

## Meeting: taking turns

- Use a gesture or symbol when ready to take a turn.
- Appoint a chairperson to the online meeting. This person stays out of the discussion but gives every participant a turn to speak.
- Appoint a sidekick who can monitor questions in the chat. This often lowers the threshold to engage and creates a more informal atmosphere.
- Give each other space during the meeting to take turns. Online conversations take place at a slightly slower pace than live conversations, so some courtesy will look good on everyone as you offer others the room to take a turn.
- Online sessions give a voice to people who would normally not engage in discussions.
- Make a set of explicit rules for interaction during classes. Mention these at the start of every online class and put the rules in the (online) course syllabus.

## Pick up the signals!

- Improve your positioning in front of the camera: the better you can see someone, the more signals you get.
- Make sure your lips and hands are visible, seeing someone's mouth and gestures during speaking can help with understanding.
- Look into the camera to spark engagement. Use this when you want to emphasize your message.
- Align backgrounds during online sessions or add a virtual meeting table to enhance focus and reduce noise.

## Other tips

- Insert breaks to regain focus and control. These breaks could also be used as time where students can ask their teacher questions freely.
- Use tools such as mentimeters, Kahoot and Speechbubbles to create interaction.

# TAKE HOME MESSAGES

**Due to COVID-19 measures, classes and other meetings need to be organized online. This requires adjustments so that students can remain in touch, can learn from each other, and can feel engaged. This way, teachers can guide the learning process optimally.**

**Researchers from the research consortium Language in Interaction provide advice on how teachers and students can facilitate successful and efficient long-distance education.**

## Students: a black box?

- Ask students to actively participate and contribute to the class and to interact with each other about the subject matter, for example by asking and answering questions in the chat.
- Prompt this by asking questions regularly to keep students involved and alert.
- Mention the 'rules of conduct' at the start of the online session. Ask students to eliminate distracting stimuli in their home environment: i.e. switch off your phones and other devices. Appeal to and create a mutual sense of responsibility Say that you understand this is hard, but we have to make it work together!
- Slow the pace of your online lecture so that there's enough time for teachers and students to read up on what's being said in the chat. This way, you keep students engaged and you create time for everyone to switch from listening to reading and vice versa. This enhances understanding and effective interaction.

## Further reading

### Suggested academic articles

Dingemans, M. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interac.*, **53**(1), 188-196 (2020).

Drijvers, L., & Özyürek, A. *J. Speech. Lang. Hear. R.*, **60**, 212-222 (2017).

Kurzban R., Duckworth A., Kable K.W., & Myers J. *Behav. Brain. Sci.*, **36**(6), 661-679 (2013).

Trujillo, J. P., Simanova, I., Bekkering, H., & Özyürek, A. *Cognition*, **180**, 38-51 (2018).

### Suggestions by researchers (in Dutch):

[www.nemokennislink.nl/ga/online-onderwijs](http://www.nemokennislink.nl/ga/online-onderwijs)

[www.nemokennislink.nl/ga/online-vergaderen](http://www.nemokennislink.nl/ga/online-vergaderen)

**Contributors:** Prof. dr. Asli Özyürek, Prof. dr. Antje Meyer, Prof. dr. Roshan Cools, Prof. dr. Peter Hagoort, dr. Esther Steenbeek-Planting

