

Microteaching for English Student Teachers' Performance

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I. Introduction

This study aims to suggest the ways to self- and peer-analysis of student teachers' microteaching and improve their class teaching performance. It is difficult to see how microteaching can give help with the development of skills that are only observable in a real situation if trainees are teaching a microclass of other trainees. This paper will help trainee language teachers develop the skills of organizing the lessons and giving instructions by describing how they have used microteaching to practice these skills. Research Questions are as follows:

- 1) What do student teachers do for microteaching?
- 2) What do student teachers learn from microteaching?
- 3) How does microteaching contribute to EFL student teachers' performance?

II. Microteaching

Microteaching is the practical training technique which gives student teachers the opportunity to master the skills inherent in teaching in a laboratory environment before actual class experience. Microteaching is a scaled down teaching in terms of the number of students. It is focused on the accomplishment of specific objective. It is an effective tool to fine tune teaching skills. Microteaching provides student teachers with opportunities to practice teaching skills, so that they can obtain feedback in a non-judgemental environment. Through microteaching specific features of teaching are taught and demonstrated, and then students are provided feedback on their performance. This process continues until mastery is demonstrated. The re-teaching ensures that reasonable level of proficiency is attained. If mastery is demonstrated the student teacher may be directed to practice and develop yet another skill (Yusuf, 2001; Leonard, 1971).

Feedback is an essential element of microteaching. It refers to the communication of the performance of a micro teacher to him/her through written or verbal critique of recorded or live micro lesson. Feedback reveals teaching strengths and weaknesses thereby ensuring improvement in teaching. Thus, the student teacher derives the

benefit of assessing the discrepancy between his/her performance and the expected standard of performance. Through feedback using recorded videotape or audiotape student teachers are provided with objective basis for performance evaluation rather than subjective record of performance (Dillon, 1971; Leonard, 1971).

Videotape recording of micro lesson can provide richness in detail of actual teaching interaction, and also it can provide the opportunity for student teachers to analyse and evaluate the visual and aural component of their teaching. Video feedback provides opportunity for self reflection in teaching.

III. Methods

1. Participants

Thirteen third-year-college students has taken a course of 'English Teaching Practice' for this semester. Nine among them major in English education and the rest, special education. They are expected to take a student teacher training at an actual classroom. They started this course by loading some theoretical knowledge about principles of language teaching and skills with a few textbooks. The students have strong motivation and voluntarily participated in presenting their microteaching performances and reflecting them.

2. Data Collection

Microteaching stated from the seventh week of the course after studying basic information on planning lessons and teaching language construction, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and language skills such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking, among which the students selected one element or skill to focus on their microteaching performance.

The microteaching procedures are carried out as follows: (1) Lesson Planning; (2) Lesson Practice; (3) Demonstration and Video Recording; (4) Teachers' and Peers' Observation; and (5) Videotape Feedback.

Most of students practiced their planned lessons before demonstrating their performance in front of their classmates who would play roles of students. The performances were video-recorded while the other students played roles of both students and observers at the same time and the instructor was monitoring his/her teaching. Immediately after their performance, the other students added some comment about their observation based on the given evaluation chart and also better ideas for their feedback. One week later, the video recordings were replayed; the performers did self-reflections on his/her performance; the observers commented their analysis; and the microteaching was finalized with the instructor's comment. Around at the end of the microteaching course, interviews were carried out and students have written their

feeling about the benefits and weaknesses of microteaching either as an observer or as a microteaching performer.

3. Data Analysis

Collected data consist of video recording of the students' microteaching, the instructor's field notes on her observations and the interview transcriptions about the students' reflections on their practice of microteaching. First, the teacher's field notes and oral interviews will be reviewed to answer the research question 1), "What do student teachers do for microteaching?" Second, the written interviews will be interpreted to answer the research question 2), "What do student teachers learn from microteaching?" Finally, to answer the research question 3), "How does microteaching contribute to EFL student teachers' performance?", the interactions between the student teacher and their students will be transcribed and presented as the proof for making suggestion to improve their English teaching classroom performance.

IV. Findings and Discussion

1. Research Question 1: What do student teachers do for microteaching?

Students worked as a team of three or four students to prepare for their individual English teaching performance. Students practiced their teaching in advance with their own team. They said that the preparation process of the microteaching provided them with opportunities to reflect the approaches, methods and skills for their classroom performance.

2. Research Question 2: What do student teachers learn from microteaching?

As an observer, more than ten students said that the microteaching provided them with strong confidence in teaching English even though planning lessons and preparing teaching materials are not easy jobs. Four students commented that they could recognize the student teachers' mistakes and reminded them of better idea for their performance. The video feedback was very helpful in their future lesson planning and offered courage to prepare for their performance.

As a student teacher, three students talked about the negative effect on microteaching such as the tension and stress of video recording and recommended secret recording. They also commented that the feedback from peer evaluation can discourage them. Nevertheless, eleven students pointed that the practice of their English teaching performance provided them with satisfaction and achievement so that it provided a good opportunity to prepare in a more secure atmosphere for the actual student teacher training program which is expected to take next year. Twelve

students said that the microteaching provided them with a valuable opportunity to recognize and correct their bad habits.

3. Research Question 3: How does microteaching contribute to EFL student teachers' performance?

The actual interactions showed that the students tried to use English in checking the students' comprehension with the pictures shown on PPT screen, but not in directing the overall classroom activities. Only four student teachers used English only in their performance and three other student teachers used some English in guiding the activities. They tend to depend on PPT program and the Internet to present their teaching materials. They need more practice in providing students with immediate feedback to students' response and flexible actions in dealing with unexpected classroom situations.

V. Conclusion and Implication

The practice of microteaching and interviews with the thirteen students in this study observed that microteaching has been shown to improve awareness of personal habit and mannerisms; increase the frequency of use of appropriate teaching strategies; assist in the establishment of group structure and pacing of lessons; develop human-relation skills; and shift teacher's focus from concern for students.

Reference

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