

Reflective Practice on Teaching Elementary Music Class by Pre-service Teachers-Based on Microteaching Technique

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Abstract

30 participants practiced their class teaching for 16 weeks. Based on Microteaching technique, each session was video-recorded and monitored for self-evaluation and on spot feedback during session. Class teaching follows a routine; a class preparation, a class set-up, a teaching practice, and feedback. As for the final of the whole session, meta-feedback was required in the form of writing, and separately processed from feedbacks of each session. Through this research, pre-service teachers have opportunities not just sharing class performance but also other participant's feedbacks on individual performance. As a result, the choices of class goals, methods of activities, and approaches to problems are changed compared to the beginning sessions, and especially participant's understanding on what is necessary for better class performance is specified and becomes more practical.

Keywords: *Teacher education, Pre-service teacher training, Microteaching technique, Teaching practice, Class reflection*

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Purpose

Teacher's teaching ability can be comparable with craftsmanship, possibly obtained only through consistent practice on the stage. Practice makes perfection and teaching practice requires in real classroom settings. For pre-service teacher's field training, there are two big categories in South-Korea; one is regular practicum, stated in national curriculum, which is held in during school semester along with other credit courses. Within 4 weeks of period, pre-service teachers experienced the real field classroom, and depending on their grades, the period of practicum can be varied from one week up to four weeks. In 4 week practicum, first two weeks usually used for orientation on designated school; senior teachers, students, school rules, *etc.* By the third week, pre-service teachers can have an opportunity to practice their own class teaching for themselves. However not every participants can have this opportunity, and also there are certain formats given as a guideline for practice. Considering all circumstances, practicum is more geared for field experience than for goal oriented training. Therefore, in training for pre-service teachers, field experience is always asked for more in quantity and quality. For efficient training, it needs more systematic approach and specified attention and goal in each step. This study is on pre-service teacher's performance ability in a classroom environment, based on Microteaching technique. Every practice by

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participants was video-recorded and analyzed. Expected goal for this study is to give an opportunity to pre-service teachers to 'see' their own teaching performance to encourage their self-motivation to get better. In this research, there are three research points.

1.2. Research Questions

- Three research questions have been set, in order to narrow down the analyzing results;
- What is the pre-service teacher's teaching process in music and is there a defined routine?
 - Sharing teaching experience, based on microteaching technique, makes any difference in participant's class routine?
 - If there is a second chance to teach, what they want to get improved or changed?

2. Theoretical Background

Two things should be understood; teacher professionalism in music, and a nature of microteaching technique. Teacher's professionalism is closely related to teaching ability in music. Professionalism in music can be categorized in two areas; one is musical professionalism, and the other, pedagogical professionalism, which is related to teaching technique. In music, class goal is often stated as 'doing so-and-so', or 'let the class feel so-and-so and express in so-and-so way'. Therefore 'performing' or 'doing' is a big part of teaching ability [2]. In music class, performing ability can be distinguished in two characters; teacher's own craftsmanship related to musical rendition and methodical performance in order to deliver content efficiently. In teaching music, these two performing ability should be well balanced for a 'good' music class.

Microteaching Technique (MT) is used as a part of CBTE(competency-based teacher education), PBTE(performance-based teacher education), or OBTE(outcome-based teacher education). It is utilized broadly in varied areas, including teacher education and training. Development of video engineering enhanced this movement and after 70th-80th, this technique has been widely used [1]. These two aspects brought up a synergic effect and MT has been broadly used as a method for improving teacher's ability related to teaching [3-4]. MT shares its foundation on activism, which is encouraging self-reflect on their own behavior through feedbacks and objectification. About MT, it has been defined in one research as; for training teachers, it requires imitating real classroom settings, which are the size of the class, class time, teaching contents, teaching methods, a number of students, *etc.* Under the similar field classroom environment, whole teaching process should be video-recorded for later review by teacher who practices teaching. After self-reviews and getting multi-channel feedbacks, designated practitioner will have a second chance to practice on teaching. He/she can change or adjust anything with one's own terms. It aims for improving teacher's teaching behavior in classroom and ultimately developing teacher professionalism[1].

3. Research Method & Process

3.1. Participants & Process

30 Participants are all junior in C-educational University and all majoring music education. Sessions were from March to June in 2016 for 16 weeks. Basic elements are also including detail class training goal, class course control, and feedback for practice result[5]. Research process designed as four steps; class plan, class set-up, class practice, and class criticism.

Table 1. Microteaching Research Process [9]

Process	Time	Contents
Class Planning	week. 1-2	Content knowledge, Understanding students
Class Set-up	week. 3- 4	Class time schedule, Class organization
Class Practice	week. 5-14	Curriculum Class goal Motivation/checking the previous class goal Musical activities & presentation Encouraging learner's participation Level rationalization & optimization Utilizing teaching tools
Class Criticism	week.15-16	Class writings, Self-reflection

Whole participants are considered as one group. First two weeks were used as for orientation. Afterwards 3-4 presenters were picked up for their teaching practice in each session, according to the subject difficulty assigned to them. Session process was planned at the beginning and shared with all. After the orientation, all participants should submit their detail subject for their presentation along with teaching material they planned to use. This 1st round for teaching practice should be followed and referenced by class elements, which described in Table 1. All submitted plans were screened by researcher to be discussed on their presentation order. Based on discussion, order of presentation subject was organized considered on a subject difficulty, a national curriculum, and a teaching grade. After the first-round list-up, each participant had an individual interview with a researcher to select the specific teaching material and chapter. Distribution for this list is the first step for 'class planning'. This stage is for sharing information on teaching and content knowledge on subject. All participants are sharing each pre-service teacher's selection for practice and his/her background reason. Participant should prepare a detail class plan based on a specific song or chapter. This class plan is not structure-focused documents but more similar to teacher's personal lesson note; a reason for a choice of song and a chapter, application of teaching tools, order of activities, *etc.* This is a 'class set-up' stage, and planned upon intensive interview with a researcher, and shared with a whole class for a reference to the rest of participants. After a 'class set-up', each participant has completed a detail practice plan. By the 5th week of research, presentation started and each presentation video-recorded. Video-recordings were up-loaded in shared site, where participants could access anytime. After all sessions were completed, every participant should write a feedback as a form of free-writing, and also self-evaluation on their own practice, along with an evaluation for the whole session.

3.2. Instruments & Analysis

Microteaching technique consists of steps like preparation-application (class teaching)-feedback-adjustment & reflection. Each step has considered following options;

Table 2. Options of Microteaching Model [6]

Category	Option
Learner	Students
	Peers
	Students & Peers
Feedback	Video recording
	Audio recording

		Evaluator
		Evaluator & Video, Audio recordings
Teaching feedback	after	no secondary teaching constructive teaching after feedback short-goal-purposed teaching after feedback
Evaluation		Self-evaluation Observer-evaluation Self- & Observer-evaluation

Peer and professional feedback happened right after presentations. Different point with traditional MT in this research is a secondary trial (re-teaching practice). After practice sessions were completed, self-reflection in the form of writing on their own performance and meta-criticism on whole process should be submitted in 15th-16th weeks.

Table 3. Evaluation Scale of Detail Class Teaching Plan [2]

Subject	Standard	Score
Curriculum content	How accurately followed on teaching order, suggested in curriculum?	
Presenting a class goal	How well connected with a curriculum, and is it used an adequate verb form, so easy to evaluate, if necessary?	
Motivating on learning	Presenting an adequate form of motivation in learning?	
Verifying a pre-requested knowledge	Teacher understands on pre-requested knowledge, and helps learner for this during class?	
Musical examples & activities	According to curriculum, is teacher including proper exempling on music & activities, and prepared enough to do with class, if necessary?	
Methodology	Class structure is properly planned in difficulty and learning order in understanding?	
Participation	How encouraging the class to learners to participate in?	
Focus of class	Is teacher considering learners interest and level enough?	
Use of teaching tools	Is teacher utilizing proper tools to help learners?	
Evaluation	Is teacher presenting adequate questions and ready to help students?	

4. Results

4.1. Teaching Process by Pre-service Teachers in Music

Class teaching process is divided into two steps; a preparation and a presentation. In here, research focus is on preparation. Preparation has two subcategories, such as 'planning', and 'set-up'. For set-up, there are three steps; teaching goals, ways of activities, and methods to deliver. As for a class planning, most of participants are followed steps, showing in Figure 1;



Figure 1. Class Planning Process

Each participant should select a subject and it is not limited within curriculum based textbook. They have to explain about background on their choice. For the first round, 3rd and 4th grader are the most chosen ones, and the level of songs is pretty easy ones, like a canon or a partially two-part choral song. After an individual interview and sharing whole group's selection on songs in first 2 weeks, song selection and teaching grader become broader and much more varied. For the second round set-up, more than 50% participants change their teaching grade to higher, like 5th or 6th grade in elementary school. Interesting point is even with an exactly same song they choose to teach, how they plan and set a target in specific time frame, a level of difficulty can be varied. For setting-up stage, they have to decide how deeply they want to teach on selected subject and what kind of teaching tools and which stage in process they want to teach, *etc.* Then they have to collect necessary information and get organized in setting up a teaching goal and order of activities. Usually activities are consisted in 3 steps. Most of them are not successive in contents. Focus of majority of activities are on encouraging student's involvement. They are not successive but rather focusing on fun and easiness to get stimulating students, in the form of games.

Table 4. Music Class Teaching Process

Course of teaching	1 st class set-up	2 nd class set-up
Learner grader	Grader in 3 to 4	Grader in 3 to 6 & regular choral activity
Teaching activities	3 nonsuccession activities, Fun, stimulating	3 successive and linear activities for a class goal & repetition possible if necessary
Teaching method	Lecture, teacher explanation	Lecture & visual materials, like multi-media

4.2. Microteaching Effects

'Sharing a class' is a self-taught activity to make one's performance objectively and be aware of one's teaching. Classroom is a unique space. It can be private and exclusive in certain way. Microteaching technique is utilized for the purpose of learning how to 'see' a class. For this research, it is structured as a cycle. From 'seeing' a class, they should be aware of what to see, and reflect what they have seen to their class, and then when their class is 'seen' by others, they are expected to know how to take this experience.

In other words, whole process of teaching is shared as a group 'together', getting feedback not just on their own performance but also feedback on other participant's practice.

Most expressed effect by pre-service teachers is on 'sharing classes'. Teaching is an action of giving, usually an idea or knowledge to someone who does not have but want to have. Therefore person who teaches usually is considered powered than person who wants to learn over situation. Teaching in front of peers, or person who is more knowledgeable on subject can be nervous. This usually directly connects with evaluation. Therefore openness in teaching or classroom is not easy for teachers.

“..having an opportunity to think deeply about teaching music is a new experience, and also very significant for me. On top that, ‘seeing’ other’s teaching in music is quite new. They all prepared quite hard and it was valuable experience to see teaching. I had an experience to teach music in sophomore without being aware of anything. If I can have another chance to teach music, I am pretty sure, I will be a different teacher from then.”

“...30 pre-service teachers were participated in this research process. Through this, more than 20 songs and music related chapters were shared and listened and discussed. It was a great experience. Different teaching goals, but sharing one purpose – teaching a ‘good class’. Different point of view even on the same subject; for example, I focused on ‘melody’, others saw different points, like rhythm, dynamics, tie, slur, format, structure, *etc.* So many different approaches were possible with one song...”



Figure 2. Microteaching Cycle on Individual Class Process

Besides about ‘sharing’ classes, recognition on music as a subject is changed; previously music is considered as a simple ‘sing-along’ class. Teaching music can be professional and depending on teacher’s ability, class can be varied in level and difficulty. Importance on teacher’s verbal expression during class is also expressed in its effect on learning, along with a choice of teaching instrument and with teacher’s action during class.¹

4.3. Teaching Professionalism through Meta-Criticism

As a result, writings, contained major points, are presented in here, and also related to improving on teaching professionalism;

“...teaching music theory suggested in a textbook is important, but more important point is how to teach. It is difficult to know how I can help students understand easier and much more fun. Still much to learn on this...”

In meta-feedback, two major categories are showing. First, pre-service teachers are most concerned on their musical professionalism. In music class, there are many examples teacher has to show how to do it, instead of telling them. Giving example is faster and instantaneous in learning than verbal instruction or explanation. Music theory is closely related to teacher’s level of understanding on specific musical piece. Even in elementary level, a musical piece requires theoretic understanding in order to play and enjoy it thoroughly. It is a professional knowledge on music. Second thing is about pedagogical method. Choosing a teaching model, how to utilize a teaching tool, and how to know about students and set the class level properly are all their pedagogical concerns and points they want to improve more.

¹ Microteaching effects on pre-service teachers training are quite varied and broad in amount. Therefore not all expression by pre-service teachers is shown in here.

5. Summary

Self-observation is a special experience. To improve a teaching ability needs time and effort. Based on microteaching technique, pre-service teachers could have an opportunity to be objective on self. Key point of being on objective is ‘seeing’ the class through self-reflection. Self-reflection is not something negative involved, but encouraging, understanding, and communicating are key factors.

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