

Teacher training seminar, Moscow Higher School of Economics, 2015

Teacher training seminars (27 Oct 2015-28 Oct 2015) were organized by prof. Elena Velikaya on 'Teaching the oral skills in English'. The instructor, Robin Walker, who is a specialist in oral skills development focused on teaching pronunciation issues on the 1st day and speaking skills development – on the 2nd day. The issues covered included: English as a Lingua Franca - implications for the ELT classroom, Goals, priorities and models for pronunciation teaching, Basic teaching techniques for pronunciation, Putting the stress into English (tonicity, tonic stress & meaning), Learning to listen – teaching not testing, Have you anything to say – fluency in speaking in English, At the tip of my tongue – tricks and techniques for learning vocabulary, and Make no mistake – strategies and techniques for dealing with learner error.

The seminars were accompanied by relevant slides and supplementary handouts.

Some of the teachers kindly gave their feedback:

As an EFL instructor teaching to non-linguistic majors, I found it really valuable to have a professional discussion of international intelligibility and its role in a language learning classroom. This discussion helped us focus on specific domains of pronunciation and vocabulary, which are key to international intelligibility, so that the classroom time is used with ultimate utility. I would like to express my personal gratitude to Robin Walker for raising those crucial issues within a professional development venue.

(Ekaterina Talalakina)

The concept of English as a lingua franca seems to have been accepted years ago. Unfortunately, research into its implications for teaching is still scarce and incomplete. During the two-day seminar at the Higher School of Economics, Robin Walker helped us to look at the concept through the lens of English for international intelligibility and, more specifically, the impact of pronunciation on listening, speaking, writing and reading. The sessions were very practical, so there are a lot of things we could experiment with in our own teaching context. Thank you, Robin!

(Natalia Koliadina)