

Korea TESOL Happenings and News

Autumn 2025

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Cover photo: Gwangalli Beach, Busan
By Gabriela Villafradez

Member Spotlight: Victor Reeser

Where can you find a person who lives and works on an island; is a gamer, an amateur chef, and a father; speaks three languages; studies cognitive linguistics and teaches language skills; and is heavily involved in Korea TESOL? You'll find him at SUNY Korea in Incheon. In this issue of HAN, we turn the member spotlight on Victor Reeser.

HAN: It's good to see you again, Victor, this time for an interview for Member Spotlight. Thank you for agreeing to set some time aside for this. I know you're busy with quite a number of things, but before we get into those, would you give us some background information on the pre-Korea Victor Reeser – where he's from and what he did there?

Victor: Pre-Korea Victor is from the city of Eugene, Oregon, in the beautiful Willamette Valley. He sold video games part-time and focused on finishing college. Between his junior and senior year, he spent a summer working at English camps in Korea, and even though he majored in Japanese studies, he ended up getting a job teaching in Korea just a few months after graduation.



HAN: What was it that influenced your decision to leave your home country and get a teaching job here in Korea?

Victor: I graduated college in 2009, and job prospects for someone with a liberal arts degree weren't looking too hot in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. I befriended many international students during my time in college, and I had spent time studying abroad in Japan, so I was ready to travel a bit and see what life could be like outside of America. I actually applied for jobs in Japan and Korea, and I took the first job offer I got: working at an Avalon English *hagwon* in Ansan.

HAN: I believe that over the years, you've taught a variety of different age groups and different proficiency levels. Which has been the most rewarding? The most challenging?

Victor: In my experience, university students are the most rewarding to work with. Seeing students I worked with a decade ago get jobs and start families is a wonderful thing. I endeavor to have a positive impact on my students regardless of their age or skill level, and when I see them bettering themselves and moving through life, I can't help but feel a small sense of accomplishment. The most challenging age group and level is undoubtedly preschool children. I have nothing but respect for people who work with young children.

HAN: I believe you are also a student at present — a doctoral student who is ABD, all but dissertation. Can you tell us a bit about that journey — your major, the research area you are specializing in, and what that research is revealing?

Victor: I am majoring in English language and literature and my research area is cognitive linguistics. As a relatively new branch of linguistics, there is a lot of room for new research. The primary focus of my work is connecting the semantic shift of English to multimodal communication in the form of internet memes. I have found some excellent examples supporting this phenomenon. I am also working on establishing a linguistic description of certain meme formats and considering performing a comparative analysis of popular memes in Korean and English, but that might be for later down the road.



HAN: That sounds like a really interesting path to take in cognitive linguistics. You are currently teaching at the State University of New York (SUNY) Korea. How does an international university in Korea, like SUNY, differ from a regular Korean university?

Participating in a panel presentation at the 2025 KOTESOL International Conference.

Victor: The biggest difference is that students on our campus are awarded degrees from an accredited U.S. institution of higher learning recognized the world over. SUNY Korea operates independently from the Korean education system. And while being held to the same standards as Korean universities, we have a little more freedom regarding the programs at our institution. We try to line them up as much as possible to follow our home campus's course structure while, at the same time, taking into consideration the international nature of our student body. Frankly speaking, one of the biggest differences I've noticed after a decade working at Korean universities is the high level of English proficiency of everyone I work with at all levels of administration. It makes communication a lot smoother.

HAN: What courses are you currently teaching at SUNY and to whom?

Victor: I primarily work with students in the Intensive English Center. It is an offshoot of our English language program at SUNY Korea, and all of the students have met the academic requirements to join the main university program but need assistance with their academic English skills, primarily their writing ability. I meet the same groups of students four times a week to improve their academic English. It's a lot more fun than it sounds. Additionally, I teach a course right now on general communication skills to students at FIT, the Fashion Institute of Technology.

HAN: What do you enjoy most about teaching? Do you have any anecdotes to share? Any memorable moments? From SUNY Korea or FIT, or earlier contexts?

Victor: Watching students grow over time. The fact that I have the opportunity to make a positive impact on how these young men and women interact with the world keeps me excited about what I do.

I do have an anecdote. During my time at Hanyang University in Seoul, I had a student recognize me and call out my name while I was walking to a class. It turns out the student had remembered me from about eight years previously, when I was her teacher at the Avalon English Academy in Ansan. She thanked me profusely and said she always loved my classes, that she had a great time there, and that she had worked really hard and was now a freshman at Hanyang University. I was honestly blown away. It's easy to let your passion be drowned out by the white noise of whatever's going on at work or in life. But ultimately, I find teaching to be a noble profession. Bettering myself as an educator and helping to educate the people around me is something that I love to do.



Presentation at the 2019 Thailand TESOL International Conference.

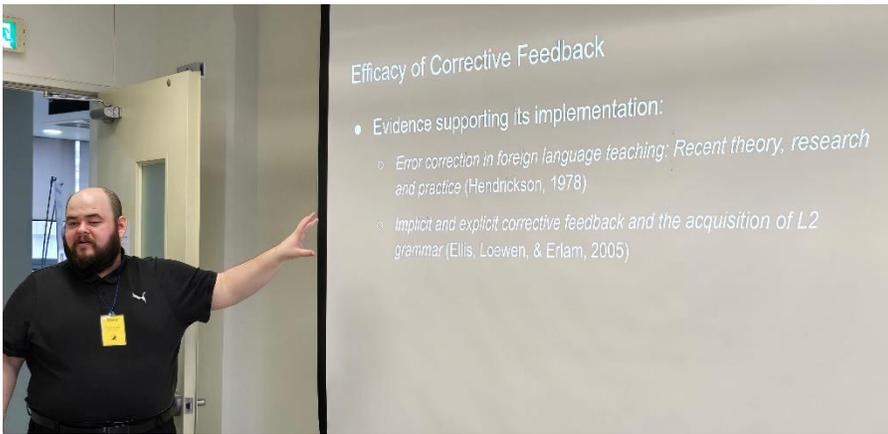
HAN: How did you first discover KOTESOL, and how did you first get involved?

Victor: KOTESOL was recommended to me by one of my instructors in my Masters of Education program. They suggested that I try giving a presentation at the international conference. I applied and had a wonderful time sitting in on some really great sessions and meeting a lot of new people who actually enjoyed their life in Korea and were enthusiastic about language education. My own presentation was well received even though I was very nervous, and I knew then that I wanted to get more involved.

HAN: Our most recent new KOTESOL chapter is the Incheon Chapter, which you played a major role in forming and now are the chapter's first president. How is the chapter growing, and what do we have to look forward to in the future? I believe that one of those things is a conference in the making.

Victor: The Incheon Chapter is thriving with new members every quarter! We have great attendance at our smaller events like bowling and coffee talks, and we hosted an awesome one-day event earlier this year, the Incheon Chapter Symposium, that had people from all over Korea. Right now, we're working on this year's National Conference. I hope we see a lot of language educators there!

HAN: You are currently also the chair of KOTESOL's International Outreach Committee. What does the committee do and how does it benefit our members?



Giving a presentation at the 2025 Incheon Chapter Symposium.

Victor: The International Outreach Committee coordinates with our international partner organizations in other countries in the region, as well as the largest organization, IATEFL, based in Europe, and the largest organization, TESOL International Association, based in the United States. We bring out representatives and host them at the international conference each year, and we do our best to try to send our own representatives to our

partner conferences throughout the year. Representatives have the opportunity to see firsthand how language education is handled in other places in the region and around the world. In addition to that, it's a wonderful networking experience.

HAN: You're also involved in KOTESOL's new website project. How is that progressing?

Victor: It has been much more challenging than I had expected to shake the rust off of this project and get everything in order to switch to the new website, but I can confidently report progress has been steady, and we are nearly ready to launch.

HAN: What are some of the things that are on your to-do list that you might want to add to your CV once they are accomplished? And also, what is on your general bucket list?

Victor: As the father of a beautiful child, my to-do list is never-ending. As far as bucket lists go, I am very much looking forward to the day when I am able to take the Trans-Siberian Express, as well as spend a few months slowly making my way through Europe, touring its historical landmarks.

HAN: And when you have some down time during the week or on weekends, what do you like to do? Any interesting hobbies?

Victor: I'm an avid self-taught cook. Food is life. I love learning new techniques, I love trying new dishes, and I love cooking for others. I have a slowly growing YouTube



Winning an onstream match at the Pearl One Smash Ultimate tournament in Shanghai, 2019.

channel where I post food content videos (@BigKoreanEats). And I am a lifelong gamer. I love playing video games with friends whenever I get the chance. I have years of experience organizing e-sports events, as well.

HAN: What do you see Victor Reeser doing in, say, five — or ten — years from now?

Victor: In five years from now, I hope to be running the department wherever I end up working. Ten years is too far into the future to tell. I'm certain I'll be enjoying my life.

HAN: I'm sure you will. What first got you interested in language education? Have you done much studying of other languages yourself?



Serving up Korean cafeteria-style garlic chicken.

Victor: My first foreign language experience was studying Japanese in high school. In college, I worked with Japanese students participating in year-long exchange programs and that got me interested in the field of language education. I studied Japanese for six years and I used to be fluent. Now I'm fluent in speaking Korean. I still have a decent amount of Japanese rattling around in my head.

HAN: In what ways do you seek out collaborations with others in the field, and what value do you think they bring?

Victor: I'm always open to collaborations. In addition to the tangible outcomes of attending events and publishing research, collaborating allows me to strengthen community while contributing to the field. If anyone seeing this interview has an idea that you feel resonates with what I do and would like to work together, please get in touch! I look forward to hearing from you.

HAN: Is there anything that you would like to say to our readers before we conclude this interview?

Victor: I hope my experiences can inspire others to enjoy working in language education. I am grateful for this opportunity to share a little of myself with the world.

Interviewed by **David Shaffer**.

Chapter News

Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter

By **Gabriela Villafradez**, President

This summer, the Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter decided to embrace the art of rest. After a packed calendar, we gave ourselves a breather and hosted just one official event in the summer and two at the beginning of autumn. Sometimes less really is more.

Summer Socials: Beach Hop Success

Our 2nd Annual Busan Beach Hop took place on August 30, led by the dynamic trio of KC, Aulia, and Tom. A cheerful crowd of chapter leaders, members, and curious newcomers gathered to soak up the sun and sand at Songdo and Dadaepo, two of Busan's less-touristed beaches. KC Washington summed it up best: "This event not only encourages socializing, but is also a way for members to quietly network and make future connections. We hope the tradition will be an enduring one." We could not agree more. Sun, surf, and subtle networking. What more could one want?

September Events: Knowledge, Networking, and a Touch of Cinema

An Evening with the Publications Team: (September 14, Zoom). Editors David Shaffer and Andrew White shared wisdom and wit in equal measure. Insightful, practical, and successful, the session should inspire a new wave of submissions from KOTESOL members. Missed it? Fear not, the recording is waiting for you on our KOTESOL chapter page.

Movie Networking Event: (September 20, Busan, Centum City). As part of the Busan Global City Grant, members gathered for an evening of food, films, and Formula 1. Viewed in supreme comfort thanks to Tempur beds, blankets, and pillows. It doubled as a fond farewell to our dear secretary, Tom Wyatt, who is off to Japan. Tom, you will be missed. Good luck in your next adventure.

Upcoming Events

DCC-BG Thanksgiving Symposium: November 15, 2025 / Woosong University, Daejeon

BG Annual Christmas Dinner: December 2025 (date TBA) / Busan

Newsletter Updates: Our newsletter will now feature paid advertisements. To start, the first two ads are free. After that, advertising will be 30,000 won for BG members, 40,000 for KOTESOL members, and 50,000 for non-members.



A fond farewell to our dear secretary, Tom Wyatt (left), who is off to Japan.

Member Achievements

KC Washington: Our VP and director of communications, KC, will be included in *KOTESOL Proceedings 2025*. Her article "Building Student Relationships for a More Fulfilling Career" expands on her workshop at this spring's KOTESOL International Conference.

Aulia Djunaedi: Aulia has been active in both presenting and publishing. At the KOTESOL International Conference in Seoul, she led a 50-minute workshop on "Maximizing EFL Adult Classrooms with Multi-Skill Textbooks and AI and AI-Free Resources." Her work was selected for inclusion in *KOTESOL Proceedings 2025*. She also contributed to *The English Connection* with her article "Literature in the Multicultural Classroom."

Looking Ahead

BG officers will participate in the KOTESOL National Conference 2025 in a variety of roles. More updates to come as we approach the big date, but we will be at the NC and have a table to meet members and new faces.

Daejeon-Chuncheong Chapter

By Eric Reynolds, President

Hello everyone! We hope you've had a wonderful summer. Did you get the chance to relax, recharge, and maybe even travel a little? Whatever you did, we hope it brought you joy. For us at DCC KOTESOL, the summer months were a mix of planning, connecting, and preparing for an exciting semester ahead!



We kicked off the semester with our Homecoming Workshop, September 13.

While many of you were enjoying vacations, our chapter was busy behind the scenes. This summer, our major focus was collaborating with the Busan-Gyeongnam (BG) Chapter to co-organize the biggest event on our calendar: the Thanksgiving Symposium. After lots of coordination, discussions, and planning, we're delighted to share that it is now officially branded as the "DCC-BG Thanksgiving Symposium." This joint effort is something we're particularly proud of, and we look forward to welcoming you in November.

Of course, summer wasn't only about logistics — it was also about recharging, sharing ideas, and getting ready for an inspiring fall.

Homecoming Workshop (Saturday, September 13): We kicked off the semester with our Homecoming Workshop: "Life in ELT Beyond and

After Korea." This was a chance to reconnect with colleagues, meet new friends, and explore exciting career paths that stretch beyond the traditional classroom.

The global TESOL landscape is shifting rapidly, and this workshop opened the door to fresh opportunities, from international teaching to roles in policy, training, and digital learning. It was the perfect space to exchange ideas and inspiration.

Upcoming Events

Buyeo Cultural Trip (Friday, October 3): We partnered with Buyeo County to offer a FREE cultural trip to the historic heart of the Baekje Kingdom. Buyeo is rich in history and heritage, and this excursion was a wonderful way to connect, learn, and relax with fellow members.

Buyeo (부여) Cultural Trip

With Korea TESOL's Daejeon-Chungcheong Chapter!

DCC-BG Thanksgiving Symposium (Saturday, November 15): Our 22nd Annual Thanksgiving

Symposium is just around the corner — and this year it's bigger than ever! Co-hosted with the Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter, the symposium will take place at Woosong University's West Campus (Building W16) in Daejeon. Registration opens at 9:00 a.m., and it's a full day of presentations, discussions, and networking, with the theme of "The Future of English: Technology, Policy, EMI, Artificial Intelligence, and More." Find the [Call for Papers](#) and [Pre-registration](#) pages here! Pre-Registration Deadline is Wednesday, November 5.

We truly hope you'll join us — whether as a presenter, participant, or both. It's going to be an event full of energy, learning, and community.

Wrapping Up

So, how was *our* summer? Busy, fulfilling, and full of anticipation for what's next! Between chapter meetings, planning sessions, and our exciting

The 22nd Annual DCC-BG KOTESOL Thanksgiving Symposium and Dinner

Join Us to Explore the Trajectory of English in Education

THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH

Technology, Policy, EMI, Artificial Intelligence, & More

Join Us Saturday November 15th, 2025
At Woosong University, Daejeon

Enjoy an exciting event with a Thanksgiving Dinner provided by Ugly Delicious AGAIN!

Pre-Register Now!
(ends Nov. 05)

forms.gle/RiGY3mfTogjR9Bo27
dckotesol@gmail.com for Inquiries

partnership with the BG Chapter, we're entering the fall semester with great momentum.

We're looking forward to seeing you at one (or all!) of our upcoming events — whether you're reconnecting, exploring new opportunities, diving into professional development, or just enjoying the company of fellow educators.

Here's to an amazing semester ahead!

Gangwon Chapter

By Michael Free, President

What has Gangwon been doing? Here you go!

Recent Meetings: We hosted a meeting on July 9, which was well attended. Dr. Robert Stroud of Hosei University followed up on his sessions at the International Conference. His talk was called "Engagement in the AI Era: What Are We Missing." It engendered quite a bit of productive discussion! We also had a small workshop on August 23, where Michael Free and a small, attentive group examined the design and use of chatbots in the language classroom. Claudia Tumba, Gangwon's rising star, gave a workshop for the Seoul Chapter: "How to Use Drama Techniques to Help Our Students Give Better Presentations."

Upcoming Happenings: Gangwon Chapter will be supporting the upcoming National Conference with Michael Free giving a workshop on scaffolding and improved prompts as well as (perhaps) bringing some cake for the organizers. Michael will also have a short piece on AI policy at the classroom level published in *The University Grapevine* in November. You can also see him traveling south to attend and hopefully present something at DCC-BG KOTESOL's annual Thanksgiving symposium.

Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter

By Dr. Maria Lisak, President

As summer winds down and the fall semester kicks off, the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter of KOTESOL has much to reflect on... and much to look forward

to. From intercultural exchanges to heartfelt farewells, our community continues to show how language teaching goes hand in hand with connection, care, and creativity.

Summer & Early Fall Highlights

July: Pizza, Potluck, & Professional Exchange

On July 3, our chapter welcomed about 20 visiting English teachers from Mongolia at the GNUE English Café for a lively pizza-and-potluck gathering. With around 30 participants total, this event blended shared food with shared ideas, offering an unforgettable space for intercultural dialogue.



Mongolian teachers participating in a workshop by Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter officer Bryan Hale just prior to the chapter dinner.

August: A Farewell to Buukgan

On August 16, we gathered for dinner at Buukgan to mark the restaurant's closing. This small venue has long hosted our after-workshop meals, making it a bittersweet evening of shared stories and reflections. Eight members came together, reminding us of the important role that local businesses play in sustaining our chapter's fellowship, especially in the post-COVID era.

September: Workshop, Swapshop, & Potluck

On September 13, we returned to GNUE for a full community day:

- Workshop: "Understanding the SDGs: 17 Goals to Change the World" by Eunhee Yoo.
- Swapshop: Members shared quick teaching activities and classroom ideas.
- Potluck: A shared meal brought everyone together to round out the day.

It was a free, open-to-all event that welcomed both long-time members and newcomers into the fold.



On September 13, Eunhee Yoo held a workshop, "Understanding the SDGs: 17 Goals to Change the World."

What's Coming Up

October: Holiday Pause, Maybe a Meet-Up

With Chuseok and national holidays filling the calendar, October is a quieter month. If at least 10 members are interested, we'll host a social gathering: possibly a trip to Hampyeong, a Coffee Connection, or a casual dinner.

November: Workshops & Independent Learning Panel

Our November event will feature:

- "Go Fish for English" (Ingrid Zwaal, Young Learners focus)
- Independent Language Learning Panel (Jocelyn Wright, on TOPIK and KIIP; Jocelyn Pages, on language exchange clubs)

December: AI + Elections

We're planning a double workshop on AI in language teaching (Michael Free from Gangwon Chapter will join us) alongside our chapter elections.

Reflections & Challenges

Like many volunteer organizations, we face the ongoing challenge of attrition and mobility. Some members travel long distances to attend, while others relocate to new cities for work. At the same time, fresh voices and energy, like new member Jocelyn Pages, continue to strengthen our chapter.

We also see differing opinions on whether summer and winter breaks should mean a pause in events. Attendance typically ranges between 8–13 participants, yet gatherings like July’s exchange with Mongolian teachers show the potential to grow and connect in meaningful ways.

Looking Ahead

The Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter thrives on its ebb and flow of members, ideas, and energy. Whether you’ve been with us for years or are just discovering KOTESOL, we welcome you to join us at an upcoming event, share a meal, or contribute your voice to our diverse teaching community.

Gyeonggi Chapter

By **André Jacobs**, President

Gyoko has been running wild the past few months.

We launched the Gyeonggi KOTESOL Teacher Training initiative with an online workshop featuring Wesley Martin, Andisiwe Khuzwayo, Park ShinYeop and André Jacobs. The workshop went a little over time, but a lot was shared and the need for more of the same was agreed on by all participants.

The Gyoko Podcast crew, comprised of Greg Lewis, Nick Ni, and André Jacobs, next made their way down south for an interview with Dr. Alvaro Fuentes of Jeonbuk National University in Jeonju. We talked about “AI in Education: The Potential, Reality, and Dangers.” Dr. Fuentes is hoping to collaborate further with KOTESOL on developing an AI education program.

Next, our very own Rhett Burton presented an online pecha kucha on “Bootstrapping Partial Knowledge.” It was enjoyably informative and Rhett was in his element. We learnt a lot about teaching, as well as a few tidbits about Rhett’s wise grandmother. Fun was had by all present.

In September, Gyoko Podcast ventured into Seoul to visit the 2025 EdTech Fair at COEX mall. We met up with Sophie, director of Sophie’s English

Planet from Gimhae, and Nick shot some footage and did an excellent interview.

Finally, Greg Lewis and André Jacobs had an interview with Dr. David Tizzard and Courtney McLaren on the ongoing K-Pop Demon Hunters phenomenon. We learnt a lot about Hallyu and what it means to be a K-pop fan.



The Gyoko Podcast crew, with Courtney McLaren and Dr. David Tizzard, talk K-pop, demons, and the Hallyu phenomenon.

For more information on any of the above events, please visit our website at Gyoko.org. There you will find links to the interviews and workshops.

Incheon Chapter

By **Madison Brand**, Vice President

As many members were busy or out of town during the hot summer months, Incheon Chapter took two months off from our monthly meetups in July and August, but we recently kicked off again in September with a casual meetup at Coffee Bean on Triple Street. Enjoying both coffee and conversation, attendees were able to chat about the start to the fall semester as well as recent teaching highlights and challenges.

Otherwise, the chapter has primarily focused on preparing to host the KOTESOL National Conference 2025. The conference theme is “Transforming Voices: Inspiring Identity and Agency,” and it will be held at the local university, SUNY Korea, on Saturday, October 18, 2025.

Victor Reeser, Elizabeth May, Corrine Spencer, Chris Houghton, Cassandra Santos, and Madison Brand have come together to form the conference committee, and as the conference date rolls ever closer, we have been working hard to ensure that submissions, registration, and the day of the conference proceed smoothly.

To highlight a few other member achievements this quarter, Dr. Brandy Bippes recently started a podcast titled *Voices Between Worlds*, which explores how writing fosters connections between people across different languages, cultures, and educational systems ([Check the podcast out here!](#)) Additionally, Corrine Spencer presented at Jeonju-North Jeolla KOTESOL's September 6 event on the topic of "Emergency English for Non-Native Speakers: Vocabulary Building for Safety and Wellness."



Corrine Spencer (Incheon Chapter) presenting at Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter's September 6 event.

We look forward to the cooler temperatures of autumn, and with them, the swiftly approaching KOTESOL National Conference 2025. We hope to see you all there!

Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter

By Ingrid Zwaal, Treasurer

JNJ had a quiet summer. The executive met several times, in person and online, to plan for our September opener. We even made new name tags with four QR codes on the back of them chock full

of information! We had moved to Jeonbuk University at the end of last semester, but we wanted to start the fall off with a bang. We changed rooms and floors in the College of Education building and for this event we set up a silent auction.

JNJ is a small chapter and paying for speakers' travel and other incidentals help us run through membership money quickly. So our president came up with the idea of a silent auction with donated books, games and teaching materials. It was also a way for some of us to clean out our homes a little. We called it "Put the Fun in 'Fundraiser.'" It was a little strenuous and very busy, but ultimately successful in terms of attendance and profit: we made enough to cover all expenses for the next six months.

Instead of two main speakers, we just had one. Corrine Spencer spoke on emergency English for non-native speakers and vocabulary building for safety and wellness. Were you here for Covid and the constant alerts on your phone? Well, they have those in other countries too. But imagine if you get a message and not only are the words beyond your vocabulary, but you need to respond immediately for your safety? She told us about an active shooter warning to avoid the cafeteria, but a foreign student misunderstood and ran toward the cafeteria looking for safety. Luckily the student wasn't harmed. I

always try to include life skill lessons in class, but this never occurred to me. Valuable information indeed.

We are taking a break in October because of the National Conference in Incheon, but we may plan to have a group activity as yet to be announced. Perhaps a movie. November 1 sees us with a regular workshop and another in December. Plans are starting for a regional conference in March; more details as they become available. I would like to thank all the members who contributed their hard work and all the bidders who helped make the first meeting of the fall such a success!

Seoul Chapter

By Christopher Miller, President

The Seoul Chapter was modestly active over the summer. We hosted an online event on July 2, facilitated by Stewart Gray. He delivered a presentation entitled "AI Cheating: How to Respond as Teachers and as Institutions." The event was well attended and well received, with 19 participants in total. On July 12, we held a reflective practice event in the Gangnam area. It was a great opportunity to reflect on our successes and opportunities for growth related to the prior semester.



On September 20, Claudia Tumba presented on "How to use drama techniques to help your students give better presentations."

We kicked back into action on September 20 with a fantastic event featuring two dynamic speakers. Claudia Tumba presented on "How to Use Drama Techniques to Help Your Students Give Better Presentations." On top of this, Wesley Martin offered the Seoul KOTESOL community "Humor, Metaphor, Global Crisis, and the EFL Classroom." The presentations were interactive and both had many concrete takeaways for our attendees.



On September 20, Wesley Martin presented on "Humor, Metaphor, Global Crisis, and the EFL Classroom."

Going forward, we have an online Zoom event scheduled for October 8 at 7:00 p.m. from Pariwat Imsa-ard entitled "Think Before Ink: Practical Strategies for Metacognitive Reading and Writing," which will focus on effective use of graphic organizers to scaffold instruction. Interested readers can attend this event [here](#).

We have a hike in the central Seoul area planned on October 25 (details to be posted on koreatesol.org and the Seoul KOTESOL Facebook page).

On November 22, we will have Corrine Spencer presenting "What Are We Missing? Ethnography for Equity in the Classroom," and Bilal Qureshi will present "Bringing Lessons to Life: The Hands-On Power of DELTA Module 2." The event will most likely be held at Seoul Tech, and precise details will be made available on koreatesol.org in the coming weeks.

A promotional poster for the KOTESOL Seoul Chapter. The top half features the text "KOTESOL SEOUL CHAPTER" in large white letters on a blue background. Below this is the event title "Think before Ink: Practical Strategies for Metacognitive Reading and Writing" in smaller white text. A central photograph shows a smiling man, Bilal Qureshi, wearing a black blazer over an orange shirt. Below the photo, the event details are listed: "PARIWAT IMSA-ARD" and "OCTOBER 8, 2025 7PM KST". The location is "THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY THAILAND". At the bottom, there are two QR codes labeled "DETAILS" and "ZOOM", and the KOTESOL logo with the text "Korea TESOL KOTESOL · 대한영어교원회" is centered.

Special Interest Group News

Christian Teachers SIG

By Heidi Vande Voort Nam, Facilitator

The Christian Teachers SIG continued its discussion of David I. Smith's *On Christian Teaching: Practicing Faith in the Classroom* on July 2, August 13, and September 10. In July, we looked at an example language lesson that was designed to incorporate themes with more significance and to draw attention to human stories. Our August meeting focused on the concepts of "seeing anew," "choosing engagement," and "reshaping practice." James Rush connected these concepts to the "why" and "how" of Christian teaching. Heidi Vande Voort Nam noted that these concepts seemed to overlap with reflective practice and cooperative learning. We discussed two model lessons: one in which the approach to Christian education appeared to fit the lesson content and objectives, and another in which the Christian approach seemed forced because it had little connection with the academic goals of the lesson. At our September meeting, the image of teaching as "breaking bread" resonated with group members, not only as a metaphor for inclusivity and nourishment but also because of the wonderful experiences we have had sharing literal food with our students.

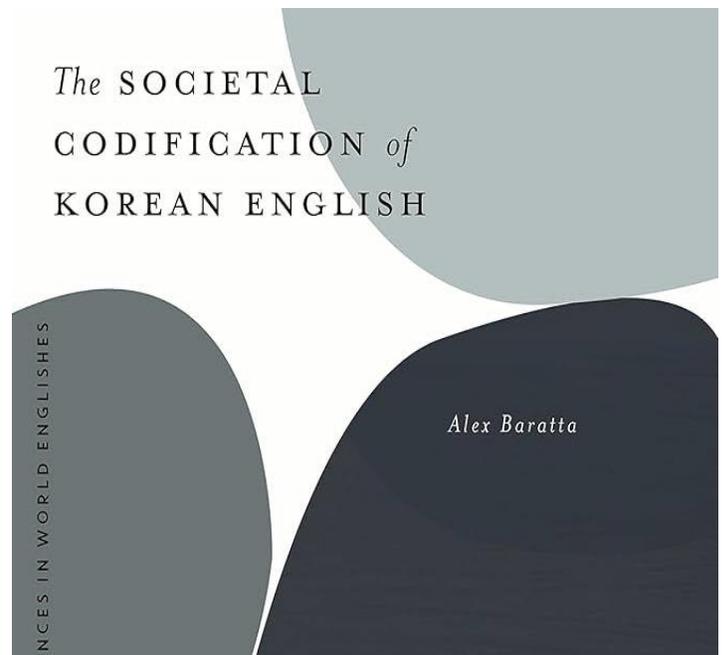
Our autumn book club meetings will be on October 1, November 12, and December 10. Newcomers are always welcome to drop in (even if they haven't had time to catch up on the reading). Those who want to join future CT SIG book discussion meetings can register to receive the Zoom link [here](#).

Social Justice SIG

By Jocelyn Wright

In this third quarter, the KOTESOL Social Justice (Critical Educators in Korea) Special Interest Group (SJ-SIG) was quietly active in various ways.

Over the summer, three longstanding KOTESOL members held another book club initiated by Jocelyn Wright. The focus this time was on Korean English. Individually, we read chapters of *The Societal Codification of Korean English* (Baratta, 2022, Bloomsbury), then held almost weekly Zoom meetings for eight straight weeks. As a result of this club, Robert Dickey decided to offer a presentation entitled "Korean researchers defining 'Konglish' – not just errors" at the 2025 KOTESOL National Conference coming up in October. The three participants also decided to collaborate to write a review paper based on their stimulating discussions and are planning to submit a proposal to present at the 2026 KOTESOL International Conference! It has been a very productive time.



Three members read chapters of *The Societal Codification of Korean English* (Baratta, 2022, Bloomsbury).

Over the summer, the SJ-SIG leadership also participated in two meetings to revise KOTESOL SIG guidelines.

On the Facebook page, there was only one discussion topic this past quarter connected with language and national news: The "Fake Korean" slur, suicide, and the military.

However, three resources were shared:

- A free online course on cooperative learning
- A book on joy-centered pedagogy
- An inclusive language guide

Additionally, an announcement of a hybrid peace education symposium, calls for submissions to the 2025 KOTESOL National Conference and the 2026 KOTESOL International Conference, and a call for chapter proposals for a critical collection on inclusion were also shared.

As always, we are looking for KOTESOL members to get involved in this SIG, both on- and offline, and it would be wonderful to find a new (co-)facilitator for the SIG. If you wish to get in touch, our contact information follows:

- [KOTESOL Social Justice SIG](#)
- Email: sjsig@koreatesol.org
- [Social Justice \(Critical Educators in Korea\) SIG Facebook group](#)

Well-Being and PD SIG

By **Gabriela Villafradez**, Facilitator

This summer brought together members of our community through three memorable events. The season began with an online yoga and meditation session, which focused on the theme of acceptance. This gentle practice combined elements of Qigong and Yin Yoga, offering participants both movement and mindfulness.

On August 2, we gathered at Gwangalli Beach in Busan for a community-centered day of meditation, yoga, and swimming. The morning began with



Gwangalli Beach in Busan for a community-centered day of meditation, yoga, and swimming.

yoga on the sand, followed by hours of swimming in the sea. The event concluded with a shared group lunch at Bollywood, where participants enjoyed lively conversation and a sense of connection.



Lunch at Bollywood, where participants enjoyed lively conversation and a sense of connection.

The season closed with an online yoga and Pilates session on September 25, bringing SIG members together for an energizing and restorative class.

Looking Ahead

Three exciting events are planned:

- **A table at the National Conference 2025 (October, in-person)** Please come and meet the Well-Being and Personal Development SIG team. Ask questions and join us for free aromatherapy and yoga activities on the day.
- **Audiobook and Walk (October, in-person)** A chance to combine storytelling with gentle outdoor activity, encouraging reflection and conversation. Each person can listen to the audiobook individually as we walk to a set destination (most probably a restaurant) and then discuss the book over a meal.
- **Spanish Speakers' Game Night (October, online)** An interactive evening designed for Spanish speakers to connect through play and light-hearted competition. Low-intermediate to advanced speakers welcome.



Committee News

Diversity Committee

By Melvin Dixon, Chair

The summer was mostly quiet for the Diversity Committee. So far this fall, committee members have been engaged in charting directions for action. Broader representation in membership and amongst members with active roles are areas of improvement the committee is seeking to improve.

After receiving positive reactions on the workshop presented through Zoom for the Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter on June 26, the committee is poised to present similar workshops for any other chapter. Please feel free to contact Melvin at diversity@koreatesol.org or directly.

Financial Affairs Committee

By John Tom Wyatt, Chair

The Financial Affairs Committee is happy to report that not only did we complete the 2025 Q2 audit, but that there were no discrepancies. For the curious, the process is not very complex; we merely make sure that RADs and our spreadsheet of transactions matches KOTESOL's bank records. Meanwhile, we look forward to completing the 2025 Q3 audit with just as much efficiency and accuracy. And regarding the current committee chair, John Tom Wyatt, he has left Korea to study Japanese for 1 to 2 years, but will continue on in his role as chair.

International Conference 2026 Committee

By Dr. Meerbek Kudaibergenov, Chair

The summer and fall months have been especially productive for the KOTESOL International Conference Committee as we prepare for next year's much-anticipated event. From venue planning to the release of the call for proposals,

significant progress has been made toward shaping what promises to be another inspiring and enriching gathering of ELT professionals.

After a series of meetings and discussions with our host institution, we are delighted to announce that the 2026 KOTESOL International Conference will take place at Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul on May 16–17, 2026. This venue, located in the heart of the city, provides an ideal setting for international exchange, professional development, and networking. The committee extends its gratitude to Sookmyung Women's University for their support and partnership in hosting this major event.

Equally exciting is the unveiling of our lineup of plenary and featured speakers (see our [website](#) for details). We are honored to welcome Dr. Thomas Farrell from Brock University, Canada, and Dr. Nathanael Rudolph from Kindai University, Japan, as plenary speakers for the 2026 KOTESOL international conference. Both are highly respected figures in the field of ELT, known for their scholarship and thoughtful leadership. Their participation under-scores KOTESOL's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality professional development opportunities that address the diverse interests and needs of educators worldwide. In addition to our plenary sessions, attendees can look forward to a strong lineup of featured speakers, whose expertise will help shape discussions on criticality, innovation, and compassion in ELT.

To ensure a rich and diverse program, the call for proposals was officially released on September 20, 2025, and will remain open until January 25, 2026. The committee invites proposals from educators, researchers, and practitioners across the globe. We encourage submissions that explore the themes of the conference – criticality, innovation, and compassion – and help us rethink language education in times of change! By bringing together voices from around the world, the conference

continues to serve as a platform for meaningful dialogue and exchange across contexts.

As preparations move forward, the International Conference Committee is excited about the opportunities this event will bring, and we warmly invite educators, scholars, and graduate students to join us in Seoul in May 2026, and to take part in critical conversations, innovative pedagogies, and compassionate teaching.

Mark your calendars, prepare your proposals, and get ready for an engaging and inspiring conference at KOTESOL 2026!

Submit your conference proposals [here](#). Submission Guidelines can be found [here](#).

International Outreach Committee

By Victor Reeser, Chair

The International Outreach Committee continues to support KOTESOL's mission by maintaining strong connections with partner organizations and facilitating international engagement for our members.



Dr. Herron staffing the KOTESOL table at ELTAM.

Recent and Upcoming Events

In September, President Lindsay Herron represented KOTESOL at the ELTAM International Conference in Mongolia. In October, Gabriela Villafradez will serve as our representative at the JALT 2025 International Conference in Japan. The following month, Lindsay will also represent us at the ETA-ROC Symposium in Taiwan. Closing out the year, Meerbek Kudaibergenov and Rob Dickey will attend the PALT and PAC Conference in the Philippines as our official representatives. Looking ahead to 2026, I have been selected to represent KOTESOL at the 22nd CamTESOL Conference in February in Phnom Penh.

New Collaboration with IATEFL's BESIG

In early September, the IOC chair met with Uma Tadema, online event coordinator for IATEFL's BESIG (Business English Special Interest Group), to discuss collaborative opportunities. BESIG is actively seeking presenters from outside Europe, including Korea, for upcoming online events and welcomes submissions to their journal, *Business Issues*. The IOC is currently looking for members

#KOTESOL2026

Call for Abstracts

2026 KOTESOL International Conference
*Criticality, Innovation, and Compassion:
Rethinking Language Education in Times of
Change*

Early-bird Submission

- **Submission Opens:**
September 20, 2025
- **Submission Deadline:**
November 15, 2025
- **Acceptance Notification:**
November 30, 2025

Regular Submission

- **Submission Opens:**
November 16, 2025
- **Submission Deadline:**
January 31, 2026
- **Acceptance Notification:**
March 1, 2026

Submission Link: <https://koreatesol.org/ic2026/submission-form>



May 16–17, 2026
Sookmyung Women's University
Seoul, South Korea

with experience or specialization in Business English who are interested in giving an online presentation for the IATEFL BESIG in the coming months. Please contact the IOC [here](#) for more information.

Membership Committee

By Dr. Lindsay Herron, Chair

The KOTESOL Membership Committee continues to send out the monthly enews (*KOTESOL News*) to nearly 2,000 recipients. Our branded merchandise also remains popular; in fact, more than twenty water bottles were recently purchased en masse for participants at a TESOL training program. Stop by the Membership Committee's booth at the KOTESOL National Conference to get your own KOTESOL goodies! Finally, membership perks this fall include discounts on the KOTESOL National Conference, KOTESOL regional conferences and symposia throughout the country, iTDi self-study courses, and IATEFL membership, in addition to other benefits.

DISCOUNT FOR KOTESOL MEMBERS!

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<https://koreatesol.org/content/membership-perk-discount-itdi-self-study-courses>

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Nominations and Elections Committee

By Dr. David Shaffer, Chair

This is election season for Korea TESOL's national elections. The nomination period for elected offices

was open from September 1 to 21, as announced in advance, and is now closed. We received nominations from members for four offices: president, first vice-president, second vice-president, and secretary. Dr. Lindsay Herron is the candidate for president, Mike Peacock is the candidate for 1st vice-president, Gabriela Villafradez for 2nd vice-president, and Heidi Vande Voort Nam for secretary. We thank them for coming forward to make themselves available to serve KOTESOL in the coming year.

Each of the candidates have submitted a personal resumé pertinent to running for a KOTESOL national office, a candidate's statement of their qualifications for the office they are standing for, and the required number of written endorsements. These documents are all available for members' perusal on the [KOTESOL website](#).

KOTESOL NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Voting Period
October 1-19, 2025

Details at
<https://koreatesol.org/elections>

The voting period for national elected offices is set for October 1–19, and voting will be online only. Ballots will be sent out via email to all current KOTESOL members at that time. Ballots will be sent to the email address on record in the member's KOTESOL account. If you have not received your ballot, which was sent on Oct. 1, (1) check your spam folder, (2) confirm your email address recorded in your KOTESOL account, and if neither of these suggestions solves the situation, (3) contact the Nominations and Elections Committee at elections@koreatesol.org.

Election results will be announced at the KOTESOL Annual Business Meeting (ABM) scheduled for November 1 via Zoom. Any elected positions remaining unfilled through the election process will be filled by the National Council as per the Korea TESOL Constitution. Other committee chairs are, by the way, appointed and approved by the National Council.

Remember to Vote!: October 1–19, 2025!

Publications Committee

By Dr. David Shaffer, Chair

With numerous publications under its purview, the Publications Committee is constantly busy, but during this past quarter, it has been even busier than usual. In addition to the quarterly buzz and hum around TEC and HAN (monikers for *The English Connection* and *Korea TESOL Happenings and News*), there has been a whirr at the *Korea TESOL Journal* (KTJ) and at *KOTESOL Proceedings* as well.

As evinced by what you are reading, the Autumn issue of HAN has been published, bringing you a report on all the events occurring throughout KOTESOL over the past three months. We thank all the chapters, SIGs, committees, and others for the reports that they have submitted to make this publication possible.

On September 1, the Autumn issue of TEC (29-3) went live on our website for members to read the seven articles, two regular columns, book review, president's message, and editorial within its 32 pages. Members requesting print copies received them in their mailboxes later in the month. The Autumn issue's theme was "Time... in EFL Education." Members can access it online by selecting "Publications" in the website menu.

September also saw the publication of KTJ 21-1. This issue of the *Journal* includes seven full research papers, a brief report, and three book reviews. Members may also access it through the website menu by selecting "Publications." This issue is the first of our online-only publication of the *Journal*. As such, we have gone to in-house layout, made possible through the layout skills of Dr. Lindsay Herron.

The deadline for International Conference presenters to make submissions to *KOTESOL Proceedings 2025* passed in mid-July, and to our surprise, we had twice as many proposals submitted as we did in previous years. After the screening process, we still had twice as many papers as published in 2024 – over sixty. At

present, our plans are to publish two volumes of *KOTESOL Proceedings 2025*: Volume 1, which will contain invited speaker contributions and the research papers, and Volume 2, which will compile the reports from workshops, panel discussions, and poster presentations. We are hoping to have Volume 1 completed by the end of the semester and Volume 2 soon afterwards.

Scribes Square has also had two contributions recently – by Jocelyn Wright and Dr. Maria Lisak. Scoot on over to the Square (under "Publications" in the menu), and see what they have to offer. We thank these two Gwangju-Jeonnang Chapter members for keeping the Square active. However, I wish to remind everyone that Scribes Square invites all KOTESOL members to contribute a short article on any ELT, applied linguistics, or education topic. It has a very favorable submission-to-publication turn-around time.

In other Committee news, the Publications chair and the TEC editor-in-chief, Dr. Andrew White, were invited to lead a Zoom event hosted by the Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter. The session, "An Evening with the KOTESOL Publishing Team," informed on how members can publish in KOTESOL publications and included a lengthy Q&A segment.

What is there to look forward to in the coming months? In addition to *Proceedings* mentioned above, TEC will be coming out on December 1, KTJ 21-2 is expected to be out in December, and the Winter issue of HAN will be available for your reading pleasure next January. And under consideration at the moment is the possibility of publishing a volume of National Conference 2025 proceedings.

To conclude, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the authors who have contributed writings to our various publications, including this one, as well as to all the editors, reviewers, copyeditors, proofreaders, and layout editors, who make our KOTESOL publications the quality products that they are.



"An Evening with the KOTESOL Publishing Team" gave practical advice on how to publish in KOTESOL's many publications.

Research Committee

By Dr. Ian Moodie, Chair

The Research Committee is welcoming KOTESOL [Research Grant applications](#) for 2026. The committee will award up to two research grants, one for 250,000 KRW and another for 750,000 KRW. The deadline for applications is March 31, 2026, and we invite all members to submit proposals. In order to receive the grant, the report must demonstrate the grant recipient's progress and commitment to publishing a full paper in the *Korea TESOL Journal*.

Sponsorship Committee

By Rob Dickey, Chair

In the past quarter, the Sponsorship Committee has done the following: (a) worked on sponsorship and paid advertising (website, e-news, publications) in general, (b) had discussions and did preliminary work for display sales for the 2025 National Conference, and (c) sent a general update to 220+ potential and past sponsors – already resulting in confirmed sales for front inside cover and back cover of the 2026 International Conference program book/booklet.

Teachers
helping
Teachers

National News

National Conference Preview

By Victor Reeser, Chair

The Korea TESOL National Conference is right around the corner; it will take place on Saturday, October 18, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Songdo, Incheon. This year's event is hosted by the State University of New York (SUNY) Korea, an exciting new venue hosting the conference for the first time.

The theme for this year's conference is "Transforming Voices: Identity, and Agency," and we are proud to announce that Dr. David Tizzard will deliver the plenary address titled "Identity Unleashed: Lessons from Korea's Democratization." His session will offer an insightful and reflective look into some of the

lesser-known forces that have shaped modern Korean identity.

The venue is easily accessible, located just a 15-minute walk from the nearest subway station, and offers free on-site parking. Nearby, you'll also find a large shopping center with a variety of restaurants, cafes, and retail outlets including a Hyundai Premium Outlet. The conference is an excellent opportunity to blend professional development with a great weekend outing.

Registration is now open! This year's conference is open to both members and non-members, so feel free to bring a friend or colleague! With the support of SUNY Korea's student volunteers, we're looking forward to an engaging and well-organized day.

For more information on the venue, schedule, and registration, please visit our [conference website](#).

We hope to see you there!

September National Council Meeting

By Heidi Vande Voort Nam, Secretary

The KOTESOL National Council met via Zoom on Sunday, September 14. In addition to regular reports from national officers, chapter presidents, and committee chairs, a special report was presented by the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The report addressed the SIG formation process, reporting requirements, and procedures for handling inactive SIGs, with draft guidelines to be finalized for approval at the next meeting.

Three motions were passed at the meeting. The first motion permits the International Conference committee to compile an email list from data on the KOTESOL website for a one-time email announcing the conference's call for papers. The second motion approved the budget for the 2026 International Conference. The budget is largely the same as last year's; however, the conference fees



18 OCTOBER 2025
Songdo, Incheon

Korea TESOL National Conference 2025

**TRANSFORMING VOICES:
INSPIRING IDENTITY & AGENCY**

SUB-THEMES	RATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voice, Agency, & Identity Inclusive Practices Global Citizenship Multimodal Practices Soft Skills & Emotional Literacy Digital Literacy & Tech Ed Purpose-Driven Language Learning Culturally-Responsive Teaching 	Early Bird (26 SEPT.-3 OCT.) Members ₩ 20,000 Non-Members ₩ 25,000 Students ₩ 10,000 Regular (3-18 OCT.) Members ₩ 25,000 Non-members ₩ 30,000 Students ₩ 15,000

PLENARY SPEAKER
DR. DAVID TIZZARD

For More Information:
incheon@koreatesol.org

PRE-REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!

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will be raised to include lunch. The final motion allows KOTESOL to engage a bookkeeper on a probationary basis.

President's Corner

By Dr. Lindsay Herron, President

The autumn semester is off to a running start for KOTESOL! As I write this, I'm in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, for the 2025 ELTAM International Conference. Unfortunately, that means I was unable to participate in this year's ALAK International Conference, but KOTESOL International Conference chair Dr. Meerbek Kudaibergenov, who also represented us at the KATE International Conference in July, stepped up to represent our organization.



Dr. Herron with the other invited speakers and the ELTAM board of directors.

Speaking of international conferences, Dr. Kudaibergenov's team is already hard at work! The call for proposals for KOTESOL 2026 is up and open; submit a proposal by January 31 for consideration. We've also confirmed that lifetime member Dr. Kara Mac Donald will be sponsoring the presenter travel grant again this coming year. Applications for the grant, which is aimed at supporting presenters facing financial hardship, will be accepted through mid-February. Additional details are available on the KOTESOL website.

Finally, please save the date: our annual business meeting (ABM) will be held on November 1! The ABM will feature a retrospective of

the past year, election results and service awards, and a vote on any proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. All members are welcome to attend, and members are also eligible to vote on amendments.

We hope to see you there!

Lifetime Members

We have no new lifetime members this quarter. If you're thinking of taking out lifetime membership, there's no time like the present! Actually, on the topic of *presents*, KOTESOL memberships make a great gift. Contact membership@koreatesol.org to arrange a year (or a lifetime) of perks, privileges, and opportunities for your favorite educator!

Give the gift of KOTESOL membership!

One-year memberships start at just **50,000 KRW (40 USD)!**



Contact us at membership@koreatesol.org to arrange a KOTESOL membership for the educator(s) in your life.

<http://koreatesol.org>



Attendees, including our own Dr. Meerbek Kudaibergenov, at the 2025 ALAK International Conference.