HOW TO ENGLISH
With Gav & Em
Free teacher practice card

How Can Teachers Correct Students Without Saying “Don’t Say That”?

S06E04 | For teachers to adapt to their learners

Teaching focus

A usable alternative often helps more than an instruction to avoid a word. We can model a form, prompt self-correction or explain why an expression fits a particular context.

Our suggested routine

1. How could we make a correction more precise? Classroom adaptation: compare feedback for She go to work with feedback for a grammatical expression that is unusually formal. In the first case, model She goes to work . In the second, explain where the original fits and offer another choice for this conversation. These examples extend the episode’s discussion; they are not exchanges heard in the recording. We can acknowledge an acceptable alternative instead of presenting our own wording as the only English available. If learners already know a form, try a short prompt and allow thinking time. If they do not know it, supply a model. Prolonged guessing may consume the exchange without clarifying the language.

After the attempt

What could learners do? What needed another model or a smaller step? Choose one useful adjustment and try the task again.

Notes for our next lesson

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Read the full teaching article and listen to the episode at howtoenglishpod.com