



Developing Teaching Competency Through Micro Teaching Approach

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ABSTRACT

The standard of education of a country largely depends on the quality and competence of the teachers of that country and this quality and competence of the teachers depends on the teacher education programme. Thus to make significant development of a nation, we have to look towards the teachers. The teacher needs to be conceived as a 'change agent' for which they may be well acquainted and informed about day to day development because efficiency of an educational system is primarily determined by the efficiency of teachers. The Education Commission (1964-66) have pointed out that, "*off all the different factors which influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant.*" To prepare an efficient teacher is a challenging task today. Previously, it was thought that teacher are born not made but now recent researches in this field proved that efficient and competent teachers can be produced by modifying their behaviour. The purpose of the teacher education programmes is to prepare effective and competent teachers. The success of any educational reform depends on the quality of teacher, which in turn depends to a large extent on the quality of the teacher education programme. The success of teacher education programme depends on developing a skill to identify different teaching objectives, attitude and patterns of teaching behavior among the college students, who have been preparing to enter the teaching profession. The success also depends on enabling the student teacher to perform certain teaching behavior patterns, string them together into strategies of classroom instruction and carry them out to compare different patterns of his own teaching behavior and different strategies of teaching in terms of its consequences.

Keywords: Education, country largely, change agent, teacher, skill, teaching objectives

An effective teacher guides the learning activities of the children so that they may learn. A teacher as a professional develops certain skills to use his knowledge to organize, encourage

and assist certain generally approved skills of learning. This involves a careful study of his own behaviour in some systematic and objective manner, so that the teacher may gain deep insight into his own pattern of influence.

Proper training to teacher is of great importance in improving the quality of education. The process of improvement in teacher education programme is in progress in our country, but these improvements are marginal in nature.

It is now, generally realized that researches must be directed towards the improvement of present day teacher education programmes. The training of teachers demands our urgent attention. In a rapidly changing world, the old system of teacher training no longer seems to meet the requirements of our schools and the society. The problem is of quality and efficiency of our teachers. How can a teacher do a better job of teaching is the main problem. The solution for the improvement of teaching in our schools is to turn out effective teachers from our teacher training institutions. The minimum requirement of any teacher training programme is that it should enable the trainee to acquire the basic skills and competence of a good teacher.

There are various techniques to modify the teacher behavior, which are emphasized and implemented during teacher education programme for prospective and in-service teachers to make them competent and effective. The Education Commission (1964-1966) have stated "Investment in teacher education can yield very rich dividends because the financial resources required are small when measured against the resulting improvements in the education of millions..... First rate teacher training institutions can thus play a crucial role in the development of education."

Pellberg (1970) referred to the traditional teacher education programme – "The traditional teacher education programme consists of two main elements, theoretical courses and practice teaching, covering the philosophical, sociological and historical foundations of education and teaching methodology, are mainly verbal, tend to be abstract and are sometimes vague, consequently, they affect cognitive and attitudinal rather than behavioural changes in teachers. Research in teaching is yet a young science. Teaching should now be looked upon as a set of skills used by the teacher in classroom. A skill is a set of behaviour aiming at specific objectives. Like any other behaviour, teaching, can also be modified. This requires a systematic analysis of what teaching is and what behaviours of teachers contribute to effective learning in the pupils. According to Allen (1970) teaching consists of acts or behaviours. It is considered that attitudes, personality, intelligence and many other factors affect the success of a teacher. However, all of these factors contribute to produce certain acts or behaviour of teachers.

In recent years several innovations have been developed to equip teachers with the requisite competencies and skills to teach effectively. Interaction analysis based on practice teaching training in teaching skills using micro-teaching approach and simulated teaching exercise are

some of innovative technologies through which effective training program can be transacted. The present mode also pointed out each one of these technologies, its major emphasis on the use of micro-teaching in Indian situation for developing the required skills of teaching at the mastery level.

Hence, in order to make teacher education programme effective and to bring qualitative improvement, some other technique or approach should be adopted so that the opportunity for the development of various skills among teachers may be increased. Micro-teaching which is one of the recent innovations in teacher education may be an answer of our problem.

Teaching Competency

The term “teaching” can be defined as a set of observable teacher behaviours that facilitate or bring about pupil learning. Teaching is a relationship, which is established among three focal points in education – the teacher, the students and the subject matter. Teaching is the process by which the teacher brings the students and the subject matter together. The teacher and the taught are active, the former in teaching and the latter in learning. Modern teaching is not a mechanical process. It is exacting and intricate as well. Teaching is not “telling and testing”. Teaching is a complex art of guiding students through variety of selected experiences towards the attainment of appropriate teaching-learning goals and “teaching competency” means an effective performance of all the observable teacher behaviour that bring about desirable pupil outcomes. Teaching competency includes knowledge, attitude, skill and other teacher characteristics. In other words, teaching competency involves effective use of various teaching skills. Rama (1979) gives a comprehensive definition of the term teaching-competency as the ability of a teacher manifested through a set of overt teacher classroom behaviour. In other words, it is a set of observable teacher behaviours that bring about pupil learning. Hence for the purpose of this study ‘teaching-competency’ would mean: *“Effective performance of all observable teacher behaviours that bring about desired prospective teacher outcomes.”*

Micro-teaching

The term micro-teaching was first coined in 1963, but the concept has never been a static one. It continued to grow and change and developed both in focus and format. Microteaching is a laboratory technique of teacher training in which the complexities of normal class room teaching are simplified. It is described as a ‘Scaled down teaching encounter in class size and class time’ (Allen and Ryan, 1969). Passi (1976) defined microteaching as “A training technique which requires student teachers to teach a single concept using specified teaching skill to a small number of pupils in a short duration time.

Prepositions of Micro-teaching

The basic prepositions underlying microteaching are as follows:

1. It is a real teaching.
2. It simplifies the classroom teaching in terms of class size, time, content etc.
3. It focuses on training for the accomplishment of specific tasks.
4. It allows for the increased control of practice. In practice setting of microteaching, various factors like time, students, methods of feedback and supervision etc. can be manipulated.
5. It greatly expands the normal knowledge of result of feedback dimension in teaching. Immediately after teaching a micro-lesson, the trainee gets a feedback about his performance and several sources of feedback may be used.

Principles of Micro-teaching

On the basis of the learning theories, the following principles underlie the concept of microteaching:

1. Capabilities of the learner must consider when a decision of what to teach is made. In pursuance of this principle, a trainee is given the opportunity to select a lesson content in an area of his greatest competence so that he may feel at ease with the subject matter.
2. The learner must be motivated intrinsically. In line with this principle, intrinsic motivation in the context of microteaching is created through cognitive and effective discrepancy between his ideas, self concept a teacher and his real teaching.
3. Goals are to be realistically set. In keeping with this principle in the microteaching setting, attempt is made to modify only modifiable behaviour which trainee wants to change.
4. Only one element of modifiable behaviour is to be worked on at a time. In pursuance of this principle, in any microteaching session a trainee practices one skill at a time and moves to the next only after he has achieved mastery over it.
5. Active participation by the student is necessary in order to modify his behaviour substantially. In accordance with this principle, in any micro-teaching situation a trainee engages actively in practicing a skill in which he wants to be perfect.
6. Knowledge and information about one's performance helps the learner. Transfer of learning will be better if the learner gets the feedback related to his performance. In view of this principle, if any microteaching session a trainee is provided knowledge

and information about his performance by supervisor with or without the help of videotape or an audio tape.

7. Transfer is maximized due to immediate feedback which informs the trainees of their defective practices before they become habitual. According to this principle, in microteaching setting a trainee is provided immediate feedback regarding his performance, thereby eliminating any chance of wrong practice.
8. Spaced distributive recalls are advantageous as learning and maintenance of a skill are best accomplished through spaced practice over a period of time. In keeping with this principle, in microteaching, students are provided experience in various skills over a considerable length of time.

Process of Micro-teaching

The microteaching programme generally consisted of two phases namely, orientation phase and practice phase.

1. Orientation phase: The purpose of this phase is to bring a clear understanding of the microteaching technique, teaching skill, process of feedback, observation of the lesson, preparation of lesson plan, aid other elements of micro-teaching. This phase forms a base to practice particular teaching skill.

2. Practice phase: The practice phase is the main phase of the micro-teaching programme. In this phase, trainees practice the required teaching skill. The trainee does so by following the six steps mentioned below. The completion of these steps means one microteaching cycle. This cycle may continue till the trainee mastered the given skill. Each step of the microteaching cycle is given below:

1. The trainee plans a short lesson which he can use the skill which he wants to practice.
2. Trainee teaches the lesson to small group of pupils which is videotaped or audiotape or observed by supervisor and/or peer(s).
3. Feedback is provided to the student teacher by videotape or audiotape recorder or who observes, and analyses his lesson with the help of supervisor. The supervisor attempts to make so in forcing comments about instances of effective use of the skill and draws the student's attention to other situations where the skill could have been exercised.
4. In the light of feedback and supervisor's comments, the student teacher replans the lesson in order to use the skill more effectively.
5. The revised lesson is retaught to different but comparable group of pupils.
6. Feedback is again provided (re-feedback) on the re-teach lesson which is analyzed with the help of the supervisor.

7. The 'teach-reteach' cycle may be repeated till adequate level of skill-acquisition takes place.

Importance of Microteaching

The importance of microteaching has been discussed under the following heads

1. It is a safe practice: Practice is essential for many learning activities. Practice is the normal class-room whether by a student teacher or by experienced teacher brings with it certain constraints. It is felt that students are to be skillfully taught, not practiced on. Practice may take place within a larger block of time. It must be integrated into the flow of longer lesson. Most important factor taking in our classroom teaching is the limited opportunity for the student teacher to receive feedback for his performance.

2. A focused instrument: Teaching is a complex activity. It can be analyzed into component skills or behaviours. The microteaching environment enables a student teacher to focus attention on and practice on specific skill at a time until he acquires competence in it. Provision of feedback accelerates this process. After acquiring competence in a number of skills in this way, the student teacher takes to microteaching.

3. A vehicle for continuous training: Microteaching is a useful vehicle for providing continuous training to serving teachers. Most of the teachers who reach their professional plateau do not want to improve their skill of teaching. This is also true of the teachers who enjoy high reputation for their skill of teaching. The main reason for such a tendency is that they do not find a way to experiment with new skills of teaching and thereby improve upon them. Microteaching helps in over coming such lacuna. It provides setting for experimentation. Again with the introduction of new curriculum, teachers are required to acquire new skills of teaching. Microteaching helps them in acquiring such skills.

4. Modeling instructional skills: The microteaching setting demonstrations of good teaching given by teachers can be recorded on videotape or observed by supervisor. Such a recording or observation analyzed to identify component skills comprising teaching which is a complex activity. Similarly, sub-behaviours underlying each skill can also be identified. This knowledge so obtained helps in building models of various component teaching skills. These models are presented before the trainees so that they may make their behaviours according to the models of the skills by practicing in the microteaching setting.

5. A new approach to supervision: The approach to supervision under microteaching is non-evaluative. In the microteaching setting a supervisor acts as a guide or an adviser. He helps the trainee teacher or the practicing teacher to improve his skill of teaching. Before the commencement of practice, both the teacher and supervisor are clear about the objective to

be achieved or skill to be demonstrated. They are also clear about the mode and instrument of assessment to be used. Such a procedure provides common frame of reference for the supervisor and the trainee for a dialogue. The suggestions given by the supervisor are incorporated in the new lesson or reteach practice.

6. A new research too: There are many variables which may affect the teaching-learning process. Such variables are the size of class, quality of the student, the length of the period, the motivation of the students etc. Microteaching helps the researcher to exercise control over such variables and thereby enables him to see the effect of independent variables over the dependent variables. Microteaching is also suitable for pilot studies. Before embarking on large experiments same problem can be worked out in micro-teaching setting.

Teaching Skills

A teaching skill is defined as a set of teacher behaviours which are especially effective in bringing about desired changes in pupils. There are various skills that can be usefully developed among student teachers.

Allen and Ryan (1969) had identified the following fourteen general teaching skills that can be applied at many levels, for teaching different subjects:

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| 1. Stimulus variation | 2. Set induction |
| 3. Set induction | 4. Closure |
| 5. Reinforcement of student participation | 6. Fluency in asking questions |
| 7. Probing questions | 8. Higher order questions |
| 9. Divergent questions | 10. Recognizing attending behavior |
| 11. Illustrating and use of examples | 12. Lecturing |
| 13. Planned repetition | 14. Completeness of communication |

Passi (1976) in his book '*Becoming Better Teacher- Microteaching Approach*' has discussed the following general teaching skills.

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|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Writing Instructional objectives | 2. Introducing a lesson |
| 3. Fluency in questioning | 4. Probing questioning |
| 5. Explaining | 6. Illustration with examples |
| 7. Stimulus variation | 8. Reinforcement |
| 9. Silence and non-verbal cues | 10. Increasing pupil participation |
| 11. Using black-board | 12. Achieving closure |
| 13. Recognizing attending behaviour | |

But now the trend has changed. The researchers have started identifying the skills needed for teaching a particular subject and grade. In this context, **Rama (1978)** has identified fourteen skills for teaching Physics at secondary level.

These are as follows:

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| 1. General Teaching competency | 2. Class-room management |
| 3. The use of questions | 4. Initiating pupil participation |
| 5. The use of black-board | 6. Recognizing attending behavior |
| 7. Achieving closure | 8. Logical exposition |
| 9. Teacher concern for students | 10. Using Audio-visual aids |
| 11. Professional perception | 12. Giving assignment |
| 13. Illustrating with examples | 14. Pacing while introducing |

Passi and Sharma (1981) have identified nineteen teaching skills for teaching language at secondary level. These skills are:

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| 1. Giving assignment | 2. Loud reading |
| 3. Asking questions | 4. Introducing a lesson |
| 5. Managing class-room | 6. Clarification |
| 7. Secondary loud reading | 8. Using black-board |
| 9. Using reinforcement | 10. Pacing |
| 11. Avoiding repetition | 12. Consolidating the lesson |
| 13. Dealing with pupils' responses | 14. Improving pupil's behavior |
| 15. Using secondary reinforcement | 16. Audiobility |
| 17. Recognizing pupils' attending behavior | 18. Presenting verbal mode |
| 19. Shifting sensory channel | |

There are two types of teaching skills :

1. General Teaching skills
2. Specific teaching skills

General teaching skills help in the teaching of different subjects whereas specific teaching skills help to teach a particular subject keeping in the mind, the importance of specific teaching skills, and the trend has been started to identify the skills for a particular subject at a particular

grade. NCERT (1981) has taken a project to identify the skills required for teaching primary level. According to the importance and need in the opinion of researcher the following skills are of great importance.

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| 1. Introducing a lesson | 2. Fluency and probing in questioning |
| 3. Explaining with the writing of black-board | 4. Illustration with examples |
| 5. Stimulus variation | 6. Silence and non-verbal cues |
| 7. Reinforcement | 8. Achieving closure |
| 9. Recognizing attending behaviour. | |

But the researcher will lay more emphasis on five skills.

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| 1. Skill of Reinforcement | 2. Skill of probing questioning |
| 3. Skill of stimulus variation | 4. Skill of illustrating with examples |
| 5. Skill of explaining | |

The time duration of each skill is 5 minutes.

1. Skill of Reinforcement: Reinforcement is a term that belongs to the stimulus response (S-R) theoretical paradigms. Reinforcement is a theoretical construct. It was first used by Pavlov in connection with his classic experiments with dogs.

According to **Dictionary of Education by Good**, reinforcement is defined as : “Strengthening of a conditioned response by reintroducing the original unconditioned stimulus”. “Increase in response strengthens when the response, leads to the reduction of a drive”. Reinforcing desired pupil-behaviour through the use of positive reinforcing behaviour is an integral part of learning process. This skill involves teacher encouraging pupils’ responses or any desirable behaviour using verbal statements like good, continue, etc. or non-verbal cues like a smile, nodding the hand, etc.

2. Skill of probing Questioning: Probing requires that teacher asks questions that require pupils to go beyond superficial ‘first answer’ questions. This can be done in five ways.

1. Asking the pupil for more information and/or more meaning.
2. Requiring the pupil to rationally justify his response.
3. Refocusing the pupils or class’s attention on a related issue.
4. Prompting the pupil or giving him hints.
5. Redirecting the question to other pupil.

3. Skill of Stimulus variation: This skill is related to classroom attention. It is based on the principle, which changes in stimuli in one's perception captures his attention or uniformity in the perceived environment distracts his attention. This skill involves deliberate changing of various attention producing behaviours by the teachers in order to keep pupil's attention at high level. Such behaviours include teacher movements, gestures, change in speech patterns, focusing, changing interaction styles, shifting sensory channels, pausing and such others.

4. Skill of illustrating with examples: Examples are necessary to clarify, verify, or substantiate concepts. Both inductive and deductive uses of examples can be used effectively by the teacher. Effective use of examples includes:

1. Starting with simple examples and progressing to more complex ones.
2. Starting with examples relevant to students.
3. Relating the examples to the principles or ideas being taught.
4. Checking to see if the objectives of the lesson have been achieved by asking students to give examples which illustrate the main points.

5. Skill of Explaining: In a classroom, an explanation is a set of interrelated statements made by the teacher related to a phenomenon, an idea, etc. in order to bring about or increase understanding in the pupils about it. The teacher should practice more and more of desirable behaviours like using explaining links using beginning and concluding statements and testing pupil understands behaviours like making irrelevant statements, lacking in continuity, using inappropriate vocabulary, lacking fluency, and using vague words and phrases as far as possible.

Educational Implications

In India, Microteaching is a recent innovative techniques of training teachers. It has been introduced in some universities and teachers training Institutions for the last few years as part of their regular practice teaching programme.

During the last few years so many secondary teachers' education institutions have tried this technique as part of a research project. It has been felt that a sound training strategy should be worked out which is based on the available research findings. The results of this experiment therefore have direct relevance to this need. The findings will prove useful in effective micro-teaching as a powerful supplement to the existing student teaching programme.

For wider adoption of microteaching technique is an integral part of normal pupil teaching programme, the B.Ed. curriculum, particularly the student teaching and its evaluation may be revised. Objectives should be tested in terms of teaching skills and specific teacher behaviour. Though this innovation is the only innovation which has been tried out too vigorously in

the area of teacher education, still it needs more vigorous researches. Some studies may be undertaken to throw more light on the promise of technique and its use in improving teaching competence and integration of skills in pre-services as well as in-service teachers, some studies will be conducted to increase efficiency of the technique in terms of economizing inputs, or in terms of improved output and in terms of training effects and their retention.

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