



English Language Teachers’ Summer Seminar 2026

Week 1: 27 - 31 July

Beyond the Coursebook: Pragmatic Approaches to Teaching Speaking and Listening

Tutor: Ben Beaumont

How can we teach speaking and listening in ways that truly prepare learners for real-world communication? This thought-provoking and hands-on course moves beyond traditional coursebook approaches to explore how we can develop learners’ oracy through strategies grounded in pragmatics, discourse awareness, and metacognitive development.

We begin by examining how speaking and listening have historically been approached, and identify where traditional approaches to teaching speaking and listening fall short in addressing learners’ actual communicative needs. With a focus on the interplay between speaker and listener, these sessions will reveal how understanding discourse as a shared, interactive process can unlock more effective teaching strategies.

Through a series of interactive workshops, you will:

- Build awareness of your own discourse features and voice quality, and learn how these impact listener comprehension.
- Explore pragmatic techniques to help your students become clearer, more intentional speakers and more active, responsive listeners.
- Evaluate and adapt published materials, turning passive exercises into purposeful, learner-centred tasks.
- Investigate how metacognitive strategies—learning how to learn—can be embedded into teaching practices to support long-term skills development.

By the end of the week, you will be equipped with a range of practical tools and insights to support your students in navigating spoken discourse more confidently and effectively.

<p>Session 1 Monday</p>	<p>Speaking & Listening: A Dynamic Exchange</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how communication is a two-way, meaning-making process—beyond just knowing the rules. • Moving beyond a dichotomy of language knowledge and performance. • How understanding the listener’s perspective transforms our communication. • Unpacking the features of our own spoken language to become more intentional speakers.
<p>Session 2 Tuesday</p>	<p>What We Say vs. What They Hear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delve into the mechanics and perception of speech—why what we say is often not what learners hear. • How rhythm, stress, and intonation shape spoken discourse. • Practical process-based approaches to improving learners’ listening comprehension.
<p>Session 3 Wednesday</p>	<p>From Textbook to Toolbox: Tailoring Materials for Your Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to make published materials work for you—and how to create your own when they don’t. • Adapting textbook tasks to support skills development, not just assessment • Tips and strategies for designing authentic, effective listening materials • Empowering students to help shape listening activities that resonate
<p>Session 4 Thursday</p>	<p>Oracy in Action: Developing Speaking Skills Through Talk and Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how structured speaking tasks can develop communication, not just fluency. • Learning to talk: Practical strategies for helping learners talk and listen with confidence • Learning through talk: Using spoken tasks to build language skills across the curriculum • Learning about talk: Guiding learners to reflect on how they speak and listen, and why it matters

Session 5 Friday	Thinking About Thinking: The Role of Meta-cognitive Skills in Language Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support your learners to becoming more aware, independent, and strategic in how they approach speaking and listening. • The role of the CEFR • Evaluating activities through the lens of cognitive and communicative development • Choosing meta-cognition activities for your students
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Please note: This course schedule is intended to give an overview of the topics to be covered in each session; however, it may be liable to change at the tutor's discretion.

Further reading (No pre-reading required)

- Cauldwell, R. (2013). *Phonology for Listening*. Birmingham: Speech in Action.
- Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oracy Education Commission. (2024). *We need to talk: The report of the Commission on the Future of Oracy Education in England* [online]. Available at <<https://oracyeducationcommission.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Future-of-Oracy-v23-web-13.pdf>>. Accessed 20.07.25.
- Thorn, S. (2021). *Integrating Authentic Listening into the Language Classroom: Practical Guidance on how to Teach Real-life Listening*. Shoreham-by-Sea: Pavilion Publishing and Media Limited.