



TESOL Connections

Keeping English language professionals connected

TESOL 2022: Inspiring and Empowering ELT Professionals

On March 22, 2022, the [2022 Hybrid TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo](#) opened in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA—and online. Renowned for its big-city fun in a small-town, friendly atmosphere, Pittsburgh was the perfect host city for a Convention that welcomed, in person, more than 2,000 professionals—in addition to the more than 8,000 professionals who attended online from all parts of the world, from 140 different countries.

Convention Highlights

In addition to academic and InterSection sessions, there were a number of special events. [Preconvention Institutes](#) offered in-depth, hands-on workshops designed and led by experts on high-demand topics, such as pronunciation, family engagement, and high-impact English language teaching. The

[Graduate Student Forum](#) offered a place for master's and doctoral students to support their peers, learn about their research results, network with peers and faculty, and gain teaching ideas. There were also special workshops for SWEL (Teacher Leadership for School-Wide English Learning) and for novice researchers.

The Computer-Assisted Language Learning Interest Section hosted its free [TESOL Electronic Village](#) (EV), an ed-tech learning space for TESOL professionals—for the first time completely virtual. The virtual EV allowed participants to discover new e-tools and instructional activities and learn with CALL experts and colleagues around the world. Though the 2022 TESOL EV has come to a close, you can still interact with the [hands-on learning content](#) and view [recordings of live sessions](#) on YouTube.



To gain some individual insight into the Convention experience, view any of nearly [40 attendee interviews](#) recorded in Pittsburgh. In the video [here](#), Meg Eubanks talks about building community, her Convention session, winning the TESOL Teacher of the Year Award, and more:

Between attending sessions, visiting exhibitors at the English Language Expo, and networking with friends and colleagues, many attendees shared why they love being an English language professional. Here are a few of the reasons:

- It gives me an opportunity to inspire and impact lives.
- My students *need* to know English.
- Being multilingual breaks down barriers and connects us all!
- More communication is good for the world.
- I want to be the advocate that our students need.
- I want to do for others what someone once did for me (as a refugee).
- It is my calling!

To close the Convention, TESOL held its Annual Business Meeting, where hundreds of TESOL members gathered to hear updates on the association's growth over the past year. New board members were sworn in, which included the passing of the gavel to the association's new president, Joyce Kling, and the installation of Shelley Taylor as president-elect. Other new board members included Elisabeth Chan, Raichle Farrelly, and Kate Mastruserio Reynolds.

Popular Sessions

The 2022 Convention provided attendees with many opportunities to add to their educator toolkits. Nine hundred sessions, both in-person and virtual, covered strands like advocacy, social justice, and community building; language assessment; content-integrated approaches; and digital learning and technologies.

For a look at all sessions, download the [2022 Program Book](#) (PDF)

For an idea of what English language educators found interesting in 2022, here are a few of the most attended and viewed sessions:

- Embracing the Balancing Act: ELT Professionals Empowering Themselves
- English as a Lingua Franca in Multilingual Classrooms: Meeting the Challenges
- Using Technology Tools to Teach Reading Comprehension Strategies
- Project-Based Teaching as Solution to Online Learning in Low-Resource Contexts
- Assessing English Proficiency Efficiently and Meaningfully in the Digital Age
- Teaching Grammar Communicatively: How the Situational Approach Helps
- Modifying Materials to Make Content More Comprehensible for ELs
- Engaging Young ELs With TESOL's 6 Principles
- Designing Literacy Instruction for Today's Multilingual Learners
- Collaborative Reading in a Virtual World
- Future-Proof Competencies: The Soft Skills Students Need for Employment
- Using Comics to Promote Literacy Among ELs

- Visual Thinking Strategies: Creating Multiple Points of Entry for ELs
- The Metaverse, Unlimited Horizons, and Language Learning in Virtual Reality
- Adapting Assessment for Language Skills for the 21st Century

Keynote Recap

As always, keynotes drew the biggest crowds at the Convention, each among the most viewed sessions online. Here are some highlights from each keynote:



Opening Keynote: Hector Ramirez

Mini-Lessons Motivate Your Learners to Assemble the Language Puzzle

To kick off the event, curriculum implementation specialist Hector Ramirez provided the opening keynote to an excited crowd of both online and in-person attendees. His keynote was the most watched session of the Convention. In an hour-long presentation, Ramirez guided English educators on how 15-minute lessons can empower students to own, apply, and transfer the English language. In these mini-lessons, teachers can break down information into digestible pieces and determine what students need to know in that moment and what can wait until later, allowing lessons to be spread over the course of a year versus in just a few months.

- Hector Ramirez: “You need to change your actions to impact student learning.”

Presidential Keynote: Gabriela Kleckova

Embracing the Balancing Act: ELT Professionals Empowering Themselves



TESOL President Gabriela Kleckova and Vietnamese artist and activist Mai Khoi shared the stage Wednesday morning to discuss, respectively, preventing burnout and standing up against government censorship using the power of music. Kleckova argued that in an effort to try and do it all, educators experience a clutter of too many ideas, responsibilities, expectations, resources and opinions, which can become overwhelming or paralyzing. Through prioritization, and “deliberately reject[ing] all that is unnecessary,” educators can make active choices to determine what really matters in a specific moment, whether it be in everyday life or in the classroom.

- Gabriela Kleckova: “It does take a lot of energy to live a simple life, to pack less, personally and professionally. But we get so much back in return. Our learners get so much more in return.”



Artist and activist Mai Khoi, currently an exiled artist in residence at City of Asylum Pittsburgh, performed excerpts from her biographical song cycle entitled “Bad Activist.” Khoi’s aspirations to alter government censorship through self-nomination for a position in the National Assembly in Vietnam have come with a price: Her performances have been raided, she’s been evicted from her home, and she has been detained and interrogated by police. She continues to use her platform to fight for the freedom of artistic freedom in Vietnam.

- Mai Khoi: “I realized, we can't depend on foreign heroes to save us....We Vietnamese need to fight for ourselves.”

Thursday Keynote: Gisele Barreto Fetterman

Invisible Immigrant to Advocate

Barreto Fetterman, Pennsylvania’s Second Lady, spoke about her journey going from an invisible immigrant to an advocate for Pennsylvania residents through community enrichment initiatives. Undocumented for a decade, Barreto Fetterman learned to make herself “invisible” to keep her family safe, knowing that any trouble could result in her family being sent back to the violence they fled from in Rio de Janeiro. Now, she serves her community through initiatives like the Free Store, which provides necessities to residents, and 412 Rescue, which picks up foods to be donated to food banks, nonprofits, and shelters.



- Barreto Fetterman: “If we're afraid to talk to people who are different, we will never get somewhere better”



James E. Alatis Plenary: Helaine W. Marshall

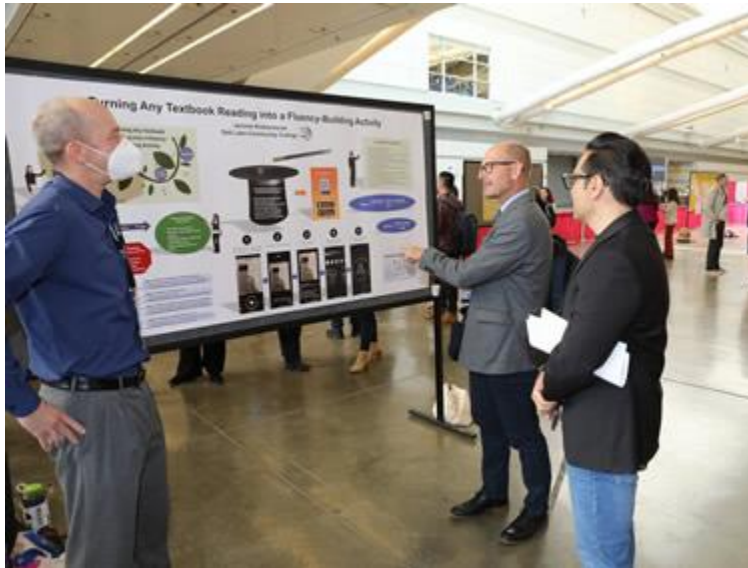
Creating Fertile Spaces for Instructional Innovation in a Digital Age

Helaine W. Marshall highlighted three innovative educators who took creative approaches in providing fertile learning spaces through collaboration and technology acquisition: Khalid Fethi, Chizuko Konishi, and Nan Frydland were able to create fertile spaces by leveraging technology to expand classrooms, build collaboration, and reinvent instruction. Fethi created an international film club to allow his students to discuss films with students around the world; Chizuko connects global universities through the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program; and Frydland innovated by using WhatsApp as an alternative teaching platform when her school, whose students were not computer literate and didn’t have access to computers or WiFi, closed. Marshall asserted that fertile learning spaces are an asset but will take patience (ideas may take years to execute) and persistence.

- Helaine W. Marshall: “In our content, we need to create conditions so our students can reach their potential and find joy in the spaces we create for them.”

TESOLers in Motion

Take a look at some awesome photos from Pittsburgh covering just a handful of the many events and sessions—see if you can spot a friend, colleague, or yourself!









TESOL 2023

It's never too early to start planning for next year's Convention, which will be held 21–24 March 2023 in Portland, Oregon, USA. The deadline for all [proposal submissions](#) is 1 June 2022.

To become a proposal reviewer, [apply here](#).