



Teams Observation Topic Areas and Tasks

2022-2023



The TET teams are required to choose one topic area for assessing and improving the teaching quality during the team observation rounds. The Quality Teaching Model suggests fifteen elements of teaching quality classified under three dimensions (Please read the Quality Teaching Element section of TET guide for details). Below are the seven topic areas that have been selected from the fifteen elements of Quality Teaching Model for TET team observation tasks. The team observation tasks will assist TET members to make meaningful observations in their selected topic area and be more focused in their reflection of classroom learning.

In your TET team, please discuss the seven topics below and finalize a topic area for your team's observation rounds, which your team will conduct over the next few weeks.

Use of Metalanguage (Classroom Language)

Task Objective

This task requires conducting research on classroom language both of the teacher and learners.

Generally speaking, for a statement to be meaningful, there should be an authentic reason for uttering it and it should be something that the hearer doesn't already know. This task aims to have you collect some instances of the teacher's and learners classroom language in order to consider the relative value that such language has in a learning context.

Explicit Quality Criteria (Error Correction)

Task Objective

If teachers corrected every language error made in their class, far too much classroom time would be given over to correction. This has negative implications in that it might reduce learner willingness to take risks and experiment.

Teachers necessarily differentiate between errors that require immediate attention and errors that are better ignored or treated in another way or at another time. This is one of the many choices a teacher makes in regard to learner error.

This observation task is designed to help you become more aware of the issues involved in error management. You will be attending to learner error, noting down some examples, watching for how the teacher responds and noting whether correction is given and how.

Learner Autonomy

Task Objective

Traditionally we think of the classroom as the place where the teacher 'knows' and the students are there to find out. This model of education invests a great deal of power and responsibility with the teacher. In recent years this approach has been viewed with less favour by language teachers as they experiment with learner-centered teaching and ways to hand responsibility for learning over to the learners.

This task aims to have you reflect on:

- The decisions that are made in the learning encounter
- Who makes the decisions.

Substantive Communication (Patterns of Interaction)

Task Objective

This task is concerned with how communication takes place in a classroom setting, and specifically the patterns of interaction.

In this task you will collect data about how communication is realized in the classroom.

Student Direction (Teaching and Learning Roles)

Task Objective:

Within the time frame of any one lesson, there is a range of roles that a teacher may adopt, and a range of corresponding learner roles as well. An important aspect of effective teaching is the facility with which a teacher can move in and out of these various roles and enable learners to do likewise. This flexibility itself depends on the teacher's understanding of the purposes of different stages of a lesson and a clear sense of what the various corresponding roles of teachers and learner are.

This task is designed to heighten your awareness of the various teacher roles and their corresponding learner roles.

Engagement (The Learner)

Task Objective

It is commonly recognized that active learning allows learning to be both more personal and more memorable and for these reasons, is more effective. Learners who are engaged by the lesson - by the teacher, materials, tasks, activities etc. - are more likely to have that learning make an impact on them.

The purpose of this task is to allow you to become sensitive to the fact that learning by doing embraces a large range of activities, and to analyze these activities as being cognitive (thinking); affective (feeling); and physical.

Cultural Knowledge (The Learning Environment)

Task Objective

Few would now doubt that people learn best when they are relaxed, comfortable, unstressed, interested in what is going-on, and motivated to continue. Regrettably, there is no hard and fast list of what makes an environment conducive to learning. Nonetheless, there may be a lot gained from developing an awareness of the affective factors that influence learning.

This observation is designed to refine your awareness of the learning environment. During the lesson you will be considering factors that contribute to making the learning environment one in which the students learn better.

Conversely, you will also become aware of factors that hinder or impede learning and detract from the effectiveness of the learning environment.

Broadly you are looking for factors that range from the size and physical comfort of the room, the seating arrangements, the acoustics, aspects of the teacher's behaviors (body language, eye contact, praise, tone of voice) to the classroom dynamics between students and the teacher.

One difficulty in this task is that the presence of an observer will affect the learning community in subtle, perhaps imperceptible ways. This difficulty can be minimized by your awareness and maintaining a low profile.



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CENTER OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING



OUR CONTACT



TET Coordinator: Wojod Alsuaidy
walsuaidy@kau.edu.sa



TET Trainer: Syed Zahid
szahid@kau.edu.sa



<https://eli-cpelt.kau.edu.sa>



@ELI_CPelt



eli-cpelt@kau.edu.sa



King Abdulaziz University , KSA