

GET THEM TALKING: Teacher as Architect, Referee and Electrician

SPEAKER:
ROBERT HANLEY

Abstract

The teacher's role is often framed as instructor, mentor, or facilitator. This webinar explores a different model—one that sees the teacher as:

- 1 - Architect – designing activities with the specific aim of triggering meaningful language use in situations that simulate real-world L2 interaction;
- 2 - Referee – managing not only the classroom but the flow, energy, and language output within the structure of challenging, game-based activities; and
- 3 - Electrician – seeking that elusive 'spark', the shared lightbulb moment when learners suddenly 'get it' and show mastery of new language

We'll explore how game-based learning (GBL) can transform English language classrooms into spaces of engagement, challenge, and authentic practice. Drawing on classroom experience and how we all naturally learn through play, we'll highlight how high-impact games boost retention, motivation, autonomy and confidence.

We'll also challenge the idea that good lessons need props, printouts, or endless prep. Instead, teachers can prepare by playing like learners, drawing on empathy and experience to design dynamic, reusable speaking activities.

Moving from the "teacher-as-performer" model to one of designer and facilitator, this session offers tools, rubrics, and frameworks to embed purposeful play into your teaching. It also invites participants to join a network of testers and tinkerers — because every activity idea improves when it hits the road in a real classroom full of stimulated learners.

Biography

Robert Hanley is an experienced English language teacher, trainer, manager and digital innovator with a passion for game-based learning. His classroom methodology has been shaped over 15 years of prioritising learner engagement—first, last, and everything in between.

Specialising in a communicative approach with teens and adults, his foundational teaching experience was being voted #1 teacher nationally by Spanish university students on an immersive 3rd level programme. His approach is paper-free, prep-light, and laser-focused on designing, engineering, and refining classroom speaking activities that spark rapport and drive language production.

Robert has led digital transformation projects for leading international schools, training teachers to thrive in online environments. He's also worked extensively in summer school coordination, quality assurance, and change management, so has been at the pointy end of English language teaching for two decades, in a variety of guises, but always coming back to one central tenet - Learners Come First.

As a director of EdYouGallery, he leads Erasmus+ training, academic strategy, and project development. Known for creating engaging language games which allow speaking production to flourish, and don't add to the queue for the photocopier, he is currently developing a publication on practical, teacher-tested GBL strategies and curating a network of reflective practitioners.

Register now!



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ONLINE, 21 MAY
@14.00 – 15.00 UK TIME