The roles of a teacher (adapted from J. Harmer)

- **Controller** *(som kontrollerer)*
  Exemplify the teacher-fronted classroom. Transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the pupils. Can inspire if the teacher has knowledge and charisma, if not ... Possible **disadvantages**: a) Denies pupils’ access to their own experimental learning. b) Cuts down on pupils’ opportunities to speak, because the class is acting as a whole group. c) Can result in lack of variety in activities. **Advantage** when a) announcements are made, b) order has to be restored, c) explanations are given, d) in a question-answer session.
  Do you think many teachers feel that this is the role they are used to and are most comfortable with?

- **Organiser** *(som organiserer)*
  Organising pupils to do various activities. Give information, how to do the activity, put in pairs or groups, close things down when time to stop. Important to get full advantage of an activity and to avoid chaos. Get pupils involved and ready. Get language right and present instructions in a logical order. E.g. get a pupil up front to **demonstrate** the activity with you. Tell them how much time they have got and exactly when they should start. When finished, organise some kind of feedback. Summing up the role of organiser: engage – instruct (demonstrate) – initiate – organise feedback.

- **Assessor** *(som vurderer)*
  What pupils expect from their teachers: Indication of whether or not they are getting their English right. Feedback and correction and grading pupils in various ways. Pupils should know what we are looking for and what success looks like so they can measure themselves against this. (Refer to **learning aims** and **can dos** in K2006.) Important: The feeling of **fairness**. Also be sensitive to the pupil’s possible reaction. Give feedback with sensitivity and support.

- **Prompter** *(som påvirker, gir råd)*
  If pupils lose the thread of what is going on or they are lost for words, we may nudge them forward in a discreet and supportive way. We want to help, but not to take over. Balance between taking the initiative away from the pupil and – if too careful – not giving the right amount of encouragement.

- **Participant** *(som deltar)*
  Traditional picture: Teacher standing back from the activity, letting learners get on with it. Later giving feedback and/or correcting mistakes. Sometimes we should join in – not as a teacher, but as a participant in our own right. Enliven things from the inside instead of organise from the outside. **Danger**: The teacher can easily dominate the proceedings. Something it takes skill and sensitivity to avoid!

- **Resource** *(som er en ressurs)*
  We should be helpful and available, but resist the urge to spoon-feed our pupils so they become over-reliant on us. Offer guidance to where they can go and look for the information. Help them to become more independent in their learning generally. It is okay to say, “I don’t know, but I’ll tell you tomorrow.”

- **Tutor** *(som underviser)*
  Working with individuals or small groups, combining the roles of prompter and resource. More personal contact gives the learners a real chance to feel supported and helped. Positive for the general class atmosphere! NB: Important to see and give guidance to as many groups/individuals as possible.
Observer (*som observerer*)

Observe what the pupils do – especially in oral communicative activities – to be able to give them useful feedback. Be careful not to be too intrusive! When taking notes on pupils’ performance, have columns not only for what they get wrong, but also what they do right. Observing for success gives us a different feel for how well they are doing. We need to be able to work and observe simultaneously, listening, watching, and absorbing. Not only in order to give feedback, but also to judge the success of the different materials and activities we take into the lessons, so we can make necessary changes in the future. This represents an important area of teacher development!

The teacher as teaching aid

Apart from the different roles and how they are performed, we are a kind of teaching aid ourselves. We *mime and gesture*, we are the most important *language models* and we provide *meaningful input*.