

## Slide 1

Thank you for having me here today! I am incredible excited and happy to be delivering this keynote. It is truly an honor. I want to thank Doriana and the organizing team who have been behind this effort. Thank you, Araceli, for connecting me with the team and allowing me to be part of this initiative. Hopefully soon we will be able to meet in person.

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So, today we will speak about stories of resilience and to speak about this topic, we of course need to define resilience. We might all have different definitions on resilience based on our own experience.

As I was searching for the perfect” definition, I said to myself, the best way to look in is of course the American Psychological Association, so I went to their site and find a study on definitions and concepts of resilience. While there are many ways in which we can define resilience the APA defines it as:

**“...the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress (para. 4).” (APA, 2014)**

So, you see most likely your definitions, pretty much match this definition from the APA and also we have to note that resilience is defined by our context.

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Now, within resilience we have social and emotional learning and there are skills that we develop and that we should seek to develop in our learners. The Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergencies defines SEL as a process through which humans acquire and apply knowledge, attitudes, and skills to focus on the positive aspects of goal setting, establishing positive relationships, make responsible decisions and manage emotions.

Here I want to tell you a little bit about the Honduran context. We are as you know one of the poorest, most violent countries in Latin America, we have high levels of corruption and of impunity. This does not sound very positive at all right? Well in Honduras there are many people in the private, public sector, donors and international agency interested in helping us in our path to self-reliance. I work for one of this international donor agencies, USAID in Honduras. Our work is to precisely contribute to high quality education, support our children and youth to develop social emotional learning and connect our youth with labor market opportunities. In addition, through the volunteer work I do with our local TESOL affiliate HELTA TESOL which supports English teacher.

Our children go to school in neighborhoods where there are conflicting gangs who at times prevent them from attending school. They live in dangerous places and our job is to go into these communities with education projects and create safe spaces for learning, create community cohesion and develop social emotional learning skills. So, the work we do responds to education in a situation of crisis and crisis can vary in some countries it can be war, in others it can be climate issues and in others like in ours, violence and high crime activity. Now, we could sit and be sad, but we choose to be positive. Important to note here, there is nothing wrong with being sad, but the sadness needs to lead us into action to contribute to change.

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So today I want to share some of the stories of resilience of our country. I share these stories with you, please share in the chat your stories as well, as I would like to hear your experiences as well (so write to me). The focus will be the current pandemic and as you know it caused the whole world to pivot and for us language educators this was no different.. Today I am sharing the photos that tell you these stories of resilience. Our children had to quickly start using devices for learning, some children who had no access to the internet had to go to school and teachers had to risk getting infected, but education could not stop, other alternatives such as youth volunteers helping at home became an option as well. Instruction through whatsapp, platforms, television, radio and in person learning were used depending on the context.

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Children wanted to continue learning and as Abigail Adams said, teachers had such an ardor, passion, commitment, and diligence that they came up with creative ideas as you see in the picture using plastic divisions or using the parts from trees to create benches to teach outside. Schools in some cases opened the small school libraries to make sure learners could continue reading and learning. This speaks to the resilience of our communities and teachers. We had teachers that walked long distances to students' homes in order to review the lessons and check assignments.

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Then towards the end of the year two hurricanes hit our country Eta & Iota, it became even more difficult to reach children and youth and keep them learning. In the picture you see two stories of resilience. Children from an area called el Ramal del Tigre in the Northeastern side of our country who had to travel a long way in a small boat to pick up their school materials to continue learning during 2021. These were communities that were isolated, but their will was bigger and made them come and get their materials. Children and youth in shelter, were provided with activities to keep them positively productive even though they had lost their homes and belonging and now were living with many families in these temporary shelters.

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Parents continue to attend training we provided to continue helping their children and supporting their learning at home. Another story of resilience as our parents have low levels of schooling and we prepared guides for them to help their children at home.

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The community came together, and this has made the sad stories be stories of hope. Now, I know I am speaking to the choir here as you are as well as resilient country and I know there are many stories you can tell me of hope and facing challenges and overcoming the negative and keeping a positive outlook no matter the circumstances.

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Now, thinking about our role as language educators within the ELT world and how we must provide these elements of resilience the best tools I can share with you are the 6 Principles for exemplary teaching of English Learners. These are years of research developed by TESOL

International Association and Deborah Short, Past President and myself wrote an article on how to apply the 6 principles in situations of education in crisis. So it is a very relevant article to share with you especially after understanding that our countries go through crisis and as educators it is our responsibility to support resilience and help our learners develop these social and emotional learning skills.

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Principle 1 Know your learners

Principle 2 Create Conditions for Language Learning. Set the stage of the educational experience

Principle 3 Design High Quality Lessons for Language Development, Create quality lessons

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Principle 4 Adapt Lessons and delivery as needed, Be flexible and learn to adapt, understand we are all living challenges, and we need to be patient

Principle 5 Monitor and assess student language development, their progress and not for the sake of grading, but to understand

Principle 6 Engage and collaborate within a community of practice, Join a community of practice, like TESOL International, create your own support network where you can share challenges but also best practices.

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What are the suggested teaching strategies?

Build on your patience and create lessons that bring the best of your students and understand they might have challenges. Ensure you have available a variety of tools. If we think about technology, you can use kahoot, padlet, nearpod, if you don't have technology use photographs, stories, have learners create their own materials from things they can recycle at home. Do an online webhunt or do a home scavenger hunt and have them talk about the things they found and create stories together

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Build community within your group of learners, a support, or buddy system where they can support each other while they learn. Use TBL or Project Based Learning, to solve issues in their community and allow them to be productive and see the positive side of things even in the face of challenges, this teaches our learners resilience. For you as a teacher join free webinars, but also from time to time invest in your professional development. For example, this conference, two days of great live and recorded plenaries, live and recorded sessions, publishers materials, this is an investment for life.

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Finally, to ensure resilience we need to focus on our well-being. Is it difficult yes, but we have to. No one can give from an empty vessel. We need to refill our energy containers to serve others and the way we do that is taking care of ourselves. You can incorporate the positive habits you consider best. It can be short walks, exercising, eating chocolate or ice cream, meditating. Not doing work after hours, being with your family. The important thing is that you address all the aspects of your being. Also, how you influence the environment around you in order to make sure everyone is taking care of each other.

