



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 e-mail: tesolitaly@gmail.com C.F. 96220500589

Rome, May 14th, 2019

Dear Colleague,

TESOL Italy's 44th National Convention will take place on November 15th and 16th, 2019 in Rome **at Polo Didattico, Piazza Oderico da Pordenone, 3.**

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 June 14th, 2019. 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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Redesigning ELT in the 21st Century



The famous physicist Stephen Hawking has called the present century "the century of complexity". Can the term "complexity" also apply to ELT? How can complexity be used to make sense of English Language Teaching? And what could that possibly mean for teachers? Complexity theory is the study of complex, dynamic, adaptive systems and what, if not teaching and learning a language, is as complex, dynamic and adaptive in our rapidly changing world? But that complexity also offers us the possibility to revise our understanding of language, how to teach more effectively, and in a word, to re-design ELT for the new generations.

How well prepared are we to teach the next generation of English language learners? What is the impact of the prevalent use of technology on learning? Everything happens so fast and many learners who are in the "instant community" of the internet have become impatient when forced to wait for results as in a learning experience. They have shorter attention spans so teachers have to design their teaching activities to accommodate that way of learning.

As for the students, they also need to be comfortable with adapting their behaviour in an increasingly complex environment, and teachers should be able to help them. But are we ready to provide students with practices and processes focused on acquiring and developing, among other things, also creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, self-direction, and cross-cultural skills?

At the same time teachers should be motivated to incorporate meaningful and intellectually stimulating alternatives that allow students not only to learn English but, even more importantly, to understand complex perspectives, how to use multiple media and technologies and to work creatively with others.



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Therefore it is important to explore key issues that affect English language teaching and learning today and in the future in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Treasuring Multilingualism

In a global community that is increasingly interconnected, the ability to speak and communicate in more than one language is a valuable asset and skill, which promotes mutual understanding as well as intercultural dialogue and cooperation. Multilingual capabilities have positive effects on both personal development and autonomous learning.

How can ELT nowadays promote language diversity and encourage multilingualism? What role can ELT professionals and educators have in fostering multilingual approaches and experiences? How can English teachers cope with multilingual classrooms? How can the teaching of English as a lingua franca affect multilingual education? On the one hand, ELT professional associations and networks need to support programs that foster skills in both first and additional languages and encourage governments and countries to strengthen multilingual policies. On the other hand, ELT professionals and educators should recognize multilingualism as a precious resource.

Lastly, English teachers can play an important cultural role in making learners aware of linguistic diversity, by supporting multilingual attitudes and abilities and effective classroom practice.

Fostering Cultural Awareness and Global Competence

Intercultural education has grown worldwide in response to increased diversity within societies, as the result of mass migration. As intercultural education becomes a core responsibility of schools, the attention to fostering students' cultural awareness is growing. In order to promote the students' ability to understand each other across and beyond all types of cultural barriers, educational agencies should propose the most effective strategies to address the complexities of today's multiculturalism.

How can we, as educators, stimulate discussion about cultural identities and intercultural relations? Can we adopt an approach that offers a forward-looking model for managing cultural and language diversity? And if so, how can we foster interaction, dialogue, mutual recognition and enrichment of each and every individual, with respect for those with different backgrounds?

Self-awareness of one's own identity and culture, sensitivity and respect for differences are essential values that together with the ability to understand and consider diverse perspectives can foster the development of global competence. "The disposition and capacity to understand and act on issues of global significance" are rooted in our changing world. What are the necessary strategies and tools needed to integrate global competence into the school curricula, and prepare young people to meet the challenges of 21st century?



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Focusing on Mediation in CEFR

In the past few years the notion of mediation has been the object of growing interest in ELT, and it has proven its potential in second/foreign language education and social inclusiveness. Since its introduction in CEFR, mediation has greatly evolved to a broader conceptualization which has been translated into new illustrative descriptors articulated within three categories: mediation concepts, mediating communication, and mediating a text (Council of Europe, 2018).

In order to communicate effectively in ELT classrooms, teachers need to focus on students' mediations skills and utilize mediation activities which create a positive learning atmosphere and facilitate collaborative interaction. In mediation, learners act as social agents who create bridges, solve problems and help to (co)construct or convey meaning by enhancing critical thinking and creating space for creativity (North and Piccardo 2016). The concept of mediation is also related to plurilingual/pluricultural competence as both teachers and students switch languages to help each other understand better. As a consequence, learners are more open towards linguistic diversity and can use more refined linguistic resources.

Preparing Young Learners for Tomorrow's World

Within the rich, inclusive and equitable teaching and learning contexts of the 21st century, the demand for high-quality language instruction for young learners has increased dramatically and so naturally has the need for specific theoretical knowledge and the development of new skills for all the teachers and professionals involved.

The teaching of young learners is a particularly dynamic and ongoing learning experience, not only for children but for the teachers as well. The early years of learning a language have a significant impact on students' motivation and ways of thinking (critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and innovation, learning to learn and metacognition) and working (communication and collaboration) in the years that follow. Therefore, teaching young learners involves great responsibility and poses important challenges to ensure all children develop the kind of essential (21st century) skills they need to build on in later life. But just what are these skills exactly and how can we develop these within our YL teaching contexts? What tools can both teachers and learners use? What competencies do teachers need to teach effectively and how can they develop these?



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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 44th National Convention.

Deadlines summary

<i>For Speakers</i>	
<i>Proposal Submission</i>	Deadlines 14 th June, 2019
<i>Paper Acceptance Notification by TESOL Italy</i>	29 th July, 2019
<i>Speaker's Contribution Fee Deadline</i>	4 th October, 2019