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TITLE:

THE POWER OF INCLUSION: TRANSFORMING CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES

SPEAKER: DANIEL XERRI

PRESENTATION TYPE: PLENARY

Abstract

This plenary explores how inclusion can transform English language classrooms into spaces where all learners are recognised, supported, and empowered. It argues that inclusive practice is not limited to accommodating identified needs, but involves creating equitable learning environments in which diversity is valued as a resource for learning and community-building. Drawing on social, interactional, and neurodiversity-informed understandings of inclusion, the talk considers how teachers can move beyond deficit views of learners and focus instead on removing barriers to participation, engagement, and success. Particular attention is given to practical strategies for inclusive ELT, including differentiation, multisensory learning, accessible materials, inclusive assessment, learner voice, and the development of agency. The plenary also highlights the importance of small, sustainable adjustments that can have a significant impact on learners' confidence, belonging, and progress. By means of this talk, teachers are invited to see inclusion as both a pedagogical commitment and a social responsibility.

Biography

Daniel Xerri is an Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at the University of Malta, and the Chairperson of the ELT Council. He has published widely on different areas of English language education. He has co-edited nine books and authored over 200 publications. His work has appeared in research anthologies, scholarly journals, magazines and newspapers. His publications have generated a substantial number of citations. He has delivered plenary talks and keynotes in 20 countries and his research has been awarded international prizes. His main research interests are teacher research and professional learning. His most recent book is *Innovative Practices in Early English Language Education* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023). www.danielxerri.com