



## **TESOL Italy**

**Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages in Italy**

An Affiliate of TESOL International Association

Via Boncompagni 2, 00187 Roma - Tel. 39.6/4674-2432 Fax 39.6/4674-2478

[www.tesolitaly.org](http://www.tesolitaly.org) e-mail: [tesolitaly@gmail.com](mailto:tesolitaly@gmail.com) C.F. 96220500589

Rome June 24th, 2020

Dear Colleague,

In light of COVID-19, TESOL Italy made the decision to move its annual 2020 in-person convention to a virtual format.

TESOL Italy's 45th Online National Convention will take place on 13th and 14th November, 2020.

Hoping that you will consider taking an active part in the event, we are sending you the "Call for Papers" which should be returned to our office by July 3rd, 2020.

We trust these notes will help clarify the title and subtitles, suggesting some ideas for your presentation.

Yours faithfully,

Maria Grazia Maglione  
Convention Chair TESOL Italy

Maria Rosella Manni  
President TESOL Italy



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# Enriching Learning & Teaching



In the space of a very short time, life around the world has changed, caused by a rapid and dangerous virus that crashed into our lives.

We, at TESOL Italy, like to call it the “storm”, as this name reminds us of the archaic and mythical storms from which people emerged in some way changed.

What impact has the “storm” had on education? How is the teaching/learning model changing right now?

For thousands of teachers and students, online classes have become the new norm. Some teachers have already had experience in meeting students through synchronous and asynchronous mode and for them it has not been a daunting task. Others may feel intimidated, but after the first unsteady steps they have contributed significantly to the community. Both have shown resilience in facing the new scenario in this phase of their professional life. But what are the risks for students’ education, safety and wellbeing and what are the opportunities?

Is learning easier and more enjoyable? Do teachers make the dissemination of knowledge easier and more attractive? How can learning and wellbeing best be supported in this context? Has teaching improved?

Now more than ever, improving the quality and value of the student’s learning experience is a key priority for teachers, and the watchwords are: engage, enhance and interact.

By adopting modern pedagogies along with interactive technologies teachers engage, enhance and interact with students. However, using trends and innovative teaching methods is a crucial skill for teachers and it is not an



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easy feat. In fact, embedding technology leads to a change in teaching strategies, assessment methods and implementation processes.

Teachers should also explore methods and techniques to adopt and ensure quality assurance and quality enhancement in their practice. As education professionals, we must always be mindful of how well we are doing. In engaging with these innovations to enhance learning and teaching, what is the effect on the students' learning experience? Is the quality of student-teacher relationship an important factor in determining students' engagement? Are students more likely to achieve their goals when exposed to a variety of teaching strategies and technological tools? Teachers must find most effective ways to make students interact since interactive forms of work can considerably enrich the learning experience. As scientific researches have shown, innovating teaching strategies is a win-win for both students and teachers.

Are these methods and techniques effective both in face-to-face and online teaching? Should learning styles and teaching styles be matched in order to have a much more confident and active learning and teaching experience?

Finally, how can we put to fruition, once back to normal, the widespread, but forced, experience of remote learning/teaching that we are experiencing right now?

### GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ELT

Global sustainability is one of the most important challenges of our time affecting environmental, socio-cultural and economic spheres. Promoting sustainable development and communities, improving environmental health and the quality of life, combating poverty and hunger, reducing inequalities, enhancing citizenship and human right values are the priorities on the Agenda for 2030 as well as the key objectives to create a more sustainable society which meets the needs of the present and future generations.

Current education policies and systems have defined strategic objectives aiming to achieve global sustainability. In this scenario, ELT can play a crucial role in developing sustainability in education and encouraging learners to be responsible actors who solve challenges, respect cultural diversity and work for a sustainable future. Also, competence in the socio-linguistic field is fundamental in negotiations and discussions of sustainability related problems which require English as a shared means of communication.

How can global sustainability be fostered through ELT? Why is it important to embed sustainable development issues in ELT? What role can ELT professional associations have in designing and implementing specific programs and projects to make teachers more aware of the importance of sustainability in education?

As ELT professionals, educators and teachers, we need to help motivate and empower learners to change their behaviours and take action for sustainable development through innovative approaches and strategies.

Embracing the ethics of sustainability implies students' active involvement in effective learning and the development of key competencies like critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, collaboration and creativity.

### CARING FOR LEARNERS & TEACHERS' WELLBEING

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing at all ages is essential to sustainable development (UN SDG #3). This goal has become more urgent after the global earth crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the psychological impact of the lockdown. Promoting wellbeing is also one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century educational priorities and the foundation for effective language teaching and learning.



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In the current education scenario, it is more and more important to ensure the physical health and emotional wellbeing of staff and students. How can learners' and teachers' wellbeing be enhanced in ELT classrooms? How can caring for physical, emotional and intellectual wellbeing facilitate ELT and improve language learning? In recent decades psychological trends have considered wellbeing as a positive emotional state combining the personal needs and expectations of both learners and teachers. Wellbeing strongly influences teacher behaviour, classroom learning climate and students' success. In particular, the relevance of emotions in foreign language learning and teaching has increased with the growing popularity of Positive Psychology (PP) which does not deny the existence of problems but complements them with topics such as wellbeing, inclusion, creativity, resilience, empathy, mindfulness, motivation, strengths, optimism and health. This approach helps raise awareness of teachers' and students' emotions and helps develop strategies to avoid stress and reduce the risk of burnout and dropout as well as face the challenges in the classroom and in the school context. Focussing on the emotional dimension and interweaving wellbeing goals in language teaching is the key for effective learning.

### ENHANCING LANGUAGE AWARENESS AND CREATIVITY

The latest *Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages* (2019) has opened up new scenarios in the field of plurilingualism, language awareness, and language creativity. In the context of increased diversity in the multilingual classes of our schools, "language-awareness could include awareness and understanding of the literacy and multilingual competences of all pupils, including competences in languages that are not taught in the school. Schools may distinguish between different levels of multilingual competence needed depending on context and purpose and corresponding to every learner's circumstances, needs, abilities, and interests". This means that we need to reconsider the challenges and opportunities we are faced with, to make multilingualism a true asset of the EU.

Considering the inputs provided by the European Commission to improve the quality of the learning pathways and the language learning outcomes of 21st-century students, also language creativity and innovation can be highlighted as essential skills for the 21st century, especially if we consider that both skills can promote human potential by eliciting positive aspects of the individual. Given that the term "creativity" is multifaceted and complex, it is important to consider creativity from different perspectives and approaches. Creativity is the ability to see new opportunities, to produce original ideas, to flexibly adapt to changing situations, and to apply one's imagination to solve complex problems.

How can inspiring inputs, suggestions, and ideas reshape future language learning scenarios in Europe and the world?

### CHALLENGES OF DISTANCE LEARNING

Technology is changing the scenario of education, breaking boundaries of time and space, greatly expanding access to information, connecting people around the world, shaping the way we learn and teach. In the most recent decade, advances in internet-based technology have rocketed educational innovation to unprecedented levels. One of the greatest advancements in innovation has been in distance learning, which is set to disrupt the current paradigm of education. We are currently in the fourth industrial revolution of high technology and a fast-paced digital era, but there are still challenges of distance learning to resolve. For educators, "the COVID-19 Pandemic has been a quintessential adaptive and transformative challenge in the field of distance learning, one for which there is no pre-configured playbook that can guide appropriate responses. Education leaders must



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swiftly design responses – and with specific contexts in mind – as the pandemic runs its course” (OECD). What are the design responses, the necessary strategies and tools needed to integrate global competence in school curricula through distance learning and prepare young people to meet the challenges of 21st-century citizenship through? This topic is aimed at gathering experiences, projects, initiatives in this field which could represent “success stories” providing suggestions, studies, research outputs, and practical ideas for re-thinking language education in schools facing the challenges of distance learning.

## SUBMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

We expect all presentations to be consistent with the title and subtitles of the Convention. In addition, both the abstract and the summary of the proposal submitted should match the actual content of the presentation to give in November. Abstracts should be informative and carefully prepared in order to enable the Program Committee to judge the merit of the paper. We especially encourage practical workshops and interactive presentations.

You can participate by making either a professional or a commercial presentation. A commercial presentation is designed to promote products or services, such as books, programs, certifications, etc. Professional presentations should not be used for promotional purposes.

Please read the ‘Steps in Submitting a Presentation Proposal’ carefully and then clearly fill in all the items on the attached Call for Papers form. We also invite you to share this information with your colleagues, so feel free to photocopy this letter and the attached Call for Papers form and display them at your school, in your office or staff room.

On behalf of TESOL Italy, we thank you for your interest and look forward to meeting you at our 45<sup>th</sup> National Convention.

## Deadlines Summary

<b>For Speakers</b>	
	<b>Deadlines</b>
<b>Proposal Submission</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> July, 2020
<b>Paper Acceptance Notification by TESOL Italy</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> July, 2020
<b>Speaker’s Contribution Fee Deadline</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> September, 2020 (for your acceptance of being in the convention schedule program)