Putting prosody first in ELT -

Using the body and voice to teach pronunciation and comprehension

Speaker: Dan Frost

Summary

The one thing all varieties of spoken English have in common is the alternation between strong and weak syllables. Stress & intonation make up the prosody of a language, and the prosody of English is a nightmare for many learners, especially here in France, but also speakers of any non-Germanic language – and even speakers of Germanic languages to some extent. In fact, some of them just cannot perceive stress. And the unstressed syllables are even harder, of course...

This webinar will draw on (briefly) theory, research and experience to highlight the importance of teaching pronunciation – especially prosody, to English learners. We will look at why, what, how and when to teach. I am one of a number of teachers who believe that pronunciation is an articulatory skill and therefore the role of the body is extremely important – by working with colleagues in theatre and musicology, we have developed a number of techniques, activities – and it is mainly on these that I wish to focus in this webinar.

You do not have to know the IPA inside out to teach pronunciation. You do not have to use technology to teach pronunciation. Teaching pronunciation can and should be fun. And it is always useful.

Biodata

Dan Frost has a PhD in ESP/EAP, a BA in Languages and Linguistics and an MA in applied phonetics. He taught in Thailand and Sweden before settling in France, where he has worked in secondary and further education. He is currently a senior lecturer (*maître de conferences*) in Lifelong Learning in the Modern Languages Department, Université Grenoble Alpes. His teaching involves a lot of work with teachers and trainee teachers as well as learners of all ages. His main research interests are oral English, particularly pronunciation, and computer-mediated learning and motivation.

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