

DEFINITIONS OF MICROTEACHING

Microteaching has been defined in several ways:

Allen and Eve (1968) defined microteaching as "a system of controlled practice that makes it possible to concentrate on specific teaching behaviour and to practice teaching under controlled conditions".

Allen (1966) defined microteaching as "a scaled down teaching encounter in class size and class time".

Buch (1974) has given a comprehensive definition of microteaching as a "teacher education technique which allows teachers to apply clearly defined teaching skills to carefully prepared lessons in planned series of 5 to 10 minutes. It encounters with a small group of real students, often with an opportunity to observe the results on videotape".

McAleese, and Unwin (1973) define microteaching as a scaled down teaching encounter in terms of time, class, size, lesson, length and teaching complexity.

Passi (1976) writes that "the most important point in microteaching is that teaching is practised in terms of definable, observable, measurable and controllable teaching skills".

Singh (1977) defines microteaching as "a scaled down teaching encounter in which a teacher teaches a small unit to a group of 5 pupils for a small period of 5 to 20 minutes. Such a situation offers a helpful setting for an experienced or inexperienced teacher to acquire new teaching skills and refine old ones."

These definitions stress the essential propositions of microteaching put forth by Allen and Ryan (1969).

CHARACTERISTICS OF MICROTEACHING

The following are the characteristics of microteaching:

1. In microteaching, the trainee can concentrate on practising a specific, well-defined skill.
2. It is a miniaturized teaching in the sense that it scales down the complexities of real teaching with the provision for
 - Practising one skill at a time
 - Reducing the class size to 5–10 peer group
 - Reducing the duration of the lesson to 5–10 minutes
 - Limiting the content to a single concept.
3. Microteaching provides for pinpointed, immediate feedback.
4. As microteaching is scaled down teaching, there is no problem of discipline.
5. Less administrative problems arise as teaching sessions are organised with peers.
6. Microteaching provides an opportunity to undertake research studies with better control over conditions and situations.
7. Microteaching can be used as an integral part of teacher training in India as sophisticated gadgetry is not a must.

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MICROTEACHING—THE INDIAN SITUATION (Figure 3.1)

Microteaching as a training technique involves the following steps:

Step 1—Orientation: In the beginning, the teacher trainee should be given necessary theoretical background about micro-teaching on aspects such as:

- Concept of microteaching
- Rationale of using microteaching
- Procedure of microteaching
- Requirements and setting for adopting microteaching technique.

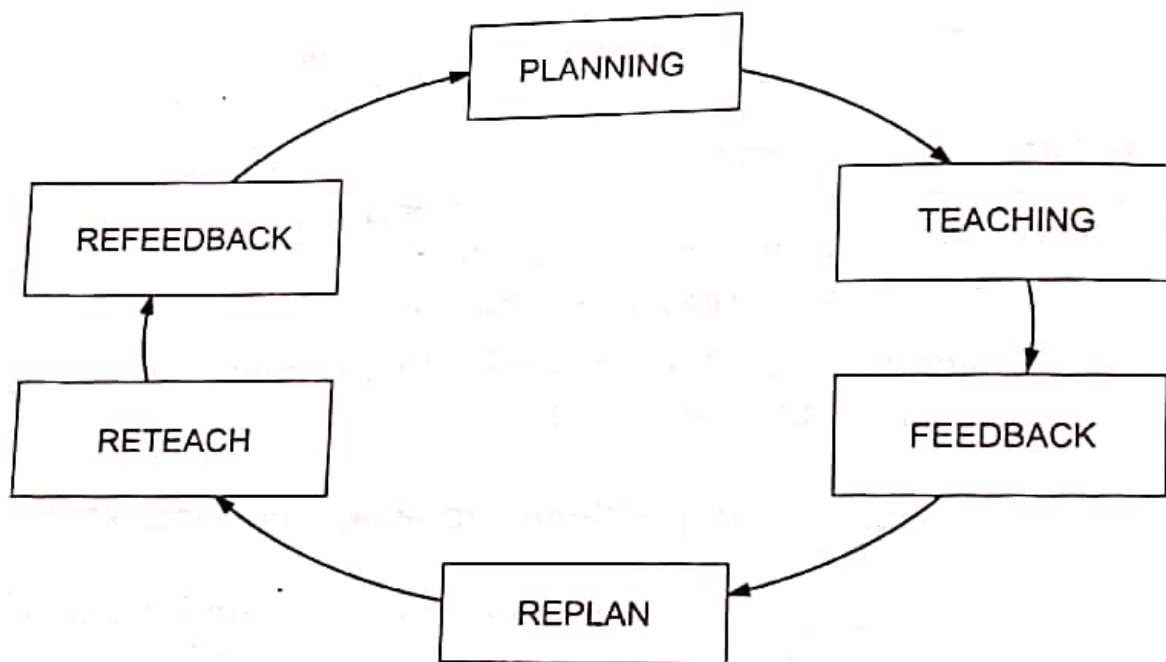


FIGURE 3.1 Microteaching cycle.

Step 2—Discussion of teaching skills: This step covers the analysis of teaching into component teaching skills, rationale and role of these teaching skills in teaching.

Step 3—Selection of a particular teaching skill: The teacher trainee is encouraged to select a particular skill and practice it. He is given enough orientation and background information to get through this step.

Step 4—Presentation of a model demonstration: In this step, the teaching skill is presented in the form of a demonstration so that teacher trainees get an idea of what is expected of them. This demonstration can be done by the teacher educator or an expert, by showing a film or videotape, by listening to an audiotape presentation, or by providing the teacher trainees with written material such as a handbook, guide or notes.

Step 5—Observation of the model lesson and criticism: Using an observation schedule, the teacher trainees critique the demonstration model micro lesson.

Step 6—Preparation of micro lesson plan: The teacher trainee prepares a micro lesson based on the demonstration viewed. The duration of the microteaching cycle is as follows:

Teaching	6 minutes
Feedback	6 minutes
Replan	12 minutes
Reteach	6 minutes
Refeedback	6 minutes
Total	<hr/> 36 minutes

Step 7—Practice of the skill as teach session: The teacher trainee teaches the micro lesson prepared by him to a class of 5–10 peer group members for 6 minutes. This is supervised by the teacher educator and peers using an observation schedule.

Step 8—Providing feedback on feedback session: This is a vital aspect of microteaching. To be effective, it must be clearly related to the model of the teaching skill used. Appraisal guides add to the comments of the supervisor and fellow students. They focus on the feedback related to specific behaviour that can be used for the analysis session or be just given to the teacher trainee with a written comment or rating of his skill performance.

Feedback in microteaching is the information the teacher trainee gets about his attempts to practise a skill. This is generally given at the end of the teaching session from the supervisor, the peer group, pupils or the video recorder. Most of these sources of feedback are reinforced by use of appraisal guide.

The general factors for the consideration of feedback are:

1. What is being appraised?
2. Are the components of this skill discrete and measurable?

Step 9—Replanning/Replan session: Keeping in mind the feedback received from the supervisor, the teacher trainee replans the micro lesson, writing another micro lesson plan or editing the existing one.

Step 10—Reteach: The teacher trainee reteaches, incorporating the suggested changes, with the same students or another group of 5 students. The supervisor checks to see whether there is any improvement in skill attainment.

Step 11—Refeedback: The supervisor assesses the lesson again, pointing out the improvements and lapses.

Step 12—Integration of teaching skills: It means the integration of various teaching skills individually mastered by a teacher trainee. This facilitates bridging the gap between the isolated teaching episode and the real teaching situation, so that the teacher trainee can incorporate the individual skills as they are mastered into the lesson.

MERITS OF MICROTEACHING

Microteaching has proved to be an efficient and effective technique in teacher training programmes.

1. The teacher trainee is made aware of the various skills of which teaching is composed.
2. Selected skills are chosen and discussed in a briefing session.
3. Microteaching simulates the classroom scene and gives the teacher trainee an experience of real teaching.
4. Feedback enables the teacher trainee to consciously eradicate or give up irritating habits and mannerisms.
5. Microteaching is economical in terms of time and money.
6. Microteaching is flexible and can be used in a variety of situations—business schools, nursing education, the police, etc.
7. The teacher trainee can focus his/her attention on clearly defined aspects of his/her behaviour. This removes problems of discipline, control and other organizational activities.
8. Patterns of classroom interaction and communication between the teacher and the students can be objectively and easily studied. Arrangements of the timing of teach/reteach cycle can be organized.
9. Microteaching caters to the need of individual differences in the training of teachers. Here, an individual teacher trainee may work for the development of teaching skills at his own rate, depending on his teaching abilities.
10. Microteaching focuses attention on the modification of teacher behaviour and improvement of interaction process involved in the teaching learning process.