastery level of skill. Beside physical observations, feedbacks devices such as audiotape and videotape (CCTV) are also used to observe the classroom performance of trainee.

### *(vii) Micro-teaching laboratory*

Laboratory is a room where teaching skill is practiced by teacher-trainee. It should be well equipped with feedbacks devices and other necessary facilities.

## **Phases of Micro-Teaching**

Micro-teaching proceeds through three phases i.e. knowledge acquisition phase, skill acquisition phase and transfer phase. Let us discuss these phases one by one:

### *(i) Knowledge acquisition phase (Pre-active phase)*

It is a preparatory phase; here teacher-trainee attempts to acquire knowledge about the skill and its components. Initially, trainee tries to learn about the skill and its components through self-initiative. He reads the relevant literature and materials to develop his understanding about the skill and its components. Then the teacher-trainer (expert)

explains in detail about the skill and its components with purposes followed by demonstration of model lesson.

In this direction, trainee will carefully observe the demonstrated lesson and presentation of skill given by trainer. Then, he thoroughly discusses about the skill and its components with trainer for the sake of gaining knowledge. In this way trainee learns about the purpose of skill and condition under which it proves useful in the process of teaching-learning.

*(ii) Skill acquisition phase (Active phase)*

The skill acquisition phase comprised of three major activities i.e. preparation, practice and evaluation. First, the teacher-trainee selects a topic and plans a micro-lesson (based on skill) for practicing the skill in a mock classroom situation. Then, trainee carefully verifies the physical setting of the classroom such as class-size, time-duration and presence of supervisors before demonstrating lesson.

Further, trainee demonstrates the lesson in the classroom and gets immediate feedbacks from trainer and fellow-trainees. As we know, proper feedback is essential ingredient to master the skills of teaching. For this purpose, both supervisor and fellow-trainees analyze the skill presentation of trainee through taught lesson and immediately provide feedbacks to him. After considering the given feedbacks, teacher-trainee re-plans the lesson and teaches again in the classroom. This cycle of micro-teaching continues till trainee attains mastery level of skill.

*(iii) Transfer phase (Post-active phase)*

In the transfer phase after attaining mastery and command over each skill, teacher-trainee integrates different skills and provides an opportunity to use the skills in normal classroom teaching. Thus, the skills practiced during micro-teaching sessions are transferred smoothly to regular teaching in this phase.

**Cycle (Process) of Micro-Teaching**

The process of micro-teaching takes around 36 minutes on an average in completion of one cycle. Where maximum 12 minutes is allocated for re-planning (step) of micro-lesson and 6 minutes each for remaining steps (teach, feedbacks, re-teach and re-feedbacks) of micro-teaching cycle. This cycle of micro-teaching continues till the mastery of skill is attained. The cycle of micro-teaching is presented in below diagram with allocated time for each step.

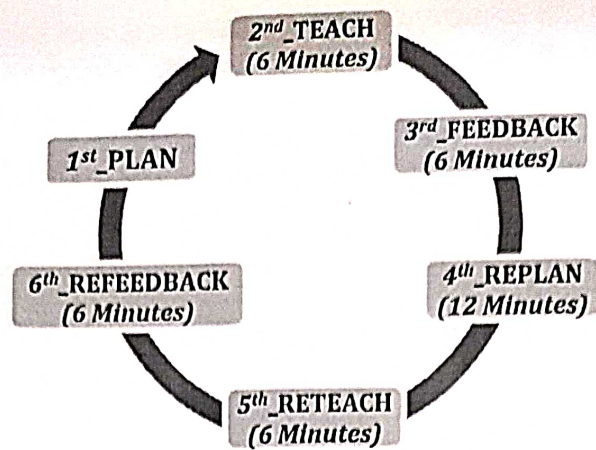


Figure 1: Micro-teaching cycle (total 36 minutes).

### *Step<sub>1</sub>\_Plan*

In this first step, teacher-trainee selects a topic or concept and prepares short-lesson plan with the use of components of the skill under practice. The activities of micro-teaching are planned in such a way where maximum application of the components of a skill is possible.

### *Step<sub>2</sub>\_Teach*

After preparing lesson plan, teacher-trainee attempts to teach the group of students as per the planned activities within stipulated time. In case of any different situations arise during micro-teaching session which is not visualized in the planned activities. Trainee can alter the activities as per the situational demand. He should have the courage and confidence to handle the challenging situation of classroom.

### *Step<sub>3</sub>\_Feedbacks*

It refers to providing information about trainee's performance in the classroom. The information is comprised of strength and weakness of trainee's performance during practice session. Obviously, feedback contributes more in enhancing the performance and behavior modification of trainee in the desired direction in each and every skill practice.

### *Step<sub>4</sub>\_Re-plan*

At this juncture, teacher-trainee re-plans his lesson incorporating the given feedbacks by the supervisors. Here, the trainee again prepares a micro-lesson on the same topic or a topic which suite trainee for practicing particular skill.

### *Step<sub>5</sub>\_Re-teach*

Here, teacher-trainee teaches the micro lesson at another time. Trainee can teach on same topic to different group of students and another topic to same group of students' vice-versa. It is done to avoid the boredom of classroom. Thus, trainee will teach the class with renewed courage and confidence to perform better than the previous attempt.

#### *Step<sub>6</sub>\_Re-feedbacks*

Again supervisors provide the feedbacks on trainee's performance in his second attempt of skill practice.

#### **Merits of Micro-Teaching**

- Micro-teaching simplifies the complex teaching process by reducing content, time-duration and number of students.
- Micro-teaching prepares teacher-trainees for real classroom teaching. It develops the confidence among trainees to face the challenges of actual classroom situation.
- Micro-teaching focuses on only one skill at a time. Thus, trainees can concentrate and pay attention at particular skill to attain mastery over it.
- Micro-teaching provides freedom to trainees practicing the activities in the classroom. Though, trainee can easily practice the lesson and skill in many times without restriction.
- Trainee can easily manage the class and handle the student activities during micro-teaching session. So the problem of indiscipline can easily be managed because of limited number of students.
- Micro-teaching may easily improve the performance of trainee. It also helps in correcting the behavior of trainee with the use of feedback mechanism.
- Teacher-trainee simultaneously plays two roles in the process of micro-teaching. One hand he acts as teacher and other hand as keen observer. Thus, trainee can also improve his own performance observing the class of fellow-trainees.
- Micro-teaching provides an opportunity of self-evaluation and self-assessment to trainee. Trainee can analyze his/her performances itself through observing CCTV or videotape.
- Micro-teaching develops good rapport between trainer and trainee during the process of micro-teaching. Obviously, trainees get many opportunities to interact and discuss with trainer about skill and its components during micro-teaching session.

### **Limitation of Micro-Teaching**

- Micro-teaching is a training technique, not a teaching technique. It mainly focuses on the training of particular skill.
- Only few skills can develop through the process of micro-teaching. We cannot develop many skills with use of micro-lesson through micro-teaching practice.
- Micro-teaching does not focus on content and syllabus of subject. It gives due emphasis on behavioral aspect of teaching rather than content.
- Micro-teaching is time consuming technique which requires much time to give equal opportunities to all trainees for their skill development. A large number of students not get an opportunity for re-planning and re-teaching.
- Micro-teaching is very expensive technique of teaching. For providing feedbacks to trainee, there is a need of some electronic gadget (CCTV/videotape) to be installed in the classroom. Naturally, it costs too much.
- There is no similarity between micro-teaching and real classroom teaching. It deviates from normal classroom teaching in terms of time duration, number of students and content.