

MEDIATED MICRO-TEACHING AS A REALISTICALLY EFFICIENT MODE OF TEACHING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The major aim of this paper was to critically review mediated micro teaching as a realistically efficient mode of teaching practice. It further defined the mode of micro-teaching with the use of video-recording and play-back which serves as a registered mirror to the student teacher. It was realized that if micro-teaching is properly planned exercised, recorded and same evaluated, it would have better training, assessment and impact on teaching styles than any other method of assessing teaching-practice and teacher-preparation. Therefore, it was recommended among others that mediated micro-teaching should be adopted in all colleges of education and other teachers' training institutions in Nigeria.

Keywords: Meditated micro-teaching, teaching practice, teachers education

INTRODUCTION

To evaluate the competency of a student-teacher on teaching practice is not an easy task. The purpose of the evaluation is to ascertain the extent to which the student-teacher is attaining the expected objectives of teaching. This may be done for the purpose of certification or for the purpose of improving teaching performance, (Abolade 2006). Whichever purpose it might be for, it is always an ideal thing to have a feedback on one's performance as a teacher. Ideally, evaluation of teaching should involve the measurement of both process and outcome of classroom activities or teacher in-action. But, in practice, especially in teacher education programmes, it is only feasible to measure or evaluate processes. These processes involve behavioural manifestations of the teacher interaction with the pupils or learners, and with the instructional material and the learning environment.

The focus of evaluation is on the teacher, the learner and the materials that are to facilitate instruction. This evaluation is normally carried out by three different parties either singularly or jointly. They are the supervisor or external observer or evaluator; the pupils or learners and the teacher. Whoever does, the evaluation first starts from observation that is observing the behaviours of the teacher and the learners. It is after the observation that the observer tries to quantify the behaviours observed as excellent, good, average or poor. This is not an easy task (Adu 2008).

MICRO-TEACHING AND MEDIATED MICRO-TEACHING

Microteaching is a contrived teaching in which the trainee teacher focuses

on the acquisition of certain teaching skills or the accomplishment of certain specified tasks in a scaled down class size of between five and ten students (Babalola 2009). Microteaching is based on the theory that teaching consists of a number of basic skills such as communicating, explaining, questioning, organizing and so on and so forth. (Koloade-Oje 2009). The merits of micro teaching include:

1. Although the teaching situation in micro-teaching is a contrived one, it is nevertheless teaching. What is being expressed here is that no matter how short the teaching period is, what has actually taken place is teaching.
2. By scaling down the size of the class to a smaller and more manageable one the amount time, the scope or the area of coverage of the lesson etc, the fact remains that the complexities of the classroom situation are reduced to the barest minimum.
3. Micro - teaching allows the trainee - teacher to focus upon the acquisition of certain teaching skills or the accomplishing of certain specified tasks.
4. Such focusing is made possible because of the high degree of control that can be brought into the microteaching situation thus the trainee teacher is being taught how to maintain effective class control during the normal run of the classroom teaching situation.
5. Microteaching has the enormous advantage of being able to offer immediate - feedback - follow - up performance. This in a way that the student has several sources of feedback at maximizing his insight into his teaching behaviour.
6. By being able to be repeated or relayed, micro-teaching increases objectivity in the assessment and evaluation of teacher - trainee's teaching practice (Babalola 2009).

On the other hand, the demerits of micro-teaching as stated by (Babalola, 2009) are:

1. Micro teaching does not take place under the normal and or the usual classroom setting. It is mock - teaching under a situation whereby a learner is made to assume the position of a teacher; hence "their teacher" may run into the problem of classroom management being that those who constitute themselves as students at that time are his classmates.
2. The time limit that is allowed for teaching is too short for much meaningful teaching to take place - five (5) minute is too short a time and it does not permit much detailed explanations to be done.
3. In a bid to avoid any and or many criticisms, the students' teacher becomes nervous. This is so because the students teacher is already aware of the fact that he is, standing before fault findings, hence he makes more mistakes as a result of his being too conscious.
4. Micro-teaching is costly. A lot of money goes into the procurement of video or recording materials as well as the accompanying instructional materials
5. Micro-teaching make the teaching condition unnatural because in a micro-teaching class, more often than not, the teacher trainees assume the position of students and or pupils.

MICRO-TEACHING PROCEDURES

The micro-teaching procedures are as listed below:

1. Allocation of Students into micro-teaching groups
2. Submission of proposal for teaching skill to teach
3. Submission of proposal for accompanying instructional material
4. Preparation of Mini-lesson
5. Microteaching
6. Recording of the lesson on the video-tape and or making of notes
7. Playing back of the recording lesson for discussion and criticism
8. Re-teaching (where and when necessary)

Micro-teaching is seen as a means of developing the art of teaching in the students-teachers on teaching practice first by using or applying the teaching methods within and among the mates as learners (Onasanya 2008). Here, the mates also try to behave as pupils. This method is sometimes used to prepare student-teachers ready for real teaching practice. The student-teacher is made to make some pre-active propositions, that is, they make ready the lesson-plans, prepare instructional materials and get read for real classroom teaching. They pose as learners though the real situation is not attained. However, a pace is set to practice the art of teaching. Like in normal situation, the observatory method of assessing or evaluating the classroom performance is applied. Here the supervisor (usually the teacher in training) observes, the pupils (the student - teacher's classmates) also watches to see where the teacher has not met with standards of teaching practice, and the student-teacher himself tries to meet with the standards in subsequent practises. This standard is the expected ideal behaviours which the teacher is expected to display and it is these behaviours that are assessed or evaluated.

The mediated micro-teaching employs the use of tape recorders audio, visual or ideally audio-visual. The mediated devices record fully all activities that go on in the classroom with the practicing teacher. The recordings are meant to be played back to meticulously assess every minute issues and performance of the student teacher. The audio recorders/tapes deal with hearing alone. This exposes the audible actions of both the teacher and the pupils. It helps to assess the communication skills, Morris (1974). But the audio devices do not expose the silent activities and the physical engagements of the teacher and the learners. However, the clarity of speech and current use of language can be assessed. The visual tapes or recorders such as silent films engage only the observatory senses such as sight only. It does not engage the hearing sense. Here the observers look at actions without learning any engagements. However, the device can still help to assess the teacher and learners' performances. But it is not as effective as the third device, the audio-visual records such as video. Video recorders expose all actions in voices and sights. When they are played back, there are no arguments as to what happened and what did not happen. The teacher agrees on the records, while the learners too accept the performances, the evaluators' or assessors now adjust their records to validate processes.

OPERATING MEDIA FOR MICRO-TEACHING

This is not an easy-task. The media operator himself should know what to focus on micro-teaching. These include: activities for snapshots, among which are reviewing of previous work, listening to explanations or lectures, participating in discourse and discussion, and focus on pupil's teachers or teacher-pupil's practice and drills in oral or written. Other focus centre on seat-work such as taking tests, reading silently, writing assignments, laboratory or manipulative activities or non-academic engagements which may cause distractions and noises with negative effects on learners and teachers alike are well taken care of.

The media therefore monitor all activities going on in the classroom, the role of the teacher, when they are not engaged, positive and negative performance and behaviours. The monitor exposes the conscious, subconscious and even unconscious activities of both the teacher and the pupils. All this is exposed for assessment and evaluation. The thoroughness of exposure, subjects the student-teacher to a measure of reactions for discussion by other students who are observers as well. The support offered by the mediated devices makes evaluation more vivid, meaningful and more accurate. The subjectivity of observation is reduced, or minimized. It is a mirror of actions and the student - teacher now accepts his faults, and adjusts to new suggestions. In fact, the play - back of actions on the monitor make the students and the student teacher see the realities of their performance either negatively or positively. This helps them to adjust. The recall is made easy while engaging in another teaching. Thus the purpose of evaluation is attained to improve performance (Oladunni, 2007).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is only very few Colleges of Education teachers and Universities that can boast of having these mediated devices. The old tradition of sending out student - teachers to adjacent schools for teaching practice continues without necessarily preparing them well for the task. Where these materials were available some years past when there was the oil-boom in Nigeria, some of the mediated materials have packed-up because of lack of maintenance and servicing. There were no spare-parts. And to purchase or procure new ones now seems to be an up-hill task. More so, that the manufacturers have changed to new models, leaving the old ones uncared for.

The country's level of technological development does not allow for the use of these sophisticated equipment and materials to be exposed for easy use. Lack of sufficient money has reduced the importation syndrome which usually carry much of our foreign reserves away. For Nigeria to catch-up with the advanced countries of the world, our system of Education must be improved upon to meet with the standards in the advanced countries of the world. Teachers preparation must be in line with theirs, too. There is the need for curriculum review and also there is the need for modest style of training teachers.

The role of media in education needs to be modified and necessary infrastructures provided to put the education sector on the part of modernization and the media should be available to all. Modern approach to teacher education must be made so as to expose teacher-trainees to new instructional and pedagogic models. It is therefore, concluded that media approach will help in no small way to make teacher trainees more efficient and effective in their primary goal of becoming professional teachers. Hence it is high time the education sector modified the traditional methods of teacher preparation and observation for effective and efficient purposes. Thus mediated micro teaching will help a lot in achieving this. Finally, mediated micro-teaching should be adopted in all colleges of education and other teachers' training institutions in Nigeria.

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