

The English Connection

A Korea TESOL Publication

Spring 2023, Volume 27, Issue 1

Preview to the KOTESOL International Conference 2023

*"Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among
Scholars, Instructors, & Students"*

Invited Speakers' Articles and Interviews

A KOTESOL Member Spotlight on Reece Randall

And our regular columnists...

Bill Snyder with The Development Connection

Curtis Kelly with The Brain Connection



KOTESOL
대한영어교육학회

Contact us:
KoreaTESOL.org
TEC@KoreaTESOL.org
YEC@KoreaTESOL.org





The English Connection

Editorial Team

Editor-in-Chief
Dr. Andrew White

Editing and Proofreading
Dr. David E. Shaffer

Publications Committee Chair & Production Editor
Dr. David E. Shaffer

Layout and Design
Mijung Lee
Media Station, Seoul

Pages 28-31:
Concepts and designs by
Anthony Kaschor

Printing
Myeongjinsa, Seoul

Photo & Image Credits

Front Cover Image: KS Kyung,
unsplash.com

This page: Luke Paris, unsplash.com
Page 5 image: ravenox.com/collections
Page 6 photo: courtesy Garth Elzerman
Page 8 photos: courtesy Jack C. Richards
Page 9 image: pinterest.co.kr
Page 10 photo & image: courtesy Thomas Farrell
Page 12 photo: courtesy Gabriel Diaz Maggioli
Page 14 photo: courtesy Judy Yin
Page 15 image: askmartin.co.nz/blog
Pages 16-17 photos: courtesy Francisca Maria Ivone
Pages 18-19 photos: courtesy Raichle Farrelly
Page 20 photo & image: courtesy Nikki Ashcraft
Page 21 photo: courtesy George Jacobs & Chenghao Zhu
Page 22 image: verywellmind.com
Page 23 photo: courtesy Boyoung Lee
Pages 26-27 photos: courtesy Reece Randall
Pages 28-31 photos: unsplash.com

Suggestions and Contributions:
tec@koreatesol.org
Submissions Deadline for the
Summer 2023 Issue: April 3 (Mon.).

The English Connection, published quarterly, is the official magazine of Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (KOTESOL), an academic organization, and is distributed free of charge as a service to the members of KOTESOL.

All material contained within *The English Connection* is copyrighted by the individual authors and KOTESOL. Copying without permission of the individual authors and KOTESOL beyond that which is permitted under law is an infringement of both law and ethical principles within the academic community. All copies must identify Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (KOTESOL) and *The English Connection*, as well as the author. The ideas and concepts, however, are presented for public discussion and classroom use. Please write to the editors and individual authors to let them know how useful you find the materials and how you may have adapted them to fit your own teaching style or situation. The articles and opinions contained herein are solely those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of KOTESOL or the opinions of the editors, officers of KOTESOL, or individual members.

Copyright © 2023 Korea TESOL

ISSN: 1598-0456

Contents

Spring 2023 / Volume 27, Issue 1

4
Editorial
Soft Collaboration with Our Students
by Dr. Andrew White

5
President's Message
KOTESOL as a Conduit for Collaboration and Connections
by Lindsay Herron

Articles

6
"Advancing Collaboration"
at KOTESOL 2023
by Garth Elzerman

7
Advancing Collaboration:
IC Speakers' List

8
Collaborative Professional
Development, the Role of EIL, and CL
Moving Beyond the Classroom
by Jack C. Richards

10
"Talk is Not Cheap": The Power of
Talk in Teacher Reflection Groups
by Thomas S.C. Farrell

12
From Cooperation to Collaboration:
Why Does the Distinction Matter?
by Gabriel Díaz Maggioli

14
"I've Always Considered Teaching as
Working Collaboratively with Students"
by Judy Yin

16
Technology-Enhanced Collaboration
by Francisca Maria Ivone

18
Global Citizenship, Global Exchanges,
and World Englishes
by Raichle Farrelly

20
Belonging in the Language Classroom
by Nikki Ashcraft



21
Scholarly Collaboration, Teacher
Authenticity, and Ecolinguistics: Walking
the Talk
By George Jacobs & Chenghao Zhu

23
Connecting Learning to Other, More
Intrinsically Motivating Tasks
By Boyoung Lee



KOTESOL News & Happenings

26
Member Spotlight:
Reece Randall



Regular Columns

28
**The Development
Connection**
Extending Your Personal Learning
Network (PLN)
by Bill Snyder



30
The Brain Connection
Understanding the Hidden Curriculum
by Curtis Kelly



To promote scholarship, disseminate information, and facilitate cross-cultural understanding among persons concerned with the teaching and learning of English in Korea.

Editorial

Soft Collaboration with Our Students

By **Dr. Andrew White** Editor-in-Chief, *The English Connection*

Whether you're standing on the shoulders of giants to research and co-write an academic article, putting your heads together with a co-teacher to reflect on an aspect of your teaching, or believe teamwork makes the dream work to work out a new department curriculum with your colleagues, collaborating with other ESL teachers or researchers is one of the backbones of professional development. It is teachers directly and formally coming together in a process to support and learn from each other, the goal being a synergy of shared knowledge that will be injected directly back into classroom interaction and student learning. In this special edition of *The English Connection*, we bring together leaders of language education collaboration in the variety of forms in which it can be demonstrated, as we preview the invited speakers united under the conference theme "Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, and Students," and appearing at our 30th Korea TESOL International Conference.



This leads me to think about our students, the biggest benefactors in this thematic conference triad. After all, what good is teacher learning if it doesn't ultimately lead to student learning? While teacher training and workshops, presentations, co-authorships, and other explicit professional development and collaborative projects are immensely beneficial, they should be a means to an end, with the ultimate purpose being application towards increased performance and positive effects from our learners. I think it's important to ultimately draw attention to the trickle down of these direct and systemic collaborative efforts to what I'd like to call soft, or indirect, collaboration because ultimately, it's in the classroom (with students and teachers collaborating together) where the true and overall successes of language teaching and learning lie. This indirect and understated agreement we have with our students underlies the teamwork that takes place in a learner-based communicative classroom.

And what is this soft collaboration we have with our students? We can't very well stand up on the first day of class and announce "Okay, everyone. We're going to collaborate together to make you better English speakers. Let the collaboration begin!" Yet all the principles of collaboration are there, teeming below the surface. For one, the group (classroom) is set up and a non-threatening (hopefully) environment is established. There's an agreement (sometimes explicit, but oftentimes vague) for the reasons the group has gathered; students want to learn and the teacher is there to help them learn. Members' roles are defined, with both teacher and students understanding their positions and responsibilities, through either the syllabus or clearly explained lesson designs. (For a more in-depth look at the tenets of English language collaboration, see the Farrell article, page 10, and Diaz Maggioli, page 12.) A communicative-based language class will be process-oriented, another key tenet to collaborative work. While EFL students may, in essence, be working towards a goal or task completion, it is the contribution and interaction (the collaboration) that is most beneficial to their improvement, rather than the poster they made, the puzzle they completed, or the debate answers they developed.

Additionally, the communicative classroom is about sharing. As speakers and listeners in a conversation, participants must bring their knowledge and experiences to the table, inputting into an evolving discourse that is a unique process to the individual members. And because learners are invested, they are more likely to improve. These are exactly the things which collaboration embodies. As Diaz Maggioli explains, "In collaborative learning, all group participants share the workload, which allows for everyone to provide input to the process ... because collaborative thinking is recursive, evidence-based, evolving, and more importantly, emerging from the interaction of team members who are working towards a common goal" (pp. 12–13). Sound familiar? It is exactly what we want our students to do in a communicative language teaching classroom.

When we think of our students as soft collaborators, as team players working towards (notice I said "working towards," not "reaching") the same goals we as teachers are, it totally changes the mindset of our purpose-driven teaching. Instead, Dr. Judy Yin (page 14) likens this kind of teaching to coaching, which I think is a great way to illustrate the individual inner strength we need to harness from our learners. Just like the coach can't be the one to kick the goal or run the race for their athletes, the teacher can't be the one to speak English for them to build proficiency and fluency. But through soft collaboration, this individual growth can occur, through the process and practice, in a way instruction and lecturing cannot.

Please enjoy this collection of articles and interviews of leaders in the various fields of collaboration and professional development. I hope they bring you to redefine your perspective of classroom interaction, and ignite the collaborative dynamic you have with your students.

President's Message

KOTESOL as a Conduit for Collaboration and Connections

By Lindsay Herron KOTESOL President

This spring, KOTESOL is pleased to present the thirtieth Korea TESOL International Conference! With the conference theme of "Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, and Students," it's particularly apropos that this major anniversary event is in collaboration with the Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies (PAC). We are a founding member of PAC, and we're delighted to welcome enticing presentations and special sessions by representatives from other PAC member organizations: the English Teachers Association of the Republic of China (ETA-ROC; Taiwan), the Far East English Language Teachers Association (FEELTA; Russia), the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), the Philippine Association for Language Teaching (PALT), and Thailand TESOL (ThaiTESOL). We anticipate many of our other collaborators and partners, both international and domestic, will be represented at the conference, as well!



This conference also marries some of the strengths of our pandemic-era online events with the ebullience and interaction of our typical face-to-face conferences. While the bulk of synchronous presentations will be onsite at Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul, there will also be an abundance of (pre-recorded) presentations available for asynchronous viewing via our online conference platform, Edzil.la. Furthermore, as we have done for the past several years, we're striving to make the conference as equitable, affordable, and accessible as possible for participants worldwide; not only do we have an online component facilitating access but also registration is completely free for educators in low- and middle-income countries (i.e., those who qualify for TESOL International's "Global Professional" rates). Indeed, in 2022, our 100%-online international conference welcomed educators from about thirty-five countries, including several nations we had never previously noted at our events, and we hope this trend will continue.



What does this mean for KOTESOL members? Well, it means we have an opportunity to participate in a truly cosmopolitan event featuring impressive diversity in both presentations and presenters – all without leaving Korea! We can look forward to new people with whom to network and socialize, new ideas to swap and share, new insights and perspectives to add nuance and depth to our own understandings. Are you looking for a teacher whose classes can partner with yours for an online intercultural exchange? Are you in search of a fellow researcher with whom you can collaborate on a cross-cultural inquiry project? Are you curious about teaching standards and practices in different countries? Our international conference, as a truly *international* event, is the place to be! We also boast one of the most affordable conferences in Asia; at just 50,000 KRW for KOTESOL members during pre-registration, the full conference package (two-day face-to-face conference pass plus online access) is truly a steal.

Actually, just as the theme of collaboration underpins many facets of the conference, the spirit of collaboration permeates KOTESOL at all levels and in a variety of ways. Throughout the year, we offer a plethora of opportunities for our members to connect, cooperate, and come together

in various concatenations, from chapter-level social events to national-level support for cross-cultural learning and sharing. For example, our International Outreach Committee provides travel grants for members to represent KOTESOL at our PAC partners' annual conferences, including in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Thailand. We also provide conference grants for many of our other partners' conferences; if you'd like to represent KOTESOL at TEFLIN (Indonesia) or MELTA (Malaysia), for instance, you can apply for this grant to have your registration fees waived. Many of our partner organizations also offer conference registration discounts for KOTESOL members; keep an eye out for a KOTESOL members' discount to the 2023 AsiaTEFL International Conference in Daejeon this summer, for example, and to JALT2023 in Japan this fall. Members should consider, too, applying for a research grant; KOTESOL is happy to support members' collaborative research, and in 2023 we hope to award up to 1,000,000 KRW in grants to promote quality inquiry. Finally, we look forward this year to the return of the membership social on Saturday evening at the international conference; all KOTESOL members are invited to relax, reconnect, and reminisce over wine and light refreshments after a full day of sessions.

The first KOTESOL conference was held in Iksan, and the theme was "Narrowing the Gap Between Theory and Practice." Today, three decades later, our organization is still thriving, still focusing on improving praxis, and still striving for excellence in our mandate to "promote scholarship, disseminate information, and facilitate cross-cultural understanding among persons concerned with the teaching and learning of English in Korea." Our organization was built on – and *for* – collaboration; and as we continue to facilitate ties among educators at the local, national, and international levels, I believe we are all better for it. Congratulations to our organization for its vitality, vision, and perseverance, and here's a toast to many more decades of connections, collaboration, and outstanding professional development!

“Advancing Collaboration” at KOTESOL 2023

International Conference Chair Garth Elzerman

In 2019, Julio Gregorio Mora-Ruano, Jörg-Henrik Heine, and Markus Gebhardt drew specific attention to the reality that collaboration among teachers has enormous positive effects for the entire educational community. They showed that improved collaboration not only benefits instructors but also has a substantial positive effect on student achievement.

With that in mind, the theme of the 30th Korea TESOL International Conference, “Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, and Students,” seeks to enhance both the teaching and learning experience by encouraging the educational community to practically engage with and highlight collaboration in its various forms and the wider impact collaboration has for learning, teaching, and scholarship.

I have long thought that a key to success is collaboration and have often wondered why we do not collaborate more. It is often the case that the skills and ideas of others are sharper or more refined than our own. The conference has invited proposals on various topics related to collaboration in education, as well as more disparate topics. How can the positive effects of collaboration be promoted and enhanced? How can we more effectively collaborate? What forms of collaboration are notably beneficial?

Our featured and invited speakers are highly respected scholars and educators who bring with them a wide range of valuable experiences and expertise. Our speakers are as enthusiastic about the theme of collaboration as we are. Attendees at the conference can look forward to presentations that focus on the research and practice of collaboration between and among almost all of the stakeholders in the field of education. From discussions of approaches to collaborative professional development and the opportunities and challenges of employing technology-enhanced collaboration to deep dives into the conditions that support collaboration between learners when participating in communicative and task-based language learning along with advice and suggestions for collaborating with international colleagues on online intercultural exchanges, the conference promises to offer something for everyone, be they a scholar, instructor, student, or a combination of these. Additionally, the conference boasts a variety of different presentation types, from research papers, workshops, and panel discussions to poster presentations, graduate student showcases, and pecha kucha.

In the spirit of our theme, the Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies (PAC) has agreed to collaborate with us this year to ensure that the 30th Korea TESOL International Conference is a resounding example of the power of working together.

Although the global pandemic disrupted our plans the last few years, we are very happy to announce that the conference this year will be a hybrid one. The 2023 KOTESOL IC will be a hybrid conference that will run fully in-person, hosted by Sookmyung Women’s University, Seoul, Korea, and partially virtually. The conference has been designed to be a hybrid conference to take advantage of the best that the two modes can offer and allow us to expand the opportunities for collaboration, staying true to our theme. Having an online option makes it possible for us to extend the accessibility of the conference, and reach areas and people that we could possibly learn from and grow with. We have had enormous success with the Edzila conference platform in the past, and we look forward to working with them again to make the online aspects of the conference especially memorable. We are also particularly grateful to Dr. Kyungsook Yeum and Sookmyung Women’s University for hosting this year’s conference, and we are sure that all participants will greatly appreciate the newly renovated up-to-date facilities that they have to offer.

There are several different registration options on offer for presenters and attendees, as well as online-access-only options. We have tried to make the 2023 conference as accessible as possible by catering for as many needs and means as we can. We truly wish to invite all in education to collaborate. Registration for presenters runs from February 15th until March 31st and registration for attendees is open from March 1st until April 10th. Full details are listed on our webpage (koreatesol.org/ic2023).

We hope that the conference will encourage participants to collaborate with people that challenge and inspire them to continuously improve and reach for greater heights in education.



Advancing Collaboration: IC Speakers' List

International Conference Chair Garth Elzerman

To address the theme of the 30th Korea TESOL International Conference – “Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, and Students” – the outstanding coterie of speakers below have been invited to participate in our April 29–30 event. Their sessions will be dealing with the array of forms of collaboration possible among teachers, students, and researchers to advance the field of English language teaching and learning.



Thomas S.C. Farrell
(Brock University, Canada)
Plenary Session: Advancing
Collaboration Among Teachers
Through Reflective Practice



Jack C. Richards
(University of Sydney, Australia)
Plenary Session: Collaborative
Approaches to Teacher Development
for Language Teachers



Gabriel Diaz Maggioli
(Universidad ORT Uruguay, Uruguay)
Plenary Session: Collaborative
Scenarios and Teacher Growth
(Online)



Boyoung Lee
(Seoul, Korea)
Featured Session: Collaborating in
the Context of Korean EFL



Francisca Maria Ivone
(Universitas Negeri Malang,
Indonesia)
Featured Session: Technology-
Enhanced Collaboration: Possibilities
and Challenges in Language Teaching
and Learning



Raichle Farrelly
(University of Colorado Boulder, USA)
Featured Session: Global
Collaborations to Promote Language
Learning and Teacher Development



Nikki Ashcraft
(University of Missouri, USA)
Featured Session: Laying the
Foundation for Classroom
Collaboration



George Jacobs & Chenghao Zhu
(Universiti Malaya, Malaysia)
Featured Session: Collaboration
Among Educators: Multiple
Authorship in Language Education
Articles



Judy Yin
(Korea Natl. University of Education,
Korea)
Featured Session: Collaborative
Teaching and Learning in TEFL



Lindsay Herron
(Gwangju Natl. University of
Education, Korea)
Featured Session: Collaborating on
Cross-Cultural Connections: Promise,
Pitfalls, and Cosmopolitan Potential

Special Session

Jack C. Richards and Thomas S.C. Farrell in Conversation

* Our speakers' session abstracts and biosketches can be accessed on the KOTESOL website under “2023 Korea TESOL International Conference” at <https://koreatesol.org/content/invited-speakers-1>

Collaborative Professional Development, the Role of EIL, and CL Moving Beyond the Classroom

Prof. Jack C. Richards, University of Sydney

Professor Richards is one of the pinnacles of our field, including second and foreign communicative language teaching, linguistics, teacher training, and materials design. His Interchange and New Interchange coursebook and workbook series, among others, have been liferafts in the rough seas facing both new and experienced teachers since the mid-nineties. Professor Richards will be presenting in two sessions at KOTESOL's International Conference 2023, and it's an honor he has agreed to this interview, previewing his April conference talks as well as discussing other current trends in language teaching.

The English Connection (TEC): It's a pleasure to be in contact with you, Professor Richards, and thank you for agreeing to this interview with KOTESOL's *The English Connection* magazine. Your plenary session at KOTESOL's International Conference 2023, and other sessions, will be your first participation in an international conference since the pandemic. What an honor for KOTESOL and our members. Thank you!

In your plenary you will be discussing collaborative professional development (CPD), a topic also appearing in the recent Autumn edition of *The English Connection*. What aspects of CPD will you bring to light in your session?

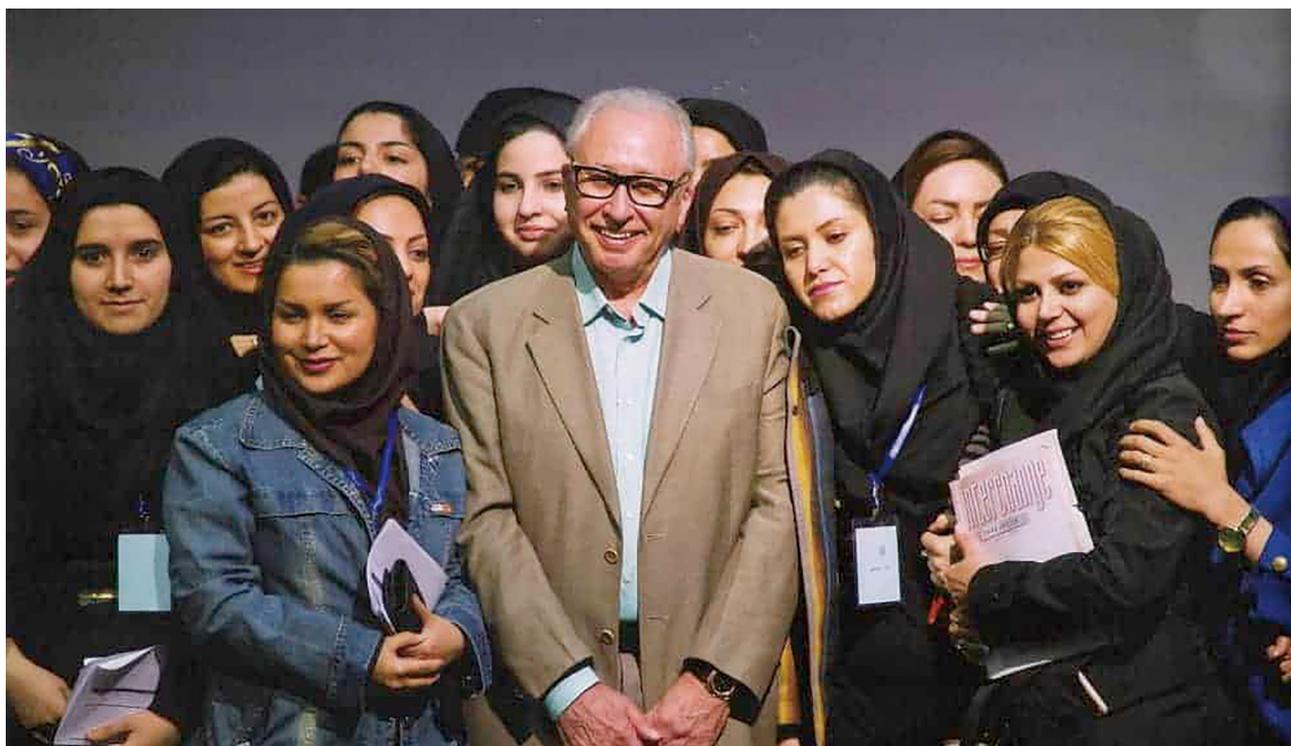
Prof. Richards: I will discuss different dimensions of CPD (teacher training versus teacher development, institutional versus individual professionalism, and formal versus informal learning), describe examples of different CPD initiatives and the facilitating or inhibiting factors that influence the outcomes of CPD.

TEC: To briefly touch upon your invited second session, you will be reviewing the nature of English as an international language, including the need to revise such popular concepts as "native English speaker," "communicative competence," "ESL," and "EFL." What can interested attendees expect in this intriguing presentation?

Prof. Richards:

In this session, I will review the consequences of the spread of English as an international language and the issues it raises for determining targets and standards for the use of English, the role of culture in EIL, the nature of intercultural competence, and the impact EIL has on many of the decisions English teachers need to make.

TEC: No doubt much of this terminology revision can be related to the concept of English medium instruction (EMI), the topic of your recent book *Teaching and Learning in English Medium Instruction* [with Jack Pun], (Routledge,



▲ Prof. Richards at an Iranian TESOL Conference in 2014.

2022). Wouldn't this be a context native English teachers create naturally on day one in their career?

Prof. Richards: Not really. EMI refers to the use of English to teach an academic subject (e.g., geography, science, economics) when both the lecturer and the students may have restricted proficiency in English. Assessment is based on mastery of academic content rather than on use of English.

In an English class by comparison, while lessons do include content (e.g., sports, fashion, movies), content is a vehicle for the learning of English. Assessment is based on use of English rather than mastery of content, and the teacher is a language teacher rather than a content specialist.

TEC: Moving on to a different topic, I personally found, in the early days of my teaching career, the *Interchange* series to be a god-send: easily accessible, not requiring much prep, a multi-syllabus content of short, fast-paced tasks, and a perfect blend of communicative student activities and teacher-led instruction. How has the *Interchange* series been able to stand the test of time, so to speak?



▲ **The Interchange series (Cambridge University Press), now in its 5th edition.**

Prof. Richards: The series is now in its fifth edition, and each new edition addresses suggestions made by teachers around the world and an updating of the design and content of the books as well as the incorporation of new digital resources. However, the feedback we get from teachers and students is fairly consistent: "Teachers and students like it, it is very user-friendly, and it works!" If this were not the case it would not still be popular today, while many competitive titles have come and gone.

...the context for communicative language use has moved beyond the classroom. Students develop their language through using English for social media, watching movies, and making use of digital resources and the internet.

TEC: As a follow-up question, what methods or strategies, if any, might be added into communicative language teaching (CLT), in light of more current research and technology since the mid-90s, when *Interchange* first appeared?

Prof. Richards: What has changed is that the context for communicative language use has moved beyond the classroom. Students develop their language through using English for social media, watching movies, and making use of digital resources and the internet. However, to be able to use English in this way, students need to have achieved a threshold level of proficiency in English. This is what classroom-based teaching as well as textbooks and their components aim to achieve: to develop the resources students need to acquire to be able to learn English beyond the classroom.

TEC: What are your thoughts on translation apps, or on the use of translation more generally in language teaching?

Prof. Richards: One of the legacies of the Direct Method in the 1920s and 1930s was the view that students could understand classroom English "directly" without the need for translation, given appropriate teaching materials and instruction. Translation has often been discredited since then, particularly in contexts where teachers do not speak the students' first language. In more recent times, applied linguists have reconsidered how translation can be used as a learning resource, and we see this reflected in the range of novel and often useful translation-based apps and resources students can now make use of.

TEC: Having published over 150 books and articles on language teaching, in addition to multiple coursebooks, what advice would you offer to new teachers, and textbook and online materials developers?

Prof. Richards: I would suggest asking, "What could I contribute that could make a difference and that would address the needs of teachers and learners?" Publishers of course are always looking for content developers who can bring something original and useful to the marketplace. However, due to the nature of the publishing industry today, there is a tendency to seek to do away with authors and royalties and to develop new resources in-house or through the use of fee-based freelance writers, something that was not the case when I first became active in materials' development.

TEC: Thank you, Professor Richards, for taking the time to discuss your experiences, as well as some of your recent research areas. I, and I'm sure all KOTESOL members, will be looking forward to your multiple presentations at the International Conference April 29–30.

Interviewed by Andrew White.

“Talk is Not Cheap” The Power of Talk in Teacher Reflection Groups

By Dr. Thomas S.C. Farrell, Brock University

Many of you know of Thomas Farrell through his extensive writings on reflective practice. What many of you may not know, though, is that Dr. Farrell spent almost two decades teaching and researching in Korea, and his connections to Korea and KOTESOL have been strong ever since. At the 2023 International Conference, Dr. Farrell will be delivering a plenary session on “Advancing Collaboration Among Teachers Through Reflective Practice,” and he will be pairing up with a one-time co-author for the special session “Jack C. Richards and Thomas S.C. Farrell in Conversation.” — Ed.

Introduction

The following (from Farrell, 2021) is an excerpt from novice TESOL teachers in a self-initiated novice TESOL teacher reflection group in Canada during the first semester of their first year:

- I liked hearing other ideas. I liked just getting some feedback when I said, “Oh, this isn’t working in my class.”
- Just to know that sometimes we were going through the same thing like, you know, we were frustrated with the administration. We were frustrated with sometimes the students or whatever.
- So, I think that’s kind of nice because we created an opportunity to talk about ... you don’t always have that opportunity in your office with a group of teachers.

The three novice TESOL teachers quoted above formed the group (I facilitated their group discussions as a “manager” rather than as a participant) as a survival mechanism because they felt they were “sinking” in their first few weeks, and they were able to survive through the collaborative process of the weekly group discussions about their experiences. The group talked about many different issues such as classroom management, discipline and control, how to organize their



lessons to motivate reluctant learners, student assessment, and coping with materials they perceived as inappropriate or inadequate that involved them becoming more aware of their isolation as novice teachers. As Mann and Walsh (2017) point out, reflection benefits from such dialogue because it “is a crucial part of the reflection-action-further-action cycle, since it allows for clarification, questioning and ultimately

enhanced understanding” (p. 8). I now outline how I discovered the power of teacher group reflections 30+ years ago while I was doing my own research on reflective practice in Korea.

The Power of Group Reflections: Korea

In 1986, I set up my first teacher reflection group with four teachers in Seoul, and this later led me to continue researching teacher reflection groups for my PhD dissertation, completed in 1996, where I really discovered the power of group reflections firsthand and that talk is not cheap as the old adage would have us all believe. I wrote about this group in one of my early publications, and I will share some of the details here (for more details, see Farrell, 1999).

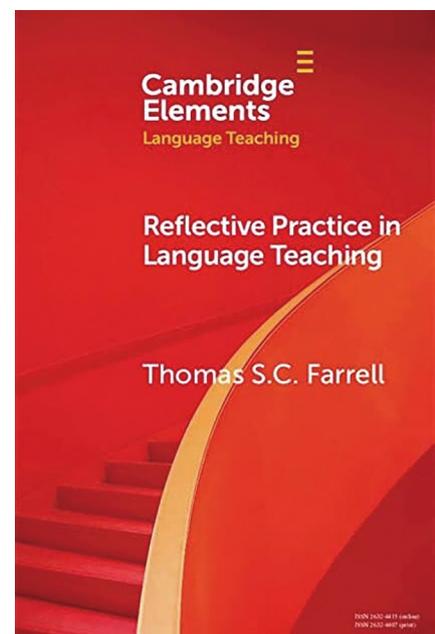
The study took place in Seoul, South Korea, in the autumn semester of 1992. The study sought to investigate in what ways regular group discussions promote reflective thinking when three experienced EFL teachers (two Korean female natives and one male Caucasian teacher) in Korea came together weekly to discuss their work. They said that they joined the group because “as ESL/EFL teachers, [we] need to share our own experiences” (Farrell, 1999, p. 165). By participating in a continuing dialogue about their experiences in their own and others’ classes, they said, “We will come to a clearer understanding of what it is to be a teacher of ESL/EFL and of how we can become better at what we do” (p. 165). Results showed that (a) the teachers talked about their personal theories of teaching and the problems faced in their teaching, and that (b) all three teachers were reflective, to a certain extent, in their orientation to teaching, although they varied in their degree of reflectivity.

This was my first real experience facilitating a group of TESOL teachers reflecting on their practice, and I have continued to encourage such group reflections since I worked with teacher groups when I moved to Canada many years ago (e.g., Farrell, 2014a, b; Farrell, 2016). Of course all teachers are different and have different concerns when reflecting on their practices while talking to other teachers. However, as the opening comments in the introduction above and the comments in this section above attest to, “talk is not cheap” in that sharing ideas with other teachers helps all to develop because of the supportive environment of the group. Of course, language teachers can engage in reflective practice by themselves, and this is a good starting point for many teachers who may be a bit uncertain about the process. However, while we are self-reflecting, we may encounter issues or situations that may be unpleasant, and so we may avoid these and become biased in our reflections to only those topics that do not upset us.

I will focus on three different aspects that I think are important when developing such reflection groups.

Forming Teacher Reflection Groups

As mentioned above, in this article, I am focusing briefly on three important aspects that teachers can consider when



▲ Thomas Farrell’s most recent book (2022).

forming teacher reflection groups: (a) setting up the group, (b) members' roles and responsibilities, and (c) modes of preferred reflection and time considerations.

When setting up a teacher reflection group, it will be important to effectively address the issues of members' roles and interaction within the group so that discussions are supportive when members are sharing their experiences. One of the most important considerations from the very beginning when setting up a group is that a non-threatening environment of trust should be fostered in the group. Ways of establishing trust can be incorporated into the reflective process itself. The members of the group can establish ground rules early on that will ensure respect and trust in all discussions, even if there is disagreement when controversial issues arise. One way of ensuring that trust is to guarantee that confidentiality will be of utmost importance. Indeed, the question of leadership is also a very important consideration for language teacher reflection groups, and this can also be connected to the idea of trust: trust in the leader and a resulting trust in the group process. Who would decide the leader? Would it be a voluntary position? What would the leader's responsibilities be – deciding the topic, nominate speakers, end topics, and so on?

Regarding roles of individual members, Belbin (1993) suggests some of the following but individual groups may also come up with some other roles:

- *Coordinator or facilitator* who makes a good chairperson and ensures that everyone in the group has an opportunity for input.
- *Shaper* who drives the group forward.
- *Implementer* who gets things done.
- *Monitor evaluator* who ensures that all options are considered.
- *Team worker* who helps cement the group together.
- *Resource investigator* who develops outside contacts.
- *Completer/finisher* who finishes things off.
- *Expert* who provides specific areas of knowledge.

Once the group has been set up and has discussed and agreed on the allocation of different roles for the period of reflection, they should then consider what opportunities they will provide for reflection. The main mode of reflection considered here is talk with other teachers, but teachers can also combine this with other modes such as written reflection as well as classroom observations that include the use of audio and video recordings to aid reflection. Of course, all of these can also be considered doable on online platforms as well as in face-to-face meetings.

Having facilitated many reflective practice language teacher groups over the years, I have found that time can be a huge factor for all teachers (Farrell, 2016). Thus, each language teacher group must consider and discuss four different aspects of time associated with reflection: *individual, activity, development, and the period of reflection*. A certain level of commitment by *individual* participants in terms of time availability should be negotiated by the group at the start of the process. Associated with the *activity* time each participant has to give the project is the time that should be spent on each activity. Another aspect of time that is important for teacher self-development groups is the time it takes to *develop*. Analytical reflection takes time and only progresses at a rate at which individual teachers are ready to reflect critically. Finally, groups must consider the timeframe for the project as a whole, or the *period for reflection* for the group. How long should a group, a pair, or an individual reflect? Having a fixed period in which to reflect allows the participants to know what period during the semester they can devote wholly to reflection.

I believe that in such teacher group reflections, whether face-to-face or on online platforms, language teachers can encourage more exploration of teaching and learning and as a result gain more of an understanding of their individual practice. Such communities of practice can help language teachers to (re)configure, define, and redefine their philosophy, principles, theory, practice, and critical reflections beyond practice. In such a manner, entering into discussions with another teacher or group of teachers can result in gaining new knowledge, new perspectives, and new understandings that would have been difficult for teachers reflecting alone.

Conclusion

In this article, I pointed out that from my experience over the past forty years or more, reflection in a language teacher reflection group of peers, be they novice or experienced, can be a powerful way of exposing language teachers to different viewpoints. These viewpoints can be seen as positive when the group members are supportive. I have briefly explained how teachers can form such teacher reflection groups

...we may need to be challenged about our beliefs and the only real way of doing this is to share them with other teachers.

through the research I have conducted with such groups over the years because these studies have shown me that groups that engage in dialogic reflective practice can help novice and experienced teachers resist plateauing that can occur easily if teachers are left in isolation and drifting alone as they teach. I will give the last words to the Korean group members from all those years ago when one of the members wrote to me privately one year after the project:

We shared what was happening in our classrooms and professional lives. I don't think we found solutions per se, but I think we provided a forum for each of us as individuals to articulate what was happening and then to share similar experiences in a supportive way. I also found that I created friendships.

References

- Belbin, R. M. (1993). *Team roles at work*. Butterfield-Heinemann.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (1999). Reflective practice in a teacher development group. *System*, 27(2), 157–172.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2014a). "I've plateaued...gone a little stale." Mid-career reflections in a teacher reflection group. *Reflective Practice*, 15(4), 504–517.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2014b). *Reflective practice in ESL teacher development groups: From practices to principles*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2016). *From trainee to teacher: Reflective practice for novice teachers*. Equinox.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2021). *TESOL teacher education: A reflective approach*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Mann, S., & Walsh, S. (2017) *Reflective practice in English language teaching*. Routledge.

...gaining new knowledge, new perspectives, and new understandings that would have been difficult for teachers reflecting alone.

From Cooperation to Collaboration: Why Does the Distinction Matter?

By Dr. Gabriel Díaz Maggioli, Universidad ORT Uruguay

Teacher Development in Perspective

A lot has been said about the beneficial role that cooperation plays in promoting teacher learning, growth, and development in English language teaching. In fact, many of the theories that deal with teachers' professional development focus on cooperation as a way of promoting teacher engagement and growth in the profession (Díaz Maggioli, 2020). However, not all cooperative teacher development activities have yielded the expected beneficial results (Panitz, 1996; Richardson & Díaz Maggioli, 2018). While cooperative thinking and working have contributed to the development of specific projects, they have failed to create a culture of professional development where teachers support one another beyond a concrete project. Hence, I would like to advocate for the advantages of implementing teachers' *collaborative* professional development as a way to bridge the gaps left by cooperative approaches.



In this short article, I will establish a difference between cooperation and collaboration, and provide other related principles of effective professional development that can successfully enhance teacher learning and development.

What Is Cooperation?

According to Panitz (1996), cooperation is a way of structuring interaction among people with the aim of promoting the accomplishment of a specific end-product or goal. In this sense, when people work together, each member of the team is tasked with one aspect of the process that will successfully take the team to achieving the goal or generating the product. In a cooperative scenario, the final product is "thrown together" at the very end by having each member contribute their part to the process. This implies that each team member works without the benefit of input from the rest of the team. While it is definitely an easy way to set up the work of groups, the cooperative mindset has been found to be quite ineffective. Some of the reasons are that it does not

foster reciprocity above and beyond the task at hand, and thus, it fails to build a cooperative atmosphere amongst teachers.

If we look at cooperative professional development from the point of view of the thinking it promotes, we see that it promotes a kind of thinking which is linear, logic-based, convergent, and oriented at highlighting individual success in the project. These traits, too, conspire against building a culture of learning, doing, and being that promotes the kind of learning expected of teachers.

Because of the above-mentioned reasons and given what has been learned on effective teachers' professional development from research and school-based practices, it would make more sense to turn toward a philosophy of collaboration. In the next section, I describe such a philosophy.

How Can Collaboration Enhance Teacher Learning?

In contrast with the kind of thinking and doing that is promoted through cooperative learning, collaborative learning provides a philosophy of interaction that brings people together and calls for individuals to be responsible for their actions, with learning included among those actions. Collaborative approaches respect the talents and contributions of each individual member in synergy with one another, thus replicating what true life collaboration looks like.

...collaborative work is a form of mediated learning (Díaz Maggioli, 2023) where everyone can contribute their expertise while, at the same time, learning with and from one another.

In collaborative learning, all group participants share the workload, which allows for everyone to provide input to the process. If successful, a collaborative project allows for an easier flow to the process, and also, it allows participants to learn more both as a team and as individuals (Hattie, 2015). This is because collaborative

thinking is recursive, evidence-based, evolving, and more importantly, emerging from the interaction of team members who are working towards a common goal. In this sense, we can say that collaborative work is a form of mediated learning (Díaz Maggioli, 2023) where everyone can contribute their expertise while, at the same time, learning *with* and *from* one another. This kind of learning has the potential to make teachers more autonomous, which is one of the key goals behind professional development.

The Principles of Effective Professional Development

In order to better understand the need for collaborative – as opposed to cooperative – teacher development practices, we should look at what research and practice have indicated are the principles of effective professional development. Richardson and Díaz Maggioli (2018) carried out an extensive meta-analysis of the literature on professional development and also accessed the results of an international survey of teachers, administrators, and policymakers on the subject. By triangulating the findings of both the meta-analysis of research and the data from the survey, they concluded that effective professional development abides by the following principles, which they have organized as the acronym INSPIRE:

...collaboration helps build communities of practitioners who collectively take responsibility for their students' learning.

- I – Impactful:** Effective professional development is characterized by an improvement in students' learning as a result of teachers honing their teaching skills, knowledge, and dispositions.
- N – Needs-based:** Effective professional development specifically targets the actual learning needs of teachers in particular contexts.
- S – Sustained:** The one-shot professional development day or workshop should give way to learning activities in which teachers engage throughout the academic year in learning more in order to be able to expand their teaching repertoire.
- P – Peer-collaborative:** In order to be truly effective, professional development activities need to recognize the situated expertise of those who teach together in the same context. It is through collaboration that both the teachers and the institution stand a chance of serving learners better.
- I – In practice:** Collaborative professional development is something done in practice and not just through theory or one-size-fits-all demonstrations and coaching. Since professional development is about learning, then it should be done in teaching–learning situations, and not just theorized.

- R – Reflective:** Collaborative professional development naturally prompts teachers to reflect *in, on, and through* their actions. It promotes collective and situated learning from practice that is shared with like-minded colleagues.
- E – Evaluated:** Lastly, effective professional development activities and their products are systematically evaluated in light of the goals pursued. In this sense, all activities should be assessed in an ongoing manner so that changes can be made to the process of teacher development, if needed, as well as to gauge the potential of certain activities for teacher learning.

Figure 1. Inspire: Principles of Effective Professional Development (from Richardson & Diaz Maggioli, 2018)



Conclusion

As can be seen from the discussion above, effective, collaborative teacher development is a systemic endeavor. Each of the principles discussed heavily relies on the possibility of teachers coming together to learn more about their craft. They each emphasize the inherently situated nature of teacher learning as part of a community endeavor. Instead of providing just a final result, collaboration helps build communities of practitioners who collectively take responsibility for their students' learning. Promoting a more collaborative mindset is one way in which we can all support educational change.

References

Díaz Maggioli, G. (2023). *Initial language teacher education*. Routledge.

Díaz Maggioli, G. (2020). Continuous professional development: The seeds of professionalism. In C. Coombe, N. J. Anderson, & L. Stephenson (Eds.), *Professionalizing your English language teaching* (pp. 253–262). Springer Nature Switzerland.

Hattie, J. (2015). *What works best in education: The politics of collaborative expertise*. Pearson. https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/corporate/global/pearson-dot-com/files/hattie/150526_ExpertiseWEB_V1.pdf

Panitz, T. (1996). *A definition of collaborative vs cooperative learning*. <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/deliberations/collaborative-learning/panitz-paper.cfm>

Richardson, S., & Díaz Maggioli, G. (2018). *Effective professional development for English language teachers: Principles and best practice*. Cambridge University Press.

“I’ve Always Considered Teaching as Working Collaboratively with Students”

Dr. Judy Yin, Korea National University of Education

Judy Yin is a professor at Korea National University of Education – the nation’s premiere provider of elementary school teachers. Prof. Yin is a featured speaker at our April conference, presenting “Collaborative Teaching and Learning in TEFL” as her featured session and “Using Drawings and Metaphors to Explore Teacher Identity” as her invited second session – both being in areas that have yet to be widely researched in the Korean context. Recently, Prof. Yin kindly provided The English Connection with the following interview. — Ed.

KOTESOL: Hello and thank you for making time for this interview. You will be providing a featured session at our international conference this spring. I’m sure our readers are interested in learning a little more about you before the conference. Would you tell us a little more about yourself?

Prof. Yin: I got my first teaching experience at the American School of Las Palmas in Spain. I visited there after I got my BA in art history from UCLA, hoping to get some experiences living in Europe. While I was teaching secondary English there, I had so many questions about foreign language teaching that were often left unanswered. Since I had no academic background in TEFL, I decided to study at a graduate school for professional development. My graduate years at Seoul National University allowed me to gain a holistic view of the English teaching context in Korea and how it differs from other EFL contexts. So, I’ve made it my goal to empower English teachers in Korea by helping them to practice reflective teaching and reinterpret theories and methods that are not based on the Korean context so that they can better suit the needs of Korean students.

I think “coaching” is a better word for what we should do in the class.

Prof. Yin: I’ve always considered teaching as not showing what the teacher knows but working collaboratively with students. In this sense, I think “coaching” is a better word for what we should do in the class. I’d like to show a few examples of how this can be achieved. Also, I think researchers and teachers need to work together to create theories and methods that are practical and applicable. Teachers can conduct action research to reflect on their teaching practice as well as provide the necessary data for further analysis and research. I’m planning to mention some studies regarding co-teaching to suggest effective ways for Korean and native English teachers to teach collaboratively. And I’d also like to discuss how we can collaborate with machine translation to help students use it strategically rather than rely on it to produce what they should actually be producing.

KOTESOL: Your mention of machine translation brings to mind ChatGPT, which has been in the news recently as a threat to teaching. Do you foresee a way that it might be of benefit in language teaching?

Prof. Yin: Just as the creation of the calculator hasn’t taken away math teacher’s jobs, I don’t think ChatGPT is a threat. Depending on how it is used in the classroom, I think it can expose students to input and encourage students to produce without anxiety about errors.



KOTESOL: You also mentioned “teachers reflecting on their teaching practice.” How closely would you say your ideas on reflective practice align with those of Thomas Farrell and/or Jack Richards, two other speakers at our upcoming conference?

Prof. Yin: I agree with their concept of how reflective teaching allows teachers to be aware of their teaching context along with their own needs and their students’ needs, which can help them make the best decisions when adopting a method that was developed abroad. I also believe that effective teaching cannot come from a ready-made method. It has to come from within the teacher who has reflected on their beliefs and practice.

KOTESOL: How and why did you get involved in collaborative classroom learning?

Prof. Yin: I remember working in groups in most of my classes from elementary through high school in the States. So for me, when I came to Korea in 2002, I experienced culture shock. Back then, there weren’t that many English classes that encouraged students to work collaboratively in class. And even if they were placed in groups, the students did not know how to work “collaboratively.” They seemed to be sharing the work they had already completed on their own, which defeats the purpose of having them work in groups. The students also seemed to have difficulties in sharing their ideas in groups. That got me thinking about how we can engineer participation in group activities so that Korean students can collaborate effectively in learning a foreign language (which can be face-threatening).

KOTESOL: Do you draw a distinction between the terms “collaborative learning” and “cooperative learning”?

Prof. Yin: I think cooperative learning involves a complete individual contributing their share of work, whereas collaborative learning is associated with incomplete individuals who need to depend on each other to generate ideas. Personally, I see cooperative learning as being more product-oriented when compared to collaborative learning, which is more process-oriented.

KOTESOL: There appears to be little research on collaborative classroom learning taking place in Korea. Why do you think that is?

Prof. Yin: It may be that it’s difficult to conduct research and collect data in secondary schools due to the test-oriented lessons and schedules. There have been a number of studies at the tertiary level, but I’d also like to see as many studies at the secondary school level.

KOTESOL: Your invited second session is on “Using Drawings and Metaphors to Explore Teacher Identity,” which I am also quite interested in, as I have used image schema in teaching metaphors, idioms, and proverbs. Could you give us a peek at what your session will focus on?

Judy Yin: I tried out this idea with my graduate students to get a more in-depth view of how they perceive themselves as English teachers in Korea. It was after reading an article regarding teacher identity, and we tried it out as an activity. The results that came out were very inspiring and even heart-breaking.

KOTESOL: You are the general secretary of AsiaTEFL, a position in which you work very closely with the AsiaTEFL presidents. Could you give us an update on AsiaTEFL activities?

Prof. Yin: Usually, AsiaTEFL conferences are held abroad in East Asian countries such as Thailand, China, Japan, or Indonesia. This year, AsiaTEFL is having its 20th anniversary International Conference at the Daejeon Conference Center (August 17–20). Our theme for this year is “Celebrating ELT in Asia: Visions and Aspirations.” Our conferences always resemble a great academic “party” with so many teachers and researchers from Asia truly celebrating their profession and passion for teaching. This year, our keynote speaker is Youngsuk “YS” Chi, who is the chairman of Elsevier, the publishing company. We’ve also invited teachers and scholars from China, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Australia as our plenary speakers to share their views. It’s going to be a great academic festival for all participants. You can get more information when you visit our website at <https://www.asiatefl.org/>.

KOTESOL: You’re a tenured professor at KNUE – Korea National University of Education. Could you tell us about the teacher training that it offers, and especially about the EFL teacher training it offers?

Prof. Yin: Our university is basically a teacher’s college that offers a variety of courses for pre-service and in-service teachers. We have two types of graduate programs: one that is offered during the spring and fall semesters with 15-week courses, and the other is offered during summer and winter with 2-week courses (4-hour classes from Monday to Saturday). The spring and fall courses are for students who have a BA but are not certified teachers and for in-service teachers who were provided an official leave from their school to obtain a graduate degree. The intensive summer

and winter courses are for teachers who cannot take courses during spring and fall. We offer both masters and doctorate programs for teachers who are interested in conducting research to enhance their professionalism in education. The courses include theories and methods in TEFL, teaching English through literature, syntax, and phonology courses, and a variety of courses that focus on reflective teaching. Many of the courses are conducted in English, so if you are interested in pursuing a graduate degree, please visit our website at <https://knue.ac.kr/smain.html>.

KOTESOL: Would you give us your impressions of Korea TESOL as a teachers association?

Prof. Yin: My impression of Korea TESOL is that it deals with “real” issues that are pertinent to teachers by focusing on topics that are aligned with the needs of the teachers. I also feel that there is always constructive communication between the officers of the association and the members, which is probably why the conference offers presentations that are timely and appropriate.

KOTESOL: What changes do you foresee in TEFL in Korea in, say, the next five to ten years?

Prof. Yin: The new 2022 national curriculum that is now in effect will change a lot of things. The intention of the credit system in high school is to allow students to have more freedom in choosing the classes that are associated with their future college majors, but it also means that teachers will have to develop classes from scratch. This process may require Korean and native English teachers to collaborate much more than they do now. Also, the importance of process-oriented assessment will also provide more opportunities for students to be assessed in various ways, but the stability of this assessment will take some time, I think. In terms of digital tools in the English classroom, I don’t see drastic changes if the college entrance exam remains the same.

KOTESOL: And what changes do you foresee for Judy Yin – professionally and/or personally – in, say, the next five to ten years?

Prof. Yin: I’m hoping to expand my perspective and knowledge regarding ways to practice reflective teaching in Korea. I got deeply interested in this area when I was forced to teach online without any preparation in 2020. I felt lost and even intimidated to be placed in a teaching context that was so alien to me. In retrospect, I think that is when I began to notice that I had been stuck in mannerism and had built a comfort zone that blinded me from so many things that could have made me a better teacher. I’d like to have more opportunities to communicate with English teachers to help them with their emotional labor and empower them by training them to practice reflective teaching.

KOTESOL: Before we conclude this interview, do you have any final words for our readers of *The English Connection*?

Prof. Yin: I see myself as being in a middle position between Korean and native English teachers, so I can see how each teacher can work together in the classroom. There are so many things both types of teachers can offer to enhance students’ learning experiences. I’d like to see more chances for Korean and native English teachers to communicate and share ideas.

KOTESOL: Thank you for this wide-ranging interview, Prof. Yin. I’m sure I’ll be seeing you at the conference!

Interviewed by David Shaffer.

Technology-Enhanced Collaboration

Dr. Francisca Maria Ivone, Universitas Negeri Malang

Francisca Maria Ivone is a featured speaker at the KOTESOL International Conference in April. She will be coming to the conference from her university, Universitas Negeri Malang, in Malang, Indonesia. She does collaborative research on collaboration and on extensive listening and viewing, the topics of her featured session, "Technology-Enhanced Collaboration: Possibilities and Challenges in Language Teaching and Learning," and her invited second session, "Extensive Listening and Viewing in Listening Courses." The following is the interview that we conducted with Prof. Ivone for The English Connection. — Ed.

KOTESOL: First, I would like to thank you for providing time for this interview for *The English Connection* and for accepting the invitation to speak at the 2023 KOTESOL International Conference. Would you begin by providing a little background information for our readers who may not be so familiar with you and your work?

Prof. Ivone: Thank you so much for inviting me to KOTESOL 2023 and interviewing me for *The English Connection*. Hi everyone, my name is Francisca Maria Ivone from Universitas Negeri Malang in East Java, Indonesia. I graduated from IKIP Negeri Malang. It is a teacher education institution in my hometown. After graduating with a Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching, I continued my postgraduate studies at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. I received two degrees from UQ, a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and a PhD in Applied Linguistics. My teaching and research interests are in ELT, specifically teaching listening and reading as well as extensive reading, listening, and viewing, and technology-enhanced language teaching. I am also interested in autonomous learning and collaborative learning. I was invited for the first time to the KOTESOL International Conference in 2021, when I attended the conference virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic. At that conference, I talked about the future of teaching English with technology. It is an honor to be presenting once again in KOTESOL 2023. I am really looking forward to it.

KOTESOL: At this spring's International Conference, your featured session is entitled "Technology-Enhanced Collaboration: Possibilities and Challenges in Language Teaching and Learning." Could you provide us with a glimpse into what it will be discussing?

Prof. Ivone: Of course. I enjoy teaching and working with technology, and I believe it has greatly aided me in developing my teaching and research skills over the years. At this year's KOTESOL conference, I'd like to share some thoughts and experiences about how technology has been and will be used to improve collaborative language teaching and learning. Technology is frequently portrayed as a magical tool capable of solving any problem in language teaching and learning. In some ways, this is correct, as we saw during the Covid-19 pandemic. We've seen its accessibility, adaptability, and versatility. We have, however, encountered its constraints, complexities, and flaws. In my presentations, I'll look at these opportunities and challenges, and talk about how they've been and can be used in collaborative language teaching and learning.

KOTESOL: The theme of this conference is on collaboration – "Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, and Students." How, when, and/or why did you get interested in collaboration in relation to ELT?

Prof. Ivone: Collaboration has always been a primary consideration in my classroom. I make an effort to design language learning activities that allow my students to collaborate in pairs or groups. However, it is only recently that I have become particularly interested in researching this subject. If I had to pinpoint a date when I first became interested in the subject, it was on a Saturday in early March 2020. It was one week before the first Covid-19 lockdown in Indonesia. That Saturday, I attended a workshop given by Prof. George Jacobs in a nearby city. The workshop was a lot of fun, and it piqued my interest in learning more about the subject. At the end of the workshop, George and I discussed the possibility of co-publishing. George is a well-known expert in collaborative learning, and I know a little bit about technology in language teaching and learning, so we collaborated during the pandemic and have since published four papers with other colleagues.



KOTESOL: Looking over your lengthy list of research papers over the years, I've seen that the great majority of them have been in collaboration with other scholars. What has made this your preferred research format?

Prof. Ivone: I researched, published, and presented my work on my own at the beginning of my professional career. Most of the time, I felt scared and out of my depth. It was difficult to do everything on my own because my knowledge and skills are limited. So, I tried to collaborate with others in my department. I learned that research and writing are much easier when done collaboratively, as everyone can contribute to the work based on their expertise, and it gives me people to discuss and "argue" with. Because we want to succeed together, we work faster and better. We can examine things from various angles and bring our experience and knowledge to the job. It is more dynamic and enjoyable. It's like going for a jog with a friend. Not everyone is sufficiently motivated to research and publish on their own. When we do it with others, we are energized and motivated by their enthusiasm. All we have to do is find the "right" buddy.

KOTESOL: As you have mentioned above, several of your research papers have included Prof. George Jacobs, another

featured speaker at our International Conference this spring. Could you tell us more about this collaborative relationship?

Prof. Ivone: I was thrilled to learn that George will be speaking at KOTESOL this spring. He is my collaborative learning mentor. When I attended his Indonesian workshop, read his work, and later published with him, he taught me the fundamentals of collaborative learning. I believe our collaborative relationship began when we realized we could combine our expertise to create something useful for language teachers. I admire George's commitment, expertise, and generosity in sharing his knowledge and experience. Writing with him helped me become a better teacher, more diligent, and more productive. He is my "right buddy" when it comes to collaborative writing.

KOTESOL: We are very glad that you will be presenting an invited second session for us: "Extensive Listening and Viewing in Listening Courses." Could you tell us a bit about what this session will include?

Prof. Ivone: Thank you very much for inviting me to also speak in an invited session at this year's KOTESOL, where I will be able to share what I've been doing in my listening classes. After learning the principles of extensive reading (ER) and extensive listening (EL), I realized I was doing "extensive viewing" when I first started learning English. In fact, I became interested in learning English because of my extensive viewing. I combined it with a lot of reading and, later, a

Prof. Ivone: Extensive viewing is the viewing of audio-visual text for pleasure. In addition to reading books for pleasure, this is one of the most natural things we do in our first, second, and foreign languages. We are constantly exposed to films, videos, and other audio-visual texts. Today's generation cannot go a single day without watching YouTube, Netflix, or other video content. This activity is more natural than extensive listening, which is solely concerned with the

Because we want to succeed together, we work faster and better. We can examine things from various angles and bring our experience and knowledge to the job. It is more dynamic and enjoyable. It's like going for a jog with a friend.

availability of aural text. When viewing, language learners can choose between moving picture, aural text, and written text as input channels based on their needs and preference. Thus, the activity is less stressful and makes foreign language texts more comprehensible, especially for beginners and at intermediate levels.

KOTESOL: This will be your first in-person KOTESOL conference, I believe. What do you look forward to doing, aside from delivering your two sessions?

Prof. Ivone: It will be my first, and I am very excited about it. Of course, I'm looking forward to seeing George. I also want to talk to people I've never met in person. I recognize a few of you from KOTESOL 2021, but I have yet to meet you in person. I'd like to expand my professional and personal network in Korea. I'm looking forward to attending the rest of the conference's sessions. I am aware that Korea is quite advanced in terms of technology and technology-enhanced language learning. I'm sure there will be presentations in this field of study from which I can learn.

KOTESOL: Are there other activities that you plan on doing while you are in Seoul this spring – places to see, foods to sample?

Prof. Ivone: I visited Korea in 2017, but I didn't have much time to immerse myself in the local culture and cuisine. When I visit Korea in April, I hope the cherry blossoms are still in bloom. And I'd like to go to the night markets and try the delicious street food. Recently, I've been watching YouTube videos about Korean street food. I can't wait to put them to the test.

KOTESOL: Well, I'm sure there will be plenty of street food available when you are in Seoul. And we are eager for a taste of the food – food for thought – that you will be bringing to the conference. Thank you for doing this interview for *The English Connection*.

Interviewed by David Shaffer.



▲ Francisca (2nd from left) meets George Jacobs (center) for the first time in Surabaya, March 2020.

lot of listening. Similarly, over the years in my classroom, I have experimented with various activities that encourage my students to do extensive listening and viewing so they can spend more time listening to aural texts in English, find texts within their proficiency level, and make aural texts more comprehensible. I believe that language learners will be more motivated and confident in performing foreign language listening activities when they are aware of what they need to listen to and how to listen to the texts. So, in my presentation, after introducing the concept and importance of extensive listening and viewing in ELT, I will show how it is incorporated into listening courses at my English department.

KOTESOL: While "extensive reading" and "extensive listening" are pretty much household terms in ELT, "extensive viewing" is not. In fact, almost all the work published in this area has been done by you. How do you define "extensive viewing"?

Global Citizenship, Global Exchanges, and World Englishes

Dr. Raichle Farrelly, University of Colorado Boulder

Raichle Farrelly is a teaching associate professor, in addition to the TESOL director, in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Colorado Boulder. She is also a member of the board of directors for the TESOL International Association. She is a featured speaker at this spring's international conference, with the presentation "Global Collaborations to Promote Language Learning and Teacher Development," as well as an invited second session "Exploring World Englishes to Enhance Learners' Oral Skills." Her numerous professional interests include community-engaged learning and teaching refugee-background adults. Professor Farrelly graciously accepted this interview for The English Connection. — Ed.

The English Connection (TEC): Thank you, Professor Farrelly, for agreeing to this interview with KOTESOL's ELT magazine, *The English Connection*, as a prelude to your two featured speaker sessions at this year's 2023 International Conference.



Prof. Farrelly: Thank you! I'm delighted to participate in this year's KOTESOL conference and welcome this opportunity to connect with your readers.

TEC: Your featured session, "Global Collaborations to Promote Language Learning and Teacher Development," looks to share our understanding of global citizenship education. How would you define a "global citizen," and could you explain the education involved?

Prof. Farrelly: According to the United Nations, "global citizenship is the umbrella term for social, political, environmental, and economic actions of globally minded individuals and communities on a worldwide scale." Being a global citizen means recognizing that we are all connected across a wide variety of societies and networks, and we have a responsibility to engage in action that benefits the greater good. As educators, when we incorporate global citizenship education into our practice, we enable students to make connections between local and global issues so that they can imagine a pathway to that "greater good." We create opportunities for learners to examine their beliefs and values, and evaluate not only the differences but the similarities between people all over the world.

Global citizenship education promotes combating prejudice and discrimination through understanding and active participation in a global community. It dovetails nicely with English language teaching because as students identify issues that matter most to them, they need to develop appropriate and effective communication strategies for conveying their stance and their passion. They need to be able to use language creatively and critically to convince people, to argue, to advocate, and to take action.

Students' authentic language use within global citizenship education reflects the types of interactions they will engage in as they become knowledgeable and take action on various social and environmental issues. Most youth today do want to be global citizens – to make changes locally and globally to create an even better world. As educators, we have this wonderful and unique opportunity to help them develop the tools and strategies needed to do so!

TEC: As a bit of insight into your featured session, what will be some of the opportunities to develop virtual global exchanges

you will be discussing, along with the practical ideas for implementation?

Prof. Farrelly: In this session, I'll highlight some virtual global exchanges that have had a tangible impact on the participating students. Some of the exchanges connected English language learners in different parts of the world through project-based learning with real-world deliverables such as a media literacy campaign developed by students in the U.S. and Slovakia. Another collaboration brought together English learners and teachers from Russia and the U.S. who were able to connect with one another through virtual conversation cafes.

The success of collaborative virtual global exchanges hinges on the planning, which starts with identifying partners and establishing shared goals for the project. If teachers are collaborating to bring their classes together, for example, each will want to be clear about the intended learning outcomes for their respective learners.

TEC: In addition to your featured session, you will be discussing World Englishes and speak on raising awareness about English as a global language in an invited second session, "Exploring World Englishes to Enhance Learners' Oral Skills." What can interested attendees anticipate?

Prof. Farrelly: I'm really excited about this session because it encompasses two areas I'm very passionate about: (a) promoting the use of diverse varieties of English in the classroom and (b) developing oral language skills (i.e., speaking, listening, and pronunciation). I'm looking forward to exploring attendees' perceptions about World Englishes, including our collective understandings about the use and acceptance of different varieties of English in a range of global contexts – academic, professional, and informal.

As teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum designers, we are constantly making decisions about the content we teach and the materials we use as the medium for instruction. We often draw on our experiences as learners when teaching, and for some of us, that means grappling with long-held beliefs about how languages are learned and taught. In some cases, that may reflect notions that elevate "native speaker" standards as the goal for learners. However, as we all are coming to realize, a "native speaker" standard is a moving and perhaps unrealistic target. Who is the native speaker and why is their variety privileged? Which "native" variety is the one to teach? As we select and develop materials to cultivate oral skills in English, we can be expansive and inclusive in our approach. In this session, I'll share a collection of activities and resources that promotes linguistic variety and reflects an attitude of abundance, and I hope attendees will also be willing to share!

TEC: A large majority of KOTESOL members are English "native speakers" teaching English to Koreans as a second or additional language, and find "enhancing learners' oral skills" to be at the top of their list of job duties. What are perhaps some specific

aspects in this Korean teaching context that might be brought out in your session?

Prof. Farrelly: I would like teachers to feel confident about the choices they make when selecting materials and developing activities to foster oral skills development in the classroom. I know there are many pressures in the Korean context to prepare learners for high-stakes exams, which may detract from the time allocated to meaningful, authentic (and dare I say fun!) speaking and listening practice. I'd like to provide some accessible approaches that teachers can integrate into perhaps otherwise constrained curricula, such as those that integrate technology and flipped classes where learners have ample opportunity for speaking and listening practice both in and out of class time. I am also a big believer in the value of teacher experience and expertise, and hope that we can engage collaboratively to bring forward high-impact practices that teachers in Korea are already employing with success in their local contexts.

TEC: If I may draw attention to other professional interests, your passion is in community-engaged learning and, specifically, teaching refugee-background adults. Can you share your experiences in this, and the satisfaction (I'm assuming!) it gives you?

Prof. Farrelly: Absolutely! Teaching adult refugee-background populations changed my life as a TESOL professional, as well as personally. In 2006, I had an MA in linguistics with a TESOL Certificate and I was pursuing my PhD in linguistics at the University of Utah. I had always taught academic English classes at my institution – academic writing, pronunciation, academic study skills – and considered myself to be a competent instructor and creative curriculum designer. Most of the learners in my classes were international students from Japan, China, Korea, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

Then one year, I was offered the chance to teach English classes for newly arrived refugee-background women from Burundi (a country in East Africa) through the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City, Utah. Within the first few weeks of teaching these women, I deemed myself a complete failure! I had never encountered learners with refugee experience and interrupted formal schooling. I had never taught adults who hadn't been afforded the opportunity to develop print literacy in their home languages. In fact, none of my TESOL courses equipped me with any understanding of how to deliver early literacy instruction. That aspect of teacher education lies primarily in programs that prepare elementary school teachers.

This first group of women I taught had never learned to hold pencils and orient papers on the desk, let alone write shapes, identify letters, map sounds to symbols in an alphabet, etc. And here I was, trying to teach all of these foundational skills in a language none of them spoke. Fortunately, I found a few literacy experts near me as well as the amazing organization Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults (LESLLA; www.leslla.org), and with a lot of time, reading, trial and error, and humility, I learned how to teach adult emergent readers. Over the years since teaching that first group of women, I've taught adult literacy and beginner English classes to immigrant and refugee-background learners from a range of countries including Burma, Nepal, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Mexico, El Salvador, Cuba and others!

My personal and professional lives converged when I decided to travel to Tanzania to visit the camps where many Burundi refugees were living for multiple decades prior to resettlement. I wanted to know where my students were coming from and what their lives were like prior to this new reality in the U.S. In 2008, I had the privilege of visiting the extended families of some of my students, who were still awaiting resettlement. The short version of the story is that this trip led me to establish an education-based nonprofit organization (Project Wezesha; www.projectwezesha.org) that operates in the Kigoma region of Western Tanzania. Since 2009, we have worked with remote villages to build a secondary school, establish academic study camps, and provide support to dozens of young people pursuing post-secondary education and vocational training.

Design for Change Model -- FIDS

- **Feel** → What bothers you about the world?
- **Imagine** → Imagine ways to make the situation better.
- **Do** → Go out and put your ideas into action.
- **Share** → Inspire others with your act of change.






▲ **Peak preview slide from Raichle Farrelly's upcoming conference Session: Design for Change – a project-based approach to making a better world through education and action.**

TEC: On a more personal note, will the conference event be your first trip to Korea?

Prof. Farrelly: Yes, this is my first trip to Korea! I am so excited to visit. Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with various students, classmates, and colleagues from Korea. I also had the honor of delivering two virtual workshops to teachers in Korea through my role as an English language specialist with the U.S. Department of State in 2021. Throughout that virtual experience, I was longing to collaborate in person with my contact at the U.S. Embassy, the leaders of the teacher associations who organized the events, and the teachers who attended the sessions. I'm looking forward to attending KOTESOL in person and meeting as many of you as possible.

TEC: Thank you, Professor Farrelly, for your time and for giving *The English Connection* readers and International Conference 2023 attendees an enticing glimpse into your presentations and professional interests.

Prof. Farrelly: Thank you so much for this opportunity to reflect and share!

Interviewed by Andrew White.



▲ **Raichle Farrelly with the first cohort of scholarship students in Tanzania.**

Belonging in the Language Classroom

By Dr. Nikki Ashcraft, University of Missouri

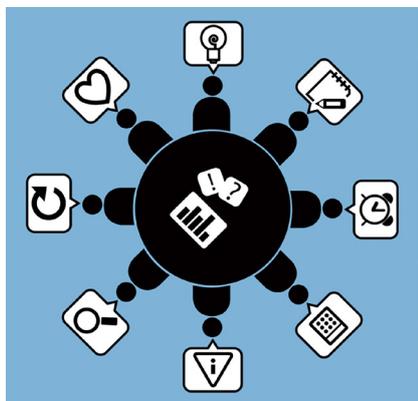
Do you belong to any groups? A club, a church, a professional association? How do you know that you belong to this group? Is it only because you paid your dues and go to meetings? Or is it something else?

For most of us, *belonging* is a feeling or experience. Strayer (2019), who writes about belonging among college students, defines belonging as

students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the campus community or others on campus such as faculty, staff, and peers. (p. 4)

When learners feel that they are part of a learning community, it not only supports their physical and mental well-being but also leads to stronger persistence towards their learning goals. In other words, when learners feel they belong, there are fewer dropouts and more graduates. Additionally, belongingness promotes higher levels of academic achievement (Felton & Lambert, 2020). Learners learn more!

Figure 1. A schematic representation of Dr. Ashcraft's featured session.



Second language acquisition (SLA) research also points to a potential role for learners' sense of belonging in the learners' language acquisition process. For instance, willingness to communicate (WTC) in a second language (L2) has been identified as a factor

facilitating second language development. WTC, which has been conceived of as both a personality trait and a state, is defined as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2" (MacIntyre et al., 1998, as cited in Zhang et al., 2018, p. 227). There are a number of variables that influence whether a learner experiences lower or higher levels of WTC in any given situation. One of these situational variables is the learner's familiarity with their speaking partner. Not surprisingly, learners feel more comfortable talking with people with whom they have established relationships. Additionally, a classroom environment where classmates participate and interact in a cooperative manner encourages a learner's WTC (Zhang et al., 2018). These findings suggest that enhancing a learner's sense of belonging within the classroom community can lead to increased language production and eventually to higher levels of language proficiency!

Likewise, relationships with peers support a learner's persistence in learning English in spite of obstacles they may encounter. For example, Cui and Yang (2022) surveyed Chinese EFL learners three times over the course of a year using a peer closeness

scale and a grit scale. They found that "peer relationships and EFL students' grit were positively and reciprocally related across time points" (p. 9). In the U.S. ESL environment, Garza et al. (2021) analyzed the responses of 6,872 English language learners to questions on the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. They discovered that both campus relationships and campus support services



contributed to learners' sense of belonging, which in turn, "had significant and positive direct effects on ELs' persistence based on reenrollment decisions" (p. 43). These studies on WTC and persistence demonstrate the impact of a learner's sense of belonging on their engagement in learning activities in both the short and long run.

As teachers, then, we have a strong academic justification for striving to create a classroom environment where all students feel they belong. Collaborative activities, which are a hallmark of communicative and task-based learning, not only promote a sense of belonging but *depend on* learners' sense of belonging to achieve their aims. So go ahead – sing those songs, play those games, and engage in community-building activities on a daily or weekly basis! You are not wasting time; you are fostering belonging. I will speak more about belonging and the other conditions required for productive classroom collaboration in my talk on "Laying the Foundation for Classroom Collaboration."

A classroom environment where classmates participate and interact in a cooperative manner encourages a learner's WTC.

References

- Cui, T., & Yang, Y. (2022). Social relationships and grit in English as a foreign language learning among high school students: A three-wave longitudinal study. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, Article 1038878. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1038878>
- Felton, P., & Lambert, L. M. (2020). *Relationship-rich education: How human connections drive success in college*. John Hopkins University Press.
- Garza, T., Huerta, M., García, H. A., & Lau, J. (2021). Exploring sense of belonging, socioacademic integrative moments, and learning communities related to ELs' persistence based on reenrollment decisions in community colleges. *Community College Review, 49*(1), 30–51.
- Strayer, T. L. (2019). *College students' sense of belonging: A key to educational success for all students* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Zhang, J., Beckmann, N., & Beckmann, J. F. (2018). To talk or not to talk: A review of situational antecedents of willingness to communicate in the second language classroom. *System, 72*, 226–239.

Scholarly Collaboration, Teacher Authenticity, and Ecolinguistics: Walking the Talk

Prof. George Jacobs, Universiti Malaya, and Chenghao Zhu, Universiti Malaya

One of our featured sessions at the 2023 Korea TESOL International Conference will be by co-presenters, George M. Jacobs and Chenghao Zhu. They will not only be talking about collaboration; they will be practicing it – as they do in much of their research activities. Their featured session will be coming to us virtually from Singapore and Malaysia, where they are based. They will also be presenting a second session with three additional co-presenters, demonstrating the effectiveness of scholarly collaboration. The following is our interview with Prof. Jacobs and Chenghao Zhu. — Ed.

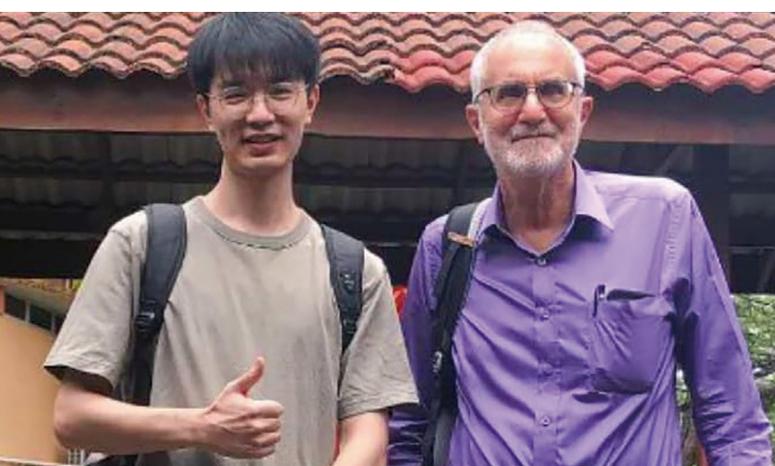
KOTESOL: Thank you, Prof. Jacobs and Chenghao Zhu, for agreeing to do this interview for *The English Connection*, and thank you for agreeing to speak at the upcoming KOTESOL International Conference. To begin with, Prof. Jacobs, could you give our readers a little background information on yourself?

Prof. Jacobs: Hi! Please call me “George.” I was born (in 1952) and raised in the U.S., but since 1993, I’ve been in Singapore.

the Sustainable Development Goals,” published in the *Journal of World Languages*. And perhaps more importantly (at least to me), it was in that collaboration that we found that we were compatible as to topics of interest and work style, that is, we’re both nerds. Now, we are like family (also with many other family members, like Qingli and Dr. Roe, who will also join our second session). And I’m more than happy to see the family getting bigger and bigger in the future.

KOTESOL: The title of your featured session at our international conference is “Collaboration Among Educators: Multiple Authorship in Language Education Articles.” Would you give us a brief overview, George, of what we can expect from this session?

Prof. Jacobs: We noticed a trend toward multiple authorship in academia, especially in the physical sciences. There’s even something called “hyperauthorship” with 100s of authors for one publication. We both prefer having co-authors, so we were curious about multiple authorship in language education. Fortunately, Chenghao has skills in bibliometrics. That made doing the study relatively easy. The session will report our study and look at some of the advantages and disadvantages of multiple authorship.



▲ Chenghao Zhu (left) and Professor George Jacobs.

I also taught in the U.S., Central America, China, and Thailand. These days, I teach English and education, along with doing a lot of volunteer work.

KOTESOL: And Mr. Zhu, would you also give us some background information on yourself?

Chenghao Zhu: Hello! I’m Chenghao Zhu, please call me “Chenghao.” It’s my great honor and pleasure to be interviewed by *The English Connection* and to co-present with Prof. Jacobs at the 2023 Korea TESOL International Conference. Now, I’m a doctoral researcher at Universiti Malaya, Malaysia. In recent years, I’ve been fortunate to work with Prof. Jacobs and have joined many exciting projects about multiple authorship, teacher authenticity, and ecolinguistics.

KOTESOL: The two of you will be co-presenters for your featured session at the conference. How did the two of you come to work together?

Chenghao Zhu: Prof. Jacobs frequently collaborates with Dr. Meng Huat Chau of Universiti Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, and Dr. Chau is my dissertation supervisor. It was in 2020 that Dr. Chau introduced us. What the two of them were going to research at that time attracted me a lot. They very kindly invited me to join their research team, so I had the great opportunity to work together with them. That work was “Ecolinguistics for and Beyond

I feel that I have a lot to share that others have shared with me, and collaboration helps me share it.

KOTESOL: And you will also be doing a second session for us entitled “Walking the Talk and Walking with Students Together: Teacher Authenticity.” What will this session focus on, Chenghao?

Chenghao Zhu: The idea originally came from Yoshi Grote, who wrote a chapter about teacher authenticity in a book called *Becoming Community-Engaged Educators*. She talked about how the teachers who most influenced her in primary and secondary school were those who really “walked their talk.” When she started teaching ESL in Japan, she didn’t share about her sexual orientation. Her chapter discusses why she decided to be an authentic teacher as to that area of her life and what happened when she did. Prof. Jacobs co-edited the book with Yoshi’s chapter, and with Dr. Willy Renandya of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and Prof. Adelina Binti Asmawi, also of Universiti Malaya, they decided to do a book on teacher authenticity. Prof. Adelina was dean of the Department of Language and Literacy Education at Universiti Malaya where my close friend, Qingli Guo, is doing her doctorate. Soon, Qingli and I were both writing chapters for the teacher authenticity book, and Qingli also became an editor of the book. This session will share

stories from the free online book that has a publication date of February 2023.

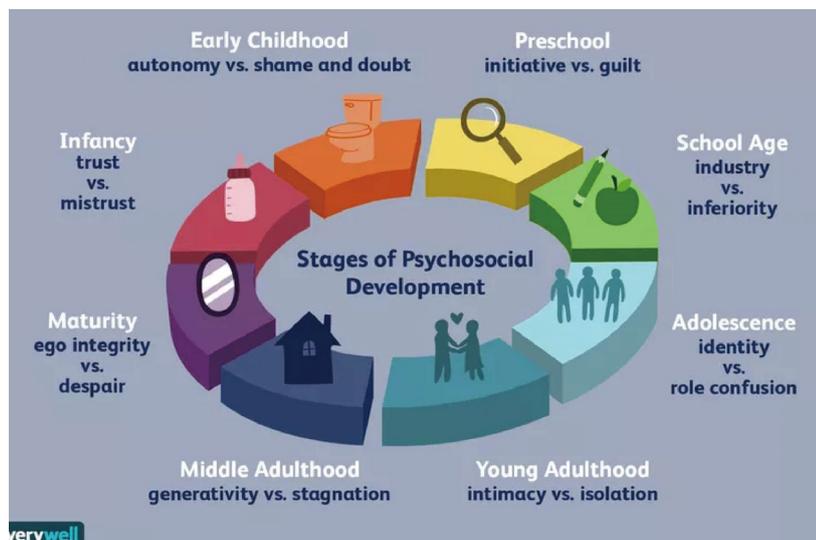
KOTESOL: In addition to the work already mentioned, I hear that the two of you are also collaborating on additional research in the area of ecolinguistics. Could you tell us what that research entails?

Chenghao Zhu: Everyone knows that humanity is in big trouble due to climate change. Ecolinguistics looks at the intersection of language and ecology. How do the words and images we use impact how we interact with the rest of nature and other humans? It's not a pretty picture. Fortunately, a lot of work has been done recently to help us understand better the messages that texts send. (The website of the International Ecolinguistics Association is a great place to learn about that.) Our research involves applying ecolinguistics' concepts to, among other texts, animated children's films: *The Sea Beast*, *The Lorax*, and *Back to the Outback*. (By the way, all are on Netflix.)

KOTESOL: George, you once mentioned to me that you have been influenced by Erik Erikson's eight stages of human life, especially on one of those stages. Could you expand on that for our readers?

Prof. Jacobs: Many years ago, when I first saw Erikson's eight stages, it made sense to me, and now that, at age 70, I've experienced all eight, the stages make even more sense. In particular, I feel the pull of Stage 7, generativity vs stagnation. I feel that I have a lot to share that others have shared with me, and collaboration helps me share it.

Figure 1. Erikson's Eight Psychosocial Stages of Development.



KOTESOL: You have also done numerous studies on cooperative learning in recent years. Some authors make a distinction between cooperative learning and collaboration as language learning approaches. Do you view them as distinct?

Prof. Jacobs: I'm in a minority, but to me cooperative learning and collaborative learning are minor variations on the same theme. I discuss this in my 2015 article *Collaborative Learning or Cooperative Learning? The Name Is Not Important; Flexibility Is*.

KOTESOL: You are also doing a great deal of writing in environmental education, including animal welfare and vegetarianism. How did you become so involved in this area, and are you actively involved in ways other than writing?

Prof. Jacobs: Back in the 1970s, I read a book called *Diet for a Small Planet*, which explained that meat eating wastes a lot

of food, and that if humans ate plants directly instead of first feeding the plants to animals to get meat, we'd have more food for the hundreds of millions of people without enough food. Based on that book, I decided to go vegetarian and later vegan. Then, I became active in promoting plant-based diets. The more I learned, the more I saw how meat connects to so many other issues, including environment, animal welfare, economic justice, and gender equality.

KOTESOL: Chenghao, do you see your areas of research continuing in areas similar to those of Prof. Jacobs', or do you have other areas that you also wish to delve more deeply into?

Chenghao Zhu: Yes, I think my research will still have a large amount in common with Prof. Jacobs'. As mentioned earlier, we are compatible as to topics of interest. Those topics that attract Prof. Jacobs may also attract me, and those topics that attract me may also attract Prof. Jacobs. Of course, some of my research interests may differ from those of Prof. Jacobs, for example, I'm also working on a learner corpus study about how bilingual students report and perform emotions. The good thing is that Dr. Chau may share the same interests on learner corpus research with me, and he is also on our research team. Prof. Jacobs, Dr. Roe, and Qingli can also give me some suggestions as a reader. I think it also shows how a research team supports one another to move forward together.

KOTESOL: What areas do the two of you see your research, your interests, and your activities moving into in the next, say, three to five years?

Prof. Jacobs: So many possibilities. It's a great big wonderful world. But maybe it's better to go deeper into the topics we have already explored.

Chenghao Zhu: Yes, I agree.

KOTESOL: This interview has only been able to touch on a morsel of the depth and breadth of your work and your activities. Before we conclude this interview, what else would you like to convey to our readers?

Prof. Jacobs & Chenghao Zhu: We want to thank readers for reading this far. Our final message is that teacher organizations are great. We hope that you will continue to support KOTESOL and other such organizations. We look forward to seeing you virtually at our presentations, and we warmly welcome you to stay in touch moving forward.

KOTESOL: And I am sure that many of us look forward to seeing your presentations at the 2023 Korea TESOL International Conference. Thank you both.

Interviewed by David Shaffer.

References

- Chau, M. H., Zhu, C., Jacobs, G. M., Delante, N. L., Asmi, A., Ng, S., John, S. S., Guo, Q., & Shunmugam, K. (2022). Ecolinguistics for and beyond the sustainable development goals. *Journal of World Languages*. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jwl-2021-0027>
- Grote, Y. J. (2022). Authenticity as activism. In G. M. Jacobs & G. V. Crookes (Eds.), *Becoming community-engaged educators: Engaging students within and beyond the classroom walls* (pp. 27–36). Springer.
- Jacobs, G. (2015). Collaborative learning or cooperative learning? The name is not important; flexibility is. *Beyond Words*, 3(1), 32–52. <http://journal.wima.ac.id/index.php/BW/article/view/676/675>
- Jacobs, G. M., & Crookes, G. V. (Eds.). (2022). *Becoming community-engaged educators: Engaging students within and beyond the classroom walls*. Springer.
- Lappé, F. M. (1971). *Diet for a small planet*. Ballantine Books.

Connecting Learning to Other, More Intrinsically Motivating Tasks

Dr. Boyoung Lee, ELT Specialist

If you haven't yet heard of Boyoung Lee, you haven't been involved in ELT in Korea for very long. She's an ELT expert: a teacher, a teacher trainer, an ELT media instructor, a materials developer, a scholar, a researcher, a businessperson... the list goes on... and a very nice person to interview. Dr. Lee is a featured speaker at the KOTESOL International Conference this April, and here is that interview. — Ed.

KOTESOL: Thank you for making the time for this interview in what I am sure is a busy schedule. It is very much appreciated. To begin with, your name – Boyoung Lee – is pretty much a household name for anyone associated with English learning in Korea, but could you tell us how you became so interested in English and what carried that interest into a career in the field of English language teaching?

Boyoung Lee: My biggest inspirations were my mother and those friends from middle school who encouraged me to become an English teacher. My mother had the clearest understanding about the need for English learning based on her own learning experience in North Carolina back in the 1950s, where she was sent by then-president Syngman Rhee to further her studies in aeronautics. Also, she was the one who allowed me to realize the importance of using dictionaries and how language skills can be utilized to achieve your goal when she helped me write a fan letter to Donny Osmond when I was 10. Also, it was some of my friends whom I used to help with their English who told me that I had the potential to become an efficient English teacher.

KOTESOL: You have taught English in almost all scenarios: in the classroom, over the radio, on television, virtually, etc. Which do you find the most appealing? The most difficult? The most effective?

Boyoung Lee: Other than the in-person class where dynamic interaction occurs, I would say that teaching opportunities on media each have their own unique and impeccable merits that could hardly be found elsewhere. The effect seems to be so wide-reaching and long-lasting

that, throughout my thirty-some-year career, I've been constantly approached by complete strangers claiming how their lives have been affected by their English learning experiences through my shows. Those are such overwhelming and humbling moments for me, I must say. The range of the audience that my teaching "reaches out to and touches" has been much wider than I could



My whole point is to take the pressure off the learners and help them understand how fun it can be to learn English.

possibly have imagined, and the sense of reward has been beyond description. I've been quite blessed career-wise to have chances to practice English education in various settings and, more importantly, to be able to learn quite a bit as an EFL learner myself.

KOTESOL: At the Korea TESOL International Conference in April, you will be giving a featured session titled

“Collaborating in the Context of Korean EFL.” Would you give us a sneak preview as to the content of this session?

Boyoung Lee: By “collaboration” in my presentation, I would like to focus more on connecting English learning to other more intrinsically motivating tasks. The case I plan to describe revolves around young Korean English learners who would voluntarily gather together and create an organization to share their positive learning experiences with their peers, mostly from underprivileged learning environments, as well as use their language skills for socially impactful causes, including the environment, and engaging as good world citizens. In doing so, they devised diverse ways to “collaborate” with different sectors through English, and as a result, their endeavor was rewarded with a huge sense of pride and responsibility. Surprisingly, adults from different organizations and even authorities who came to offer assistance to these students also collaborated.

I chose to discuss this case because it strengthens my belief that English education in Korea should allow more room for the students to explore opportunities on their own and expand themselves in various ways.

By “collaboration” in my presentation, I would like to focus more on connecting English learning to other more intrinsically motivating tasks.

KOTESOL: Collaborative teaching, also called co-teaching and team teaching, has been promoted by the government through programs such as EPIK. Though effective in theory, why do you think it has been producing quite mixed results, especially when an L1-English teacher is paired with an L1-Korean teacher of English?

Boyoung Lee: Among other things, I believe far more and bigger success stories could be yielded if Korean and native-speaker teachers could communicate more based on mutual understanding in terms of their different languages and cultures. Second, I wish Korean English teachers could have more positive learning experiences themselves, especially concerning communicative competence. After all, it’s all about communication.

KOTESOL: Many years ago when I first taught at the tertiary level, co-authored research papers were almost unheard of in Korea – except possibly for a faculty advisor and their graduate student sometimes doing a co-authored paper. With Korea traditionally being a collectivist society, it would seem natural that collaborative research would have been more common early on in Korea. Why do you think this was not the case?

Boyoung Lee: To that question, I wish I could answer with more substance and insight. However, I believe we’ll be able to see more active collaborative research implemented in the future, since there has been escalating awareness and a consensus building up of its necessity. Especially with IT-oriented experts, we can definitely

expect to see more collaborative research coming in the future. Information and technology have taken a major role in expanding and enriching the ELT environment for the past decade.

KOTESOL: You are always in multiple projects at the same time. What projects are you involved in at present? Are there any others that will be launching soon?

Boyoung Lee: Recently I’ve written two books, one of which is on healing souls. I am happily surprised to see it being well received. In addition to broadcasting/writing for EBS radio (equivalent to PBS in the US), currently I’m on an app development project. It has been quite a nerve-wracking as well as a learning experience for me every step of the way. And there is a plan to create a set of online lectures for aspiring English teachers in the private sector.

KOTESOL: You are the CEO of MISOA. Could you describe what kind of work this company is involved in?

Boyoung Lee: I set up the company in 2013 as an ELT materials content developer. So far, we’ve made a coursebook series for elementary school children, with emphasis on helping the children with grammar and vocabulary as well as their communicative ability. Also, we’ve been providing teacher training programs to a phone English company for over seven years.

KOTESOL: If you had a magic wand that you could use to change one thing about Korea’s English education system, what would you choose to use it to change?

Boyoung Lee: I’ve always thought that the education system itself has little to be blamed for the problems that have occurred in Korean ELT; rather, it’s been the adults – teachers, administrators, and parents alike – especially when they’re equipped with less understanding about ELT, and more importantly, their own children, who wrongfully use the system. Therefore, I would like to see more “educating” seminars, or training sessions, being held for these “adults.”

KOTESOL: All right. Now, if you had two additional magic English wands, what would you use each of them to change?

Boyoung Lee: With one, I would probably have the teachers of different cultural and learning backgrounds engage in more active collaboration professionally and share with one another. With the second, I would make sure that ELT learners experience “actual” communication with people from other cultures to widen their horizons, through overseas travel, etc. My whole point is to take the pressure off the learners and help them understand how fun it can be to learn English.

KOTESOL: Right. Then, to sum up, learning should be fun for students, and we might say that there are parents, administrators, and even teachers who need to “grow up” and educate themselves better on how language learning is best achieved. Dr. Lee, thank you for this engaging interview. We look forward to your featured presentation at our April conference.

Interviewed by David Shaffer.



LOOKING FOR FLEXIBLE STUDY OPTIONS?

The University of Birmingham's Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics offers flexible personal development opportunities for professionals wishing to develop their skills and expertise. Our distance learning Masters programmes are delivered part-time over 30 months, to fit around your existing commitments.

APPLIED LINGUISTICS MA

This programme is for professionals wishing to further their personal development, and those who are interested in learning more about possible applications of language research. You will study topics including corpus linguistics, sociolinguistics, lexis, functional grammar, spoken and written discourse, and multi-modal communication.

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (TESOL) MA

This programme is for practising teachers of English as a second or foreign language who wish to develop their knowledge of classroom methodology and materials design. You will study topics such as language teaching methodology, second language acquisition, syllabus and materials, pedagogic grammar, lexis, and teaching young learners.

KEY FACTS

- Start in February, April, July, October or December
- Study entirely online
- All modules assessed by written assignment
- Pay per module

Find out more and apply:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/elal-dl

Member Spotlight: Reece Randall

Under the spotlight for this issue of The English Connection is a KOTESOL member whose name you might not recognize, as he has until recently been spending his classroom time on the eastern side of the Gangwon Province mountains near the eastern shore. There, he served as Gangwon Chapter president, but now he has migrated to a university position in the southwestern corner of the peninsula and has recently been elected as KOTESOL's second vice-president. Here is our interview with Reece Randall. — Ed.

TEC: Thank you, Reece, for making time for this interview. I know that this is a busy time of the year for you. Could you start this interview off by giving our readers some background information on yourself before coming to Korea and tell us what brought you to Korea?

Reece: Thank you for inviting me to do this interview. I am thrilled to share a bit about myself with *The English Connection* readers. With an academic background including a BCom, an MEd, and TEFL certifications, I have diverse experience in EFL pedagogy, financial management, and leadership roles in academic programs – as well as volunteering for education, conservation, and community outreach initiatives – in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Hailing from South Africa, I have over 10 years of experience in Korea as a scholar, director, senior teacher, and educator in Busan, Seoul, Seongnam, Wonju, Gangneung, and now Gwangju.



I first came to Korea as a student, from age five to 10, during which time my father worked as a businessman at Coca-Cola Korea Bottling Company. After doing some soul-searching while studying and working in finance in South Africa and the United Arab Emirates, I decided to return to Korea in 2017 to take up a position as an ESL director in Seoul. With fond childhood memories and a Korean step-family, I returned seeking new challenges and opportunities related to my personal interests in Korean culture, English literature, and debate, as well as my professional interests in organizational leadership, humanistic language teaching (HLT), and global citizenship education (GCED). Driven to connect the world by fostering global competencies and intercultural communication via debate, media fluency, and cultural literacy, my teaching philosophy was influenced early on by Nelson Mandela who once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

TEC: I believe you became active in KOTESOL soon after you came to Korea – the second time. How did you first get involved?

Reece: I heard about KOTESOL through colleagues shortly after my return to Korea in 2017. I was fortunate to

receive support and encouragement from my employer to engage in ongoing professional development, which began with sponsoring my participation in the 2017 KOTESOL International Conference. Schedule permitting, I gradually increased my involvement through attending, volunteering, organizing, and presenting at KOTESOL events over the next few years. I became a lifetime KOTESOL member in 2020.

TEC: You have recently been holding some quite important positions in KOTESOL, Gangwon Chapter president and KOTESOL second vice-president. What have you focused on in those positions?

Reece: Soon after moving to Gangwon Province in 2019, I began actively participating in chapter meetings. The chapter executives at the time encouraged me to get involved in leadership. This led to my election as chapter president not long before the pandemic arrived. In that position, I focused on leading the chapter through the challenges presented by the pandemic as we delivered online professional development opportunities for English language teachers. Most of my efforts were directed toward recruiting and vetting speakers, facilitating and leading presentations/workshops online. As the second vice-president of KOTESOL, I have focused on organizing the annual KOTESOL Connections Day event, overseeing and assisting the special interest groups (SIGs) and KOTESOL Teacher Training (KTT), as well as serving as SIG/KTT liaison to the National Council.

TEC: Are you planning on our SIGs having an active role in the upcoming International Conference that will be held in April in Seoul? What about the individual chapters?

Reece: Indeed, there are numerous SIG-related plans in the works that I am excited about for the International Conference and individual chapter events! Building on the connections and suggestions members made during the 2022 KOTESOL Connections Day I helped organize, we are planning a series of SIG meetings and chapter events in the coming months to preview sessions and facilitate a strong SIG presence at the hybrid (Seoul and online) 30th KOTESOL International Conference (IC). In collaboration with the IC organizing committee, we have given SIG leaders and members opportunities to secure dedicated SIG session slots and participate in the vetting process for proposals tagged under their SIG. To encourage greater awareness, participation, and involvement in SIGs from KOTESOL members, we are organizing SIG social events to help members get to know coordinators, exchange ideas, and encourage teambuilding ahead of the conference. Beginning with the Meet KOTESOL's Christian Teachers SIG event in early February, I encourage members to check the KOTESOL website as more SIG-related meetings and chapter events are scheduled.

TEC: How do you feel about the International Conference moving from an all-online format to a hybrid, but mainly in-person, format?

Reece: I am most interested in seeing how the hybrid 30th Korea TESOL International Conference will showcase all that we have learned from the pandemic, while also breaking new ground as our first hybrid event. I would like to see how the exciting line-up of invited speakers and the hybrid format facilitate new and improved exchanges among scholars, instructors, and students, in line with the theme of advancing collaboration.

TEC: You have recently changed teaching positions from one in the far northeast to one in the far southwest – from Gangwon-do to the Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology (GIST). Has there been a big difference in teaching in those two positions?

Reece: My current faculty position involves teaching English writing and presentation courses for science and engineering college and graduate students at a public institute of science and technology. In my previous position, I was a senior invited professor leading a communicative English program in a division of liberal arts and general education at a comprehensive national university in Gangwon-do. Currently, the courses I teach focus more on English for specific purposes (ESP) and English for academic purposes (EAP) in science and engineering. While my current context has a more specialized focus and STEM-oriented objectives for my instruction, my primary goal of students attaining competence and proficiency in English communication for

personal and professional success has remained the same. At GIST, I am a faculty member of the Language Education Center (LEC), which offers an extensive range of courses as well as extra-curricular activities and programs for graduate and undergraduate students.

TEC: In the future, what would you like to see KOTESOL doing more of, or doing better? Or doing differently?

Reece: I share the excitement many members have expressed with a return to many face-to-face events. At the same time, I am also looking forward to KOTESOL continuing to offer a combination of in-person, hybrid, and online offerings as needed. The past few years of the pandemic have made us more aware of online tools and resources, particularly technology applications and platforms that have enhanced the accessibility of conferencing and events for members based locally, nationally, and internationally. I believe the pandemic has challenged KOTESOL to grow and develop its capacity to deliver dynamic and innovative conferences using technology.

TEC: What do you like to do in your free time – if you actually have any of that?

Reece: I like to participate in book clubs, attend Korean language classes, hike provincial and national parks, cycle coastal and river paths, as well as explore local cuisine and culture. While living in Gangwon-do, I regularly hiked Odaesan and Seorak-san mountains and trekked the Bau-gil and Haeparang-gil trails. In Gwangju, I am an active member of the Gwangju International Center and have been participating in Korean classes and Volun-tour (Volunteer + Tour) programs.

TEC: What do you see Reece doing in the foreseeable future?

Reece: I am planning to live and work in Korea for the foreseeable future. I would be thrilled to continue teaching and researching at GIST for the next few years and hopefully make Gwangju a home away from my home country of South Africa. In the field of English language teaching, I am planning to collaborate with teachers and researchers in sharing resources and publishing academic research. As a lifetime member, I am confident that KOTESOL will continue to be a significant part of my research and professional development, as well as provide a meaningful sense of community and collegiality.

TEC: Well, we certainly wish you the best and thank you for this interview!

Interviewed by David Shaffer.



▲ Reece at the summits of Halla-san (left), Seorak-san (middle), and Odaesan (right) during 2020–2021.

The Development Connection

Expanding Your Personal Learning Network (PLN)

By Bill Snyder

Individualization has become a buzz word in talking about professional development for teachers. And, like differentiated instruction for learners, it makes a lot of sense. Given that every teacher is different and every classroom is different, shaping professional development to the individual needs of teachers in their particular circumstances is probably going to be for the best in helping teachers grow. Similarly, giving teachers the freedom to choose their own pathways in professional development allows teachers to make decisions that are right for them in terms of their teaching context, the stage of their career, and their personal goals for growth. Individualization also lets teachers make choices based on what fits best with the rest of their lives, a consideration of increasing importance because teacher wellbeing contributes to positive outcomes for learners.

Today teachers have so many options for professional development that every teacher can pursue individual goals for teacher development. Some of these options, of course, have been available for a long time: keeping a reflective diary and practicing self-interrogation of one's teaching, reading the professional literature (books, journal and magazine articles, blogs, etc.) for ideas to bring into teaching practice, or carrying out an action research project in one's own classes around a teaching or learning issue that has come up. Other opportunities that teachers may not have been able to access before have arisen during the pandemic. With many conferences going online, much more material for professional development is available through video recordings online. And often, this material is available on demand, freeing teachers from geographic and time restrictions that might not have allowed them access in the past.

I've deliberately focused my examples above on things a teacher might do by themselves because my sense is that the rise of individualized professional development has encouraged a lot of teachers to take a more solo approach to enhancing their skills. I can understand that. Convenience and control are powerful levers for encouraging people to do things they otherwise might not. Separation from shared worksites during the pandemic may also have led more teachers into doing more of their professional development

in isolation simply because they didn't always have contact with other teachers.

While the trend is towards more individualization and less formality in professional development, I don't think this means that teachers' paths of professional development have to be isolated. Advocates of informal learning often point to the fact that learning is an inherently collaborative process (Cross, 2007). Wenger's (1998) concept of the *community of practice* (CoP) as a source of learning is grounded in the idea that learning is the result of social engagement. More recently for teachers, the community of practice has come to be seen in terms of a *personal learning network* (PLN), the group of people with which a teacher engages in a variety of ways to promote their learning (DevPro PD Flipped, 2013). What distinguishes the PLN from the CoP is its individual and voluntary nature. Each teacher's PLN is different and each teacher decides independently how, when, and how much to participate in their PLN. In this sense, each teacher's PLN is the result of the individualization of professional development reflecting the teacher's decisions about engagement with others for the purpose of learning more about teaching.

The beginning of a new academic year is a good time to think about the state of our personal learning networks, to revitalize old connections and at the same time, make an effort to create new ones. There are a lot of proposals for ways to do both of these things. What I'd like to do in the rest of this article is put forward some suggestions that maybe aren't heard so often and that have worked for me in maintaining and growing my PLN.

1. Reach out to an old contact you haven't heard from.

While our immediate CoPs may change as we or our colleagues move around, we don't have to lose from our PLNs. A simple note to someone who helped you learn in some way showing appreciation and a desire to stay in contact will renew ties and keep parts of your PLN from fading out over time. Last week, I wrote a note to a colleague who mentored me when I first began to work in Korea and has been a help at different points in my career. We've stayed in touch intermittently, but the pandemic reduced our contact. They live in North America now, but

when I saw that they would be in Asia soon, I sent a note asking if we could meet. That won't happen this time, but we exchanged news and worked out a time when we might meet up later in the year. About the same time, I got an email from someone who I mentored when they first came to Japan about a decade ago, checking on me and asking if we could meet sometime over this term break. When we do meet, I'll be interested to hear about what they've been doing in their work towards a doctorate. It's a small thing, but staying in touch even when you don't need to keeps you in mind and lets other people know that you want to include them in your professional life.

I can hear some novice teachers saying that they don't have such long-standing relationships to keep going. But the beginning of your career is the time to start building the relationships that make up a PLN, and some friendly outreach within your CoP can start this process. Ask someone expert to mentor you in a skill you want to develop. Thank someone for even a small bit of assistance given. Every contact is a potential source of support for future growth. And despite what they might think, novice teachers do have long-standing contacts that can serve as sources of inspiration. I'm still in touch with my 4th-grade teacher, who I consider one of the greatest teachers I ever encountered.

2. Attend a face-to-face conference again.

During the pandemic, our ability to go online and hold conferences there was an amazing resource. This possibility supported so much of the teaching community and created new possibilities for us all to continue learning while separated. But the loss of direct contact with our fellow teachers was also something of a limitation, cutting us off the kinds of informal interactions at conferences that can help us build our PLNs. I used to joke that conferences were excuses to hold coffee breaks because the chance interactions that could take place in those breaks between



presentations were often the most memorable and valuable parts of the conference for me. At a conference a few years ago, a friend of mine introduced me to a group of people who worked in her area of specialization, educational technology. From that small conversation, one of the group contacted me when his journal needed a review of a paper that overlapped with my interests. And reading that paper introduced me to some possibilities for using educational technology that I had not considered before.

The Columnist

Bill Snyder is a professor in the International Language Education Program: TESOL at Soka University in Japan. He has worked in teacher education for over 25 years in the US, Korea, Turkey, Armenia, and Japan. His current research focuses on the lives and wellbeing of teachers across their careers and on the mentoring of novice teachers. Email: wsnyder7@gmail.com



The return of face-to-face conferences opens up for us once more the possibilities of these encounters that can connect us to people we otherwise wouldn't meet, spend time with, and include in our PLNs. These conferences also give us a chance to strengthen our ties with people who might have been on the fringes of our networks, in some cases because we only knew them online. At the JALT conference in November, I was approached by someone I didn't recognize because we had only met online during the pandemic (this person was much taller than I expected in real life). A half-hour chat helped us realize some deeper connections between our interests. While we don't have a way to do a project together now, we have started sharing resources we come across.

3. Volunteer in a professional organization.

If you are reading this, you are most likely already a member of KOTESOL, which is a good thing to do professionally. Even better is volunteering to help your professional organization. Doing that helps support the entire CoP involved in the organization, and in fact strengthens the notion of the community. This issue of *The English Connection* is brought to you entirely through the efforts of volunteers who deserve public thanks for their work in making KOTESOL a valuable resource for its members.

The people you meet when you volunteer in a professional organization already share some interests with you but can often be people you would not meet outside of the volunteer situation. This is another way to widen your circle of contacts and meet people who can contribute fresh ideas to your professional growth. And volunteering doesn't necessarily mean giving up huge amounts of time. Organizations that run on volunteer labor are grateful for any help, no matter how small, and often it is little help that is needed, like assisting at a registration desk for an event. The small amount of time doing that can make you known to others and help you encounter those people who may make your professional life richer in the future.

Simply by being a teacher, you have entered into the community of practice that defines the profession. Your personal learning network, though, is more intimate and depends on your efforts to shape it. Expanding it within and beyond your immediate communities of practice can help make your teaching life better. I've offered a few ideas here for how you can do this, but there are many more. I hope that each of you finds the right way for you to build your network and enrich your professional development.

References

- Cross, J. (2007). *Informal learning: Rediscovering the natural pathways that inspire innovation and performance*. Pfeiffer.
- DevPro PD Flipped. (2013). *What is a PLN? - Marc-Andre Lalonde's take* (Video). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLLpWqp-owo>
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge University Press.

The Brain Connection

Understanding the Hidden Curriculum

By Dr. Curtis Kelly

There were so many things that baffled me when I first started teaching English in Japan, and I wonder if the same was true for you in Korea. First there were some little things that happened in the Japanese classroom, like students sharing answers rather than finding their own. I was shocked that two students would turn in identical homework reports, something I saw as plagiarism. I would give both zeroes, no matter who the original author or the copier might be, to teach them a lesson. And then, it disturbed me to no end when I'd call on a student to provide an answer, and invariably, that student would turn to another and discuss something in Japanese before answering. "How cheeky!" I thought. "You are supposed to prepare for class yourself, not get answers from friends, and to do that right in front of me!" As an American, I found such behavior totally unacceptable; I saw it as a kind of cheating and said so.

Then came the big things, probably the same ones that bothered you: test obsession, cram schools (*hagwon*), rote memorization instead of critical thinking, language study that has little to do with communicative competence, and draconian methods. Educator and journalist Se-Woong Koo was bothered by this too. As he wrote in the *New York Times*:

The world may look to South Korea as a model for education – its students rank among the best on international education tests – but the system's dark side casts a long shadow. Dominated by "tiger moms," cram schools, and highly authoritarian teachers, South Korean education produces ranks of overachieving students who pay a stiff price in health and happiness. The entire program amounts to child abuse. (2014)

These small and large aspects of the school system can be troubling, especially if you were educated in an English-speaking country (as was Se-Woong Koo), but I think most of us are also aware that these practices exist in a larger cultural milieu to serve society. What

students learn in school goes far beyond just the subject matter. And maybe by going "system," looking at how the rites, rituals, and practices of the educational system fit the whole, we can understand them better.

For example, let's think about what type of knowledge, skills, and attitudes are most needed in today's world, especially in countries that have high levels of tertiary (services) and quaternary (IT, research, education) industries. Unfortunately, we can hardly teach our learners the exact things they will need to know for their future jobs, but we can teach them how to study, how to get the necessary information on their own.

Then, skills and attitudes. Maybe the most important skill in today's world is just basic discipline. We need responsible, hard-working people in our top positions, not slackers. Do you want a doctor who skipped classes and barely studied, or one who goes deep into his or her field? Would you trust the fortunes of your company to someone who just does the minimum to get by? Or do you want someone who puts in the extra hours to make sure the job is done right?

Maybe these are the skills entrance exams are testing for, not the obscure subject matter per se, or little-used grammar forms, but rather discipline, responsibility, and the ability to learn things.

No syllabus is as it seems. In addition to whatever is written in the textbook, we are also teaching students to be on time, when to speak or not, and even the proper way to write, sit, dress.

We are teaching these things, but generally unaware we are doing so. No syllabus is as it seems. In addition to whatever is written in the textbook, we are also teaching students to be on time, when to speak or not, and even the proper way to write, sit, dress. Eliot Eisner (2002) called this the "hidden curriculum," strict unwritten rules that we constantly impose on students. Straying from these standards usually results in humiliation or punishment. That was why I failed the students with the same papers, "to teach them a lesson," although I had only a vague notion of what that lesson was.

The hidden curriculum pervades so much of what we do. We might label a girl who shouts out an answer before being called on as displaying "bad behavior," or a boy who fails to answer our questions as not being "engaged," or suffering from "extreme shyness."

In fact, it is amusing how the hidden curriculum often contradicts a school's stated mission. Searching online for a mission statement from a school in the part of the US where I grew up, I found a middle school, whose name I will

not reveal, that stated they were “committed to promoting a safe, supportive learning environment where students are encouraged to become independent, self-sufficient learners.” Similar claims can be found in many such schools. Independent. Self-sufficient. And yet, were a student at one of those schools to show a little “independence” and “self-sufficiency” by reading something other than the assigned passage, or ignoring teacher directives, that student would probably be punished. Indeed, not even aware that they are doing so, schools are making “dependent,” rather than “independent” learners.

Indeed, the culture of the classroom can be as prescriptive, rigid, and controlling as a fundamentalist religion. We spend an enormous



amount of time and energy instilling the right values, attitudes, and behavior that classroom culture mandates, and most of the time, we are barely even aware that we are prescribing this hidden curriculum.

Nonetheless, as we discussed above, there is a reason for doing so. We are instilling the values and behavior needed to succeed in today’s highly competitive, collaborative, and often boring world. But a vulnerability lies in that process too. When the hidden curriculum of one societal/educational system is imposed on another, it can lead to chaos and frustration, which happens often with foreign language teachers, as in my own case when I started teaching in Japan. What I perceived as bad behavior because of my own educational standards, turned out not to be so at all. Those students turning in identical papers or discussing the answer in Japanese were just doing what their educational culture had taught them was the right thing.

And I still remember the moment I discovered that. It was at a JALT presentation made by my friend Fred Anderson. I had not intended to go to Fred’s presentation on sociolinguistics, a topic I knew nothing about, and so, was not very interested in, but after helping him carry some

materials to his room, I decided to stay. It turned out to be exactly the presentation I needed to hear (Lesson learned: Every time you go to a conference, attend at least one presentation on a topic you are not interested in).

Fred talked about the culture of the Japanese classroom, which he pointed out has its own hidden agenda. Japanese are taught not to speak out in class unless called on, and to always give the one absolutely correct answer. Answering in class, then, is framed as an announcement for the entire class, a kind of consensus. If the answer is not the expected one, that student will be ridiculed by both teacher and peers.

No wonder then, that the students I asked to answer checked their answers with their neighbors first. Not only were my questions kind of slippery with more than one possible answer, the answering itself was a high-stakes situation, and the orientation towards consensus rather than the single student–teacher interaction I expected, explains why the students would confirm answers with neighbors first. It is not that these students did not know the answers – they were not “getting” the answers from neighbors as I thought – but rather, the students were collaborating and confirming the answers before “presenting” them. That behavior was proper for Japan.

Something similar was true with two students turning in the same paper. Another American teacher had the same problem, and when he scolded the students for copying, they corrected him, “No sensei, we wrote this paper together.” Suddenly, the reason the papers were identical made sense, and certainly, the learning was not reduced by that joint effort, but enhanced. And maybe we should change our perspective for cases in which copying really does happen. If the educational system emphasizes the one correct answer, and rarely asks for individual opinion, the copying then, can be seen as mentoring.

This does not mean you should abandon Western educational values. Some have merit, but it is important to understand these values might not have been pre-installed in our learners who have their own hidden curriculum. In my case, the values I was enforcing were opposite to those the students had learned.

So, my advice is that anytime you become emotional about a student’s behavior, such as angry or irritated, take a step back and think about why. It might be *you* that is the problem.

References

- Eisner, E. W. (2002). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs*. Prentice Hall.
- Koo, S. (2014, August 1) An assault upon our children. *The New York Times*, Sunday Opinion.

The Columnist

Curtis Kelly (EdD) founded the JALT Mind, Brain, and Education SIG, and until 2022, was a professor of English at Kansai University in Japan. His life mission is “to relieve the suffering of the classroom.” He has written 35 books, over 100 articles, and given over 500 presentations. This article was based on one he wrote for the MindBrainEd Think Tanks, so please subscribe! mindbrained.org





**Korea
TESOL**

KOTESOL · 대한영어교육학회

April 29-30, 2023

Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, Korea + Online

#KOTESOL2023

The 30th

Korea TESOL International Conference

*Advancing Collaboration
Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, & Students*

in collaboration with **Pan Asian Consortium of
Language Teaching Societies**

Our Theme

The theme of the 30th Korea TESOL International Conference, "Advancing Collaboration: Exchanges Among Scholars, Instructors, & Students," seeks to enhance both the teaching and learning experience by encouraging the educational community to practically engage with and highlight collaboration in its various forms and the wider impact collaboration has for learning, teaching, and scholarship.

This conference invites proposals on various topics related to collaboration in education, as well as more disparate topics. How can the positive effects of collaboration be promoted and enhanced? How can we more effectively collaborate? What forms of collaboration are notably beneficial?

Let's make the 30th Korea TESOL International Conference an event of collaboration and educational enrichment.

koreatesol.org/ic2023