57th International Conference & Exhibition
-
16th April 2024 to 19th April 2024

Date: 18th April 2024

Venue: Brighton Conference Center

Website:
https://www.iatefl.org/conference/iatefl2024-overview

Intonation and artificial intelligence: a '1, 2, 3' plan

Abstract

Intonation may be perceived as something abstruse, but this is not really so. Artificial intelligence has come to change the picture. In this practical presentation, I will show how teachers and learners can work on English intonation in three steps. In this way, learners will be empowered to select the right tunes and produce intelligible oral texts aided by AI.

Summary

English intonation may be perceived as something indeed complex and even "unteachable" by teachers and "unlearnable" by learners. However, this need not be entirely so. Perhaps, teaching has been too closely tied to listening and repeating intonation drills that the teacher chose, a practice that usually overlooked the speakers' generation of meaning when communication is accomplished.

In present-day education, the "possession" of knowledge is no longer on the side of the teacher. In a pioneering text about a new era in the field, Paulo Freire (1993) stated that "[t]he teacher is no longer the one who teachers, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students" (p. 61). The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) seems to prove Freire right (Baker & Smith, 2019; Fengchun, 2021).

Through a '1, 2, 3' lesson plan, the presenter will show how teachers and learners can get into the experience of working on English intonation. A set of classroom tasks mediated by lab-created material and AI will demonstrate that short texts can guide learners to infer the decisions speakers make when they speak English. This will empower learners to make their own tune selections and produce them aided by AI.

Teachers will continue to be responsible for prioritizing the intonational features that are of foremost importance in a lesson plan, while learners can be empowered by AI to produce intelligible oral texts.