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## Micro-Teaching, Video-Taping and TESL Training

By Ivan D. Muse

The conversation of any group of first year teachers will usually pause for some reflection upon the adequacy or inadequacy of their college training for preparation as educators.

Too often, the comments stress the inability of the teachers to transpose the theoretical discussions of school life at the college to the actual "trial by fire" happenings in practice.

The teacher-to-be approaches his first job with many hesitations and reservations as to his actual ability and skill to do the job required.

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Frequently, student teaching experience, which permits the only opportunity to relate theory to practice, is completely overwhelming and too complex for a student to be able to find time to concentrate upon development of specific skills or to improve upon weaknesses.

Micro-teaching, first initiated at

Stanford University in 1963, and since used in varying forms by a number of colleges, is a technique for adding relevance to the knowledge that teachers have received and for improving teacher training programs.

This technique simulates, on the college campus, the actual classroom situation with which the teacher-to-be will soon be faced. By miniaturizing the teaching act; that is, teaching a class of only five students for a shortened period of time, the teacher has an opportunity to apply and test teaching strategy in a controlled encounter.

The teacher, under this situation, can stress the development of a teaching skill or the presentation of

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a single concept without the need for preparation of a full 45 minute lesson.

The value of this approach is clearly observable within the program operation. The teacher is provided:

(1) IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK. Following the seven to twelve minute lesson presentation, the teacher, supervisor, and participants (public school students) meet in conference to discuss the teaching act.

(2) SPECIFIC SKILL DEVELOPMENT. A short lesson presentation permits the teacher to concentrate on the development of a specific skill.

(3) RE-TEACHING. A poor lesson presentation is not "fatal" to the teacher. The same lesson, with helpful suggestions from others or by self-evaluation and improvement, can be retaught within a short period of time.

## Video-Taping

Video-taping has also been used during the micro-teaching presentations. This technique is not essential for the success of micro-teaching but has been found to be very helpful to the teacher trainers.

At Church College of Hawaii video-taping is used during most of the micro-teaching sessions. During a presentation two cameras are used. One camera faces the teacher and the other the students. A monitor station in an adjoining room records on tape the teacher presentation and the student reactions.

We have found that, after the initial fear of being on camera passes, the teachers and class participants tend to ignore the cameras during the teaching sessions.

Following the micro-teaching lesson, the teacher, high school participants, and supervisor adjourn to a conference room for a discussion of the teacher presentation.

Positive aspects of the lesson are discussed as well as constructive criticism. Later in the day the teacher can review his presentation (in private) to further analyze strengths and

weaknesses.

Self-evaluation is encouraged as well as planning for re-teaching when it appears necessary.

The breaking down of the complex teaching act into simpler, more easily trainable and observable skills is very significant for the teacher.

Teachers exposed to this experience tend to feel more confident during their student teaching (at CCH student teaching follows the micro-teaching experience) and are also more comfortable when supervision of teaching takes place.

## Micro-Teaching and TESL

The micro-teaching experience has particular relevance for TESL majors.

The development of language skills requires, initially, student comprehension and oral reproduction. Practice should be designed to make language patterns automatic. Mere listening to a language is not enough as the teacher must include within her oral presentations discrimination of sound, stress, and intonation distinctions.

Student feedback should include goal satisfaction through the accurate, oral reproduction of the required phonological emphases.

## Developing Skills

The TESL major must develop certain crucial skills if he is to be successful in his teaching. Foremost among these skills are: teaching ability in commanding attentiveness during oral exercises, pacing of dialogue so as to permit sound discrimination and word recognition while speaking rapidly enough to indicate typical conversation style, and bodily cue gestures that emphasize or express certain thoughts or that tell students what to do during the oral drills.

Micro-teaching permits immediate feedback to the TESL teacher at the completion of a lesson.

In addition, the video-tape provides a vehicle for replay of the lesson presentation. Observations indicating

## ***Micro-Teaching...***      Continued from page 1

that the teacher spoke too rapidly to be easily understood, or did not use cue gestures appropriately can quickly be discussed and viewed, and then can serve as a base for the teacher to plan for improvement.

Micro-teaching and video-taping

appear to have considerable merit as techniques in improving the training of teachers.

Additional research and practice in this area should prove fruitful in further improving the training of teachers.