

**Friday, March 11, 10:00-10:50 AM**

**Day 1 Opening Plenary:**

Barry O'Sullivan  
*British Council, UK*

**Title:**

Voices from Around the World: The Future of English

**Abstract:**

In the same way that very few, if any, people could have predicted Covid-19 and all the changes it has brought in its wake, attempting to predict the future of the English language offers a tremendous challenge. In 2006 David Graddol wrote his influential book *English Next* in which he examined the current and future trends in English language learning and teaching. The book went on to become the most downloaded book ever published by the British Council and provoked a great deal of debate on the learning and teaching of English globally.

In 2020, a team of researchers at the British Council decided to revisit Graddol and set up a global project to reflect on his predictions to both assess where English is at the moment and where we think it might go in the next 10 years. The project, entitled *The Future of English* is a multi-stage undertaking which is designed to set a research agenda with global scope and local relevance. It takes a cross-disciplinary approach to reach diverse audiences and draws on research experience and expertise from a whole range of disciplines. There are three phases to the project of which two have been completed.

In this presentation, I will revisit Graddol's predictions, before outlining the aims and structure of the *Future of English* project. I will then go on to present and discuss a number of the key findings from Stages 1 and 2 while looking to the next stage, which is already under way.

**Bio:**

**Professor Barry O'Sullivan** is Senior Advisor English Language Assessment at the British Council. He has worked on numerous test development and validation projects and advises ministries and institutions on assessment policy and practice. His work includes the development and refinement of the socio-cognitive model of test development and validation, and the design and development of the Aptis test. He has presented at many conferences around the world and has over 100 publications including his most recent book with Micheline Chalhoub-Deville entitled *Validity: Theoretical Development and Integrated Arguments* (Equinox, 2020). He is the founding president of the UK Association of Language Testing and Assessment, holds a visiting professorship at the University of Reading, UK and is Advisory Professor at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China. He has been a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in the UK since 2016, and the Asian Association for Language Assessment since 2017. In 2019 he was awarded an OBE by the government of the UK for his contribution to language testing.

**Friday, March 11, 4:00-4:50 PM**

**Day 1 Closing Plenary:**

Justin Shewell

*Arizona State University, USA*

**Title:**

Three Best Practices in Translanguaging with Technology

**Abstract:**

Language learners need all the tools available to them in order to be successful, yet many teachers ignore one of language learners biggest resources: their other languages. This presentation will discuss best practices in using technology to make use of a learner's entire language repertoire in the classroom.

**Bio:**

**Justin Shewell** has a Ph.D. in Educational Technology from Arizona State University and an M.A. in TESOL from Brigham Young University. He is the co-designer of the award-winning Teach English Now! (<https://teachenglish.asu.edu/>), the world's largest online TESOL certificate program, and co-designer of the popular Learning How to Learn a Language MOOC (<https://language-warriors.com>). He is the author of several books and book chapters, including 50 Ways to Teach Online (<https://jshewell.com>) and 50 Ways to Learn a Language (<https://jshewell.com>). He is the creator of the Perception of Spoken English (POSE) Test (<https://posetest.com>) and ESL Activities (<https://eslactivities.com>). He is a member of the Board of Directors for the TESOL International Association (<https://tesol.org>), the premiere international association for teachers of English to speakers of other languages. He has lived and worked in the UAE, Korea, and Utah, and Hawaii in the United States. He currently lives in Arizona with his family.

**Saturday, March 12, 9:00 – 9:50 AM**

**Day 2 Opening Plenary:**

Christine Coombe

*Higher Colleges of Technology, Dubai Men's College, UAE*

**Title:**

The Quest for Academic Excellence in ELT

**Abstract:**

Academic excellence is the demonstrated ability to perform, achieve, and/or excel in academic activities. Academic excellence for teachers has been identified with achieving superior performance and engaging successfully with activities related to teaching, scholarly output and service. For most of my teenage years and adult life I have been in the pursuit of academic excellence. Now as I am closing in on my golden years, I would like to share what I have learned about this topic and provide some strategies that I have found useful. We will first look at what it means to achieve academic excellence, the professional lifecycle of a career teacher, the characteristics inherent in academically successful teachers and strategies you can use to increase your levels of excellence and achievement.

**Bio:**

**Christine Coombe** has a Ph.D in Foreign/Second Language Education from The Ohio State University. She is currently an Associate Professor of General Studies at HCT, Dubai Men's College. She is the former Testing and Measurements Supervisor at UAE University and Assessment Coordinator of Zayed University. Christine has published 50+ books in various topics in TESOL/ELT. Dr Coombe serves as the editor of Language Teaching Research Quarterly (2017 to present) and as the Editor of the Scopus-indexed Q1 Brief Reports section of the Asia TEFL Journal (2016 to present).

Christine has lived and worked in the Gulf for the past 28 years. In this capacity, she has served as the President and Conference Chair of TESOL Arabia, formerly one of the largest TESOL affiliates in the world. During her tenure in the Middle East, she has won many awards including: 2002 Spaan Fellowship for Research in Second/Foreign Language Assessment; 2002-03 TOEFL Outstanding Young Scholar Award; TOEFL Board Grant for 2003-04, 2005-06, 2007-08 and 2009-10 for her work in delivering assessment training assessment in developing countries. She served on the TESOL Board of Directors as Convention Chair for Tampa 2006 and was the recipient of the Chancellor's Teacher of the Year for 2003-04. She served as TESOL International Association President (2011-2012) and was a member of the TESOL Board of Directors (2010-2013). Christine received the British Council's International Assessment Award for 2013 and was named to TESOL's 50@50 which "recognizes professionals who have made significant contributions to the TESOL profession within the past 50 years." Dr Coombe is the 2018 recipient of the James E. Alatis Award which recognizes exemplary service to TESOL. Her most recent honor was being named to the US Department of State's 30@30 English language specialists in 2021. This list recognizes ElSpecs who have made an impact on the teaching and training of English language teachers around the world in the last 30 years.

**Saturday, March 12, 4:00 – 4:50 PM**

**Day 2 Closing Plenary:**

Christina Gkonou  
*University of Essex, UK*

**Title:**

Sustaining and Protecting Language Teacher Wellbeing

**Abstract:**

The world of education is increasingly concerned with issues surrounding the emotional wellbeing of students and teachers. However, there is still much that we do not know about how the specific challenges faced by English language teachers affect their wellbeing and how teachers can be supported in practice. This talk will provide an understanding of teacher wellbeing and suggest strategies for maintaining and protecting it. Raising awareness of wellbeing and taking action to improve it does not only help to prevent stress among teachers, but also enables teachers of diverse backgrounds and levels of experience to teach more effectively and help other members of the school community to flourish and thrive too.

**Bio:**

**Dr Christina Gkonou** is Associate Professor of TESOL and MA TESOL Programme Leader in the Department of Language and Linguistics at the University of Essex, UK. She convenes postgraduate modules on teacher education and development, and on psychological aspects surrounding the foreign language learning and teaching experience. She is co-editor of *New Directions in Language Learning Psychology* (with Sarah Mercer and Dietmar Tatzl), *New Insights into Language Anxiety: Theory, Research and Educational Implications* (with Jean-Marc Dewaele and Mark Daubney), and *The Emotional Rollercoaster of Language Teaching* (with Jean-Marc Dewaele and Jim King). She is also co-author of *MYE: Managing Your Emotions Questionnaire* (with Rebecca L. Oxford) and has published a number of research articles in international, peer-reviewed journals. Her new co-authored book (with Kate Brierton) for Cambridge University Press is on *Cultivating teacher wellbeing* and will be out in March 2022.