

Teaching in English at SDU – Suggestions for the interaction section in the observed session

It is important that there is sufficient opportunity to fairly assess different forms of spoken English including presentation and more spontaneous interaction. To achieve this balance, the observed 45 minute session needs to include as close to a 50/50 share of the time for teacher presentation and teacher interaction with students as possible. The observed session can include any combination of presentation and interaction such as 5 minute teacher-students interaction, 10 minute teacher presentation, 15 minute group activity with teacher interaction, 15 minute teacher presentation. Alternatively the session could be organised into two distinct parts with a 20/25 minute teacher presentation to start followed by a 20/25 minute student activity with teacher interaction.

We recommend that you review the C1 criteria description for interaction and think how you will demonstrate the relevant language skills when interacting with students.

It has been noticeable that when the teacher informs the students about the session organisation at the start of the session and reminds them that he or she will need to speak English whilst being observed, the students are better prepared for the interactive sections.

Please inform the evaluators how your session will be planned and let them know if you want them to shadow you if you decide to move to different student groups for the interactions.

These are some ways in which colleagues have integrated teacher-student interactions in their observed sessions:

1. Start the session asking the students what they already know or think they know about the session's topic or theme. Once a student has offered a thought, re-frame and summarise what they have said and check with them that your summary is accurate. If students are less willing to verbally share what they know or do not know in front of the whole group, give them the opportunity to discuss it in pairs or small groups or to create group mind maps. When you circulate around the groups, check understanding, discuss and question the students' ideas and summarise their key points.
2. Plan the session so it includes a 20/25 minute presentation and a 20/25 minute group discussion/activity. During the group activity the teacher sits, for 5 or more minutes, with different groups of students and contributes to their discussions, posing further questions, checking understanding, clarifying expectations and summarising key points.

The group activities could include: a discussion about a case study or reading which was provided prior to the class; a group mind-map activity to generate discussion and to capture further ideas and understandings of an issue/concept introduced in the presentation; a web link or PPT slide with information/data to be summarised or analysed.

3. Direct the students to questions included in the presentation and ask them to discuss in pairs or groups, circulate around some of these pairs/groups and engage in the discussions, posing further questions, checking understanding, clarifying expectations and summarising key points.

If you like further guidance on these or other interactive approaches you are welcome to contact Donna Hurford dhu@sdu.dk