



From 'Ummm...' to Unstoppable: AI and Shadowing for Speaking Confidence

Many EAP students struggle with speaking, even when they have strong reading and writing skills. Fear of mistakes, low confidence, and limited practice opportunities make speaking particularly challenging. Teachers also face difficulties in providing enough speaking practice due to time constraints and curriculum demands, leaving many students unprepared for academic and professional communication.

This presentation explores language shadowing as an effective technique for improving spoken English. Shadowing involves listening to a speaker and repeating their words in real time, enhancing pronunciation, rhythm, and fluency. With AI tools, students can receive instant feedback on pronunciation, speed, and stress patterns, allowing independent practice without fear of judgment.

Survey findings reveal that while students want to improve their speaking, they often lack clear strategies. Teachers recognize the importance of speaking practice but struggle to integrate it into lessons. AI-supported shadowing offers a structured way for students to develop fluency outside the classroom.

Participants will learn different shadowing techniques, including full, delayed, and focused shadowing. The session will also introduce AI-driven fluency tracking and text generation for practice. By the end, attendees will understand how to implement shadowing effectively to enhance speaking skills.

Presented by Saman Ranabahu and Jacky-Lou Maestre

Saman is an experienced ELICOS teacher with over 30 years in language teaching, teacher development, and assessment. Currently at Monash College, he specializes in independent learning and language assessment for EAP. He has held leadership roles, including Leading Specialist Teacher and Examiner Trainer. With a Master's in Education from the University of Exeter, Saman is active in research on learner independence and assessment, presenting at conferences like English Australia. He mentors teachers and students, supports professional development, and promotes innovative teaching practices.

Dr Jacky-Lou Maestre was a primary school English teacher and has taught in ELICOS programs. She joined Monash College in July 2023 and taught in Suzhou, China, from June to August 2024. Additionally, she has volunteered with the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). Her research focuses on digital literacies and English language learning.