

# MICRO TEACHING

*What is micro teaching?—Characteristics of micro teaching—Objectives of micro teaching—Steps in micro teaching—Advantages of micro teaching—Limitations of micro teaching—Summary—Questions and problems—Bibliography.*

Micro teaching is a significant effort to make teacher education programme scientific, effective and meaningful. It is now considered not only a constructive teacher training technique but also “a versatile research tool which dramatically simplifies the logistics of investigating certain teaching skills and learning variables.”

Micro teaching was developed by Professors Dwight Allen and Robert Bush, in teacher preparation programme at Stanford University between 1960 and 1967. Today, it is considered one of the most important developments in the field of teaching practice in many countries.

## **What is micro teaching?**

Micro teaching is like a simulated social skill teaching to provide the feedback to teacher trainee for the modification of teacher behaviour. It is a training concept that can be applied at various pre-service and in-service stages in the professional development of teachers. It provides teachers with a practice setting or instruction in which the normal complexities of classroom are reduced and the teacher gets feedback on his performance.

Micro teaching has been defined differently by the experts. Allen (1960) defines micro teaching as a “scaled down teaching encounter in class size and class time.” Urwin (1970) feels that the term micro teaching is most often applied to the “use of closed-circuit television (CCT) to give immediate feedback of a trainee teachers’ performance in a simplified environment.” They suggest that micro teaching is best viewed as a form of simulated teaching usually incorporating reduced complexity and some feedback placed “along a simulation spectrum ranging from the purely abstract text-book of teaching practice through to actual classroom teaching.”



Clift and others (1976), have defined micro teaching as "a teacher training procedure which reduces the teaching situation to simpler and more controlled encounter achieved by limiting the practice teaching to a specific skill and reducing teaching time and class size."

Bush (1968), has defined micro teaching as "a teacher education technique which allows teachers to apply well-defined teaching skills to a carefully prepared lesson in a planned series of five to ten minutes encounters with a small group of real classroom students, often with an opportunity to observe the performance on videotape."

Teaching, as we know, constitutes a number of verbal and non-verbal acts. A set of teaching acts of related behaviours aiming at specific objectives and performed with an intention to facilitate pupils' learning can be called a *teaching skill*. All these teaching skills which go to make good teaching can be defined, observed, controlled and measured by means of practice. Micro teaching concentrates on specific teaching skills or behaviours and provides opportunity for practising teaching under controlled conditions.

Micro teaching is a scaled down sample of teaching. The complex act of teaching is broken down into simple components. Only one particular skill is attempted and developed during micro teaching session. The teaching act is scaled down in terms of the content of the lesson, duration of the lesson, and size of the class. A student teacher teaches a short lesson of five to eight minutes to a small group of pupils, usually five to eight. The lesson is self-contained. A single concept is taken up in the lesson. At the end of the lesson, the pupils in the class leave and the teacher trainee discusses his lesson with the supervisor. Then the teacher-trainee is given time to think about this discussion and modify his lesson plan accordingly. The student teacher *reteaches* his micro-lesson with a *different group of students*, under the same conditions and with the same opportunities for feedback in an attempt to improve his previous lesson. The process can be repeated till desirable skill is developed. The success of micro teaching depends on the *teach-reteach* cycle which can be completed in about 30 minutes.

### Characteristics of micro teaching

Micro teaching has the following significant characteristics:

1. Micro element: Micro teaching reduces the complexities of the teaching situation in terms of, (i) number of students to be taught, (ii) duration of the lesson, (iii) subject-matter to be taught to enable the trainee to concentrate on a particular teaching skill at a time. The idea is that one should master the components of the task of teaching before he attempts to perform effectively the complicated task of teaching at macro-level.



## 2. Teaching skills and teaching strategies:

- (i) *Pre-instructional skills*—These include writing of instructional objectives, sequencing and organising knowledge to be presented in order to achieve specific objectives, appropriate content, proper organisation, selection of proper audio-visual aids, etc.
- (ii) *Instructional skills*—These include skills of introducing a lesson, skills of explaining and illustrating, reinforcement, probing questions, reinforcing pupil participation, diagnosing pupils' difficulties, etc.
- (iii) *Post-instructional skills*—These include skills of writing test items, interpreting pupil's performance in a test, planning remedial measures, etc.

Micro teaching enables the trainees to develop these skills and perfect them in such a way as to master the teaching strategies.

3. Feedback—In micro teaching several reliable and authentic sources are employed for providing necessary feedback. Some of them are like oral feedback by the supervisor, observation schedules filled in by the peer group participating in the micro lesson, audio and video-tape recording.

4. Safe practice ground A micro teaching laboratory possesses all the inherent features of the real classroom. Teaching is performed under simulated conditions with a small group, the trainee is on a safe practice ground.

5. The teaching models—The trainee gets many opportunities to study the desired pattern of behaviour through demonstration given by the supervisor, or a tape or a film. With the help of these models as guides, the trainee can develop his own style.

### **Objectives of micro teaching**

The technique of micro teaching can be used to achieve these objectives:

- (i) To enable the teacher-trainees to learn and assimilate new teaching skills under controlled conditions.
- (ii) To enable the teacher-trainees to gain confidence in teaching and mastering a number of teaching skills on a small group of pupils.
- (iii) To utilise the academic potential of teacher-trainees for providing much needed feedback.
- (iv) To give the teacher-trainees training in the component skills of teaching at the pre-service level.