



# TESOL Connections

Keeping English language professionals connected

## TESOL Board Connect: Conferences and Professional Development

by [Joyce Kling](#)

I attended my first TESOL convention in 1998 in Chicago, Illinois USA. I was an MA student in TESOL at the time and was simply in awe of those who were presenting, the magnitude of the event (conference planning is an art!), and the breadth and depth of quality presentations focused on research and professional development. It was there I experienced for the first time the energy and excitement that ignites when professionals come together to exchange knowledge, experience, and ideas.

I relive this excitement each time I engage in some type of TESOL networking or professional development. And while we have all been thrilled to be able to meet virtually through the plethora of platforms available to us, I think we can agree it is not the same as when we can meet in person. Therefore, as we begin to travel again and meet for face-to-face events, there is an even greater heightened sense of exhilaration. The buzz at TESOL's most recent event held in June proved this. For the first time, TESOL held a regional conference in Central Asia, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and the feeling was palpable.

For the past year, TESOL has been partnering with American Councils for International Education; the U.S. Embassy, Tashkent; and the Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan to support teacher professional development and English language enhancement as part of the English Speaking Nation Secondary Teacher Training Program and to collaborate with George Mason University (GMU) to deliver the Teacher Development Training of Trainers program for Secondary Public School Teachers. [The program](#) has drawn on the efforts and contributions of TESOL instructors, coaches, and the English Speaking Nation core trainers and regional peer mentors to provide cascading professional development modules on TESOL's [The 6 Principles of Exemplary Teaching of English Learners®](#) and GMU's [Teaching English Through English course](#). This training is expected to reach more than 15,000 teachers across Uzbekistan in total. Already, almost 400 teachers in Uzbekistan have completed their TESOL Core Certificate Program.

The [TESOL 2022 Regional Conference](#), held at Inha University from 13–16 June 2022 in Tashkent, welcomed more than 500 attendees from across the region and beyond. In addition to the peer-reviewed sessions, four speakers were invited to give keynote presentations.



Left to right: Gabriel Díaz-Maggioli, Christine Coombe, Joyce Kling

**Dr. Christine Coombe** kicked off the event to a packed auditorium with a presentation focused on the quest for academic excellence in English language teaching. Through personal narratives and focused clarification of current elements of academic work, she provided a roadmap for pursuing academic excellence in the field. Similarly, **Dr. Dave Chiesa** engaged the audience with a rationalization for the inclusion of social-emotional learning in support of student success in the foreign language classroom. On the third day, **Dr. Gabriel Díaz-Maggioli** offered a broad range of techniques and procedures for continuous professional

development. He provided multiple examples of how teachers can work together to move beyond their comfort zones and challenge themselves to continue to grow over the course of their careers. The final keynote was provided by **Dr. Joan Kang Shin**. In her presentation, she discussed frameworks and practical strategies for successful media literacy instruction in our English language lessons.

Bringing together English language teaching professionals from this region for a professional conference was a huge success. Not only because of the presentations and the networking, but because this event provides a template for holding regional events around the world. Building on this momentum, TESOL will look for partnerships and alliances to provide access to regional professional development.

In addition to these face-to-face events, TESOL continues to focus on providing access to members in our virtual space. Many of you may have just participated in the annual [Advocacy & Policy Summit](#) held in Washington, DC, in

June. Looking ahead, TESOL will be hosting our virtual conference ELevate from 18–19 October, with sessions focused on student-centered learning, trauma-informed practices, and family engagement, to name a few. Of course, our communities of practice continue to offer webinars online. You can find out more information about the rich and diverse options available to you as a member on both social media and [myTESOL](#).



Left to right: Joan Kang Shin, Dildora Khakimova, Woomee Kim

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**Joyce Kling, PhD**, is an associate professor at the University of Copenhagen, where she teaches second language teacher education courses to preservice and in-service teachers. Over the course of her career, she has worked as an English language ESL and EFL teacher, program director and administrator, teacher trainer, researcher, materials developer, author, and consultant. Her research interests include English as medium of instruction (EMI), teacher cognition, and language testing and assessment. Her work appears in TESOL Quarterly, Journal of English-Medium Instruction, as well as several edited volumes and monographs. The most recent publication is a coauthored monograph entitled *The Evolution of EMI Research in European Higher Education* (2022, Routledge). She is currently TESOL International Association president 2022–2023.