

The English Connection

A Publication of KOTESOL

This Issue:

Korea-Japan Comparison

Group and Pair Work in
Korean Classrooms

Power Tools for E-learning
Development

Professional Development
Without a Teachers' Room

Face-off:
Presentation Skills

KoreaTESOL.org
KOTESOL's New Web
Resources

Summer 2011 Volume 15, Issue 2



Safety and Support
in the EFL Classroom

Teaching Teachers
for the First Time



www.KoreaTESOL.org

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tecfeedback@gmail.com

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Editor's Welcome

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking a few minutes to check out the redesigned The English Connection magazine for KOTESOL. You might be asking yourself, is this the same magazine that KOTESOL usually sends me? To answer your question, yes it is. The new editorial staff has worked hard to create a magazine designed to focus on the professional development of English teachers in Korea. We hope there is something in each issue that will cause you to pause and reflect on what you do in your diverse classroom settings.

I would like to thank the previous editorial board, especially Dr. Kara McDonald, Dr. David Shaffer and Maria Pinto for all of their hard work and devotion to TEC. They worked tirelessly to maintain the magazine's high standards over the years. I would also like to thank the column editors and contributors who worked hard to provide engaging articles for each issue.

I was asked to take The English Connection in a new direction and have chosen Michael Griffin and Manpal Sahota to help me rethink what The English Connection is and what it can be. We have added sections such as an advice column for classroom challenges and a section on expat living to help all of us stay informed about issues that affect our lives here on the Korean peninsula. In an effort to attract more L2 users of English and public school English educators into KOTESOL and give them a voice in our organization, we will attempt to find practical stories written by and for those demographics. Finally, for readers who have enjoyed the magazine for years, we will continue to find interesting articles and information about education-related topics in Korea and around the world.

One of the main goals of the new editors is to solicit submissions from a wide range of contributors. To that end, we will be scouring not only KOTESOL, but the world to find excellent writers and educators who will share their thoughts and experiences. We also strongly encourage KOTESOL members teaching in Korea to submit their manuscripts. TEC will be publishing articles from different contributors every issue in an attempt to keep the magazine fresh and something worth investigating every quarter. Please contact us about your ideas or send your submissions to TECsubmissions@gmail.com.

We are also working hard to ensure that The English Connection gets to you, the reader, in a timely manner. We understand that information regarding conferences and chapter events can be time sensitive and we will be working with the KOTESOL's webmasters to keep events updated on the website as well as in our new TEC News online publication which will be available to KOTESOL members as well as the general public so that we can better publicize the great things we are doing as an organization. TEC News will include conference reports, member updates, and other organization-related news items that you might be interested in. Check it out at www.KoreaTESOL.org/TECNews or look under the Publications tab.

Speaking of KOTESOL's new website, we plan to have every issue of TEC online and available to KOTESOL members on the first day of June, September, December, and March from this point forward. We hope you will read online as well as in print and send your comments to TECfeedback@gmail.com to let us know how we are doing with KOTESOL's magazine.

Welcome to the new TEC. Our mission is to always be on point, on time, and online.

Sincerely,

Tim Thompson

Tim Thompson
Editor-in-Chief



Safety and Support in the EFL Classroom

Joseette LeBlanc shares how teachers can create better class environments

Has a teacher ever called you dumb? Did your teacher ever yell at you for getting the wrong answer? Worse yet, were you ever hit by your teacher for not meeting academic standards? Now reflect on this: Did you really learn from these teachers? Probably not. I have a deep sense that my inability to multiply fractions has something to do with my high school math teacher labeling me stupid.

Personal experience, and a little background in second language acquisition, tells me that teachers who provide a safe and supportive learning environment also have more success in helping students meet their learning goals. Part of the learning process includes making mistakes. When we have permission to make mistakes, we also have permission to learn from them. However, when we feel anxious, or more precisely, when we feel unsafe, our ability to risk making mistakes and to hold on to new information is greatly reduced. I believe that when the renowned linguist Stephen Krashen refers to the importance of a low affective filter in learning a new language he may also be referring to the importance of a safe and supportive classroom.

Teachers do not need to be well-versed in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis to understand the pedagogical importance of creating an environment conducive to lower anxiety. Via their own experiences, and their ability to empathize with their learners, teachers are able to apply the concepts of safety and support to their classrooms. In order to get a better sense of how Korean teachers of English felt about this concept, I asked 17 practicing teachers participating in the Keimyung Intensive English Teacher Training (KIETT) program in Daegu these questions:

Do you think students learn better when they are in a safe and supportive classroom? What do you do to help your students feel more comfortable with you and the other students? Are there any special activities you do?

The teachers' responses showed a desire to create an atmosphere where mistakes are accepted and students suffering from low confidence are supported. These teachers value student/teacher rapport and use teaching strategies that foster a sense of safety and support. A brief examination of their responses follows.

Supporting Imperfection

Providing a non-threatening learning atmosphere is one of the most basic keys to a successful language class. – Mi-Ju Yu: Sangwon High School

Mi-Ju Yu describes how she noticed a big difference in her students' willingness to speak English in class when they were in the presence of a teacher with whom they felt comfortable and safe, as opposed to a teacher who was deemed "scary." She noted "the same students may express their opinions and communicate freely without any anxiety or fear with one teacher, but with another, they may choose



to remain quiet and feel reluctant to speak in the target language. This shows how significant the teacher's role is to student performance in class, and in turn, to student achievement."

Of course, this anxiety isn't always created by the teacher. In many cases, a student's fear of speaking English in class relates to the larger societal belief that she shouldn't speak without perfect pronunciation. Myung-Hyun Jung realizes how detrimental this belief is to his students' linguistic growth. He asks his students to embrace their Korean-English expressions and pronunciation: "If we are afraid of speaking Konglish, we can't open our mouths! In my classroom, I endeavor to remove students' shame and fear of speaking English (Konglish). Konglish is not shameful. After speaking Konglish, we can refine our English step-by-step. Communication is first, and accuracy is second." By giving students of all levels permission to express themselves, he provides a supportive atmosphere that brings them one step closer to helping them gain the courage to be communicative.

It is easy to tell our students that it is okay to make mistakes, but how do we really show them that we will deliver on this promise? Jeong-A Lee, from Neungin Middle School in Daegu, explains to her students that as non-native speakers, they will naturally make mistakes. She reminds them of this fact by making mistakes herself, but instead of being hard on herself or feeling embarrassed, she lets the students laugh with her. "They may think that we are the same even if I am a teacher, and they are the students." They start to notice that making mistakes is a normal part of speaking a second language, but most importantly, they notice that their teacher is willing to support them if they also fail at perfection.

Healthy Student-Teacher Rapport

Good teacher-student relationships start when we can trust each other. – Bu-Kil Cho: Sang-in High School in Daegu

Essentially, what Jeong-A described above was an example of positive student-teacher rapport. When students feel a sense of connection and trust with their teacher, they are

also more willing to extend themselves outside of their comfort zone. Although creating such rapport may be easy with some students, it can be a challenge with students who come to class already believing they will fail. Eunji Lee and Bu-Kil Cho remedy this notion by trying to meet with their students on a one-on-one basis to check in on what is happening in their lives. This personal time gives the students the chance to see that their teachers are interested in their lives and in their learning. In this way, students start to see that they can trust the teacher.

However, trust is not a one-way street. The KIETT participants also mentioned how important it is for students to get a glimpse into the teachers' lives: "From my experience the best way to build trust is to open myself up to the students, even though it would mean sharing my personal life, or my childhood memories, good or bad." Bu-Kil, who is teaching at Sang-in High School in Daegu, explains that when she has been able to get to this personal level with her students, the results have been remarkable. With mutual understanding built between them, students who were once falling behind, or who feared speaking up in class, were now embracing her English lessons with courage, willing to take the risk of making mistakes. Min-Jeong Lee agrees on this point. She explains that when she has talked about herself and her experiences as a student, she has succeeded in creating closer relationships. She notes that "it helps a lot to make a safe and warm class."

Knowing What to Expect

Successful experiences give students more confidence. – Eun-Ju Jang: Seong-ju High School in Seong-ju

To complement their personal beliefs about safety and support, some of the KIETT teachers have developed teaching practices that foster this kind of classroom environment. "I always let my students know what they will learn next class. Once students know this, they can preview the text or learning points. The readier they are for class, the less they will make mistakes during the class." For Eun-Ju, this sense of preparedness gives the students a better chance of achieving their language learning goals. Once students feel like they have a handle on what will be coming up in class, they are more willing to try, and they have a better chance at performing successfully. In the end, this gives them a stronger sense of accomplishment. The confidence they get from this experience provides them with the self-assurance they need to try again the next day. For Eun-Ju's students, this kind of support makes a world of difference.

I seldom ask students to present answers unexpectedly. – Hyun-Ae Park: Gyeongbuk Girls High School in Daegu

Hyun-Ae introduces the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) strategy as a way to alleviate common stresses students have about talking in front of their peers. She gives students time to think of what they want to say. Then, in pairs, they discuss their ideas. Finally, she calls on some of the students to share what was discussed in their pair. "I introduce the notion of TPS as my favorite class routine so that they can expect what will always happen after I give questions. They



know they have time to share their ideas with partners, and they seem to feel more comfortable." Creating predictability becomes a supportive teaching technique for enhancing student performance.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that we learn more effectively when we are in a safe and supportive environment. When we sense that we have the space to make mistakes, we are more open to receiving new information. When we are prepared for class, we are more willing to risk trying something new. When our teacher listens to us, and also empathizes with our struggles, we are more able to come to class with full attention. Through their personal learning and teaching experiences, the teachers in the KIETT program have made valuable use of their awareness of safety and support. They have used this awareness to create a classroom ripe for learning.

Note: I would also like to thank the teachers whose insightful and helpful ideas were not able to make it in this article due to limited time and space: Hyun-Jin Im, Hae-Yoon Jung, Jeong-Min Kim, Bok-Soon Kim, Ju-Eun Lee, Hee-Ja Jeong, Myeong-Suk Jung, Byeong-Mi Sohn, Seung-Hee Park, Hae-Gyung Kim, and Hae-Jin Park.

If you have any questions or comments about safety and support in the language classroom, I would love to hear from you. Please contact me at josette.leblanc@gmail.com.

Josette LeBlanc

(MA TESOL) is a teacher educator in the Intensive English Teacher Training Program at Keimyung University in Daegu. She is passionate about teacher social and linguistic awareness; how emotions affect teaching and learning; and holistic education. You can join in on discussions of these topics at her blog which can be found at www.throwingbacktokens.com.



Advice Corner

Four educators give suggestions to help English teachers around Korea

I work at a public elementary school and the head teacher just told me that I'll be teaching a new conversation class for the Korean teachers at my school. I was told that I could plan whatever I want for the class. I've never taught adults before, let alone teachers, so I have no idea what to teach or where to even start. Do you have any suggestions?

Harbir Jinju, Gyeongsangnam-do



Soo-Young Lee
English Teacher,
Daejeon Heungryong
Elementary School

Soo-Young Lee

Congratulations on your new start with Korean teachers! First, I think you should try to grasp the general characteristics of the teachers (e.g. gender, length of teaching careers, homeroom or subject teachers, their interests, needs and ages). The next thing to find out is their levels. There will likely be various levels and their interests and needs could be very different. If so, don't be disappointed or puzzled. This is just the first step.

After that, find out what skills they want to improve and

what they want to do and study. The teachers will be satisfied with the process especially if they are involved in designing the course with you. They may choose the topic, select types of activities, and discuss what direction they would like the course to take. These questions might lend themselves well to a group discussion for your first class.

You should mix your thoughts and opinions with what they tell you they want. Don't forget that you are the person who organizes the conversation class. Many elementary school teachers will be ready to follow you and the syllabus you create. Remember that you can make revisions to your schedule later on.

I think a supplementary textbook will be helpful. It might be difficult for you to prepare every supplementary activity by yourself. After analyzing the teachers' needs and level differences you can find some proper textbooks and then adapt them to your class. Even though it might take a long time, it will be time well spent.

Above all, please try to build up rapport with the teachers. The most important thing is to have empathy and understanding for each other. If you put yourself in other teachers' shoes, it's not difficult for you to build up rapport with Korean teachers. So, creating a space of understanding is the key to making the course successful. Good luck!

Kevin Giddens

What an exciting yet daunting opportunity. My most difficult yet rewarding classes are those that I'm able to design myself. My experience with Korean teachers is that they are very diligent yet demanding students. The good news is that they are highly motivated to learn English. Both their students and the administration are pushing them to improve their language proficiency. However the term "conversation" isn't the first thing that comes to mind in terms of what their needs might be. I would spend some time in your first class finding out exactly what areas they need to work on most and then design your course from there.



Kevin Giddens
Teacher Trainer,
Sookmyung
Women's University

Group dynamics can really make or break your course and in my experience they can be quite complex among teachers. For this reason, I'm not shy about spending ample time on activities that promote cooperative groups. In addition, Korean teachers respond really well to a focus on "Classroom Language." They may even be preparing for the Teaching English in English (TEE) test where they are evaluated on their classroom language. Here are two resources that might be helpful:

Hadfield, J. (1992). *Classroom Dynamics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hughes, G., Moate, J., & Raatikainen, T. (2007). *Practical Classroom English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Working with adults, especially teachers, requires an attitude of respect and, at times, humility. In past classes I've had students who have taught for longer than I've been alive. They have strong and concrete beliefs about teaching and learning languages. As a relative newcomer to the Korean context I've found it really helpful for both my professional growth as well as my relationship with my students to actively listen and learn from their experience.



Elynnor Trail,
English Teacher,
Seoul Gaeil
Elementary School

Elynnor Trail

First, speak to the teachers who will be studying with you and try to get an idea of their English speaking level. Once you know approximately how many people will be meeting together and whether they are at a beginning, advanced, or a mixed level, you can plan something suitable. Ask them what class structure would make them feel most comfortable. Do they just want to chitchat? Would they prefer a textbook and a set lesson plan each week? In my experience, most Korean teachers prefer a no-pressure, free-talking conversation class.

Second, you may want to prepare a list of possible topics for your class. This could be a brief interesting news article, current celebrity gossip, or each member of the group sharing a past experience relating to a common theme. For more ideas, search the internet. Try keywords such as ESL, conversation topics, conversation starters, or questions for adults. Hundreds of questions for ESL teachers on a variety of topics can be found at <http://iteslj.org/questions/>. Whatever topic you choose, try to limit your role to asking leading or open-ended questions, and allow the students to practice speaking as much as possible.

It's often helpful to let the Korean teachers know the topic you will be studying a few days to a week in advance. They may wish to jot down a few thoughts on paper, or they may just mull it over in their minds throughout the week. Either way, they will probably feel more comfortable sharing in English when they have had a chance to feel prepared. Lower-level students can also benefit from a list of key phrases and idioms associated with the topic. A Korean-English phrasebook such as *English Expressions for my Diary* which can be found at Kyobo Books is helpful, as it is organized by topic and may be a good starting point for some teachers who feel particularly timid.

Shannon McGrath

I was asked to teach a conversation class for the Korean teachers at my school last year as well, and like you, I did not have experience teaching adults. I spoke with a friend of mine who teaches adults in Korea and she recommended the textbook *Open to Debate* by Neal D. Williams. The book covers 70 Korean issues including Korea's greatest hero, English for kindergarteners, U.S. troops in Korea and global warming. I found this book to be very useful because all of the topics created discussions and it was interesting for me



Shannon McGrath,
English Teacher,
Seoul Daemo
Elementary School

as a foreigner to get a Korean perspective on these issues. Each two-paged unit is also easily broken down into three parts: a dialogue, two-three short factual paragraphs and three to five discussion questions. I often had the teachers take turns reading the dialogue and discussion questions, whereas I would read the factual paragraphs. I also provided the teachers with lined paper so they could create their own vocabulary lists from new words in the units.

Another great idea is to create a comfortable and entertaining environment by incorporating ice breaker activities into your first lesson. These are fun and easy ways to get discussions started and to expand on vocabulary. For example, a great game to play is to put pictures of famous people on your forehead and ask questions to figure out who you are. The trick is only asking yes/no questions, such as, 'Am I a girl?' or 'Am I from Korea?' I also found cards online for popular brain-teasing games such as 'Scattegories' and 'Taboo'. These were a great way to break the ice and increase their vocabulary in a comfortable and entertaining environment. You can find these resources and more at: <http://bogglesworldesl.com/adultesl1.htm>.

Advice Corner is an opportunity for readers to send in their questions and concerns about problems they encounter while teaching English in Korea.

The English Connection will find experienced educators to give advice for your unique level, problem, and teaching situation.

Send your questions or concerns to tecfeedback@gmail.com.

Power Tools

Chris Surridge takes your e-learning development to the next level

You've been Moodle for some time, have been adding students, setting up online homework assignments, and now have your online classroom more or less in order. It's been a long road from the day you first decided to take some of your course material online, and you're right to feel proud of yourself. In the process of making these additions to your educational repertoire, you've also noticed some holes in your skill-set. Some of the processes for setting up your Moodle involved fiddling with files with extensions like php and ini, which you're still not sure you understand. You've learned how to navigate the control panel of your commercially hosted server, but you're still a little cautious about exploring more energetically, lest you break something or, even worse, delete something that can't be restored. I'd like to recommend three "Power Tools" to help you fill those holes in your skill-set, improve your self-confidence, and at the same time, take your e-learning development to the next level. These tools will enable you to improve your skills quickly, effectively and safely.

XAMPP

The first Power Tool I'd like to recommend is XAMPP, an all-in-one web server package that you can run on your local machine. Think of it as a testing area or sandbox for your experiments with eLearning. XAMPP is a fairly simple package that will allow you to install a functioning Apache/PHP/MYSQL server on your PC. This will enable you to install, test, explore, break, repair, delete and re-install Moodle or any other web software to your heart's content. What's more, by locally installing XAMPP and then a version of Moodle identical to the version on your existing commercially-hosted site, you can create content locally and, when you are satisfied with the results, upload it to your production site. The installer package, along with detailed installation instructions, can be found at www.apachefriends.org. Best of all, XAMPP is free.

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Christopher Surridge was a career educator and self-taught technophile who lived and worked in Daejeon, Korea at the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology. He constantly pushed the boundaries of e-learning, and integrated Moodle, 3D virtual worlds, adventure learning, portable gaming, and social media into his cutting-edge courses. He was also the creator of Devil Island Mystery.



Chris passed away on May 4, 2011. To learn more about the amazing life that Chris Surridge lived, please visit www.KoreaTESOL.org/TECNews.

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Plenary Speakers
Stephen Krashen
B. Kumaravadivelu
Keith Folse (Cengage)

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Featured Speakers

Thomas S. C. Farrell
Gavin Dudeney
Robert J. Dickey

Nicholas Groom (Birmingham)
Muna Morris-Adams (Aston)
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KOTESOL International Conference XIX

Pushing our Paradigms;

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East of Korea, West of Japan

Iain Stanley compares teaching and living in the two countries

A topic of discussion that generates a healthy debate between teachers is the comparison between living and working in Japan and Korea. Different people have different views and can often provide compelling arguments for why one is more appealing than the other. Without doubt, each place offers opportunities to enjoy unique cultural experiences that can live in the memories forever. Professionally, they also provide teachers with the potential to save good money and an opportunity to enhance their credentials and develop their careers.

I currently live in Japan and work at a small university in the south of the country. I've been here for two years, and prior to that was at a university outside Tokyo for four years. Before coming to Japan, I worked at universities in Daejeon and Seoul. Perhaps my experience gives me an insight into life in both countries and may be of interest to teachers contemplating life in either place. There are certainly similarities, but also just as many differences.

In my experience in Korea, requirements were far less stringent. I understand that the visa process is far more thorough in Korea these days, but the process of actually getting a job at a university in Japan is, I believe, much more difficult.

In terms of getting a job, I think that the requirements are a lot more stringent at Japanese universities. Usually, you need a master's degree, university experience (preferably in Japan), publications in verifiable journals (preferably refereed), references that can be relied upon (as they are usually-checked), and occasionally a good command of Japanese. In my experience in Korea, requirements were far less stringent. I understand that the visa process is far more thorough in Korea these days, but the process of actually getting a job at a university in Japan is, I believe, much more difficult.

For many people, it seems that the requirements of Japanese universities are far too exclusive, presenting a closed door that is impossible for most to open. I mean, how many teachers out there have publications or conference presentations on their resumes by the time they've decided they want to work at a university in Japan? Many teachers don't even know where to begin as far as both are concerned. Fear not. If you are determined to land yourself a university job in Japan, the visa system there is your friend.



Work visas are one of the major differences for teachers in Japan and Korea. In Korea, you are beholden to your employer, and your visa is inextricably linked to your place of employment. Therefore, on a standard E2 visa, private lessons are strictly illegal. It's a controversial subject which certainly divides opinion. However, in Japan, you own your visa. The work visa is yours, not your employer's. You can quit a job, get laid off or fired, and the visa still remains yours. It is valid as long as it does not expire.

How does this help in getting a university job in Japan? Well, a lot of universities hire part-time teachers. The hiring process is far less stringent and many a teacher without publications has opted for this route. You can string a few different part-time jobs together and build your own little lucrative kingdom. However, you have to remember that the universities that hire you part-time will seldom sponsor or renew your visa, provide paid vacation, or offer health insurance. You simply teach your classes and get paid. Nothing else. Nonetheless, it's a way to get your foot in that door.

In terms of job security, I think Korea is a little better than Japan. This is simply because most Japanese universities hire teachers on short-term contracts, usually lasting from 3-5 years. That means that every few years in Japan you have to brush up your resume and go through the process of finding another job. This is not particularly enjoyable if you





They love to tell jokes and are extremely curious about the world as it compares to Korea. However, as much as it might surprise some people, Japanese students are also quite gregarious at times, and are nowhere near as shy as they're stereotyped to be.

have a significant other, or family, that has ties to a certain place. You can never be sure of getting a job in the same area. This is not the case in Korea. If teachers at universities in Korea do their job to the satisfaction of their superiors, they are renewed for as long as they want. This is comforting for those who have kids in schools, or significant others who love a certain area.

As for the students themselves, I could go on for days about the nuances in each country. Without doubt, Korean university students are more open, forthright, opinionated, and willing. I had some wonderful discussions with Korean students. They are very inquisitive, unafraid to broach issues on a wide variety of topics. They love to tell jokes and are extremely curious about the world as it compares to Korea. However, as much as it might surprise some people, Japanese students are also quite gregarious at times, and are nowhere near as shy as they're stereotyped to be. The major difference is that it takes time to build rapport with Japanese students and to earn their trust. But once they feel comfortable with the teacher and their classmates, just like Koreans, they are willing to open up.

One common point teachers have in both countries is the ability to save money. Having lived in both countries, it's difficult to give a definitive answer on which is more attractive, because there are so many variables, including salary, rent, cost of living, leisure spending, domestic travel, and transportation. It depends on lifestyle. For the most part, I think savings potential is about even, though this is open to debate and further discussion. For example, public transportation, including taxis, is much cheaper in Korea. That being said, riding bicycles is so common in Japan that it often cancels out the need for people to spend money on public transportation. Moreover, even though tax might be slightly lower in Korea, the exchange rate currently favors the yen much more.

Excluding obvious issues such as salary and tax, I think housing has the biggest impact on how much a teacher can save. At most universities in Korea, teachers will be provided rent-free, or heavily subsidized, accommodation. Teachers are usually responsible for utilities only. While this may seem like a huge plus for Korea, there can be catches. Sure, the accommodation may be free, but you don't get to choose where you live. At my first university in Korea, I was provided with a lovely, spacious apartment, but it was in a block with many other faculty members. At my second job, I was provided an apartment where no other teachers lived, but it was extremely small and the furnishings left a lot to be desired. Both were free and allowed me to save what I would have paid in rent, but you leave things to chance in terms of what kind of accommodation you get. Moreover, because the university provides the accommodation, if you leave your job, you have to vacate your apartment.

In Japan, universities seldom provide teachers with accommodation. Teachers must usually find their own apartment and pay all associated costs. When you first get an apartment, this can be extremely expensive. Normally, you will have to pay 3-5 month's rent in advance, in order to cover rent, the real-estate fee, bond, and 'gift money' to the landlord. In addition, apartments are unfurnished. Due to such costs, it is very difficult to save much money in the first year at a job. The good thing is that you get to choose where you live and how your place is furnished. Further, if you leave your job, you get to stay in the apartment. The bad thing is that if you leave the apartment, you need to sell or get rid of all the furniture. This is why 'sayonara sales' are so popular in Japan.

Overall, I think both countries have a lot to offer for teachers, both professionally and in leisure terms. Hopefully, in the future, I can expand on more of these points and provide a more in-depth analysis of some of the topics raised today.

Iain Stanley is a Lecturer at Miyazaki International College in Japan. He has taught at the university level in Japan, Korea, Thailand and Australia. He is in the final stages of his Doctorate degree.



If you have taught English in Korea and another country, we'd like you to share your experiences. Please send your proposal to TECSubmissions@gmail.com and we will let you know if others are already working on it.

Professional Development Without a Teachers' Room

Kyle Devlin shares how to share with your colleagues

For many, the words professional development may conjure up ideas of attending conferences, going to an organization's local chapter meeting, reading the latest journals or publishing scholarly articles. However, professional development doesn't have to only mean these things.

One of the fondest memories of my early teaching career was the sharing of teaching ideas in the staff room with ten to fifteen fellow teachers before, during and after classes. Though we may have been teaching classes individually, as much as we could, we made the learning of teaching collaborative.

Little did we know that we were taking part in professional development – the sharing of ideas and experiences to increase one's skills and knowledge.

Now, I'm in a setting where I see much less of my fellow colleagues compared to where I worked in the past. Instead of a staff room, teachers now have their own offices. It has made the type of collaboration that I once enjoyed much more difficult to take part in.

Fortunately, there are ways of fostering professional development in sharing with others even when a staff room is nowhere to be found.

Observing a Colleague

One of the easiest ways that we as teachers can develop professionally is to observe a colleague's class. Having a teacher share a syllabus is one thing, but being able to sit in the back of the room and being able to observe how an activity is put into practice is quite another experience all together. At my place of employment, teachers often ask to sit in on another teacher's class when a teacher is either looking to expand his or her repertoire of courses he or she can teach or when a teacher knows he or she will be asked to teach a new course in the future. This kind of observation can be of benefit to both the teachers and the observer as the observer has an opportunity to see how the material may be presented and the teacher can ask for feedback on the lesson if he or she wishes.

A Roundtable Discussion

Another way of developing professionally is by setting up a regular roundtable discussion at one's place of work. A roundtable discussion is just that, a group discussion on a particular topic. Generally, there is a person in charge of the roundtable whose task it is to ask individuals to lead a roundtable discussion. The topic may be something that the leader is particularly knowledgeable about or merely something that he or she has interest in. The leader of the roundtable prepares a list of questions to facilitate discussion. The roundtable should not be one person presenting on a topic. The goal of the discussion is for participants simply to share their ideas. Some have had success with holding roundtables once a month.



Online Sharing

Until recently, most online sharing was done through email groups or blogs, or sometimes through online group forums. The latest trend seems to be utilizing social networking sites for online sharing. The most popular of these sites is Facebook, which allows for the creation of group pages that can be easily connected to through one's personal page. In addition to Facebook pages, some are now even utilizing Twitter to share professional development ideas online.

One of the fondest memories of my early teaching career was the sharing of teaching ideas in the staff room with ten to fifteen fellow teachers before, during and after classes.

At its core, professional development is learning through the sharing of information. Not having a space where teachers routinely gather does not have to mean that teachers can't learn and share on a daily basis. It simply means that teachers have to look at other ways of learning and sharing, such as observing colleagues, participating in roundtable discussions, or sharing online.

Kyle Devlin received his Master's in TESOL from The School for International Training in 2002. He worked previously as a U.S. State Department English Language Fellow in Indonesia doing pre-service teacher training and is currently an Assistant Professor of English Education at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, Korea.



Group and Pair Work in Korean Classrooms

Thomas Baldwin explains how and why they should be incorporated

Guest public school and hagwon EFL teachers in Korea who wish to incorporate collaborative group and pair work often face difficulties when working in their classroom environments. These teachers are expected to be the English 'games person' providing a 'fun' environment, not offering a true educational classroom. "Traditionally, teacher-centered philosophies emphasize the importance of transferring knowledge, information, and skills from the older (presumably wiser) generation to the younger one. The teacher's role is to instill respect for authority, perseverance, duty, consideration, and practicality" (Sadker & Sadker, 2006, p. 354). This educational philosophy is still the norm in the Korean school system and administrators generally do not wish to go against the accepted system.

While most educators in the 21st century would agree that group and pair work are valuable activities in the EFL classroom, not all teachers in Korea are allowed to, or feel the need to, use them. Many Western professional educators would say that what needs to be incorporated into Korean students' learning experience is "the broad activities approach" (Harmer, 2007), allowing students to experience a classroom from a Western perspective. This lack of Western perspective may easily be seen in the reticence among many hagwon and public school administrators in Korea to incorporate changes. This is due to a reliance on the Korean Ministry of Education (MOE) for direction, leaving classrooms thoroughly in the Korean mode. It is an educational system where teacher-centered classrooms are the norm, and as such, teachers find themselves at a loss when confronted by the demands of a Western style of teaching in their classrooms. This often leads to objections to the introduction of new teaching concepts by foreign teachers who are hired to teach English but who are considered guests in Korea. Many of these problems can be solved by communication. A native-speaker English teacher (NEST) should attempt to begin a dialogue with his or her employer. Being prepared for questions that may arise during this dialogue can help the teacher overcome this resistance. This article will answer some questions that might come up in such dialogues.

Do students who work in pairs really learn?

Pair and group work increases student talking time in class and gives students the opportunity to share learning strategies. It offers intensive, realistic practice in speaking and listening; and it promotes a classroom ambiance that is conducive to learning. Pair work has another important advantage that work done in larger groups does not have. "Student pairs will negotiate different aspects of the same pair activity. Therefore, pair activities help students with their specific language learning needs" (Harris, 2005). These outcomes of pair and group work allow the students to integrate the target language in a covert way, virtually unaware that the target language is being learned.

Does it increase critical thinking?

Most Western professional NESTs see interaction as the basis for critical thinking in their classrooms. Collaborative effort by students allows them to change and modify their roles in the classroom, where the students act as both teacher and student by exhibiting a degree of independence that would not be possible in teacher-centered environments. By incorporating this new learning style into the classroom, the teachers will also begin to introduce Western style critical thinking to their students.

How can teachers arrange the classroom?

There are no set rules as to how the classroom might be arranged, but many have offered basic guidelines. Klippel (1985) suggests several basic seating arrangements (circle or half circle) to put the students into a learning environment, noting that, "learning is more effective if the learners are actively involved in the process." However, teachers in public schools are often faced with large class sizes, and sometimes have fixed seating in their classrooms. Teachers can easily rearrange their classes to have two rows of students face one another, instead of the teacher (or have students turn towards their partner in classrooms where the furniture is bolted to the floor).

The teacher can decide whether to keep students with the same partner, to change partners, to pair a stronger student with a weaker one, or to pair two of equal ability – and can change pairs and groupings for different tasks.

In a large class, having students work in pairs or groups also reduces student numbers to a manageable level. A classroom management tool that works well to facilitate learning and participation is the use of competitions among groups of students. The students working as a team then become actively involved with each other, rather than focusing on the teacher. Korean students often appreciate rewards given by their guest teacher and respond accordingly.



What about disruptive and shy students?

Classrooms generally have some students who are shy, and some who are disruptive. Activities based on the students alternating between pair work and group work can help students become more aware of their in-class behavior. Disruptive students then have little or no opportunity to disrupt other students and will likely become more involved just by the nature of the activity. Klippel (1985) suggests activities that can help students learn to take turns, including one in which the speaker holds a ball of string and completes a specific task. In order to keep the process going, this student must hand the ball off to another, with each speaker transferring the ball, so that there are several lines of strings leading to and from her/him. These strings serve to identify the person who controls the conversation. Students are now actively involved in the classroom and are less likely to be disruptive.

Korean parents like to be informed whenever changes occur in the pedagogical relationships that go on with their children. If parents are shown that this system falls within the professional requirements for a 'World Classroom,' and if they are shown the researched benefits of such changes, then most of them would not only allow these changes but would encourage them.

Shy students are given the opportunity to rehearse the task in front of an audience of one, or in front of a small group. This reduces the pressure they feel to perform, and might make them more likely to participate. In addition, they will become less reticent when they see others participate in a low-pressure situation.

How will students adapt?

Korean students who have never experienced a student-centered environment may be apprehensive at first, but they will quickly adapt. They will need to be introduced to pair and group work gradually, which can be done by giving them a short task to perform. As students get used to the idea of working in pairs and groups, the teacher can extend the range of activities being offered (Harmer, 2007). Start with simple, non-threatening activities that encourage the students to become involved and progress to more advanced activities that cause the students to begin to think critically.

Will parents accept changes to the norm?

Korean parents like to be informed whenever changes occur in the pedagogical relationships that go on with their children. If parents are shown that this system falls within the professional requirements for a 'World Classroom,' and if they are shown the researched benefits of such changes, then most of them would not only allow these changes but would encourage them. Most Korean parents are also worried about how their children will fare on the Korean Scholastic Aptitude Test (KSAT). The KSAT currently supports a teacher-centered classroom with an emphasis on rote memorization, and teachers will have to continue to 'teach to the test'. However, both the Korean MOE and parents are also concerned about how these students will

fare with English as the lingua franca of the new Korean economy. To help students become more fluent in English by whatever means necessary, both groups will welcome these changes.

Conclusion

NESTs genuinely want to help their students speak better English. Maximizing student talking time in the classroom is the best way for students to improve their English ability. Pair and group work maximizes student talking time, gives shy students the opportunity to rehearse before performing a task before the entire class, keeps disruptive students interested and participating, and teaches the students valuable independent thinking and critical thinking skills. Korean parents and administrators want their students to do well in school and to be better-equipped to face the world after they graduate. It is hoped that the information in this article will help teachers open dialogue with administrators on teaching through pair work, and will help the teachers answer questions administrators might have.

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Thomas Baldwin

For the past two years Thomas Baldwin has been an English Communications Instructor at WooSong University in Daejeon, Korea. Prior to that, he spent three semesters teaching EFL in Hamyang, Korea at the Boys Middle School and working part time in a hagwon. He was also an EFL Instructor at the Yokohama Institute of Marine Sports and Sciences in Yokohama, Japan and he taught in public schools and in a community college in Oregon and Washington in the USA. He is currently a member of KOTESOL and can be reached at thomas.wsu@gmail.com.



Textbook Adaptation

Hyun-Ae Lee shares advice for level-differentiated classrooms

Dressed in a formal black outfit, I paused at the door of the teacher's office and took a deep breath. A short time later, I left the room with a single set of textbooks and the corresponding CD-ROM in my hand, this time with a deep sigh, pondering over what I heard from one of my colleagues: "Your students will range from kids who don't know the alphabet to those who aim at prestigious foreign language high schools and anyone in between." That was the first day of my teaching career at a Korean secondary school.

I am currently in my 2nd year of teaching and lots of questions linger in my mind. The one that most interests me concerns textbook adaptation in level-differentiated English classes. Last year, I taught lower-level first-grade middle school students, including many who were overwhelmed by their textbooks. This year, I teach first-grade classes as well, but my students are at a higher proficiency level and some are at too high a level for their textbook. Considering that all the classroom variables, other than student competence, have remained the same, I asked myself, "will it be okay to reuse the materials from last year?" and found myself answering, carefully but confidently, "No."

What is going on in level-differentiated classes?

The current National Common Basic Curriculum strongly recommends level-differentiated classes, especially in mathematics and English, stating that "English classes at the middle school level should consider different learning ability of individual students and carry out different levels of lessons." (KICE, 2008) Based on test results, students are streamed into groups of homogeneous proficiency levels. For each lesson, students move to different classrooms and are taught by different teachers according to their assessed abilities, but with the same textbooks. The teachers discuss which parts of the textbooks to keep before beginning the new semester, and this process is critically linked to testing. To eliminate concerns that the tests might be unfair, teachers are supposed to construct test items based solely on items that have been covered in all classes. Testing forces all teachers to teach at the same pace to ensure that they all complete the same tasks within a given period of time.

To sum up, under the current system, students in the same grade are split into two or three levels, all managed by different teachers. However, the assessment of student mastery of learning objectives is not leveled correspondingly. As a result, teaching processes, such as the adaptation of textbook material to proficiency levels, are crucially affected by the tests. This can lead to negative washback on classrooms, and sometimes to reduced motivation.

Why is textbook adaptation needed?

One major consideration for in-service teachers in the level-dependent Korean teaching context is that the same textbooks are shared by students at different proficiency levels. Although almost all English textbooks for secondary

schools in Korea are eligible for adoption at the local school level, students do not have the ability to choose textbooks tuned to their level. In addition, the national curriculum must be adhered to, and school exams must be administered based on the same course content regardless of students' competencies. Therefore, it is impracticable to match *topics* to the level of students. There is another option, though. *Materials* can be matched to the student level instead, to keep students' minds on track for the topic. This suggests that, in designing a lesson, the core decisions should hinge on textbook adaptation rather than on textbook adoption.

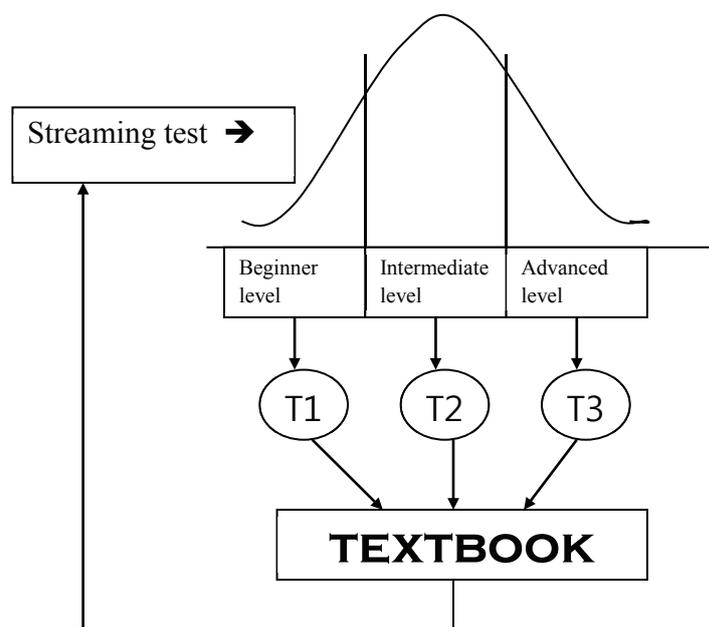


Figure 1. Rationale for textbook adaptation

Are there any possible challenges to textbook adaptation?

Let's take a closer look at middle school English textbooks to see how they are organized. There is a main textbook and its accompanying activity book; the latter functions as a leveled supplementary textbook and supports the understanding of course content. Each chapter of the activity book usually provides three-tiered exercises, or activities built upon the same texts (since teachers have to develop test tasks based on course outcomes that overlap among all levels), with the task difficulty varying so that teachers can choose an appropriate task to match students' abilities.

However, for teachers who strive to achieve congruence between the two course books, there might be some apprehension: How can students at the lowest level, who feel even



Figure 2. Original activity from middle school English textbook (For 1st graders, published by Chunjae (Yin-Gi Lee; revised edition), Lesson 12, p.150)

a single short passage in the main textbook is impenetrable, be motivated? In addition, will all the tasks in the activity book work with these students? In what way can student motivation be increased while using the same unit content?

Before the list of questions gets too long, it is important that teachers decide on any features of the material they would like to change (McDonough & Shaw, 2003), using a range of techniques such as adding, deleting, modifying, simplifying, and reordering. In addition, the level-suitability of the classroom material should also be taken into account.

How can the textbook be best used?

“The teacher must satisfy the demands of the textbook, but in ways that will meet the needs of those who learn from it”, (Stevick, 1972 in McDonough & Shaw, 2003, p. 75). So, the ultimate question is, how can we cater to cross-ability students with “level-appropriately” adapted textbooks?

For me, the key was to have students create a *portfolio* that included adapted-from-textbook materials and supplementary worksheets. It brought several notable benefits to my classroom: (a) I could generate language input matched to my students’ ability levels with a textual form; (b) students were encouraged to compile the input they picked up, shifting their role in the classroom from a passive to an active one; (c) students felt a sense of achievement by updating their ever-growing folders; (d) students could refer to their personal learning log whenever they wanted.

While I felt I had success with portfolios some assumptions about advanced students’ abilities are less successful when transposed, without thought, to students at lower levels (Harmer, 2007). The following are some ideas about creating supplementary hand-outs and tasks that are added into the students’ portfolios, bearing in mind levels of competence.

1) For beginner-levels

Students who struggle at the bottom are demotivated and may well lag behind in their understanding of course content. They can choose to be left out if they feel that the tasks are not doable.

In order to adapt the content to get the meaning across and to boost the morale of

lower-achieving students, exercises in textbooks should be modified into more controlled tasks that give clear-cut answers. For example, the activity shown in Figure 2, which requires students to complete captions for a cartoon with no given sentence options, can be converted into one with choices given in jumbled order. This invites students to fill in the blanks with lines that match each scene by considering the flow of the whole story and exploiting the language support given. Also, more than two consecutive instructions given together can be divided into separate sentences so that students can better understand what they need to do (see Figure 3).

2) For advanced-levels

Some students at this level may feel that tasks in their textbook are not challenging enough. If they are given materials that are used for intermediate or beginner levels, they might find it difficult to maintain their interest. Thus, as a necessary step toward keeping these students enthusiastic and motivated, activities in textbooks should be contextualized and adapted to be more attractively challenging.

This can be done in a number of ways: First, challenging tasks with greater autonomy should be arranged for lessons. As an example, students might be invited to imagine the ending of the given story or to devise possible solutions to problems presented in the material, with or without written clues. This can be more demanding both cognitively and linguistically.

1. Fill in the blanks to complete the cartoon below. [Sentence Bank] is given for you.
 2. **group!** Practice speaking with your group members. :-)

[Sentence Bank]		
• Help!	• He will never get out.	• I'll carry stones.
• Elephants can't jump.	• Elephants can't climb.	• We are happy, too.
• We can get him out.	• I'll bring some sand.	• I'll sing and dance for you.
Please help me.		
		
①	Don't worry. I'll help you.	②

Figure 3. An example of textbook adaptation for beginning levels

1. Fill in the blanks to complete the cartoon below.

2. **group!** If you were the mommy elephant..?
Draw your own ending scene and write lines for it.

3. **group!** Practice speaking with your group members. :-)

		
Help!	①	②

Figure 4. An example of textbook adaptation for advanced levels

Second, since these students can generate their own language input, teachers can elicit support language and exploit it when outlining tasks. This helps students feel connected to the class, and also heightens their enthusiasm for hard work. Elicitation can even be done with printed material. For example, the presentation of new vocabulary for a reading text might be modified by distributing a word worksheet which only provides Korean meanings and getting students to write the English counterparts. Then, through the process of a whole-class check, students can learn various synonyms from answers gleaned from their peers, as well as the target words from the textbook. Likewise, as shown in Figure 4, pictorial cues with no lexical support might elicit more sophisticated expressions from stronger students.

Do your students sometimes hesitate on their textbook pages?

Last year, I had many memorable moments in my classroom, where I heard exclamations like “ah... got it!” from my slower students who needed extra support. This year, on the other hand, I feel joy when I see my advanced students get involved in given tasks and hear them murmuring “Eh? What’s this?” In large-size, leveled classes, students might switch off if they receive cookie-cutter intellectual stimulus from their textbook. To keep students engaged in learning, the teacher should respond not merely to verbal questions, but even to students’ raised eyebrows. Be sensitive to their responses to the materials they have — even including their hesitating pencils on their textbook pages! This could be one of the unspoken messages which your student, with his or her own stance on the materials, is trying to bring to your attention. Keeping this and the above activities and ideas in mind can be very helpful in dealing with the potential difficulties inherent in level-differentiated classes.

Hyun-Ae Lee started her teaching journey last year and is currently teaching at Pyeongtaek Girls Middle School, a public school located in Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi Province.



Her main academic interests are in materials development, extensive reading, and professional development through reflective practice. Email: jessica.efltr@gmail.com

Useful websites for textbook adaptation

<http://english.njoyschool.net>
<http://www.toolsforeducators.com>

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Face-off: Presentation Skills

Aaron Jolly and Joshua Davies, two active members of the KTT team of teacher trainers, were asked how they approach giving presentations, to describe some of their outstanding presentation experiences and about teaching presentation skills courses. Let's see if they agree or disagree in this edition of Face-off.

1) Tell us briefly the key things you do before, during and immediately after one of your own presentations.

Before: (1) Research the audience if possible - how many people, how many years of experience on average, teaching levels etc. (2) Decide how important it is for me so I know how much time can be dedicated to preparation. (3) Prep visuals and practice 'out loud' in my head - I literally visualize myself giving the session and work through the entire session visually, including 'hearing' myself speak - especially the opening. Of course check the tech at the venue to the best of my ability... and bring a back-up.

During: (1) Scan the audience and maintain eye contact constantly. (2) Vary activities, be ready to alter things, keep track of timing, (3) Have fun and enjoy it, or focus on whatever it is that motivates you.... and do not forget to smile a lot! Studies of successful people show they smile much more than average - no matter what happens.

After: (1) Ask for feedback. (2) Refer folks to more stuff at my blog and links online. (3) Promote KOTESOL and other events, put people back in to the cycle by encouraging community building. Tell them to join and follow KOTESOL on Facebook and Twitter.

2) Describe your best presentation experience(s) as a presenter, teacher and audience member.

(1) **Presenter** - I did a session for GEPIK in Gyeonggi-do recently and the audience was just so positive. I think my opening activity created such a buzz that it permeated right through the 90 minutes; I've never had so many smiles and positive vibes from so many audience members.

(2) **Teacher** - I did a course with Joshua at Korea Expressways Corporation recently. One of the students came up with a final presentation that really moved me. I realized again the power that presentation skills can have in teaching English for Specific Purposes in ELT. He simply blew us all away.



Aaron Jolly

(3) **Audience member** - It's a tie - Mark Helgeson (awesome combination of interactivity, great visuals, informative handouts and awesome jokes), Rob Waring (passion, sureness of thought and knowledge, feeling that you are watching a revolutionary teacher in his element), Tom Farrell (humor, call to action, being challenged as a teacher), Joy Reid (very interactive, always smiling, and seemed in total control of her timing both at the macro and micro level).

Before: I try to practice parts of it in front of a live audience and get feedback- Toastmasters is great for that (and very forgiving of mistakes). Looking at content creation: I try to get out of my head and address how my topic solves audience problems, which leads to much stronger buy in.

During: Record it for future reference. Focus on interaction, interaction, interaction. There's a tendency when we get nervous to go into auto-pilot, but as soon as we stop having a conversation we lose the audience.

After: Send a follow up thanks to any attendees who share their business cards-it helps to continue the dialogue and bridge the gap between presentations. Reflect: never stop adjusting/learning- even a presentation that went great can be improved, and watching the video feedback enables that more.



Joshua Davies

(1) **Presenter** - Honestly? The first time I did a two-day training session and it didn't blow up in my face, Making the leap from short sessions to leading 16 hours in a row forced me to rethink everything in terms of flow and content delivery. It made me a better teacher.

(2) **Teacher** - Anytime I get positive feedback from students who've had that huge moment of shock seeing their before and after videos. The best thing about two-day intensives is to see such a sudden real transformation.

(3) **Audience member** - Ditto Aaron. Mark Helgeson was the first presenter I saw in person who ever tried to fully interact with an audience. I've seen many since, but he was the first to cause me to rethink my presenting.

This article has been shortened for print. For the entire article please visit our website.

www.KoreaTESOL.org/TEC

3) In your opinion what are the three most important components of a presentation skills course? Why?

(1) Rubric: You have to have a clear presentation skills rubric so that students know what is expected from the get-go. I use one adapted from Bryan Stoakley's presentation skills course at the Korea National University of Education which he uses with pre-service teachers. You can find one online and adapt it, or ask around the KOTESOL circuit like I did.

(2) Videoin: You simply do not know how you look when you present until you have seen yourself on video. Even when I work with elementary kids I video them with my cell phone and play it back to them right away. It gives motivation and encourages pride in performance. In a recent course, I had staff record and upload to a café or blog so that all students can see all other students videos and learn from each other.

(3) Will/passion/purpose: I firmly believe in the Robin William's stand-on-chairs-and-call-on-students-to-seize-the-day approach to teaching presentation skills (from Dead Poets Society). Presenting is a performance and should be treated as an art-form whatever the content. I challenge students to tell us why anyone should care about what they have to present. I saw Professor David Perkins, a colleague of Howard Gardner's at Harvard graduate School of Education, give an amazing talk about "Will" in education in 2008. Basically, through your "will" students can do amazing things. Take risks and inspire your students, sharpen the tools of your trade with better use of technology, watch TED videos online and read the amazing book on presenting by Garr Reynolds called *Presentation Zen*.



Aaron Jolly

(1) Student to student as well as video feedback. To continue growing beyond the classroom students need to develop a toolkit of self and peer assessment tools that will allow them to sustain their improvement and become part of a community of presenters.

(2) Having a teacher who is becoming a better presenter himself/herself. So many presentation skills classes are taught by teachers who teach, but have never presented. They are overlapping areas, certainly, but I can't stress enough that the teachers themselves should practice presenting at Toastmasters or other venues, as it will allow them to better understand and empathize with their students.

(3) Find local heroes. Oftentimes we focus only on western role models of good presenting - but sites such as TEDx Seoul have many examples of Korean presenters (speaking in Korean and English) presenting well, and this can help break the idea that the ability to present interactively is culturally constrained.



Joshua Davies

If you would like to challenge a friend or colleague to a "Face-off", send your idea to tecfeedback@gmail.com.

Academic English Writing Development

Robert Kim shares his ideas for university writing courses

In order to teach EFL writing skills in the South Korean academic context, teachers should deploy various techniques to guide their pupils' writing skills. Several of these are presented below.

Brainstorming and Freewriting

Two good ways to get students to start thinking about a topic is to get them to brainstorm or freewrite.

One way of brainstorming is to mind map the topic. In mind maps, ideas are clustered to connect with a central issue. One big central circle contains the topic. The big circle joins other circles that contain key details and examples. For example, a central circle could contain the main topic Barack Obama. Lines from the central circle could lead out to circles containing details such as his biography or accomplishments. Students can organize their thoughts by connecting the main topic with various details and examples. Brainstorming can help pupils come up with a clear, coherent organizational scheme for their writing. With this approach, idea organization can lead to a path for organized writing.

Brainstorming can help students start to freewrite. They can write what is on their mind or respond to a question posed by their professor. When freewriting, they generate and organize their ideas without consideration for any fluency or accuracy errors. Freewriting can also serve as a springboard toward tapping into prior knowledge of a topic.

Show Samples of Various Writing

One technique that can be implemented in academic writing classes is to show students samples of writing, such as paragraphs and essays. Samples can come from previous classes or from the assigned textbook. The professor can draw attention to the features of a good piece of writing in various ways by breaking the students up into discussion groups. Students can discuss whether a sample composition is properly organized. Alternatively, each student in a group can share how certain sentences and paragraphs serve as examples of specific kinds of writing, such as a comparison-contrast composition. Students may even critique or rate a sample piece of writing. These activities can help

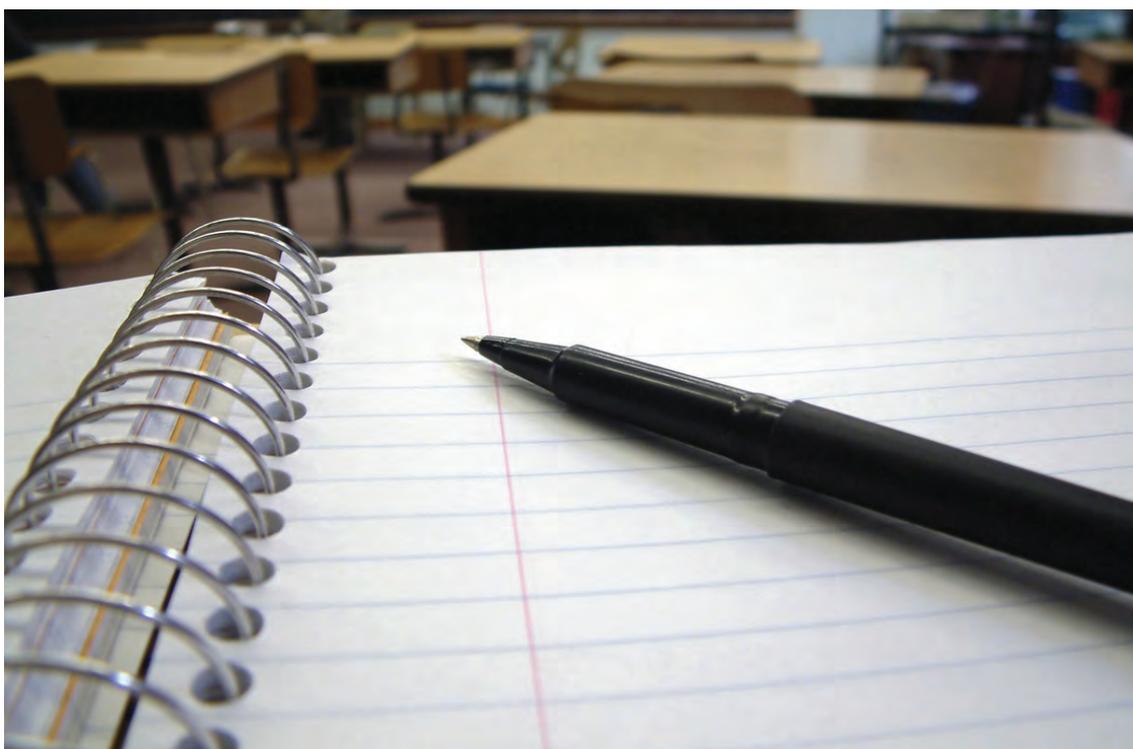
students to integrate their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax (Shrum and Glisan, 2004). In addition, group discussion can help pupils develop their critical thinking skills and understand the content of good and bad writing.

Emphasize the Issue of Plagiarism

Showing samples of plagiarized writing is important. It must be pointed out to East Asian EFL students that those types of compositions are not acceptable and can lead to a low score. The professor has the responsibility to explain what plagiarized writing is. He or she can show a sample, side-by-side with the actual source, highlighting the sentences stolen without proper citation. (Google.com is a good way to track plagiarized text.) Simultaneously, professors must acknowledge the cultural conflict with East Asian EFL learners, who believe that copying, conserving, and reproducing knowledge through memorization and imitation, without citing the source, is ethical (Hyland, 2003). Of equal importance, a writing teacher must stress that if a student were to study in college in a native English-speaking nation, plagiarism would not be tolerated and could lead to expulsion.

Rubrics and Portfolios

Student writing development can be fostered through the use of rubrics for assessment purposes and for skill development. Rubrics can be applied to rate accuracy of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and sentence construction. They can also be used to measure other criteria, including fluency for details, example organization, paragraph construction (e.g. the use of topic sentences, detail sentences, and concluding sentences). Rather than getting a letter or numerical grade, students get



qualitative (and quantitative) feedback about their strengths, weaknesses, and areas that need improvement. In addition, rubrics can define quality and provide learners with criteria that must be met for their work (Olson, 2007). One type of rubric an instructor may use is an analytic rubric, which can break down a composition with detailed information about areas of strength and improvement with separate scores. A holistic rubric could also be applied, with one impression mark that considers how a paper's mechanics, ideas, voice, and other criteria work in harmony for an overall effect (Olson, 2007).



To complement rubrics, portfolios can be used. When using portfolios, a student's writing assignments and accompanying rubric scores are placed in folders. Looking through this collection, students can work with their teachers and track their progress. The portfolio serves as a collection of evidence highlighting a learner's growth during a term. The portfolio can offer additional angles in measuring strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement (Shrum and Glisan, 2004). A collection of rubrics and their accompanying assignments are used together to assess how much progress has been made. They provide empowerment and awareness of how students can reach their course goals in writing. The goal of using the writing portfolio is to provide evidence of the progress a student has made, and to show what steps have been taken toward writing development across writing assignments.

Use of Student-Teacher Conferences

Rubrics and portfolios can complement student-teacher conferences. The instructor can point out room for improvement. He or she must not simply make corrections for pupils. In fact, there is little support that learners who receive error corrections make fewer errors (Shrum and Glisan, 2004). Instead, writing accuracy is increased when the instructor gives the location of the grammar errors but requires that students identify and fix these. Thus, grammar and content feedback can have a positive effect.

Use of Peer Editing

One method for helping students with their writing is peer editing. Students work in groups and exchange their writings then rate and assess a classmate's composition. Peer raters provide advice on form and format, give constructive criticism, clarify the context, and increase accuracy (Shrum and Glisan, 2004). The teacher provides the structure for the peer-editing process by organizing groups, clearly establishing roles, and arranging papers to be rated by someone outside of the peer group (Shrum and Glisan, 2004).

Students can also work together to revise a poorly written composition or create a group essay or paragraph. Through collaboration pupils can integrate their knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and proper essay or paragraph cultivation (Shrum and Glisan 2000).

Conclusion

The path for Korean and other East Asian EFL learners to develop their English writing skills in universities is long and arduous. There are always going to be issues with fluency and accuracy that will trouble both professors and students alike. It is up to the instructor to establish the methods and strategies that will help each learner develop their English writing skills

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Robert M. Kim is currently teaching at Kyonggi University (Suwon Campus). He has an MSTESOL degree from Hofstra University and extensive EFL and ESL teaching experience in Korea and the United States respectively.
Email: iamrmk@AOL.com.



Bryan Stoakley introduces what KOTESOL's new website can do for you

Much of KOTESOL's Internet-based exposure has gone through a considerable amount of change and new implementation. We have upgraded our systems and website from scratch so that we may better serve our membership, attendees, and organizational partners. This drastic step was required on several tiers and the end result(s) will make our organization a better networked and informed group!

However, before explaining some of these changes we have some explanations and requests for you. First, when we upgraded the website to a new version we determined the most beneficial step/improvement for the membership database (member contact information) was to have every member re-insert their contact information regardless of membership status. We request(ed) this because of two core problems: a) members' data was extremely outdated as few members update(d), and b) the upgrade to the new site was met with data tables not transferring due to versions not melding and new data being requested. We recognized this would be an inconvenience to reregister, and have had some constructive feedback on difficulties some members have had, and with this useful feedback we are continually improving and simplifying the registration process for members! Please (re) register now if you have not yet.

Now, on to read about some of the additions and changes made to the site and how you might be able to contribute.

Website Upgrades

The Korea TESOL website was developed with the intent to meld new and improving technologies which will enable many new features, such as access to multiple languages. For example, it is our intent to be in better contact with you about conferences, events, publication releases, and important notices while limiting frequent Emails and eliminating spam. In order to facilitate this, we aim to keep in contact via social media outlets (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), as well as through more traditional means of Email. If you have any announcements you want on the official sites, email the Social Media Director, Mike Peacock, at socialmedia@koreatesol.org or the Publicity Chair, Jure Majnaric, at Publicity@koreatesol.org. Email notices have also undergone an html upgrade, of which you may have noticed in recent Emails from us. In addition to these notices, we may also be able to message you about other announcements straight to your KoreaTESOL user ID. We are working on a program that will allow you a choice on how to accept announcements (via Email or User ID).

The Forum

The website is now streamlined so that only "official" documentation will be held on the website proper, while all other pertinent documentation (i.e., chapter newsletters, member news, and current/new publications such as Proceedings and/or The Korea TESOL Journal) will be found on the official KOTESOL Forum. The Forum is only (site wide) accessible by members of KOTESOL and access



will be granted upon associated email addresses. The Forum is going to be the source for much content through Chapters, Special Interest Groups, Korea Teacher Training, National Council, and other key benefits for members. The Forum (sure, original name, I know, so send me something better at webmaster@koreatesol.org and we will change it!) has great potential to be something of benefit to members and organizational partners. It is envisioned that the forum will be a place where members can find discussions on just about anything relating to living, working, or what-not in South Korea, yet hopefully a copious amount about teaching will be found here.

It is also hoped that we can offer the membership a free place to upload resumes and for employers to post job advertisements. Furthermore, member news will also be found here as discussions can be held on topics published (newspapers, journals, et cetera) by KOTESOL members themselves, or otherwise. Obviously, those of us who frequent other boards recognize that some moderating is needed, so before all boards are opened we need individuals to help the Web Services Committee moderate The Forum. The more depth we have "on staff" the larger we can grow the forum and permit more benefits to members through it. Please, email me at if you are interested in being a moderator!

Video Content

As made mention on the bottom left corner of the website, we have official Vimeo and YouTube channels. You can visit these channels at <http://www.vimeo.com/kotesol> and <http://www.youtube.com/user/KoreaTESOL>. From here we can, and will, post any videos relating to interests in KOTESOL. We know there is a lot content out there, so please send your videos (or links to) to video@koreatesol.org. The Video Director, Justin McKibbon, will be in contact with you in regards to the content.

Payment Capabilities and “The Store”

Another feature we are striving to offer our membership is the ability to allow payment to be made via such additional payment services as Paypal, Google Checkout, and credit cards. The former two options are being worked out as location is an issue, while the latter will be enacted when we are confident on the security of the option taken. From this feature we will be able to offer online purchases of not only tangible goods, but access to such content as live and/or recorded webinars.

Improving Teaching via Web Services

Combining the technologies mentioned above, the Web Services Committee also has the ability to offer webinars for our members. These webinars, which will cater to a wide-ranging audience, can be synchronous or asynchronous. If the format is synchronous we also have the capability to allow members to “sit in” as a non-participating audience member, or if requested, we can supply interaction between audience member(s) and presenter(s). The possibilities are nearly endless as the technology grows by leaps and bounds!

Finally, there are many new features for this website, many of which will be progressively enabled or apparent– stay tuned! Should you have any questions or concerns, you may reach me at webmaster@koreatesol.org.

A Ph.D (candidate) known as “Stoakley” by friends, colleagues, students, and both local and international law enforcement agencies, the author has been “web-mastering” for KOTESOL since 2007 in one position or another, and is a facilitator in the MCALL SIG.

Contact him by phone: 010-6564-5425 or at www.stoakley.org.



TEC Submission Guidelines

The English Connection (TEC) is KOTESOL's quarterly news magazine, featuring scholarly articles as well as teaching tips and articles on working and living in Korea. The English Connection is currently provided for free to KOTESOL members.

The English Connection welcomes unpublished articles in the following categories:

Feature articles: These should be 2000-3500 words on topics of interest to language teachers in Korea. Please send your photos or artwork as well.

Guest columns: Contributions should be around 800 or 1600 words and should be on practical subjects for language teachers in Korea. Art and photos are also strongly encouraged.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to: classroom experiences, cultural issues, CALL, language learning, professional development, or general teaching tips.

Manuscripts should be sent to tecsubmissions@gmail.com

News items should be sent to koreakotesolnews@gmail.com

Please send your thoughts and suggestions for TEC to tecfeedback@gmail.com

Team Teaching in Elementary Schools

Sean Donnelly shares his experiences with his Korean co-teacher

What follows is a short examination of team teaching in a Korean public school based on my own experiences, struggles, and successes. I have been teaching in Korea for over four years but only 6 months of this time have I been partnered with a co-teacher. Although team teaching does have its pitfalls and critics in the ESL world, there are those who have enjoyed success when involved in such a setup. It seems that a successful team teaching experience is not beyond our reach, but to get to the promised land of enjoyable team teaching there are several key steps which may need to be followed in order to make it an effective teaching and learning experience.

There are various models of team teaching from which to choose from, and sometimes the one you end up with in your classroom might be out of your hands. During my first semester at my current school I was paired with a Korean teacher who had been teaching at the school for a few years. Therefore, I felt obliged to follow her lead in choosing the method as I presumed this was school policy. It was the traditional model where we both taught the same group of students and had an equal amount of teaching time. The reason I feel this model failed to work for us is due to a lack of communication and limited planning time between co-teachers. On several occasions one teacher was not aware of what the other had planned until 5 minutes before class started. It was not until the second or third time of teaching the lesson again that either one of us felt comfortable with the lesson as whole, goals that were to be met, or even the structure of the lesson.

We should have taken the time to meet on a regular basis to map out specifically what we hoped the students would achieve by the end of the lesson. Various factors inhibited such occasions from frequently occurring due to differing schedules. A severe lack of motivation for team teaching from both parties added to its failure as neither of us had any real experience with this approach and, in secret at least, neither of us were convinced of its effectiveness before we even entered the classroom together for the first time.

I felt obliged to follow her lead in choosing the method as I presumed this was school policy.

We failed to meet before the semester started to discuss our teaching philosophies and styles. It would have helped to know what we both valued in teaching, and even if our styles differed entirely, we could have incorporated these styles into the classroom with ease and careful planning, and with respect for the other's ideas.

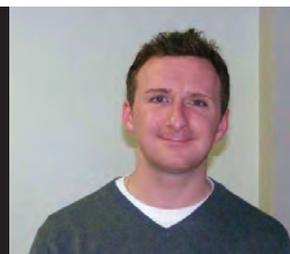
Thankfully, my second semester has been more agreeable and effective due to a complete shift in focus on what team teaching can be about. I have two new co-teachers this semester, one for each grade I teach. With the previous semester's experiences in mind, I decided to take the lead on how this semester would go (this was helped by the fact that

both new teachers are new to the school). In the new format, I teach the students twice a week with almost full control of planning and execution of lessons. The third lesson is likewise except the Korean teacher is in the driver's seat. Before finalizing plans, we meet to discuss any improvements that could be made or any pitfalls which already may be included yet unseen by the teacher in control. I have found that in using this method I do not feel I am stepping on anyone's toes (or they are stepping on mine), I am not blasting through activities for the sake of the co-teacher getting her full 20 minutes and there is a better flow to the lessons as the theme is maintained throughout the lesson with relevant activities that build on each other.

I would advise any team teachers that if your current method is not proving successful, experimentation might be useful. If you are bound by school policy to follow a specific method which you feel is flawed, I would say communication and respect for the other's teaching philosophy are paramount. I failed to see the warning lights in my first semester, but with some consideration and adjustment I am pleased with how things have been progressing this semester.



Sean Donnelly has been teaching English since 2005. He earned his MA in TESOL the same year and has a keen interest in the different learning styles of language learners. He arrived in Korea in 2007 and has had some very rewarding experiences in the classroom. Sean currently works at Doseong Elementary School teaching grades 4 and 6.



Managing Your Elementary School Classroom

Matthew Stone offers tips for managing young learners

I've never been put in jail before, but I imagine it's similar to stepping into a public school classroom for the first time: the sense of entrapment, the nervous sweating, the multiple eyes prodding for weaknesses. I heard in a movie once that you're supposed to beat up the biggest guy on your first day of prison and everyone else will leave you alone. In an EFL classroom, however, I recommend you try the steps listed below.

Step 1: Draw Up Your Battle Plan

You need to plant the seeds of expectation from the moment you step into the classroom. Have your reward/consequence system at least partially formed, your progress chart drawn up, and your rules ready to be listed. Be prepared! You wouldn't just completely wing your lesson, so don't wing your classroom management.

Step 2: Reward Markers

On day one of the semester, the first thing I do when I walk in to the classroom is pick up the marker and draw a 'happy face' with four empty slots beside it. Then I draw a 'sad face' with four empty slots beside that. I turn to the class and give the following instruction: "When I say 'pay', you say 'attention' and clap three times. Ready...Pay!" If the students get it nice and loud on the first try, they get their first happy face. If they don't, we'll practice it again until they do.



Step 3: Show Them Their Progress

In my classes, I always have a progress board. This is usually a simple piece of white cardboard, with a line for each class in the grade I'm teaching (ex. 3-1, 3-2, 3-2...). This can go horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or which ever way you want. Just make sure it's easy for the students to understand, and make sure they can see it at all times. If the class gets four happy faces, they get one more sticker on the board that day. They get four sad faces and I'll rip a sticker right off. Anything less than four happy faces results in no sticker for that day and an explanation on how they can do better next time.

Step 4: Give Them Rewards

While it's true that the students will try hard just to be the best class on the chart, I think they also need some sort of reward. This doesn't mean you're going to take the best class out for a steak dinner, but I think it's fine if the best class gets a little candy and a certificate at the end of the semester. You might disagree with me, but I've found that mere praise alone doesn't always sell the system on day one.

Step 5: Be Firm!

Please, please, please be firm. You don't have to come up with a million rules; just the one's you feel are needed to properly manage the class. Don't bother with rules that you can't possibly enforce (no speaking Korean, ever!) or rules that are already enforced by their homeroom teachers (no cell phones). Do include rules about raising your hands, talking in turn and being quiet when prompted by the teacher. Model these rules. Pretend you're the student and have them give you thumbs up/down as you act them out. Go through the correct ways to properly line up and to get the teacher's attention. You'll save yourself more than a few headaches later on. Give some leeway on the first day or two, but after that, if the class breaks a rule give them a sad face. You'll find that the first one or two sad faces will scare them enough that you rarely make it to four. But just in case, be ready with an appropriate punishment- I suggest line writing. Don't feel bad for giving them consequences. After all, you explained the rules, didn't you?

Conclusion

Now, I have to be honest. Following these steps alone won't ensure that you class will run one hundred percent smoothly all the time. I encourage you to build on the things I've said; to always be tweaking your management system and looking for new methods to try out in the classroom. This is merely a starting point from which you can construct the system that works for you. Make sure the rules are well known to your students and, perhaps more importantly, to yourself. Be firm on your consequences for poor behavior, but make sure you're reinforcing the good behavior. Good luck. Managing thirty kids at once isn't easy, but it's almost always possible.

Matthew Stone has been teaching English for 4 years, mostly in Seoul. He has also worked with special needs children in his native Canada. He currently works in an elementary school in Seoul. He plans to go home this fall to continue his studies in education.



TEC News

KOTESOL's Quarterly Online Newsletter

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To make a submission, please contact
Ezekiel Mentillo or Curtis Desjardins at
Koreakotesolnews@gmail.com.

Expats Life

ESL forums guru Ttompatz provides a guide to E2 visa changes

In this column I want to touch briefly on a few issues that are common threads of discussion on the various ESL forums on the Internet. One of the big ones at the moment surrounds the requirements for “national” criminal background checks (CBC) and apostilled copies of your degree.

In late 2010, Korean immigration announced that as of January, 2011 they would no longer accept originals of your degree for E2 application purposes and they now require a “national” CBC rather than a local or state check. For new E2 applications this change was little more than a minor inconvenience and a slightly longer delay in arranging the paperwork to come to Korea. For those who already came in under the old rules it has caused a bit of an uproar due to the difficulty in obtaining the required documentation while in Korea.

In January of this year the Korean Immigration Service delayed the onset of the requirement for those who were already in Korea and working on valid E2 visas. Currently, since the relaxation of the onset of the changes, you are allowed one change of status (extension, renewal, transfer) after January, 2011 and before December, 2011 without the need to supply new documentation. For those of you who qualify for this you will be required to sign a form stating that you are aware of the requirement to submit them and agree that you will submit them the next time you make a change in your status. This means that most of you have just about 6 months to take care of getting your documentation in order.

One big thing I would like to say about the Korean Immigration Service (<http://www.immigration.go.kr/>) is that they are NOT your enemy. When you have questions or potential problems with your status of sojourn in Korea they should be one of your first stops.

Another change designed to smooth out the paperwork for E2 holders is the easing of the requirements for a transfer of sponsorship from one employer to the next at the end of your contract. Under the new rules you can change jobs on the completion of your contract with just a simple transfer rather than the need to make a new visa application and a visa run to obtain a new visa. Transfers can be completed any time during the last week of your old contract and up until the expiry of your ARC. Transfers attempted more than 1 week before the end of your contract still require the permission of your sponsor (letter of release) before the transfer is approved.

Other good news from immigration was the elimination of the requirement for re-entry permits for registered (you have an ARC) foreigners. Now, all registered foreigners are free to leave and return without the need for a re-entry

permit for as long as your ARC remains valid. In the case of F5 holders, you are allowed a maximum of 2 years out of the country without re-entry.

One big thing I would like to say about the Korean Immigration Service (<http://www.immigration.go.kr/>) is that they are NOT your enemy. When you have questions or potential problems with your status of sojourn in Korea they should be one of your first stops. They will try to help you within the limits of the law to keep your status in Korea. They are not there to try to catch you in some obscure rule and deport you or cause you problems.



Another great resource that you should keep in mind is the Seoul Global Center (<http://global.seoul.go.kr/>). They can often assist with many of the daily frustrations that you may encounter as well as provide a wealth of information on most topics that you may have questions about. You can also call them at 02-2075-4130. They are located on the 3rd floor of the Seoul Press Center (just to the north of Seoul City Hall), 124 Sejong-daero, Jung-gu, Seoul.

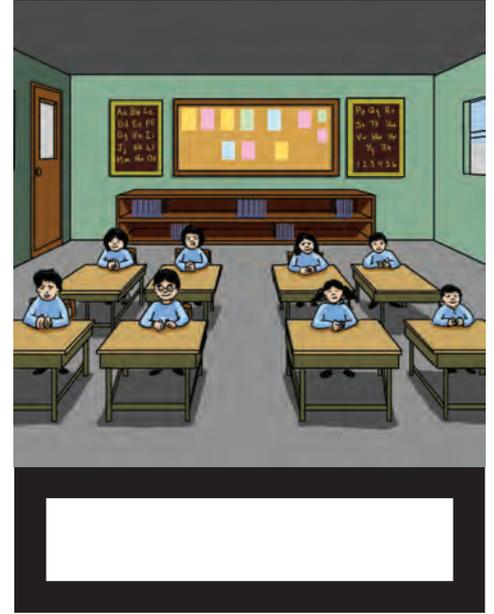
You can certainly have a fun and productive year or 10 in Korea. Make the best use of your time and enjoy your sojourn period. In the next column I will try to address some of the issues about getting around in Korea and maybe some of the off-the-path things to see and do while you are here. Best of luck to you all during your time here in the land of the morning calm.

Many of you who frequent any of the ESL forums on the internet will probably recognize him by his pen-name, “Ttompatz”. He has been in the ESL game for some 16 years, most of which were spent in Asia and almost a decade of which has been spent here in Korea. As well as working as a teacher he has also spent many years working as a volunteer at one of the foreigner help centers here in Korea as well as posting on the more common internet ESL forums. Contact him at ttompatz@yahoo.com.



Report Cards from the Edge

Jason Burnett



Report Cards from the Edge is intended to be a fun and interactive comic strip. We encourage readers to submit caption ideas and use the comics in class.

Send your captions to tecfeedback@gmail.com to compete for inclusion in the fall issue.

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International Conference Preview Pull-out Section

Korea-UAE Comparison

New Advice Column

New Expat Life Column

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