The English Connection

A Korea TESOL Publication

MOOCs, Tiger Moms, and iPadagogy

Plus: Thomas Farrell
"Is Teaching a Calling?"

… and introducing
Leonie Overbeek

KOREATESOL

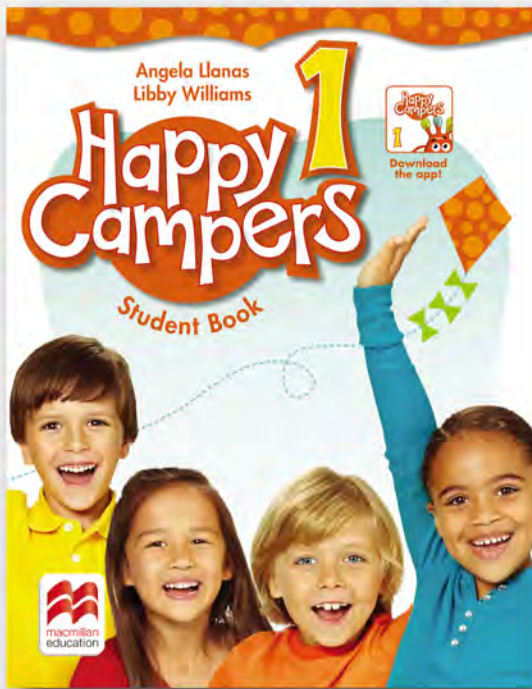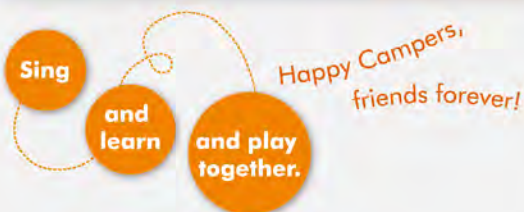### KOTESOL
대한영어교육학회

www KoreaTESOL org
Contact us:
tecfeedback@gmail.com

Contents

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

KOREA TESOL

KOTESOL
대한영어교육학회

macmillan education

MACMILLAN ACADEMIC SKILLS

Skillful

Developing essential skills for academic success

Academic English Skills

Skillful is a five-level academic skills course designed to prepare students for university life.
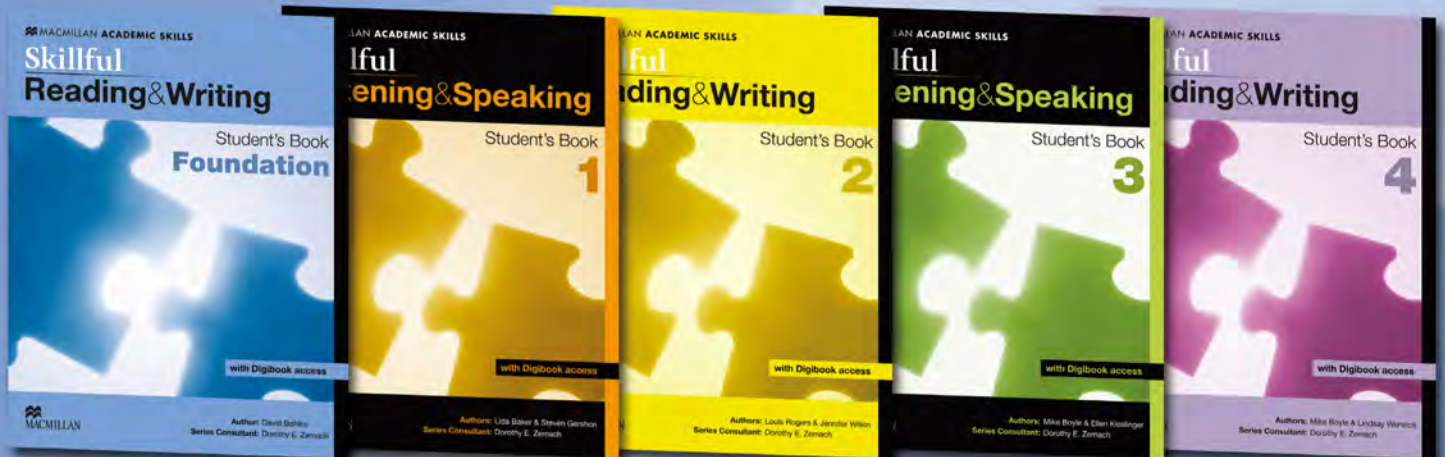
Every student needs top class reading, writing, listening and speaking skills to succeed at an academic level; Skillful focuses on each of these skills to give presentation, instant practice and complete immersion in that language skill.

The English Connection Editorial Team

By Julian Warmington Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to the first issue of *The English Connection* for 2015. Extra special thanks to the contributors, editors, and proofreaders who have spent numerous hours during their winter break making these pages shine - and all on a volunteer basis. The holiday season saw much of our regular team away on vacation, and fortunately for us, a number of new volunteers offered their time and energy to help prepare these pages.

This issue is a celebration of the thematic diversity typical of TEC content. From the use of technology to the role teachers play in society, we start out this year as we mean to continue: offering a broad spectrum of topics from the widest possible range of contributors.

The challenge of choosing which articles to publish is one TEC editing staff now share: the executive editorial team, who copy-edit and proof all articles, contribute qualitative votes on which articles they preferred reading. When all available articles have been copy-edited, proofed, and a professional photograph and brief bio description from each writer included, articles are then selected based on editors' votes.

The diversity of the KOTESOL membership, and thus the potential TEC readership, has always struck me as being a wonderful thing. It would be great to see that richness of variety reflected in the contributors to TEC, which would in turn lead to an even wider variety of insights and experiences to be shared through these pages.

One reason I love the written word is the very open nature of it all: when looking at a page, the writer's gender, nationality, or any other identity marker matters only insofar as the experiences that the writer has had in the past have helped form their current thoughts, feelings, and insights, which are now shared in black and white in front of you on the page. By distilling those experiences into the cultural function of writing, the text then becomes a very pure form of sharing.

I therefore invite you, kind reader, to talk with and personally encourage co-workers and teaching friends to contemplate interesting and useful topics related to teaching English in Korea, and then to write for TEC; people respond better to face-to-face verbal encouragement from you as a friend or colleague than to any I can offer as just another random stranger.

I look forward to seeing a continuing increase in the depth and diversity of contributions and contributors to TEC. As diversity increases, so too will the breadth of knowledge and the broad palette of ideas from which KOTESOL members can select those most suited for our teaching contexts. Within the wider KOTESOL scene, we hope you will join the TEC volunteer team, either directly or indirectly, and help make this another banner year for progress in teaching English in Korea.

Julian Warmington

By Peadar Callaghan
KOTESOL President

President's Message

Spring is one of my favorite times in Korea. The weather has started to improve, the cherry blossoms are coming into bloom, and KOTESOL events are starting again. After a little bit of rest over January, it is time to brush up those presentation abstracts, finish up your research, and get ready to present at or attend the great conferences we have on offer. For those of our members who have never made it out to one of the regional conferences, or even to the National Conference, I encourage you to make 2015 the year that you give one a try.
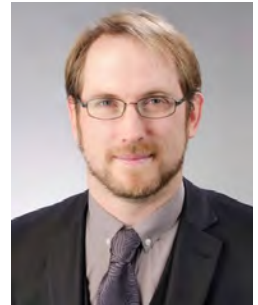
In some ways, I feel going to smaller KOTESOL events has been more beneficial to me as a teacher. These smaller events provide a greater number of opportunities to engage with the presenters and other attendees in a more relaxed atmosphere than, for example, at the International Conference. This more relaxed atmosphere is also a great opportunity to catch up with friends, to brainstorm your own ideas, and in many cases, to get previews of the sort of presentations that are going to be delivered at the larger events.

I am especially looking forward to the National Conference this year. It is going to be held at Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul for the first time in over ten years; this should enable more members than ever to take part in this great event. If you are interested in the conference, you can find more details on the KOTESOL website.

For those of you who do make it out to the events this year, be sure to say hello, as I always appreciate it. I look forward to seeing many familiar faces and getting to know those of you who are making it out for the first time.

Peadar Callaghan

Part 1:
A Brief History of English Education in Korea

The archetypal idea of a mother as a teacher is common to many cultures. Starting from birth, mothers are typically expected to provide their children with a constant source of guidance, compassion, and wisdom, and they are generally also the ones who first expose their children to language and culture. In fact, research shows that literacy skills commonly transfer inter-generationally from mother to child (Knaflic, 2005). It makes sense, then, that one's native language is called the "mother tongue" in many languages.

Figure 1. Shin Saimdang (Inseon), the traditional ideal of a mother in Korea, as represented on South Korea's most valuable banknote.

In Korea, the role of mothers in English language education is especially important. They invest a great deal of time, energy, and financial resources to ensure that their children receive the best education possible (Cho, 2004). Nicknamed "tiger moms," Korean mothers are one of the major economic driving forces that have made Korea the 6th most educated country in the world; indeed, 7.6% of Korea's GDP is spent on education, much of which is invested directly in English language learning (Grossman, 2012; ICEF Monitor, 2014). Yoon Min-sik (2014), of the *Korea Herald*, puts the total amount spent on private education at 19.4 trillion won ($17.9 billion); a third of that amount — over 6 trillion won — is spent directly on English education.

Background on Education in Korea
Korea's "English craze" can be traced back to its recent history. One of the most important drivers was President Chun Doo-hwan's push to standardize school entrance exams in 1987. He hoped to make education fair and equal for all, but there were unexpected consequences, the most serious of which was that standardized test scores came to be seen as the primary, if not sole means, of scholastic and professional assessment (Grant & Lee, 2009; Park & Abelman, 2004).

The second major cause occurred in the 1990s when the Kim Young Sam administration began implementing policies to globalize Korea. English became a requirement for most standardized tests (Grant & Lee, 2009, p. 52), and English proficiency scores have consequently been used for everything from qualifying exams for higher-ranked kindergartens to job interviews at major corporations. The irony for many Koreans is that they are required to meet a certain level of English proficiency in order to enter a good school or company, but many of these institutions do not necessarily require them to use English at all once they have entered.

By the mid-1990s, the growing importance of English led the Korean government to promote early English education. For decades, English instruction started in the 7th grade, but this changed to the 3rd grade in 1997 (Grant & Lee, 2009; Cho, 2004).

Another important issue to consider is that by 2000, many parents had become angry with Korea's changing pace of education, so they started to pressure the government to allow them more rights to choose their children's educational institutions, which eventually led to the private education industry becoming almost totally market driven (Park & Abelmann, 2004, p. 649).

Problems in the English Education System
Soon after President Chun Doo-hwan's push for fair education in 1987, families started to realize that higher test scores meant being able to go to more prestigious schools, which meant being able to get better jobs, thus improving their life prospects. Families began to push their children to study at *hagwons* or after-school institutions. As a result, education in Korea progressively became more competitive, *hagwons* began to spring up all over the country, and several social issues emerged.

For example, English has come to be seen as a class marker in Korean society (Cho, 2004; Park & Abelmann, 2004) in that access to English education

is limited to those who can afford high *hagwon* tuition rates, private in-home tutors, or a year or so living in an English-speaking country. On the other hand, low-income families, especially those in the countryside, have little access to quality English education (Grant & Lee, 2009, pp. 54-55).

The level of competitiveness has led to other problems. Preschoolers, for example, are sent to expensive *hagwons* to study for six or eight hours a day; as they get older, students have to study longer and longer hours—14 hours a day for some high school students. The long hours and high stress are thought to be a factor in Korea's high suicide rate and general unhappiness (OECD, 2013; Sistek, 2013).

There is also a disconnect between how much Korean families invest in their children's education and how well their children are actually learning English. Korean students rank 24th in the World's English Language Proficiency Index (Education First, 2014) and 110th in ETS's global TOEFL rankings (Card, 2006). Some argue that the reason for Koreans' low levels of English proficiency is due to the stark differences between Korea and the English-speaking world (Cho, 2004); however, I believe that the main reason is due to how Koreans view the English language.

"Nicknamed 'tiger moms,' Korean mothers are one of the major economic driving forces that have made Korea the 6th most educated country in the world…"

Instead of seeing English language as a living, breathing entity, many Koreans see English only as a means to an end; it is something needed to pass a test, or a subject isolated from the rest of real life. Students study English in large classes in public schools with little teacher-student interaction, and after school, go to *hagwons*, where they are force-fed English for three to five hours a week. There is very little room for authentic English interaction inside or outside of the classroom.

Following on from these ideas, the next article focuses on the roles that mothers play in their children's learning and how they can use English with their children in a more balanced, holistic manner.

References

Card, J. (2006, December 15). *Appetite for language costs S Korea dear.* The Guardian. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/education/2006/dec/15/tefl

Cho, B.-E. (2004). Issues concerning Korean learners of English: English education in Korea and some common difficulties of Korean students. *The East Asian Learner, 1*(2), 31-36.

Education First. (2014). English proficiency index (EF EPI). Retrieved April 2, 2014, from http://www.ef.edu/epi/

Grant, R. A., & Lee, I. (2009). The ideal English speaker: A juxtaposition of globalization and language policy in South Korean and racialized language attitudes in the United States. In R. Kubota & A. Lin (Eds.), *Race, culture, and identities in second language education: Exploring critically engaged practice* (pp. 44–63). New York, NY: Routledge.

Grossman, S. (2012). And the world's most educated city is…. *Time World.* Retrieved from http://newsfeed.time.com/2012/09/27/and-the-worlds-most-educated-country-is/

ICEF Monitor. (2014). High performance, high pressure in South Korea's education system. Retrieved from: http://monitor.icef.com/2014/01/high-performance-high-pressure-in-south-koreas-education-system/

Knaflic, L. (2005, July 28). How we started: The family literacy programme in Slovenia. *Literacy, 39*(2), 81-84. Retrieved from http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1741-4350.2005.00404.x/abstract;jsessionid=C60EFC8B07C53D06F2261F1CC77586E5.f04t04?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false

OECD. (2013). Suicide. *OECD Factbook 2013: Economic, environmental and social statistics.* Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/factbook-2013-en/12/01/03/index.html?itemId=/content/chapter/factbook-2013-97-en

Park, S. J., & Abelmann, N. (2004). Class and cosmopolitan striving: Mothers' management of English education in South Korea. *Anthropological Quarterly, 77*(4), 645-672.

Sistek, H. (2013). South Korean students wracked with stress. *Aljazeera.* Retrieved from http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth features/2013/12/south-korean-students-wracked-with-stress-201312884628494144.html

Williams, M., & Burden, R. L. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Yoon, M. S. (2014, February 5). Test scores don't guarantee English skills. *The Korea Herald.* Retrieved from http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20140205001246

The Author

James Johnston has over seven years of EFL experience in the Peace Corps, Korea, Indonesia, and the US. Recently, he completed his MA in TESOL from SIT Graduate Institute and moved back to Korea.
Email: James.Johnston@mail.sit.edu

Writing Social Issues: Developing Students' Critical Consciousness

By Lauren Harvey

In the current political and sociocultural context of English language instruction in Korea, it is important to consider how teachers can encourage students to use English as a tool to express their sociocultural views. From the Sewol tragedy to gender roles and politics, there are a wealth of social issues in Korea that can provide an opportunity for students to develop critical consciousness.

Okazaki (2005) defines critical consciousness as "the ability to realize and question the reproduction of socio-cultural and historical injustice, as well as power relationships in one's own culture, the target culture, and global cultures" (p. 181). According to to Kumaravadivelu (2003), raising consciousness emphasizes "the need to treat learners as cultural informants so that they are encouraged to engage in a process of classroom participation which puts a premium on their power/knowledge" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 40). To initiate this strategy for effective language instruction, teachers should ensure social relevance by being sensitive to the broader social, political, and economic conditions that affect students' lives and thus classroom aims (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

By engaging students through raising their critical consciousness, students generate more oral production and more engaged writing. As Okazaki (2005) points out, "In the process of discussing critical issues that are meaningful and engaging, students develop their writing, grammatical, and oral competence. Thus, the course serves the dual purposes of language development and consciousness-raising" (p. 181).

Within the context of university-level writing classrooms in Korea, writing about social issues offers teachers the opportunity to engage students beyond the typical textbook preoccupations of the writing process and organization. It gives students a chance to raise their critical consciousness in a way that promotes language use for critical sociocultural purposes. As Brown (2007) notes, critical pedagogy, which situates learning in relevant social contexts, has become an area of interest in EFL instruction, and it would be "remiss of any language teacher to skirt around issues of power and politics and religion in the classroom, simply because they evoke strong emotions" (p. 513). Further, Shin and Crookes (2005) and Shin (2004) have encouraged EFL teachers in Korea to explore the possibility of a more critical pedagogical approach to instruction. Using social issues in writing assignments is one way to embrace this approach.

Practical Application
For writing organization, grammar, or other skills presented in my course textbook, I tend to rely on examples from the textbook. When it is time for students to demonstrate their writing skills, however, I usually move beyond the textbook and identify socially relevant topics that students can choose from. For example, in a unit about the five-paragraph example essay structure, instead of the topics suggested in the textbook, I provide the students with the following prompt for their writing:

Write a five-paragraph example essay on the topic: What are some examples of changes that should be made in the Republic of Korea so that a disaster like the Sewol ferry sinking does not happen again?

"It would be 'remiss of any language teacher to skirt around issues of power and politics and religion in the classroom, simply because they evoke strong emotions' " (Brown, 2007)

In other assignments, I provide students with an overall guiding topic with three options. For example:

Write a descriptive essay about one of the following Korean traditions: 1. respect for elders, 2. table manners, 3. drinking culture.

Recommendations

Based on my university-level teaching experience in Korea, I suggest the following for teachers interested in incorporating social issues into writing instruction. First, adapt your textbook. As recommended by Nation and Macalister (2010), teachers can do this by adding or omitting content or by changing the format or presentation of the material. Instead of only relying on the decontextualized writing topics in the textbook, give your students an opportunity to practice their writing skills with topics that are socially relevant and affect their lives. Examples of socially relevant issues specific to Korea include:

- The Sewol tragedy
- Mandatory military service
- Cosmetic surgery
- Relations with North Korea

Global issues include:

- Gender equality
- Global warming
- Interracial marriage
- The globalization of English

Second, use authentic materials. Adding authentic materials that are interesting and relevant, such as online news articles, comics, video clips, or social media postings to your lessons, can help students to make connections between social issues and their own lives (Brown, 2007). Sources of authentic materials, which are not specifically designed for language teaching but use natural English, are prevalent in news websites. *The Korea Herald* website (http://www.koreaherald.com/) is a good source for news articles and graphic data charts on a variety of social topics. Similarly, the *Korea Times* (http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/) offers cartoons and videos about news in Korea and around the world.

Third, give students a choice of topic. Giving students a choice of topic for their writing can connect to their interests and increase intrinsic motivation (Brown, 2007). For example, provide students with a choice of three possible social topics for writing. There are many social topics that may be of interest to students, and I recommend creating co-constructed lists of topics with students.

Fourth, promote class discussion. By participating in small group discussions about social issues, students can share their opinions and brainstorm for later writing activities. (Brown, 2007; Riley, 2013). These discussions about social issues can be done with a partner in the form of a Think, Pair, Share, or in a small group with each member taking on roles such as recorder, writer, speaker, and time keeper.

"Critical content ESL courses can stimulate engaging dialogue and writing, which further results in increased language and literacy proficiency" (Okazaki, 2005, p. 194). By incorporating social issues into writing instruction, teachers can ensure the social relevance of their classes and raise the critical consciousness of EFL students, while still supporting their writing development.

Korean students are ready to critically reflect on their society. EFL teachers should support their students in developing their voices and critical consciousness so that they can use English for socioculturally relevant purposes in class and in the future.

References

Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (3rd ed.). White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. New York: Routledge.

Okazaki, T. (2005). Critical consciousness and critical language teaching. *Second Language Studies, 23*(2), 174-202.

Riley, J. (2013). How culture shapes academic writing. *The English Connection. 17*(4), 5-6.

Shin, J. K. (2004). The use of Freirian pedagogy in teaching English as an international language: Raising the critical consciousness of EFL teachers in Korea. *LLC Review, 4*(1), 63-82.

Shin, H. J., & Crookes, G. (2005). Exploring the possibilities for EFL critical pedagogy in Korea: A two-part case study. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies: An International Journal, 2*(2), 113-118.

The Author

Lauren Harvey, MS Ed, is an Assistant Professor of English at Busan University of Foreign Studies (BUFS), where she teaches in the In-service Teacher Training Program and the Graduate TESOL Certificate Program. She has been involved in ESL/EFL teacher training in the United States and Korea for over ten years. Email: laurenharvey@yahoo.com
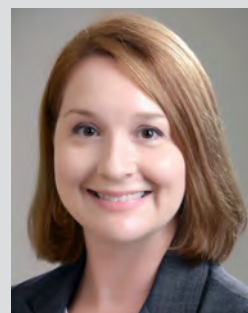
The Secrets to Successful Journal Writing

By Barbara Waldern

I have been using journal writing as a teaching tool and a method of reflective teaching practice for several years and have tried various forms.Lately, I have experimented with an autobiographical blog for personal and professional development. Some years ago, I charted out some of my memories of encounters with some Korean adult learners of English. In the classroom, I had composition and conversation students write journals on personal and social subjects.

The process of journal writing, I have learned, is powerful in building awareness and identity, deepening understanding, enhancing critical thinking, and facilitating decision-making and goal-setting. It can contribute to sharper assessments, purposes, and objectives, as well as new methods of working, living, and relating interpersonally.

Since settling into Korea in 2008, I have found some time and freedom to indulge in fiction and non-fiction writing. My first attempt at story writing in this new country was merely a record and reflection of some encounters as an English teacher from Canada living in South Korea. It was nonetheless a very productive and instructive experience in the end.

I have succeeded in completing some fictional writing since that time, but my adventures in journal writing have continued with growing awareness and refined practice. For instance, journal writing is often a required activity in my classes. Outside the classroom, journal writing has continued to help enhance my sensitivities, decision-making, choices, goal-setting, relationship management, and perspective on my environment and life in positive ways.

Here is an account of some of my adventures in journal writing followed by a consideration of journal writing and reflective practice in research and education.

> *"... students have told me how their identities, memories, goals, perspectives, and relationships have grown and benefited from the exercise of journal writing or scrapbook construction."*

Journal Writing in Teaching

All journal writing is simultaneously an investigative method and a learning process. It is a tool of reflection. Teachers often employ journal writing as a student activity in their classes to facilitate and extend learning. A student records experiences, makes note of observations, and reflects to develop concepts and perspectives throughout the education cycle (Dyment & O'Connell, 2003). Journal writing can assist students to become more engaged and reflective of both the course material and learning techniques (Fritson, Forrest, & Bohl, 2011).

Just by reading students' journal entries, journal writing may be helpful to teachers, too. According to Humble and Sharp (2012), who researched the use of teacher journals, teachers' journals bring about clarity, confidence, and connection. Journal writing, then, can bring about positive social and psychological consequences to an individual course of life, as well as communities, including institutions and classrooms.

Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is to be self-critical in order to better serve students and others. We are supposed to be more conscious of our assumptions, concepts, and methods, and accordingly, be open to adjustments to our thoughts and actions.

A good reflective practitioner aims to raise the quality of educational experiences and comes to understand the relationship with students and communities as an exchange for mutual benefit and learning with learning being inclusive and participatory. A reflective teacher relinquishes "teacher power" and tries to empower students.

Journal writing is a fundamental tool in reflective practice. A teacher can write about their experiences in one class occasionally throughout the teaching term, or daily or weekly, highlighting particular moments or activities to scrutinize and discuss them. These are normal practices today. There are unconventional ones.

Reflection Using Creative Non-Fiction

After getting acquainted with a few individuals from 2007 to 2010, I remembered them and thought about our conversations. I imagined the unfolding dramas of students struggling with identity, negotiating global English, and making career decisions, and I put myself in their shoes to reflect deeply on their situations. Though not social science, journaling

is a useful exploratory activity and can be used as one tool of reflective practice in researching or educating, understanding, and engaging with cultural groups. The stories can be used as class readings. Most of all, it can be read by teachers to better understand their learners in the context of teaching English as a foreign language in South Korea.

Kaplan, Rupley, Sparks, and Holcomb (2007, as cited in Humble & Sharp, 2012) claim that journaling enhances the educator's learning through examination, clarification, and critique of pedagogical ideas and practice. They classify journaling into four forms: (a) descriptive writing, (b) descriptive reflection, (c) dialogic reflection, and (d) critical reflection. My experiment, however, is a reflection of the context, identity, and purpose of the learner in acquiring English proficiency through formal schooling and other means. In addition, it has implications for the student-teacher relationship.

Blogging
As I was struggling with the realities of living abroad long-term and aging, journal writing helped cure the blues and fight the psychological battle against anxiety and negativity. Also, I was looking for a new and interesting writing project. I decided to jump into blogging to explore and share thoughts on positive thinking at the same time. The project I called A Year of Living Positively was thus born (posted on http://www.edwise2008.com and published on Smashwords in 2014).

I wrote about my life every day and discussed the meaning and value of positive thinking, starting around my birthday in 2013 and ending around my birthday in 2014, ending up with an autobiographical opus of about 600 pages that is shared publicly. After four months, I came up with some personal and career tips for living positively. Writing every day really made me a stronger, happier, and more confident employee and colleague. After six months, I had gained a huge appreciation for personal, student, and teacher journal writing.

Journal Writing as Class Activities
Having students write a few journal entries a month helps young adults develop their plans and thoughts. Their command of language is improved along the way. Having students cite and reflect on social issues or current events serves to develop their awareness of and relationship with the larger society. The exercise teaches them to develop their opinions. A scrapbook works just as well, and is especially appropriate for lower-level language students because images replace a lot of text.

Conclusion
What began from a need to assign and grade work has become a conscious teaching method that has been used and regarded beyond merely applications of a learned foreign language; it is an important

skill, an identity-building process that students and teachers alike value. For example, students assigned to write on current events or social issues in the course of their diary writing have learned about such matters and formed their own opinions. Even as strictly an account and reflection of their personal daily lives, students have told me how their identities, memories, goals, perspectives, and relationships have grown and benefited from the exercise of journal writing or scrapbook construction.

However it is done, the process of journal writing helps the teacher to look at their own work and social position and those of their colleagues and students from various angles, as well as in the micro and macro contexts. It is a process of discovery that shines light on previously hidden factors and phenomena and guides a teacher or student towards a decision. The process helps consciousness to awaken, concepts to grow, relationships to mature, methods to crystallize, and patterns to emerge. Above all, it makes more deliberate changes possible.

References

Dyment, J. E., & O'Connell, T. S. (2003). *Journal writing in experiential education: Possibilities, problems, and recommendations.* Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. (ERIC Document EDO-RC-03-5)F

Fritson, K. K., Forrest, K. D., & Bohl, M. L. (2011). Using reflective journaling in the college course. In R. L. Miller, E. Amsel, B. Kowalski, B. Beins, K. Keith, & B. Peden (Eds.), *Promoting student engagement, Volume 1: Programs, techniques and opportunities.* Syracuse, NY: Society for the Teaching of Psychology. Retrieved from http://www.teachpsych.org/ebooks/pse2011/vol1/volume1.pdf

Humble, A., & Sharp, E. (2012) Shared journaling as peer support in teaching qualitative research methods. *The Qualitative Report, 17* (96), 1-19. Retrieved from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR17/humble.pdf

Waldern, B. (2014). "Impressing heaven": Creative non-fiction as reflective practice in foreign language teaching and social science. In *Conference Proceedings of the Future of Education Conference* held in Florence, Italy in 2014.

The Author

Barbara Waldern is an Assistant Professor at the Busan University of Foreign Studies. Email: Edwise2008@gmail.com; Website: www.edwise2008.com
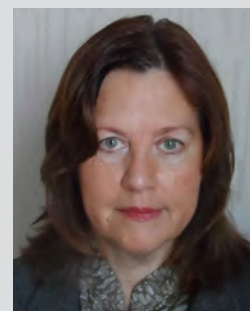
Motivate Students With Online Storybook Publishing

By Dr. Sang Hwang

Motivating learners is one of the main challenges faced by foreign language teachers. Incorporating technology in the classroom can improve student learning and achievement by maintaining students' interest in a subject and exposing them to different learning styles. Technology is especially critical in the language learning environment because it encourages direct engagement and promotes active participation (Dunn, 2012). Multimedia technology combined with appropriate instructional design can create a good learning environment that is highly motivational and leads to effective language learning. (Saqlain, 2012).

Currently, commercial storybooks are available online for young learners as resources. Moreover, some websites allow users to create their own storybooks. Publishing online storybooks provides students with ownership and real audiences for their creative works. The possibilities of using them in the classroom are endless. An innovative way to do this is for teachers to integrate the online storybook concept into their daily lesson plans. This new utilization of technology can motivate students to obtain a higher level of thinking and, at the same time, engage them with fun learning activities.

Website Review

Most of the storybook websites are easy to follow and provide video instruction or tutorial assistance for users. Some offer very basic tools, while others give more options such as animations, music/sound, cartoons, comics, and/or videos.

1. Story Jumper: http://www.storyjumper.com/
This website is simple and easy to navigate. One of the best things about this site is that it has a free classroom edition in which teachers can set up a class where students log in and create their stories in a secure setting without distractions. The users can create a book from scratch or use one of the site's templates that are designed to help students get started. They may upload their own photos to be used as backgrounds in the story. You will have to create an account to be able to save your book.
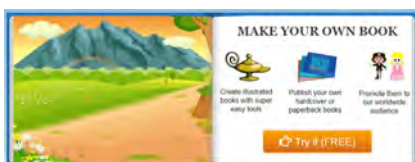
Figure 1. Story Jumper Sample (Source: Smith, 2014)

2. Storybird: http://storybird.com
This website allows users to consolidate existing artwork from various artists as inspiration. The users can put a story and pictures together within a chosen theme. It offers many different categories of artwork to choose from.

3. Talespring: http://www.talespring.com/
This website allows more options with animations and sound for the users to create a storybook with music, animated characters, and motivational purpose as in the multisensory approach.
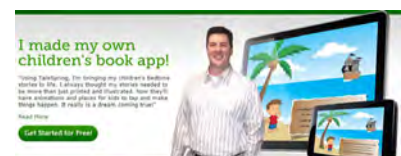
4. Pixton: http//www.pixton.com
This site allows users to create comics and customized characters. The users can move characters into any position or alter facial expressions. It offers enormous potential for

creativity. In the classroom, students may create comic stories at one computer and rotate through different stations.

Figure 2. Pixton Sample (Source: Smith, 2014)
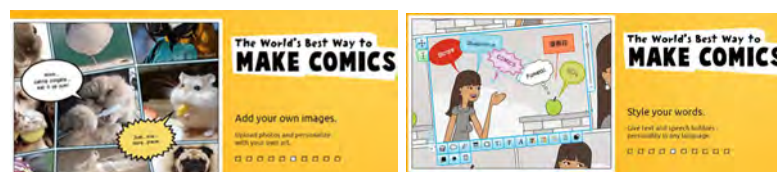

There are more storybook websites, including My Storymaker (http://www.carnegielibrary.org/kids/storymaker), Kerpoof (http://www.kerpoof.com), and Make Believe Comix (http://www.makebeliefscomix.com).

How to Start Creating a Storybook Online
(1) Watch a video instruction first, and then decide which website to use. The following websites include useful video instruction resources.
  * Storyjumper: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtSLgYcdfWg
  * Storybird: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79f1DLtMt-w
  * Talespring: http://www.talespring.com/how-tos

(2) Brainstorm a couple of ideas with a topic, target audiences, storyline, characters, plot, and setting to help warm up your imagination. (3) Start writing the story and put the words to the pages. (4) Add graphics. (5) Check for mechanical errors before publishing the story.

Conclusion
Many studies have documented that the use of electronic storybooks has helped students improve greatly in reading and writing. Grimshaw, Dungworth, McKnight, and Morris (2007) report that online storybooks lead to higher comprehension scores as readers focus on meaning. Animated pictures integrate the meaning of the text and add to the ease of comprehension. Activities such as reading aloud, shared reading, choral reading, and independent reading can all be applied with the storybooks in the classroom to facilitate students' understanding. Oral fluency and automaticity may also be practiced with certain activities such as repeated reading and echo reading. The activities will promote students' fluency and confidence in reading. For emergent language learners, the teacher may

create a storybook with letters, sounds, and sight words to focus on early literacy skills. For instance, a book can be created with the vocabulary list of sight words in a setting, such as on a farm, with sounds that reinforce images to help students attach full meaning to the new lexis.

Furthermore, the story can be written in a narrative manner with fun characters and major events. Students will become active participants in the process as they enjoy creating their own storybooks and reading what they made. Storybooks can be utilized as teaching tools in various content area subjects such as math, science, social studies, music, physical education, and health education.

Students can become more engaged and motivated in reading and learning, and further appreciate literature. Once the students experience creating their own storybooks online, their enthusiasm and passion for writing will grow naturally. Accordingly, their view of learning will become more positive.

References
Dunn, J. (2012). *7 ways to keep students focused while using technology.* Retrieved from http://www.edudemic.com/7-ways-to-keep-students-focused-while-using-technology/

Grimshaw, S., Dungworth, N., McKnight, C., & Morris, A. (2007). Electronic books: Children's reading and comprehension. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 38*(4), 583-599.

Saqlain, N. (2012). *Technology and foreign language pedagogy: What the literature says.* Retrieved from http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/technology-and-foreign-language-pedagogy-what-literature-says

Smith, S. (2014). *Online storybook sites.* Retrieved from http://www.warrensburgr6.org/storybooks

The Author

Dr. Sang Hwang teaches at West Texas A&M University. She is program chair in Reading and Early Childhood Education, and coordinates the America Reads Program at West Texas A&M University. Her research interests include reading evaluation, teaching strategies, dyslexia, refugee literature, the use of technology, and ESL methodology. Email: shwang@mail.wtamu.edu

Interview: Leonie Overbeek

By Julian Warmington

In this, the second interview in a series introducing key figures within the KOTESOL scene, TEC meets Leonie Overbeek. Born and raised in South Africa, Leonie is a teacher, a presenter, and a KOTESOL member. Leonie has participated at several levels within KOTESOL and made active contributions to both the group itself and to the field of language education.

TEC: What did you do in your previous life, before coming to Korea?
L.O.: I did research on problems of mineral extraction in mining, helped people start up small businesses, and did some amateur acting for various drama groups. I was a science major with a hefty helping of arts on the side.

What do you do now?
I try to stay ahead of Korean kids and their English ability: I teach English in public schools.

What's been the biggest adjustment to local life since coming to Korea?
Having to make my own biltong, a type of beef jerky, and not using Marmite too lavishly.

How and why did you first become involved in KOTESOL?
I joined the Suwon Chapter of KOTESOL in order to take part in the conferences. I've always been a conference-goer and organizer in the science field, so it came naturally to me. At first, I was only a presenter locally, but then started submitting ideas at the national and international level before becoming involved with the Suwon Chapter conference. Finally, I was asked to be National Secretary, which I was for three years.

What have been the biggest benefits to you since you first became involved with KOTESOL?
The people I've met and the ideas I've picked up about making my teaching more effective. There are many ideas I've used in the classroom that have led to my co-teachers heaping lavish praise on me and have helped my students study more effectively.

For instance, the idea of challenging students to read as fast as possible for one minute, *sotto voce*, and then repeating the same passage again to try and beat their own time, which I picked up from Frederika Stoller, really works, and the students enjoy it; it's probably one of my favorite activities to use.

Also, Peadar Callaghan's suggestions about using comics for writing, Stephen Krashen's discussion

on exactly how to use extensive reading effectively, Marc Helgesen's tips on bringing emotion into the material and adapting curriculum material to students' needs have all been helpful.

What has been the most difficult thing or the greatest challenge you've found yourself working on within KOTESOL?

Somehow coping with the tendency that there is in all large organizations to become a collection of separate interest groups or cliques, and then spending time and energy fighting each other rather than developing the organization; in other words, having to put energy into being a diplomatic conflict resolver rather than a creative problem solver.

What contributions have you made to KOTESOL that you are the happiest about?

I think I am proudest of the fact that many people have said that an idea I shared with them in a presentation has proven useful to them in their classes or inspired them.

Can you give us an example of one of those ideas, or types of ideas (or was it the same one idea for many people…) ?

The idea that seems to have spread the widest is the idea I had about using worksheets in Excel to present the L1 word, a picture, and then a puzzle where students have to follow those clues to get the L2 word and the L2 definition, thereby creating their own picture/bilingual dictionary for their vocabulary work.

Also, I know what I had to say about the place of fun in the classroom made many people think about their practice.

What is one contribution you've made that you think people are least aware of?

Difficult to say. Probably the changes I was able to make to the National Council meetings together with Peadar Callaghan. From long and drawn out talks with endless debate about a single point, we managed to have people talk things out

informally, then have a short formal debate before voting on an issue.

Why should newbies to any sector within the Korean EFL scene get involved with KOTESOL?

It's one of the few places where teachers and co-teachers can talk about what they do. It's a place where you will be inspired by the likes of Krashen, Helgesen, and Kelly, to name but a few International Conference speakers. It provides you with a network of professionals to connect with, opportunities to present your ideas, and a chance to grow and develop as an educator or educational professional.

How has KOTESOL changed as an organisation since you first became involved?

There is much greater transparency on the part of leadership than before, and, I believe, a greater sense of community overall.

In what directions do you think KOTESOL should move in the future?

We need to think of how we will enable native-speaking English teachers to gain the most from their time in Korea in terms of their development as teachers and how to best allow ideas to be spread to a wider audience.

What other roles would you like to play, or contributions would you like to make, within KOTESOL?

I'll probably be writing more than before, and I'll get involved with one of the conferences soon.

Photos courtesy of Leonie Overbeek and friends.

Singing Out Their Stories

By Emanuel Serra

Originally, the English through storytelling program was designed to deliver core curriculum standards to L1 children while developing their skills of self-expression in the context of opera creation. I used the power of student-driven storytelling to foster students' increasing ownership of a second language and frame their goals while learning. The result was a highly personal investment by the students in the content, delivery, and success of the work. To better articulate their telling of the story, students developed their own strategies for learning English, as their personal investment in the work rose. They also became better storytellers as a group.

I have long been inspired by the storytelling mastery I witnessed in the children's shows of the 1970s, particularly "Mr. Dressup" and "The Friendly Giant." My most lasting impressions were how easy and natural it appeared for the hosts to merely hint at an other world with a slow, narrative dialogue and a bit of evocative art. The hosts would use simple techniques, like drawing a simple line sketch while discussing development decisions with sidekick puppet co-hosts; or donning fantastical, historical, or otherwise unusual theatrical clothing to evoke worlds that could be suggested with mere verbalizing.
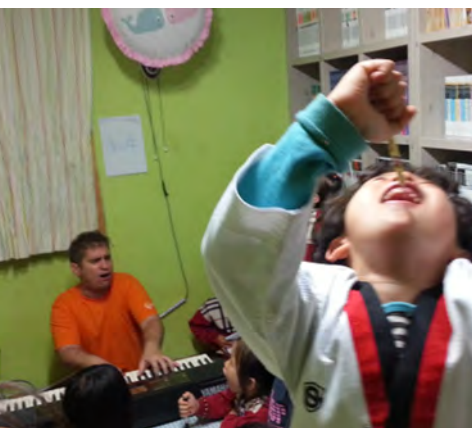
It was like the time National Public Radio's Bob the Painter talked to viewers as he walked them through his signature landscape paintings, except these were conversations. I usually followed along with the slightest pen gesture or artistic hint and verbally "filled in the blanks," wishing or wondering if the host would take the picture/roleplay in this or that direction.

I think this imagination-based propulsion, and the way it pulls on a young person to find words, phrases, and sentences, is what later drove me to believe that a more ambitious and artistic undertaking may be within the realm of the possible: creating operas with classrooms of children guided by visiting artists.

In Atlantic Canada, I used Opera America's education outreach program based on *Music! Words! Opera!* (Brooks & Ames, 2013) to create three original music-theatre productions. Originally designed to deliver core curriculum standards while promoting L1 students' self-expression through opera creation, this program was adapted for use with L2 English elementary school learners in South Korea. This was done in the context of storytelling to create their first original music-theatre arts project in an EFL environment in Korea. The result was a high investment by the students in the content, delivery, and success of the work.

The program was very appealing as a language learning tool. By delving into opera's innate expressive forms, it forced a certain economy on the words we ended up using, the brevity of which was inviting to young language learning students. In the table below, the right column shows how we encouraged teams of our afternoon English Club kids to create an operetta in a Korean public school. The left column summarizes how we encouraged other teams of kids and their families to make operas in Canada.

In Canada:

1. In each of three productions, each artist team picked a story and presented it with a discussion. Students and families had to identify an issue important to them in the story that they wanted to deal with in the final work.

In Korea:

1. The same, but the amount of English in the story was much smaller, with about two sentences per scene, maybe more for the first and last page. This also placed greater restrictions on what stories were suitable for consideration.

2. Character perspectives within the story were identified, and questionnaires about the characters' perspectives were assigned, collected, and reviewed.

2. Students asked in groups to recall the story's important parts and write simple dialogues of what characters may have said to each other. Stories selected were told simply and had almost no dialogue, so students could simply say/write, "Character A says, '___'. I (would) feel ___ because ___."

3. The story skeleton was introduced by the artist teams and compared with our developing story.

3. The artist team finished the story by collecting written statements from students that were edited with the artist's own words to compose elements of dialogue between characters that were used in song verses. This is done with certain famous opera choruses or other musical themes.

4. First presentation to class: artists compiled children's character stories and main story; presented it in a format where the class could vote on or change the elements. Then the artist team presented their suggestions/edits.

4. First presentation to class: Story presented by the artist team to the students with suggested verses and melodies from famous opera choruses and arias, and performed for the students with script copies in hand.

5. Kids worked in teams on making "I" statements (which later became parts of verses) for characters in different scenes. Artists compile and help or sit in and help kids as they do teamwork. Other students worked with a composer on melodies, melodic shapes/gestures for themes, characters, etc. using activities provided by the MWO program kit.

5. Immediately after the first presentation, students were asked for other moments they would like to see brought into focus in the story, but they were not assigned the task of composing all the lyrics. Instead, they were asked to help the lyricists by noting relevant feelings, expressions, or statements the character(s) might have felt, thought, or said in the proposed additional moments. The artist team then created lyrics using the students' content. The artist team also made their own edits and suggested additions at this time.

6. Second presentation to class: story using kids' passages and kids' melodies. Song writer help is then requested, but the composer should be prepared to complete the songs without the students' help if necessary.

6. The second presentation to class was very similar to the first, but this is what the students began rehearsing. As they worked with the story, teams adapted/changed smaller elements of lyrics, turning their attention toward memorization, choreography, learning agreed-upon songs, and production aspects like costumes, props, etc.

As students rehearsed the work, they began to polish certain aspects of it, and more unsolicited suggestions were added.

7. Third presentation with songs. Kids are asked for changes, some of which got submitted to a vote. Popular changes went forward, unpopular changes were considered by the artist team.

Two of the resulting works were 30-minute presentations premiered in school tours. Presentations consisted of fully staged productions, including a narrator, a Greek chorus (a chorale made up of participants), and a keyboard accompanist.

One resulting work was a 20-minute presentation featuring pre-recorded narration, students playing characters in fully staged production, assembling for chorus numbers. Accompaniments were pre-recorded as well.

7. The resulting work was a 35-minute presentation that premiered in the school's spring cultural festival. Students played all characters in a fully staged production with an artist accompanying at the piano for the show. Narration by students played a very small part due to the amount of dialogue between characters onstage.

Note
Part Two of this article will appear in the TEC Summer 2015 issue and briefly surveys of how to use storytelling to propel non-musical classroom activities, applying the activity design question, "How can I use English to get to the fun?"

References
Brooks, C. J. & Ames, R. (2013). *Music! Words! Opera! Create your own opera.* Gia Publications.

The Author

Emanuel Serra runs Serramusic out of Jeju, South Korea, through which he is a tutor in English and music, an English coach for small businesses, and a publisher. He has been a classical and crossover musician for fifteen years, and an ESL and EFL instructor for another ten. Email: emanuelserra@gmail.com
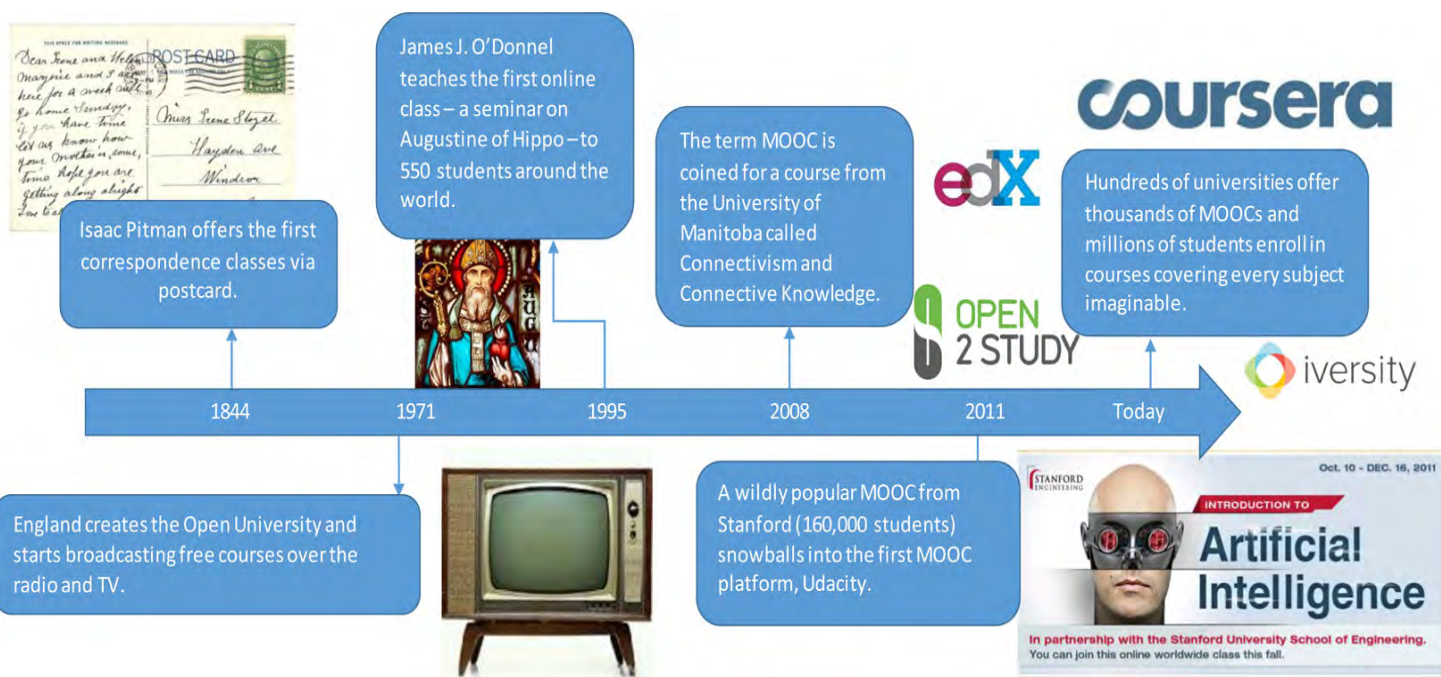
Figure 1: A timeline of the development of the MOOC. See story next page.

MOOCs for New Teachers

By Sam Landfried

Almost three years ago, I arrived in Korea as a new teacher, unprepared and unqualified. I struggled through my first year at a public foreign language high school, and with the help of my coworkers and through trial and error, I finally felt comfortable at the front of a classroom. I started to appreciate teaching as a craft through my second year, and I also started noticing how insufficient my knowledge was in comparison with my colleagues, who had been formally trained in EFL education. I started looking into massive online open courses (MOOCs) on the recommendation of a friend. After nearly a year of taking these courses, I have determined that they are well worth the time of any teacher looking to better understand or improve their teaching.

MOOCs are free college courses made available to anyone with an Internet connection. They gained popularity when universities like Stanford entered the MOOC arena in 2011 (Lewin, 2012). Currently, thousands of universities offer an ever-growing number of MOOCs, and a handful of MOOC platforms collect these classes into one convenient location. MOOC class sizes can exceed 100,000 students but are usually around 20,000 with a pass rate of around 14% (Jordan, 2014). Coursera is the largest of the platforms, offering 862 courses from 115 partner schools with over 10 million students (Coursera, 2014).

Platforms offer two valuable benefits: verified certificates and specializations. Specializations are groups of courses that focus on one subject and

> *"...the time I have spent with this specialization has paid off in terms of developing my teaching philosophy and competency as a teacher."*

end with a capstone project to demonstrate the skills learned during the courses. For example, Foundations for Teaching for Learning is an eight-course specialization offered by the Commonwealth Education Trust, a British education charity that aims to help students by providing professional development for teachers. The entire specialization takes about a year to complete and covers many valuable subjects for teachers at any stage in their career.

I have completed four of the eight courses in the Foundations of Teaching for Learning specialization so far, and they have helped me not only to think more critically about my own teaching, but to fill the gaps in my knowledge and to open my mind to entirely new ideas and aspects of teaching. For example, I take being a role model much more seriously and more frequently consider the implications of my actions in the classroom. I am more careful about encouraging students to use English instead of Korean in class. I make sure to never frame that instruction in a way that might be interpreted as belittling to their language, and I make sure to indicate my respect towards the Korean language.

My scope and understanding of what it means to be a teacher has also greatly expanded. It helped clarify my role as not just a teacher of students but as an ambassador for the school in the community. It also helped me develop a more mature understanding of what it means to help a student, and that it sometimes means stepping back and calling in administrative reinforcement. In these ways and many others, the time I have spent on this specialization has paid off in terms of developing my teaching philosophy and competency as a teacher.

The best MOOC I have taken is e-Learning Ecologies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This course revived my faith that technology can be used not just to teach more people but to teach better. According to its course description, the course explores "genuine possibilities for what we call New Learning." The lectures reinforce the idea of a "learning artifact," a project students assemble

for themselves on a topic they choose that interests them. Their projects should aim to be original and highly specialized contributions to the knowledge base of the Internet. I took this idea and created an entire semester's curriculum for my second-year high school students' writing class. The students wrote persuasive essays on a diverse range of topics ranging from the silver lining of the bubonic plague, to nurture versus nature in the early stages of language development. The students recorded the process of developing their persuasive essays on their blogs and interacted with each other in a way that would be impossible in a traditional classroom. Without e-Learning Ecologies, I would neither have been able to conceive of, nor organize, such a class.

> *"Perhaps the most valuable aspect of a MOOC is not the course material itself, but the network of people it connects you to."*

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of a MOOC is not the course material itself, but the network of people it connects you to. When you sign up for a MOOC, you are instantly connected to thousands of like-minded people. The MOOC forums have regularly proved to be a useful resource for answering whatever questions I might have about my own teaching practice or the coursework. More than once, I received valuable advice directly applicable to my classroom from teachers on the other side of the globe. The conversations are a civil, insightful, and refreshing online communication experience, with professors and teaching assistants occasionally weighing in.

There are plenty of criticisms regarding MOOCs, and I address these by saying that one should not enter a MOOC expecting the same experience as a college course. What you put into a MOOC is what you will get out of it. Will you get a job based on your MOOC credentials? No, probably not, but a potential employer will recognize the determination and initiative taken towards self-improvement.

Is watching a lecture as valuable as attending a live lecture? No. There's no direct interaction, and no pressure to pay attention, or even to watch the lecture in the first place. At the same time, it frees you to abandon a MOOC not to your liking. Are MOOCs good replacements for a university education? No, but they are a great supplement, or primer, for university. If you try out a MOOC and find it is not for you, then dropping out is easy with no repercussions. Furthermore, if you paid for a verified certificate, then you can withdraw and take the course again later, get your money refunded, or, if you fail the course, take it another time for free.

MOOCs have helped me develop as a teacher and have given my career a direction. In Korea, many native teachers are placed into teaching environments without much training or guidance. For some, MOOCs will answer a lot of their questions and perhaps help them develop a passion to continue learning about their profession.

References

Coursera. (2014). *Live counter of courses, partners and students.* Retrieved from http://www.coursera.org

Jordan, K. (2014). Graph illustration of MOOC completion rates and assessment types. *MOOC Completion Rates: The Data.* Retrieved from http://www.katyjordan.com/MOOCproject.html

Lewin, T. (2012). Instruction for masses knocks down campus walls. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/05/education/moocs-large-courses-open-to-all-topple-campus-walls.html

MOOCs: A List of Available Courses
Coursera.org:
1.
https://www.coursera.org/learn/artinquiry
From: The Museum of Modern Art
Title: Art and Inquiry: Use Museum Strategies for Your Classroom
Description: "Explore how to integrate works of art into your classroom with inquiry-based teaching methods."
Available: Anytime (Learn at your own pace)

2.
https://www.coursera.org/learn/togetherteacher
From: Relay Graduate School of Education
Title: Get Organized: How to Be a Together Teacher

Description: "With an eye toward long-term sustainability, The Together Teacher examines the purpose for planning ahead, provides tools for tracking time commitments, deadlines and tasks, and helps teachers develop a personal organization system that interacts with their day-by-day practices."
Available: Anytime (Learn at your own pace)

3.
https://www.coursera.org/course/shaping2paths
From: University of Oregon + The US Dept of State
Title: Shaping the Way We Teach English, 2: Paths to Success in ELT
Description: "This course is aimed at English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, both those who are intending to pursue this field as a career and those already working in the field who would like to revise and refresh their methods and approaches."
Available: TBA

> "MOOCs will answer a
> lot of their questions and
> perhaps help develop
> a passion to continue
> learning..."

edX.org:
1.
https://www.edx.org/course/blended-learning-edx-edx-blendedx#.VNgRUOaUecA
From: edX
Title: Blended Learning with edX
Description: "Educational technology is developing rapidly, and that development has presented educators with an opportunity to rethink and improve their pedagogical practices... In this course, we introduce you to principles and practices of blended learning."
Available: Anytime (Learn at your own pace)

2.
https://www.edx.org/course/leaders-learning-harvardx-gse2x#.VNgSFOaUecA
From: HarvardX
Title: Leaders of Learning
Description: "In Leaders of Learning, you will identify and develop your personal theory of learning, and explore how it fits into the shifting landscape of learning. This isn't just about schools, it's about the broader and bigger world of learning."
Available: Anytime (Archived course)

3.
https://www.edx.org/course/positive-behavior-support-young-children-uwashingtonx-ecfs312x-0#.VNgTiuaUecA
From: University of Washington
Title: Positive Behavior Support for Young Children
Description: "Many early childhood educators report feeling ill equipped to meet the needs of children with challenging behavior and frustrated in their attempts to develop a safe and nurturing early learning environment.... The overarching goal of this course is to learn evidence-based practices to support the social and emotional development of infants and young children."
Starts: March 2015

FutureLearn.com:
1.
https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-language
From: University of Southampton
Title: Understanding Language: Learning and Teaching
Description: "What is language? How do we learn meaning in a new language? What is easy and hard about learning another language? And what is the best way to teach other languages?"
Starts: April 20th

The Author

Sam Landfried was the head native teacher at Michuhol Foreign Language High School in Incheon in 2014, where he taught for three years. He earned nine verified certificates from Coursera in 2014, mostly about teaching.

Book Review: Materials in ELT

By Chris Miller

In *International Perspectives on Materials in ELT,* Sue Garton and Kathleen Graves provide a forum for diverse viewpoints on the use of materials, a topic which has been gaining attention in the last two decades among ELT scholars. The volume contains articles dedicated to materials designers' cultural depiction issues, the intention to influence policy-making decisions, and the teachers who actually utilize materials. Indeed, nine articles in the volume focus primarily on teachers and their use of materials.

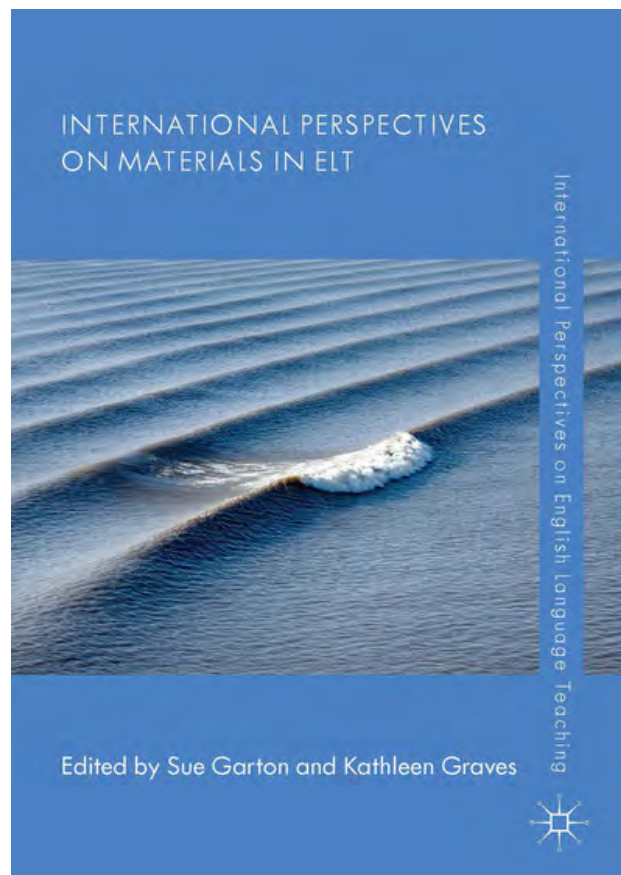The means and methods of how we learn are in flux. As Maggi et al. note in the chapter "Using Web 2.0 tools in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)," Web 2.0 offers a variety of ways to interact with materials and students beyond the four walls of the classroom. The use of Skype provides one illustration. The authors describe a project involving third-grade high school students and third-grade middle school students in Italy using English as the medium to teach each other biological concepts through video-conferencing technology.

Kathleen Graves

In a similar vein, learner materials are becoming more responsive to learner wants and needs. In "English Language Learning through Mobile Phones," Rahmon and Cotter describe the process of developing a cell phone app for learners of English in Bangladesh. Somewhat disappointingly, the results of the study indicated that motivated and intermediate- or advanced-level learners were the primary beneficiaries of the tool. Nevertheless, Rahmon and Cotter illustrate the responsiveness of contemporary materials designers. Based on participant feedback, British voices in the app were replaced with Bangladeshi speakers. Furthermore, the original app did not have an actual classroom. Later versions included a classroom in the visual background.

Beyond the medium, there are a series of articles which chronicle a basic divide among teachers: those who readily submit to the authority of materials and those who view materials as readily adaptable based on learner needs. Quotes from various teachers in this volume indicate a near-slavish reliance on the textbook: "When asked how frequently they skipped activities, most... answered...they only did so on few occasions" (p. 47); "[From a teacher in Ghana] the textbook has enough passages and all the necessary components" (p. 111); "[From an Albanian teacher] I have realized that when you skip an exercise or any other part of the book, students will do the same" (p. 98). This view contrasts sharply with inspiring articles by Nuangpolmak and Guiney Igielski, which aim to create materials sensitive to differences in proficiency level and cultural diversity, respectively.

Some familiar themes are addressed. Messekher provides content analysis of an Algerian textbook and Humphries provides a case study analyzing the deplorable state of English education at a technical college in Japan. While such research may have relevance for decision-makers concerned with those specific contexts, there is very little that is new in such perspectives. Humphries provides a series of explanations for the deficiencies of the school he researched. These explanations included sociocultural factors, limited training, and student issues (i.e., no motivation; p. 260).

Furthermore, the author goes on to provide a series of recommendations, such as creating more workshops, developing strategies to promote intrinsic motivation, and promoting greater language proficiency among Japanese English educators.

In my estimation, Humphries' view is too narrow. A significant factor contributing to the "student issues" Humphries describes is relatively low status. It has long been contended and documented -- if not always accepted -- that low status or relative poverty, and poor learner motivation and outcomes often go hand in hand (see Payne, 2003, and

Sue Garton

Jensen, 2009, for an American perspective). Until such uncomfortable realities are addressed and ameliorated as much as possible, such "internal analyses," like the one Humphries provides, will be of limited use.

Finally, there is a series of instances of specious reasoning and less-than-thorough scholarship. Many of the authors' claims rely on either citing another source (see pages 142, 145, 244) without providing relevant facts, or they overuse the words "can" and "may" (see pages 125, 145, 154, 199, 234, 244, 266). Here is one example of the former: "Themes help students make sense of instruction (Freeman and Freeman, 2007)." The reader doesn't know why, except for the fact that someone else said so (presumably). Nevertheless, perhaps that is the price for gaining the perspective of teachers (i.e., those not necessarily trained to be professional scholars).

Garton and Graves have provided a significant

contribution to understanding how materials are implemented in practice. While there are some bright spots, illustrated by both the relatively new affordances of technology and the dedication of committed teachers, there are clearly many issues inhibiting the effective application of materials, such as teacher consciousness and sociocultural factors. Despite these limitations, there is clear cause for optimism when teachers and learners are given adequate space for expression.

References

Garton, S., & Graves, K. (2014). *International perspectives on materials in ELT*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave-Macmilllan.

Gray, J. (2000). The ELT coursebook as cultural artefact: How teachers censor and adapt. *ELT Journal, 54*(3), 274-283.

Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with poverty in mind: What being poor does to kids' brains and what schools can do about it.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Payne, R. (2003). *A framework for understanding poverty* (3rd ed.). Highlands, TX: Aha! Process.

The Author

Christopher Miller has been involved in ELT for over seven years and holds a MSEd in TESOL from Shenandoah University. He currently works at Daeil Foreign Language High School. He can be contacted at cmiller112@su.edu.

"... a series of articles ... chronicle a basic divide among teachers: those who readily submit to the authority of materials and those who view materials as readily adaptable based on learner needs."
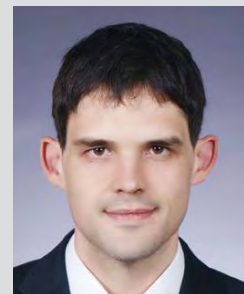
Teaching Is a Calling: Or Is It?

By Thomas S.C. Farrell

Recently I had the honor of leading a workshop for KOTESOL's Reflective Practice SIG in Seoul and one topic that received discussion from the participants was the assumption that teaching is a calling. That discussion also made me reflect on my views about this maxim. So in this short article I will revisit the assumption that teaching is a calling.

"Teaching Is a Calling"

Assumptions are usually unarticulated (and taken-for-granted) beliefs about our practice, and so we are usually not aware of what they mean to us. However, it is important for us to consciously reflect on our assumptions so that we may uncover what guides us in practice (Farrell, 2015). In addition, we must also become more aware of those who are all too willing to make assumptions for us that may not be in our best interests as teachers.

Let's take one widely held assumption about teaching that has been handed down through the ages in the following maxim: teaching is a calling. Most teachers are probably aware of this maxim, and many may even follow it, but what does it really mean? As teachers, are we really in full control of this maxim?

If we take "calling" from a religious perspective, we can see that the maxim "teaching as a calling" transcends the "normal" view of what we think a job is (such as, for example, working in a fast food restaurant) in that the "calling" becomes an act of selfless dedication to the work rather than just picking up a paycheck. Those who are "called," like those in religious organizations, have a "vocation" that seems to have come from "above," and thus teaching is more than a job. We can then wonder whether teaching as a profession is included in the "calling."

The assumption that teaching is a calling has been around for some time with the idea that those who are "called" will make a difference in the world, but I wonder - whose interests does teaching really serve? Let us examine a recent comment by an experienced ESL teacher in Canada about her teaching:

"I see my biggest challenge as achieving a balance in my life. I am actively involved in a lot of things outside of the classroom and I enjoy that, but I stay at work too late and I come home very tired every day. Work responsibilities can overtake personal and home life."

If we consider that this teacher's selfless service has become self-destructive "workaholism," then we can sense that the "calling" has become distorted somewhat because she has now become totally exhausted in her dedication to her work. The idea of selfless service by teachers may have been designed by educational institutions who impose increased teaching loads, larger classes, and extra "voluntary" duties, all in the name of the dedication to students' learning.

Perhaps the vocation of teaching and the "calling" was once even embraced by many teachers, but now we can see it can work against their individual best interests. I suspect that many teachers deep down also have begun to wonder if their sense of calling has become distorted, but if they complain because they are becoming exhausted, they can be seen by the administration as "whining" (Farrell, 2015).

We can ask then whose interests are being served. Given that a greater workload with larger classes means money is saved by the administration, we could suggest that it is the administration that benefits most; the students surely do not benefit from tired teachers or overcrowded classrooms. Thus, second/foreign language teachers need to be able to distinguish between justifiable and necessary dedication to their students' learning and a self-destructive "workaholism" that may be fostered by an institution's desire to save money rather than maximize students' learning (Brookfield, 1995).

Conclusion

In this short article, I examined a much taken-for-granted maxim about our work: teaching is

a calling. This is an assumption about our work that should be examined by all second/foreign language teachers so that each teacher can take a critically reflective stance on its place in their teaching world.

It is important not only to reflect on our own assumptions about our practice, but also to uncover assumptions (sometimes called hegemonic assumptions) that have been created and imposed by others to see if these assumptions are in our best interests or if they are harmful to our teaching.

Teachers must be on guard against those institutions that would try to exploit their selfless dedication to their students' learning so that this maxim does not become harmful to their practice. Perhaps teaching is a calling, but it must be our calling and not designed by those who would exploit our selflessness.

References

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Farrell, T. S. C. (2015). *Promoting teacher reflection in second language education: A framework for TESOL professionals.* New York, NY: Routledge.

The Author

Thomas S.C. Farrell is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Brock University, Canada, and his interests include Reflective Practice and Language Teacher Education & Development. Professor Farrell has published widely in academic journals and has presented at major conferences worldwide on these topics. See www.reflectiveinquiry.ca

iPadagogy: Using Mobile Devices to Extend Language Learning Strategies

By David B. Kent

The use of portable devices, such as cellular phones (or mobiles) and iPads, in the English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) classroom can save schools money. Portable devices can provide the benefits of technology without any additional financial costs for the administration. Students generally know how to use their own cell phones, including their own hardware and phone plan limitations. Educators who then choose to use them, either inside or outside the classroom, can focus on aspects of teaching and learning that can promote learner autonomy while also facilitating technology-based educational initiatives.

Though the actual pedagogical process of mobile use is beyond the scope of this article, a number of specific activities and their associated apps that can be linked to Bloom's Revised Digital Taxonomy (as determined by Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) will be presented. Figure 1 presents Bloom's Revised Digital Taxonomy with example apps that can potentially be used in EFL settings. Educators can then begin to consider how best to apply m-learning [mobile learning - Ed.] strategies among students and classes based on the scaffolded use of iPadagogy (Carrington, 2007). The key to learning in this context relies on selecting apps that can be integrated smoothly into language learning and teaching, and target real-world language skills both in the classroom and beyond.

Linking Bloom's Revised Digital Taxonomy to Digital Activities and Associated Apps
In this section, I will link Bloom's Revised Digital Taxonomy to digital activities and their associated apps. There are five taxonomic slices in the iPadagogy wheel: remembering and/or understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating taxonomy.

1. Remembering/Understanding Taxonomy
Before we can understand, we must remember.

Importance: To engage in recall. Here, the retrieval

or recognition of information from memory is needed to produce a definition, fact, or list, or for reciting or recovering material.

Keywords: Classifying, describing, explaining, finding, identifying, inferring, listing, locating, matching, naming, recognizing, retrieving, and reporting.

Potential Digital Activities: Blogging, bookmarking, commenting, making diagrams, using flashcards, searching Google images, performing Google searches, generating mind-maps, highlighting notes, outlining, social networking, and word processing.

Example Apps: Diigo, Edmodo, Evernote Peek, Flashcards +, Goodreads, Google Search, Inspiration Maps, iTunes U, Nearpod, Pages, PaperPort Notes, Socrative, Twitter, and StudyBlue.

Example App Application for TEFL: Evernote Peek allows students to create a quiz for self-study, or for teachers to create a quiz for lesson content review.

to quickly cycle through notes in a question-answer, flashcard style by using a Smart Cover (or a virtual cover if learners have not purchased a Smart Cover). Opening the first section of the Smart Cover reveals the question, and opening the second section of the cover reveals the answer. Closing and reopening the cover will then show a different question. In an oral EFL or ESL class, teachers could provide key expression drills or vocabulary review, which could then be extended for whole class use through AirPlay.

2. Applying Taxonomy
Before applying, we must understand.

Importance: In this category, we are executing or implementing a procedure with learned materials. The execution or implementation can be applied in contexts such as interviews, modeling, presentations, or even simulations.
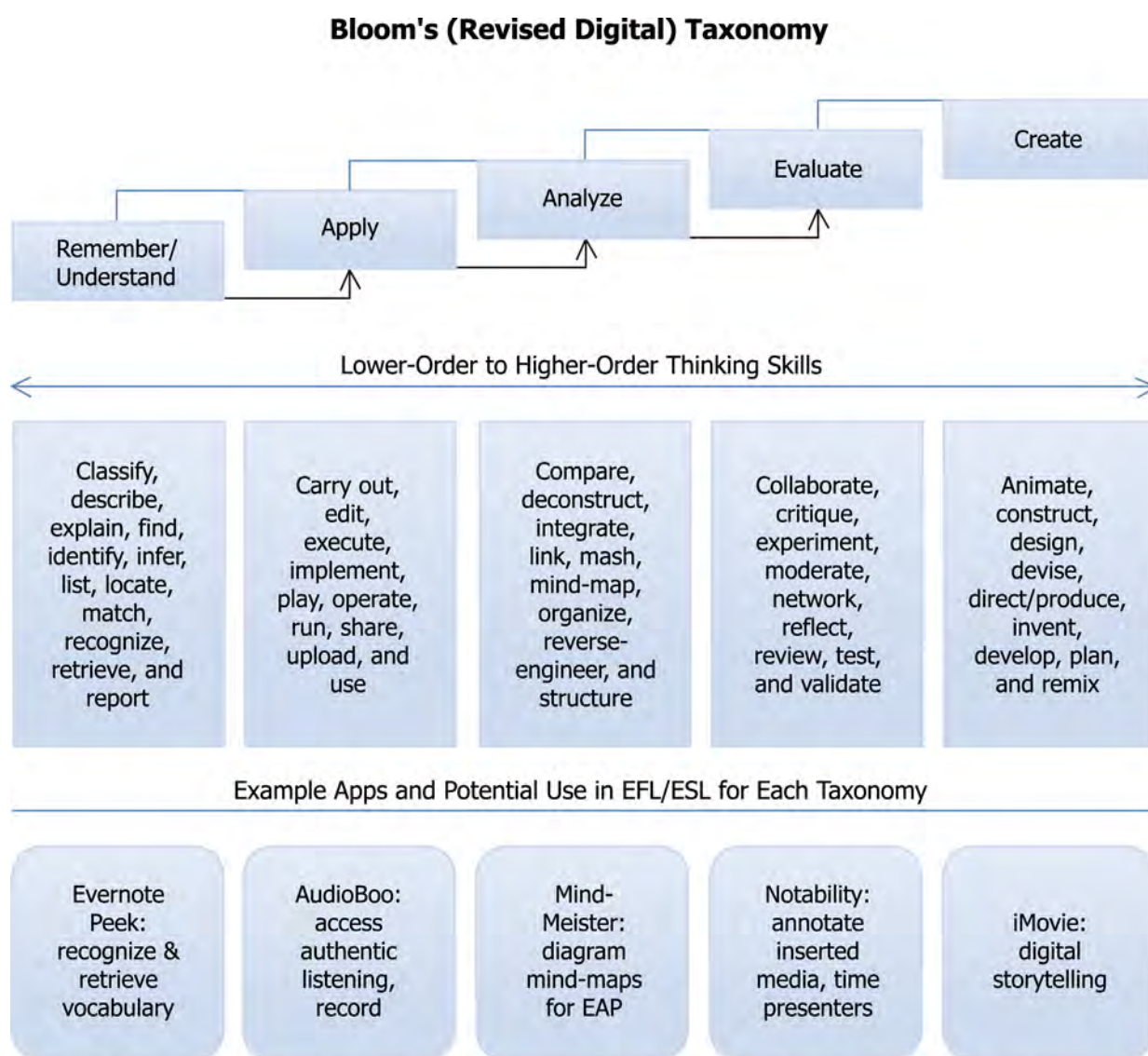
Figure 1. Bloom's (Revised Digital) Taxonomy in EFL. This figure highlights Bloom's (Revised Digital) Taxonomy with select example apps for potential use in EFL settings per taxonomy.

The title of each note in Evernote Peek becomes the "question" when viewed, and the body of the note is the "answer." On an iPad, the app allows learners

Keywords: Carrying out, editing, executing, hacking, implementing, loading, operating, playing, running, sharing, uploading, and using.

Potential Digital Activities: Collecting, demoing, diary writing, drawing, editing, interviewing, mapping, photographing, presenting, producing (movie media), puzzle creating, role-playing, scrapbooking, sculpting, and using simulations.

Example Apps: Animation Creation, Articulate, AudioBoo, Adobe Connect, Google Docs, Evernote, Explain Everything, Keynote, QuickVoice, Perfectly Clear, SonicPics, and Ustream.

Example App Application for TEFL: To assist students with practicing speaking skills and correcting text errors, the Dragon Dictation app can be useful. Students are able to use the app to speak out loud and practice aspects of presentations or role-plays. The app does not require an internet connection for voice recognition, but students would need internet access if they were to share the text content of their dictation with other students, the class, or the instructor, or to social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter. The text can be used as a pronunciation and fluency script, and extended by using AudioBoo. Boos can be up to three minutes in length, and are taggable, shareable, and searchable. This allows students to easily find all Boos using keywords such as "describing people" and "holidays." Peers can listen to each other's Boos and make a comment, which allows students to then improve or re-record their Boo before seeing it become part of a final project, assignment, or portfolio submission. AudioBoo also serves as a great content app because it provides authentic listening materials, including recordings by the BBC. To check whether they are pronouncing terms correctly, students may also wish to use Forvo, the paid pronunciation dictionary app, to check on the Australian, British, Canadian, or standard American pronunciation of content.

3. Analyzing Taxonomy
Before analyzing, we must apply.

Importance: Breaking down concepts or learned materials into parts to determine how each relates to the others and understand the overall structure/purpose of the parts by differentiating, organizing, and attributing each of the components being learned.

Keywords: Attributing, clipping, comparing, cracking, deconstructing, integrating, linking, mashing, mind-mapping, outlining, organizing, reverse-engineering, and structuring.

Potential Digital Activities: Creating charts and advertisements, constructing surveys, making diagrams, graphing, constructing mash-ups, preparing reports, composing spreadsheets, and making summaries.

Example Apps: Bomb, Comic Life, Dropbox, iCardSort, Inspiration Maps, FileMaker Go 11, MindMash, MindMeister, MiniMash, Pages, Numbers, Popplet, and SurveyPro.

Example App Application for TEFL: Diagramming a mind-map with MindMeister allows students to create a mind-map of lessons for later revision, or teachers can create a gap-based activity where students must then complete aspects of a mind-map to see what they can recall from a lesson. Students can map books, stories, or texts they are reading as part of class, map out relationships between characters, detail the characteristics, and describe the actions of the characters. Further, in terms of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), mind-maps are useful in representing textual information visually in order to highlight relationships within the content. In EFL vocabulary practice, central themes such as "sport" can also be used with students. This would be followed by developing categories and organizing these under central themes associated with key vocabulary items. Grammatical mind-maps can also be created by researching specific verb tenses and breaking down the form into components such as pronunciation with examples and notes about related concepts. MindMeister allows the easy sharing of maps, drawing of connections between nodes, adding of images and photos to topics, and exporting to Word or PowerPoint.

4. Evaluating Taxonomy
Before evaluating, we must analyze.

Importance: To establish sound judgments based on solid criteria and standards established through effective critique and analysis methods.

Keywords: Checking, collaborating, (blog/vlog) commenting, critiquing, detecting, experimenting, hypothesizing, judging, moderating, monitoring, networking, posting, reflecting, reviewing, testing, and validating.

Potential Digital Activities: Critiquing, evaluating, judging, hypothesizing, recommending, reporting, and summarizing.

Example Apps: AIM, Edmodo, Google+, Notability, Prompster Pro, Shareboard, Skype, StudentPad, Taposé, Web to PDF, and WikiNodes.

Example App Application for TEFL: Although the app is not free, Notability allows users to take notes, draw figures, insert photographs or web clippings, record and sync audio to notes being taken, and import and annotate PDF documents. Notes can be emailed or exported to cloud storage solutions (such as Box and Dropbox). The app can assist teachers in grading student presentations by recording the presentation and using the in-app time indicator to track presentation length, as well as inserting comments and photos of students presenting in real time. The application could also be used as a PDF-based seating chart for classes, or as a mini-whiteboard to record difficult vocabulary or expressions for individual students.

5. Creation Taxonomy
Before creating, we must remember to understand, apply, analyze, and evaluate.

Importance: Reorganizing learned elements into new patterns or structures through the generation of plans, or producing of skills. This in turn allows

learners to put these learned elements together to form a coherent and functional whole.

Keywords: Animating, blogging, constructing, designing, devising, directing/producing, filming, inventing, making, developing mash-ups, mixing, planning, podcasting, programing, publishing, remixing, video blogging, video casting, and wiki creating/editing.

Potential Digital Activities: Animating, cartoon storyboarding, ePublishing or iBooking, mixing, multimedia presentation development, podcasting, song use, storytelling, TV/radio program development, video casting, and/or video editing.

Example Apps: Aurasma, Easy Release, Fotobabble, GarageBand, iMovie, Interview Assistant, iTimeLapse Pro, Nearpod, Prezi, ScreenChomp, Toontastic, VoiceThread, and WordPress.

Example App Application for TEFL: The iMovie app on iPads can be used by students to import video, audio, and images to create digital stories based on lesson content, or real world experiences, which can be shared with various stakeholders such as parents or peers. This kind of digital storytelling development can help foster higher-order thinking skills via participating in the multimedia developmental process itself. This in turn can increase student motivation, spur creativity, foster collaborative learning, and lead to the practice of language skills with authentic content that is centered on the individual student's interest and real-world experience. The construction of multimedia-based stories also assists learners in developing and delivering content through multimodal means while practicing and enhancing digital and media literacy skills. This lets teachers focus on digital storytelling as a presentation medium, while students use it as a means to improve several language skills simultaneously. This includes reading and writing when storyboarding, and speaking and listening during collaboration and narration. When working on digital stories in collaborative groups, students are able to share their ideas, collaborate on picture selection, and communicate and engage in unique authentic experiences that can transform their understanding of text, words, and images while enhancing their vocabulary. Several traditional EFL classroom tasks and activities can lend themselves well to the digital storytelling setting, such as retelling, process writing, portfolio development, simulated news broadcasts, product advertising commercials, oral history/reenactment projects, and virtual tours of schools or cities.

Conclusion

The above presents each of Bloom's revised digital taxonomies from lower-order to higher-order thinking skills. Although the taxonomies are presented in a linear fashion here, learning can start at any point (and with any app or activity). However, the other outlined elements and stages are needed for that aspect of learning. Further, instructors need to keep several conventions in mind when evaluating potential educational apps for student use, either for in-class contexts or for students to use outside of class for their own personal language improvement. These include the ease of navigation and the usability of the interface; the flexibility of the app in meeting learner needs; the promotion of higher-order thinking skills; the ability to collaborate and share ideas within the app; the intuitive use of the app; the level of distractibility of the app, such as the audio when using it for learning or teaching; the feedback provision provided by the app; the age appropriateness of the app; and the ability of the app to maintain learner achievement and usage records as described in Karbach (2013). Assuming that these considerations are kept in mind, integrating mobile-based applications into the EFL teaching and learning context serves to promote 21st-century skills in students (Churches, 2014). This is becoming ever more important as students increasingly become adaptive, collaborative learners who are technology-savvy and require content that serves not only their immediate educational needs, but relates directly to their learning styles, both on-the-go and in the classroom.

References

Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.* New York, NY: Longman.

Carrington, A. (2007). The Padagogy wheel ... It's a Bloomin' better way to teach. Retrieved from http://www.unity.net.au/allansportfolio/edublog/?p=324

Churches, A. (2014). 21st century teacher. *Educational Origami*. Retrieved from http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/21st+Century+Teacher

Karbach, M. (2013). 8 things to look for in an educational app. *Educational Technology and Mobile Learning.* Retrieved from http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2013/03/8-things-to-look-for-in-educational-app.html?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pulsenews

The Author

David B. Kent is currently employed as Assistant Director – Technology at the Graduate School of TESOL-MALL, Woosong University. His doctoral specializations are Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). He has been working and living in Korea since 1995. Email: dbskent@msn.com

READING TOWN

READING TOWN 1 · STUDENT BOOK
READING TOWN 2 · STUDENT BOOK
READING TOWN 3 · STUDENT BOOK

READING WORLD

READING WORLD 1 · STUDENT BOOK
READING WORLD 2 · STUDENT BOOK
READING WORLD 3 · STUDENT BOOK

READING PLANET

READING PLANET 1 · STUDENT BOOK
READING PLANET 2 · STUDENT BOOK
READING PLANET 3 · STUDENT BOOK

Cumulative
Reading Skill Practice

Reading Series

Reading Town, World, and **Planet** are three-level reading series from low-intermediate to high-intermediate learners of English. It features interesting, informative reading passages on a variety of topics, such as animals, technology, sports, the environment, and the arts. In each book, carefully graded reading passages are supported by a variety of activities.

KOTESOL

The 2015 Korea TESOL National Conference

Bridging the Digital Divide: Examining Online Education in Asia

30 May 2015 (Sat.)
Sookmyung Women's University
Seoul

Invited Speakers
Gavin Dudeney (The Consultants-E)
Glenn Stockwell (Waseda U. Japan)
James Larson (SUNY Korea)

Members: W10,000
Non-members: W25,000

For details: www.koreatesol.org/nc15