



An investigation of teacher-trainee attitudes toward lecturing  
by Edwin Koerner Tucker

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE in Education  
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**Abstract:**

This study investigated and compared the attitudes of two groups of secondary-level teacher-trainees toward six percepts of teachings "to educate," "to explain," "to instruct," "to lecture," "to teach," and "audio-visual instruction." One group consisted of 47 teacher-trainees beginning their teacher-training program; the other group consisted of 108 trainees nearing the completion of their training.

The latter group was divided into those who had completed a course in audio-visual methods of instruction and those who had not completed such a course.

The subjects' attitudes were revealed through their rating of each concept on a set of nine bipolar semantic differential scales. Results were analyzed (1) in terms of each group's mean scale scores, (2) in terms of each group's mean factor scores on each of five dimensions of meaning; and (3) in terms of the distances each group perceived between the various concepts in a two- and a three-dimensional semantic space.

It was found that the trainees nearing the completion of their program manifested a greater separation of the concept "to lecture" from the other concepts than did the beginning trainees. The beginning trainees perceived "audio-visual instruction" in less favorable terms and with less agreement among themselves than did the trainees nearing the completion of their training. Those trainees who had completed a course in audio-visual methods gave the concept "to lecture" a less favorable evaluation than did those trainees who had not taken this course.

It was concluded that the trainees nearing completion of their program did not equate lecturing with teaching, and that a course in audio-visual methods of instruction favorably influenced these attitudes.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated and compared the attitudes of two groups of secondary-level teacher-trainees toward six percepts of teaching: "to educate," "to explain," "to instruct," "to lecture," "to teach," and "audio-visual instruction." One group consisted of 47 teacher-trainees beginning their teacher-training program; the other group consisted of 108 trainees nearing the completion of their training. The latter group was divided into those who had completed a course in audio-visual methods of instruction and those who had not completed such a course.

The subjects' attitudes were revealed through their rating of each concept on a set of nine bipolar semantic differential scales. Results were analyzed (1) in terms of each group's mean scale scores, (2) in terms of each group's mean factor scores on each of five dimensions of meaning, and (3) in terms of the distances each group perceived between the various concepts in a two- and a three-dimensional semantic space.

It was found that the trainees nearing the completion of their program manifested a greater separation of the concept "to lecture" from the other concepts than did the beginning trainees. The beginning trainees perceived "audio-visual instruction" in less favorable terms and with less agreement among themselves than did the trainees nearing the completion of their training. Those trainees who had completed a course in audio-visual methods gave the concept "to lecture" a less favorable evaluation than did those trainees who had not taken this course.

It was concluded that the trainees nearing completion of their program did not equate lecturing with teaching, and that a course in audio-visual methods of instruction favorably influenced these attitudes.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Some contemporary theorists in education, including Jerome Bruner, J. Lloyd Trump, and John Goodlad, are utilizing the research findings from several related fields to redefine the role of the teacher in the classroom.<sup>1</sup> John Goodlad, for example, discusses ". . . a changing role for tomorrow's teacher: a coordinator of instructional resources rather than a conveyor of knowledge."<sup>2</sup> If the assumption is made that most teachers, at some times, use a lecture method where other forms of presentation would better serve the needs of the class, it can be seen that the principal behavior to be changed in the adoption of the new role involves the verbal activity utilized by the teacher. The so-called "discovery" approach, the use of varied media, and the encouragement of individual study, all call for a sharp reduction of lecturing.

If a significant change in the teaching role is to be achieved it will require more than the empirical confirmation of the value of the proposed change. A good deal of attention will have to be paid to the dynamics of instituting social change. These dynamics, in turn,

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<sup>1</sup>Jerome S. Bruner, The Process of Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960); J. Lloyd Trump and Dorsey Baynham, Focus on Change: A Guide to Better Schools (Chicago: Rand, McNally and Company, 1961); and, John I. Goodlad, School Curriculum Reform in the United States (New York: The Fund for the Advancement of Education, 1964).

<sup>2</sup>Goodlad, op. cit., p. 72.

depend on individual teacher perceptions of the behaviors required by the teaching role.<sup>3</sup>

Since a primary behavioral change required would be the reduction of lecturing, an examination of teacher attitudes toward lecturing, particularly in relation to their attitudes toward teaching itself, is of fundamental importance to any program designed to achieve this change in the teacher's role. As the college and university teacher-training programs would serve as the primary agents of change in such a program, however, teacher-trainees should be regarded as the potential clients of the change program.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, an investigation of the attitudes of teacher-trainees toward lecturing as an aspect of teaching is required. Further, it is desirable to evaluate the changes these attitudes are presently undergoing during the course of a teacher-training program.

#### I. THE PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to investigate the organization of teacher-trainee attitudes toward teaching and lecturing as comparable educative processes. In addition, it was designed to measure the differences, in this organization of attitudes, between trainees just

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<sup>3</sup>Tamotsu Shibutani, "Reference Groups as Perspectives," American Journal of Sociology, 60: 562-569, 1955; and Ward Hunt Goodenough, Cooperation in Change (New York: The Russel Sage Foundation, 1963), p. 147.

<sup>4</sup>Goodlad, op. cit., p. 87.

beginning, and of those nearing the completion of a teacher-training program. It is hoped that the study will further serve to stimulate more research concerning the conditions requisite for changing the role of teachers.

#### The Statement of the Problem

The problems addressed in this study are expressed in three basic questions: (1) What is the nature of the relationship between secondary teacher-trainee attitudes toward lecturing and their attitudes toward teaching, as processes of education? (2) What differences exist, in the organization of these attitudes, between trainees just beginning, and those nearing the completion of their teacher-training program? And, (3) what effect does a course in audio-visual instruction have on the organization of these attitudes?

#### The Experimental Hypotheses

The two experimental hypotheses to be tested in this study are as follows: (1) secondary teacher-trainees nearing the completion of their undergraduate teacher education program will manifest a greater separation of the concept "to lecture" from other percepts of teaching than will secondary trainees just beginning their undergraduate program; and, (2) secondary teacher-trainees having completed a course in audio-visual methods will manifest a greater separation of the concept "to lecture" from other percepts of teaching as compared with those trainees who have not completed such a course.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Several terms are used in this report which need precise definition. Though some of them are again defined in the discussion to follow, their formal definition is included here to ensure clarity. For purposes of this study, Thurstone's definition of attitude will be used.<sup>5</sup> He defines an attitude as ". . . the sum total of an individual's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specific topic." Lecturing, in this writer's definition, is taken to mean any exclusively verbal, one-way communication, with no provision for feedback from the audience. The term percepts refers to an individual's perceptions and discernments of phenomena and processes in his environment, a definition consistent with Goodenough's use of the term.<sup>6</sup> Finally, semantic differential, a phrase coined by Charles E. Osgood, denotes both a particular technique of determining the meaning attributed by a subject to a given concept, and any instrument designed to utilize this particular technique.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>L. L. Thurstone and E. J. Chave, The Measurement of Attitude (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1929), pp. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup>Goodenough, loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, The Measurement of Meaning (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1957), p. 20.

### III. THE EXPERIMENTAL PARADIGM

Two sample groups of teacher-trainees were selected for study: a control group consisting of secondary level trainees just beginning the teacher-training program, and an experimental group of secondary level trainees who had completed their student teaching and were close to finishing their program of training. The experimental group was further divided into those who had completed a course in audio-visual methods and those who had not taken such a course.

The subjects' attitudes toward the concepts "to teach," "to instruct," "to lecture," "to educate," "to explain," and "audio-visual instruction" were measured with a semantic differential instrument, and responses between groups were analyzed along dimensions of meaning established by factor analyses of the instrument.

### IV. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It was necessary to define the limits beyond which this study was not intended to function. These limits can be grouped into three primary categories, the first of which involves the control of the variables intervening between the control and the experimental groups. The variance obtained was undoubtedly a function of many variables, including age, sex, college major, academic program, grade point average, maturation, and intelligence quotients. No attempt was made to control these intervening variables. The study only examined the differences in attitudes among the groups at different stages in the training program,

and the samples were not matched on any criteria except enrollment in this particular training program. Adequate control of these intervening variables could only be achieved in a large sample longitudinal study.

Secondly, this study examined only secondary school trainees in one university teacher-training program during one particular year. Generalizations from the results of this study to other situations and programs are not the intent of this study.

Finally, no attempt was made to determine the extent to which differences in attitude observed would imply a concomitant difference in teaching procedures among the trainees. This question is beyond the scope of this study. This study did not measure attitudes per se, but compared sets of measurements from which differences in attitudes could be inferred.

A review of the literature pertinent to the study is presented in Chapters II and III; reports relevant to the study of social change are discussed in Chapter II, while material on the theory and practice of attitude measurement is included in Chapter III. The construction of a semantic differential instrument is discussed in Chapter IV, and the findings of the study are presented in Chapter V. The final chapter presents and discusses the conclusions drawn from the study.

## CHAPTER II

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The achievement of a change in role for elementary and secondary teachers would constitute a comparatively major social change in the lives of the people involved, with ramifications that are not evident at first glance. A program to achieve such changes should therefore be analyzed as a sociological problem as well as an educational problem. This chapter will present a discussion of the significance of this study viewed as a problem in social change, with particular attention to the psycho-sociological variables involved in such change.

#### I. THE NEED FOR CHANGE

The formulation and delineation of the new roles for teachers has been stimulated, to a great extent, by rapid social and technological changes. It is the view of the proponents of the role change that no longer can teachers depend exclusively upon the traditional methods of organization and teaching if they are to fulfill efficiently their obligations in the school systems of their society.<sup>1</sup> Rather, they must apply new technological advances in order to provide education and training for vastly increased numbers of individuals, for substantially longer spans of productive life, and at sharply

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<sup>1</sup>John I. Goodlad, School Curriculum Reform in the United States (New York: The Fund for the Advancement of Education, 1964).























































































































































































































































































