

The English Connection

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Articles

Schmidt-Fajlik: Process writing with ChatGPT
Jeffery: Activities to teach prepositions
Houston: A CertPT course journey

KOTESOL Chapters' Recent Events

JNJ Chapter: Inquiries into AI and globalization
Yongin Chapter: Tsoy, our "rookie teacher"
BG Chapter: "Give a Little, Get a Lot" event
Seoul Chapter: Conflict resolution workshop

Member Spotlight

Andrew White

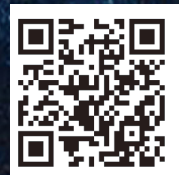
And our regular columnists...

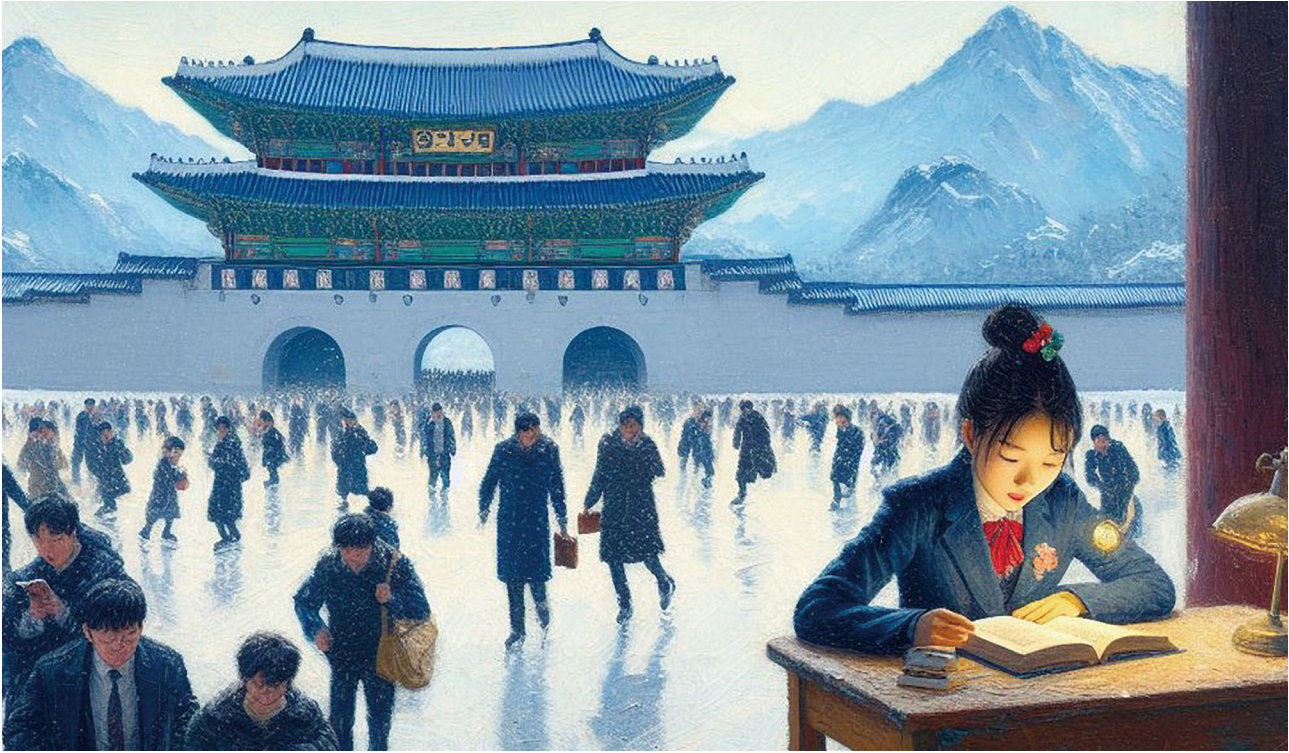
Snyder with The Development Connection
Kelly with The Brain Connection



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Contents

Winter 2023 / Volume 27, Issue 4

4

Editorial

An English Degree: Too Big to Succeed
by Dr. Andrew White

5

President's Message

Reflections and Resolutions:
Ringing in the New Year with KOTESOL
by Lindsay Herron

Articles

6

The Use of ChatGPT in Paragraph
Process Writing for
Korean University Students
by Ronald Schmidt-Fajlik



20

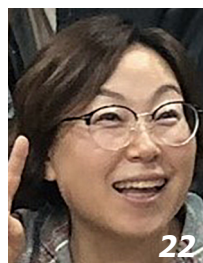
Yongin Chapter: Steps of Determination
by James G. Rush, II

22

Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter: Language
Exchange Ambassadors Give a Little
but Get a Lot
by KC Washington

10

Problems with Prepositions,
and Activities to Help
by Thomas Jeffery



24

Seoul Chapter: Conflict Resolution –
What to Do When Someone
Eats Your Ice Cream...
by Tom Wyatt

13

My CertPT Experience
by Hall Houston

10

22

26

Member Spotlight: Andrew White

KOTESOL News & Happenings

16

The 2023 National Conference in Photos



17

National Service Awards &
Election Results

13

24



Regular Columns

28

The Development Connection

Trust and Institutional
Professional Development
by Bill Snyder

18 30

Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter: **The Brain Connection**
Inquiries into AI & Globalization Metaphor Is the Brain's Learning Tool
by Frank G. Kariotis by Dr. Curtis Kelly



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

Editorial

An English Degree: Too Big to Succeed

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

I work at a jeonmun-daehak (전문대학), which in America we would refer to as a junior or community college (or even a trade school, though you might get a couple of sideways glances if you say that in the wrong crowds). Since its founding in northeastern Seoul in 1971, our English name has gone from Institute of Design, to Institute of Technology, to College, to the current, more prestigious University – we have gyo (교) at the end of hak (학) when technically we shouldn't. The majority of our departments are in what could be called the white-collar skilled trades: various engineering, architecture, computer, and design departments, offering fast-tracked accelerated three-year bachelor's degrees. And then there's the obligatory language departments, providing associate's degrees. Over the last couple of years, there's been the additions of Gaming and VR Design, Broadcasting and Entertainment, and Aviation Services (aka flight attendants), and the four schools have recently rebranded by adding such prefixes as *smart*, *global*, and *business* to their names.



Recent policy changes from administration stress a vocational education that unites academia and industry, and if we had a mission statement, it would sound similar to a dozen other colleges across the country, something like "provide our students with a practical application of the skilled trades and the innovation knowledge required to meet the needs of the Korean workforce." Our school's slogans and promotional posters tout the pathways to employment, and adverts on buses show graduates with gown and degree in hand running up steps towards an office chair in the sky. Over 70% of Korea's millennials have college degrees, yet they're overqualified for the labor market, resulting in a high unemployment rate (Business Insider, June 12, 2023). Despite the high competitiveness, new graduates remain picky, leaving jobs left unfilled. All of this suggests our college is adapting to the students' need to acquire skills with clearer priorities, in response to changing societal and demographic trends. In short: get graduates jobs.

My department, Business English, must compete with all others (with points and evaluation comes the inevitable ranking and appraisal), and unfortunately, we're constantly at the bottom of the rankings for student employment. While Architecture enjoys a rate above 80%, and others such as Aviation Services and Jewelry Design are solidly in the 70% bracket, the English Department struggles with rates half that, along with Broadcasting and Entertainment (apparently it's hard to get work as an actor nowadays). It's become apparent that the system is inequitable, and that STEM majors are where the jobs are at. I believe our English Department just doesn't have the niche to succeed in our school's recent push to boost employment rates.

Firstly, English, even Business English, is not a career in and of itself. Rather, it transcends the job sectors. While it's an extremely valuable secondary skill, it remains a "plus one" that enhances every job candidate's resume and primary career goal. Architecture graduates enter the field of architecture, graphic designers the field of graphic design, jewelry designers design jewelry... I think you see the pattern. Our English graduates, on the other hand, enter what?... the vast job market most likely lacking any specialized technical trade, making it harder for them to differentiate themselves and springboard into an industry. People go to college for a variety of reasons. And few enter our Business English Department with a career in mind. Nor do they graduate aggressively desiring a job. Additionally, innovations such as ChatGPT and other AI have created an uncertain future for the need for manpower. This is the case in all sectors, of course, but this tech, along with translation apps, bring additional hurdles for job candidates reliant on their English degrees and proficiency.

Second, all high school-educated Koreans uniformly already know English. Two more years of business writing, TOEIC, and reading comprehension classes (all done in the typically Korean-lectured translation method) are just an extension of secondary school and hagwon learning (a constant complaint of my students). "Why are you English majors?" is a standard question I ask my freshmen on the first day, and the resounding "I like English," while positive, doesn't instill a career-driven choice of major. While they surely advance and graduate with a higher English ability, if our students truly were passionate and eager to progress in English, they most likely would have done so before entering college. Departments of interest that concentrate on a vocational sector to apply that English skill, such as Secretarial Management or Tourism and Service Management (both of which enjoy much higher rates of employment than ours) are a better fit, and the accelerated bachelor's degree more appealing.

Third, our department's industry-academia connection is not strong. Our professors have been with the school for years, lacking any job placement connections with partnering companies or English-related job sectors. While we may be experts in the field of English language, we are not experts in the field of English employment. In newer, more vocational departments, newly hired, junior professors have stronger ties and collaborative work with related private sector industry, and often bear the weight and build the status of their department, as they propel their advisory students into employment.

English departments, I've been told, have always held a certain worldly prestige in Korean higher education, even vocational colleges. But that seems to be waning, being factored out by selected hard-skill majors that can better ensure our college graduates enter the workforce. The English skill set seems to be too broad. At our school, the adage "publish or perish" would more aptly be "get students employment or perish," and I'm becoming more anxious for the day a new department with a narrower niche for job opportunities replaces us.

President's Message Reflections and Resolutions: Ringing in the New Year with KOTESOL

By Lindsay Herron KOTESOL President

Happy 2024! As a new year dawns, it seems an ideal opportunity to look back on the past twelve months as well as look forward to the coming year. I'm happy to report that 2023 was a superb year that saw KOTESOL returning to our pre-pandemic normal – but with a few judicious tweaks and pandemic-inspired adjustments that made us even better. The past twelve months featured stellar conferences at the regional, national, and international levels: the regular and reliable production of our high-quality publications; the growing evolution and expansion of international partnerships; chapter workshops, both online and in person; and more!



The big news during the spring semester was the return of our international conference to our usual venue, Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul. The 30th KOTESOL International Conference and PAC 2023 attracted 560 participants from more than thirty countries and included about 200 sessions, of which about forty were asynchronous. New KOTESOL tri-color pens and a new KOTESOL bookmark debuted at the KOTESOL Membership booth during the conference, and around 100 participants attended the Saturday night social, a catered event featuring vegan and non-vegan appetizers, wine, and a prize raffle. We announced a new partnership with iTDi at the conference, as well; iTDi provided generous vouchers as raffle prizes and also offered KOTESOL members a 50% discount on advanced skills self-study courses (valid through March 31, 2024). The recipients of several awards were also announced at the conference: the *Korea TESOL Journal* Research Paper of the Year Award, the TEC Article of the Year Award, the *KOTESOL Proceedings* Best Paper Award, and the Reflective Language Teacher Award. The "KOTESOL 30@30" list, which recognized thirty KOTESOL members for their contributions to the organization and the field of ELT over the course of our thirty-year history, was also published during the conference as part of the anniversary celebrations. Finally, it was in the spring that KOTESOL was finally able to activate an official PayPal account – just in time to greatly ease the payment process for overseas conference participants.

The second half of the year was similarly successful. In August, KOTESOL members were able to pre-register for the 2023 AsiaTEFL International Conference for the same price as AsiaTEFL members and were given complimentary AsiaTEFL memberships with their registration; in addition, KOTESOL will be receiving a share of any profits generated by KOTESOL members' participation. A few months later, during the fall semester, the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter returned to holding an in-person regional conference; the Daejeon-Chungcheong Chapter hosted its celebrated November symposium; and the Yongin-Gyeonggi Chapter took on the challenge of coordinating the national conference, crafting an experience that was inspiring and rewarding for all. November also saw another successful KOTESOL Connections Day – this time in Yongin on the day after the national conference, creating a KOTESOL "double header" for a full weekend of our fun. Finally, our partnerships with JALT and English Scholars Beyond Borders yielded some wonderful perks for KOTESOL members in the form of conference registration discounts.

Looking ahead to 2024, I can perceive a plethora of promising potentialities. First, KOTESOL has been working on a few major projects over the course of 2023 that should come to fruition in the coming year: our Publications and Research Committees have been collaborating to get the *Korea TESOL Journal* indexed in SCOPUS, and the transition to a new website is well underway. I also had the pleasure of making new contacts at various conferences around Asia this year; as a result, we've got a few partnerships in the works that should lead to new insights and opportunities. Speaking of new insights, I'm especially excited about the 31st Korea TESOL International Conference coming in April; with a theme of "Players on the World Stage: From EFL Classrooms to Global Lives" and both synchronous (onsite) and asynchronous (video recorded) sessions, KOTESOL 2024 should be an innovative and engaging experience! Submissions are being accepted until January 15, and registration opens in March. I anticipate a wealth of fascinating proposals related to this flexible, playful topic – and I'm already eagerly anticipating the conference's many moments of connection and contemplation. Will you be there? If so, please be sure to say hi!

As you look back on the past and ponder the future this winter, please remember that KOTESOL is here to help you achieve your goals. Why not include us in your resolutions? Improve your presentation skills, make new friends, and bolster your resume by presenting at a chapter workshop or our international conference; enhance your research-related resources (and your CV) by publishing your work or applying for a research grant; make international connections and expand your horizons by representing us at a partner organization's conference; or explore any of the manifold volunteer opportunities that are available – perfect for both personal and professional growth. In the meantime, I hope your winter has been full of rewards, rejuvenation, and reflection, and I look forward to seeing you in the new year!



The Use of ChatGPT in Paragraph Process Writing for Korean University Students

By Ronald Schmidt-Fajlik

Educators recognize ChatGPT as a powerful technological tool and are eager to incorporate it in a way that may benefit students (Gecker, 2023). However, they also have concerns that the use of the technology may lead to plagiarism and not creating original content (ChatGPT in Education, 2023). There is fear that the application may compromise academic integrity by giving students the ability to generate perfectly written essays with only the use of a few prompts. These fears are not without warrant, as cases of such abuse have been reported, with the use of AI tools like ChatGPT often being difficult to prove (Nolan, 2023).

Language teachers in particular may have reservations about the use of the technology as language acquisition requires personal effort in which language skills are reinforced through important stages involving reflection and trial and error (Derwing et al., 2022; Mitchell et al., 2019). It may be a concern that the use of ChatGPT will bypass the necessity for students to experience these important developmental stages in language acquisition, thereby depriving them of an essential component of the language learning experience. In this article, I will discuss how ChatGPT can be utilized to enhance paragraph writing skills while recognizing that language acquisition demands students experience stages of personal effort involving reflection and trial and error. The article will describe how ChatGPT was incorporated into a process writing approach to paragraph writing for Korean university students.

Process Writing

Process writing is an approach to writing that focuses on developing a text through a series of stages rather than trying to produce a complete, polished final draft all at once. The steps in the process writing approach for English language learners may vary depending on the specific goals and needs of the learners. Process writing breaks down the writing process into manageable steps, thereby increasing student confidence and autonomy in producing texts that are well organized, clear, and effective (Ghafar, 2023).

The process writing approach introduced in this article proceeds using the following stages:

1. Topic Selection. The students may freely choose their topic of interest.
2. Brainstorming. Students generate ideas related to their topic. Brainstorming has been shown to positively benefit writing performance (Amoush, 2015; Rahmawati, 2022). Students are introduced to mind maps and freewriting as a way to brainstorm and generate ideas. Examples are given, and students may look for further examples online. They may use either technique or both to generate ideas.
3. Students write an outline of their paragraph. A simple template is provided that directs them to write a topic sentence and add three or more sentences that give supporting details. The outline is completed by adding a concluding sentence.
4. A draft is written of their paragraph.
5. The draft is edited and revised. Particular consideration is given to correcting grammar and spelling mistakes.
6. A final version of their paragraph is written.

Incorporating ChatGPT

ChatGPT is incorporated at the brainstorming (Stage 2) and revision stage (Stage 5) in the above process writing approach. The use of ChatGPT at the brainstorming stage is meant to supplement and extend students' own initial brainstorming ideas. The AI-generated responses may give students greater insight into the ideas they had already come up with, offer a new perspective, and provide further ideas for students to choose from. At the revision stage, ChatGPT will be used by students to check their grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. This will allow students to reflect upon their mistakes and make improvements autonomously. The prompts provided to students will allow them to check for such mistakes and receive detailed, easy-to-understand explanations from ChatGPT as to why what they have written is considered a mistake, which will help them reflect upon and learn from such mistakes. The use of ChatGPT as a grammar checker was found to be more effective in many respects compared to more established AI tools such as Grammarly and ProWritingAid for English language learners (Schmidt-Fajlik, 2023).

Participants and Method

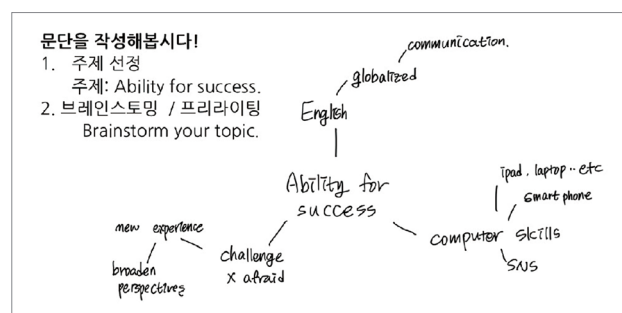
There were a total of 35 university students that participated in this study (12 males and 23 females). Ages ranged from 18 to 27 years old, with the median age being 20. Nearly half of the participants indicated they were in their third year of university studies, and the participants reported 17 different Korean university affiliations.

The participants were provided a worksheet and instructions that guided them in writing a paragraph using a process writing approach incorporating ChatGPT. Due to length considerations, the worksheet is not included in this article. However, the following directions, steps, and examples should make it easy to create a similar worksheet.

1. Students are given an example of a good paragraph and an outline. Examples of good paragraphs may be found in textbooks or online.
2. Students choose a topic.
3. Students are provided with examples of mind mapping and freewriting. Such examples may be found on the internet.
4. Students brainstorm using mind mapping or freewriting.

An example of student mind mapping is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Example of Student Mind Map for Brainstorming



5. After brainstorming, students are given the following prompt to use in ChatGPT to generate more brainstorming ideas:

The topic of my paragraph is _____. My brainstorming ideas for the topic are: _____. What other brainstorming ideas can I use?

An example of ChatGPT's response is given in Figure 2.

Figure 2. ChatGPT Response to Brainstorming Prompt in Step 5

It's great that you're already considering English skills, computer skills, and the value of having new experiences as abilities required for success. Here are some additional brainstorming ideas to enhance your paragraph:

- 1. Communication Skills:** Being able to convey ideas clearly and effectively is essential in various aspects of life, from collaborating with colleagues to negotiating deals or networking.
- 2. Critical Thinking:** The ability to analyze situations, solve problems, and make informed decisions is crucial for navigating complex challenges and seizing opportunities.
- 3. Adaptability:** Success often requires adapting to changing circumstances, learning new skills, and embracing innovation to stay ahead in dynamic environments.
- 4. Time Management:** Efficiently managing time, setting priorities, and meeting deadlines are skills that contribute significantly to productivity and achieving goals.
- 5. Leadership and Teamwork:** Whether leading a team or being part of one, knowing how to inspire, collaborate, and guide others is key to achieving collective success.

6. Students write an outline that includes a topic sentence and details.
7. Students write a draft of their paragraph.

Figure 3 provides an example of a student draft to illustrate the mistakes identified by ChatGPT in Step 8.

Figure 3. Student Draft Paragraph

7. Writing a draft (초안을 작성해주세요)
There are several abilities required for success. First, people need to be influent for speaking English. English is the most important thing for communication with various people as world become globalized. Second, people have to enjoy having new experience. They can broaden their perspectives through an experience that people have not done it before. Lastly, people should enhance their computer skills. Most people use a smart phone, laptop. So, being familiar for online system is essential. People who want to success in future need to enhance English skills, challenging mind and computer skills.

8. After completing their draft, students use ChatGPT to check it. They may copy and paste the following prompt to check their draft:

For the following paragraph, 1. Check the spelling, grammar, and format. What spelling, grammar, and formatting mistakes were found? 2. Explain all the spelling, grammar, and formatting mistakes in detail: (Paste your paragraph draft here, and then press the send button on ChatGPT).

Using ChatGPT as part of process writing gives students greater autonomy...

If the teaching situation allows, students may peer review each other's drafts before using ChatGPT to check for errors. Using ChatGPT to find errors develops student autonomy and allows them time to reflect on their mistakes. It is often the case that such errors are only

found after final submission to their teacher, who must spend an inordinate amount of time indicating common mistakes, with students often only having a cursory look at such corrections after having their writing returned to them (Schmidt-Fajlik, 2023). An example of ChatGPT's response is given in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Corrections Found by ChatGPT in Student Draft

- 1. influent -> fluent:** "influent" is incorrect; it should be "fluent" to indicate proficiency in speaking English.
- 2. speaking English -> in speaking English:** Added "in" to make the phrase grammatically correct.
- 3. as world become globalized -> as the world becomes more globalized:** Added "the" before "world" and "more" before "globalized" for proper grammar and clarity.
- 4. enjoy having new experience -> embrace new experiences:** Changed "enjoy having new experience" to "embrace new experiences" for more accurate phrasing.
- 5. through an experience -> through experiences:** Changed "an experience" to "experiences" to match the plural subject "people."
- 6. people have not done it before -> they haven't encountered before:** Reworded for better clarity and grammar.
- 7. familiar for online system -> familiar with online systems:** Corrected "familiar for online system" to "familiar with online systems" for proper grammar.
- 8. need to enhance English skills, challenging mind and computer skills -> improve their English skills, cultivate a mindset open to challenges, and develop strong computer skills:** Rewritten for clarity and parallel structure.

9. Students may translate ChatGPT's response into Korean by using the following prompt:

Translate the following into Korean: (Paste ChatGPT's response from Step 8).

Using ChatGPT to translate the responses related to error correction demonstrates the versatility of the application. Translating the corrections found in Step 8 using ChatGPT may be optional. Students may use the translation to have a clearer understanding of the corrections found in Step 8. However, for some students, the original response in English may be clear enough to be understood in English. An example of ChatGPT's response is given in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Translation of Corrections by ChatGPT

수정 사항 설명:

influent -> fluent: "influent"는 틀린 표현입니다. 영어 구사 능력을 나타내려면 "fluent"로 수정되어야 합니다.

speaking English -> in speaking English: 문법적으로 올바른 표현을 위해 "in"을 추가했습니다.

as world become globalized -> as the world becomes more globalized: "as world become globalized"를 문법적으로 올바르게 수정하기 위해 "the"를 "world" 앞에, "more"를 "globalized" 앞에 추가했습니다.

enjoy having new experience -> embrace new experiences: 더 정확한 표현을 위해 "enjoy having new experience"를 "embrace new experiences"로 수정했습니다.

through an experience -> through experiences: 주어 "people"와 일치하도록 "an experience"를 "experiences"로 수정했습니다.

people have not done it before -> they haven't encountered before: 더 나은 명료성과 문법을 위해 "people have not done it before"를 "they haven't encountered before"로 재구성했습니다.

familiar for online system -> familiar with online systems: 올바른 문법을 위해 "familiar for online system"를 "familiar with online systems"로 수정했습니다.

need to enhance English skills, challenging mind and computer skills -> improve their English skills, cultivate a mindset open to challenges, and develop strong computer skills: 명확성과 명절 구조를 위해 "need to enhance English skills, challenging mind and computer skills"를 "improve their English skills, cultivate a mindset open to challenges, and develop strong computer skills"로 수정했습니다.

10. Students may now use the feedback received from ChatGPT to revise their paragraph and write a final draft for submission.

Once students have completed the stages in the process writing approach incorporating ChatGPT, it may be submitted for final evaluation by their teacher. As it is expected that ChatGPT had found most types of common errors in revision at Stage 8, the teacher may concentrate on a more holistic evaluation of the paragraph. This may include evaluating the strength of the topic sentence,

supporting details, and conclusion in forming a cohesive paragraph as well as the ideas expressed.

Questionnaire

After the completion of the previous steps, a questionnaire was administered to assess how students felt about the process writing approach incorporating ChatGPT. The questionnaire included both close- and open-ended responses. The results are given below.

Close-Ended Responses

The questionnaire results indicate that almost all the Korean student participants found using ChatGPT during process writing easy to use and helpful. Students found the step-by-step approach of process writing a useful guide in directing them toward successfully completing a paragraph. They found that using ChatGPT at particular stages of the process writing approach provided further assistance. At the brainstorming stage, ChatGPT helped them generate and expand their ideas. At the draft revision stage, they found the corrections indicated by ChatGPT to be detailed and highly useful in improving their writing (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Korean University Students' Use of ChatGPT: Multiple-Choice Responses ($N = 35$)

Question	Yes	No	Other
1. Was ChatGPT easy to use?	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2. Were the prompts easy to use?	34 (97.14%)	1 (2.85%)	0 (0%)
3. Did ChatGPT help you with brainstorming?	29 (82.85%)	6 (17.14%)	0 (0%)
4. Did ChatGPT help you correct your paragraph?	34 (97.14%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.85%)
5. Did ChatGPT find many mistakes?	31 (91.17%)	3 (8.57%)	1 (2.85%)
6. Was the Korean translation of ChatGPT's response easy to understand and accurate?	25 (71.42%)	4 (11.42%)	6 (17.14%)
7. Were the process writing stages in writing your paragraph helpful?	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
8. Do you feel that ChatGPT is useful during the process writing approach stages?	33 (94.28%)	2 (5.71%)	0 (0%)

Open-Ended Responses

The following participant open-ended responses have been selected as being representative of the majority of responses where similar responses had been given.

a. Explain your answers to Questions 1 and 2.

1. "It has an easy-to-use interface."
2. "I believe ChatGPT is user-friendly for everyone due to its good accessibility. Additionally, I find the prompts easy to use."
3. "ChatGPT accurately answers what I want to hear and captures my intended meaning well."

b. Explain your answer to Question 3.

1. "During brainstorming, it informed me about things I hadn't thought of, and the suggestions were very similar to what I wanted."
2. "It mentioned new aspects I hadn't thought of, which was great for brainstorming."
3. "Since it suggested various keywords related to the topic, it was helpful for generating ideas."

c. Explain your answers to Questions 4 and 5.

1. "As I wrote everything without any translation or editing tools, there were quite a few typos and grammar mistakes, but it seems like ChatGPT caught them well."
2. "I was worried because I'm not good at English, but it corrected it in detail. It found and corrected grammar and more, and the explanations were detailed."
3. "ChatGPT caught all the simple errors in sentences and writings that I didn't think of. In particular, it was fascinating that it mentioned the part I forgot to write."
4. "When writing, you often make grammatical mistakes

like tense or spelling errors. ChatGPT explains each of those in detail, making it good for correcting grammar."

d. Explain your answer to Question 6.

1. "It was more natural and easy to understand than other translators."
2. "The Korean translation of ChatGPT's response is easy to understand and accurate."
3. "There was no awkwardness at all."
4. "Foreigners' messages often feel like they've been run through a translator, but ChatGPT's translation didn't feel awkward and gave the impression of a professionally written Korean text."

e. Explain your answer to Question 7.

1. "Following step-by-step made writing easier than just writing freely."
2. "First, through brainstorming, I came up with various ideas. Then, by outlining, I was able to create a more solid paragraph. Extending the outline and writing a full piece flowed smoothly and made writing easy."
3. "When writing, if not done step-by-step, the writing can easily stray from the topic. Writing step by step allowed me to convey my intention according to the subject, which was nice."

ChatGPT can be utilized to enhance paragraph writing skills while recognizing that language acquisition demands students experience stages of personal effort involving reflection and trial and error.

f. Explain your answer to Question 8.

1. "I used GPT for the first time, and it was very helpful."
2. "It's not a long time, not a few days, but with directions and revisions, good writing was created in a short time."
3. "Given ideas are helpful, and correcting errors made sentences natural."
4. "For students who are doing their first compositions, using ChatGPT would be very useful. Even for students who find brainstorming difficult, when they receive help, they can get unexpected ideas, which would lead to creating better writing. Also, since it quickly points out grammatical errors, it would be helpful for writing."
5. "As I progressed step by step, it felt like ChatGPT also provided more detailed answers. So, I thought it was a good tool for writing."
6. "It was good for brainstorming, and especially useful for correcting grammar. When you don't know grammar well, it's not easy to figure out where you made a

mistake. But ChatGPT kindly corrects the errors and provides interpretations in Korean, which is helpful.”

Discussion and Conclusion

Using ChatGPT as part of process writing gives students greater autonomy while developing their writing skills in a step-by-step guided manner. Responses to the closed-ended questions on the questionnaire indicated that nearly all the students found using a process writing approach incorporating ChatGPT to be highly effective in improving their writing skills. The most representative open-ended responses related to some of the questions further supported these findings. The use of ChatGPT was of assistance at the brainstorming stage by generating suggestions based on the student’s own ideas. Students found that ChatGPT helped point out errors in their writing, allowing them to reflect upon the mistakes they had made and the possible reasons behind them. Many students stated that they would continue to incorporate ChatGPT in their writing.

The use of ChatGPT may not only help students to become more autonomous but also may assist teachers by allowing them more time to evaluate student writing on a more holistic level rather than spending a great deal of time correcting simple grammar and spelling mistakes (Schmidt-Fajlik, 2023).

Process writing incorporating ChatGPT also may address some of the qualms language teachers may have, fearing that it may be used in an academically dishonest way, such as by generating perfectly written essays. By using a process writing approach, and having students submit their work as part of a writing portfolio, a teacher can clearly see the developmental stages of student writing based on their own efforts, ensuring that students actively participate in the language learning process, requiring personal effort, trial and error, and reflection.

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Problems with Prepositions, and Activities to Help

By Thomas Jeffery

The Prepositional Problem

Prepositions of time, (*at*, *on*, and *in*) have long been the bug-bear of Korean English language learners. In this article, I shall briefly describe the nature of the issue, followed by some applicable methods teachers can use to help alleviate what is otherwise a frequently under-considered and complex problem.

There is substantial research demonstrating that where a notable difference exists between L1 and L2 languages regarding prepositions of time, grammatical error rates frequently occur (Arjan et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2020; Lorincz & Gordon, 2012; Zheng & Park, 2013). Korean and English are two languages where these significant differences are found. In English, three temporal prepositions exist (*at*, *on*, and *in*), whereas in Korean there is only one, pronounced "ey," and written in Hangul as "에."

The methods and activities ... appeared to be an enjoyable and engaging way of learning what can otherwise be quite a dry and complicated grammatical structure.

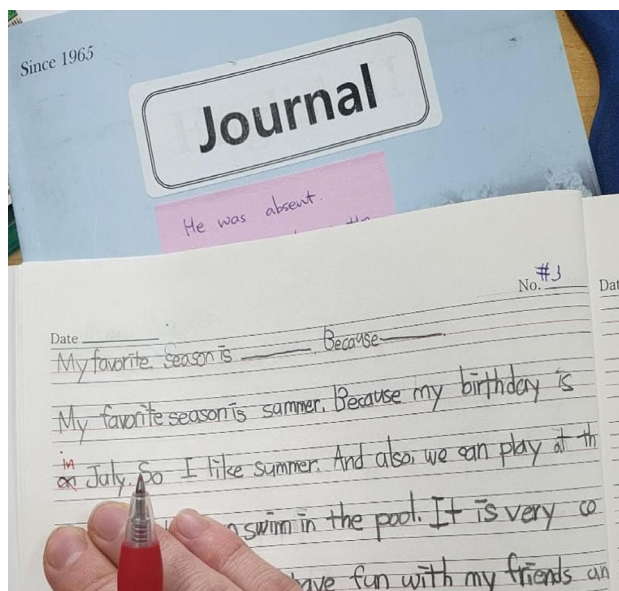
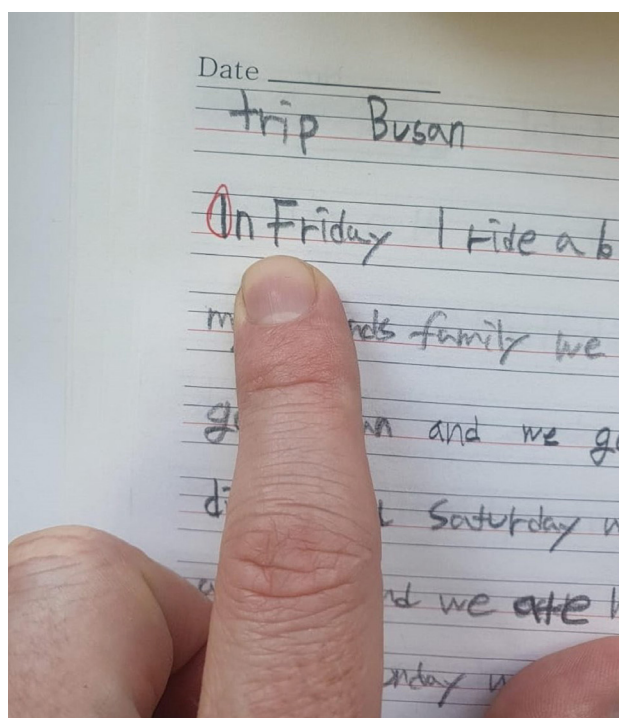
Therefore, Korean students studying English have to consider which single preposition out of a total of three to use, and they must do this by assessing the other words used throughout the given sentence. Although this process is taken for granted by native speakers of English, this is no easy feat for Korean learners.

To add to this complexity, temporal prepositions are relatively easy-to-ignore single-syllable words that are also completely unavoidable. They cannot easily be substituted with a synonym, and they are frequently used in a variety of situations. Furthermore, they are often hard to translate, as they lack any meaning in isolation of their context, acting as functional grammar units rather than holding any intrinsic meaning. Considering these factors, it is of little wonder that the English language learner faces substantial difficulties learning and using English prepositions of time.

I first noticed the significance of these errors in 2018 when working at an elementary school where students

had to write journals and diaries (see Figure 1). In spite of age and proficiency level, there always appeared a litany of errors regarding the three words *at*, *on*, and *in* when it came to the students' written work. In an effort to address this issue I started a research project that would take five years and over 100 participants' involvement to complete, during which I was able to improve my classes uptake of temporal prepositions, from 13% (at the lowest) up to 43% (Jeffery, 2023). I hope that some of the methods I detail here can be of use to those facing similar teaching situations.

Figure 1. Examples of Temporal Preposition Errors

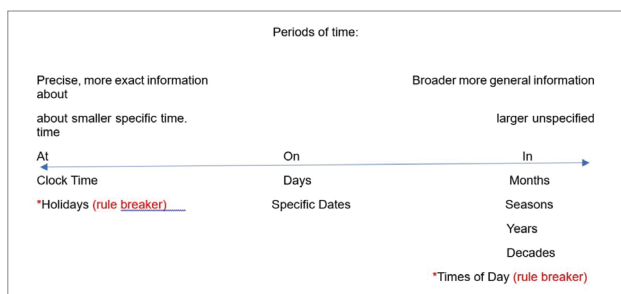


Pre- / Post-Tests and Justifications

The first consideration for any English teacher is whether this topic is indeed worthy of class time. Considering this, undertaking some form of diagnosis to check class levels regarding temporal prepositions would be advisable. It might also be advisable to consider demonstrating how important and unavoidable these words are to your students, helping to justify a class dedicated to grammar, a usually dry subject. Useful aids include corpora databases such as those by <https://www.english-corpora.org/>, which show *in*, *on*, and *at* to be the 7th, 14th, and 20th most frequently used words, respectively, in the English language. Then I would ask my students to try and find substitute words for sentences that involved temporal prepositions, asking them to remove or substitute the prepositions of time with the aim of rephrasing the sentence in such a way that the preposition might be avoided as an issue. Sentences such as "On Wednesdays, we eat lunch an hour early" or "At 2 p.m. we have class" help demonstrate how necessary prepositions of time are.

Assuming classroom instruction is needed, the first challenge is that there is no all-encompassing grammar rule for teaching prepositions of time. Below is the most effective general timeline (Figure 2) that my research suggests can help explain the concept to students.

Figure 2. Timeline for Teaching Temporal Preposition Rules



Note. This timeline was designed to create an easy-to-understand set of rules and was used throughout the research project to teach temporal prepositions. Holidays and times of day are exceptions to the given rules (rule breakers) and thus have to be identified to the subjects as being different when applying the small (*at*), medium (*on*) and large (*in*) categories for associated periods of time. Using this diagram, participants should be able to associate smaller periods of time with the word *at* and larger periods of time with *in*. *On* is used between the two for temporal prepositions associated with days and specific dates as it is neither dealing with small or large periods of time.

Although this process is taken for granted by native speakers of English, this is no easy feat for Korean learners.

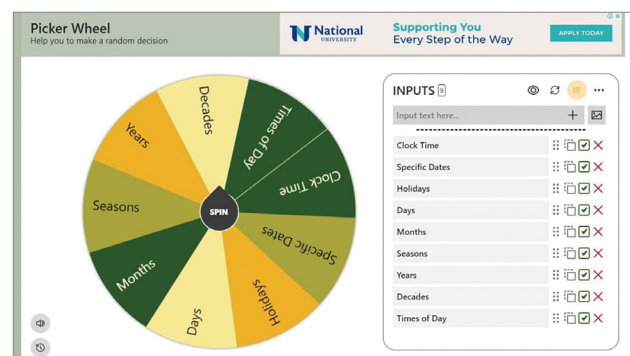
Using such a timeline, although far from perfect, should help to alleviate some of the complexity around temporal prepositions. As the teacher details this, they would be

advised to go through the timeline, providing examples for each period of time and its associated preposition to create an overall guideline for students to follow. Put simply, with a couple of exceptions (that should be explained carefully), *in* would be used for the larger units of time, *at* for smaller units of time, and *on* would be used between the two for the units of time that are neither large nor small.

Activities

Once this has been explained, the next stage would be to use some classroom activities to help begin to teach and gauge student comprehension. The first and most popular activity that I created involved pair work. Separating students into pairs and giving them mini-white boards (or paper), the teacher can use a randomized online spinning wheel (https://pickerwheel.com/ and https://spintthewheel.io/ko are free to use examples). The teacher would then fill in the different examples, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. An Example of the Preparation Involved for the First Pair Activity, Using Picker Wheel



Using a projector or simply with the computer screen turned and facing the class the teacher would spin the wheel. Upon landing on the given period of time the students, after conversing with their partner, would choose which preposition (*at*, *on*, or *in*) would correspond with the given example. Students would then write it down and hold up their answer. In my experience, this works especially well when students are timed (usually with the teacher counting down verbally from 10 seconds to create a sense of urgency) and prizes are involved.

A second activity to consider would be a verbal fill-in-the-blanks exercise. Using the printed worksheet, have the students again work in pairs. One reads the sentence, omitting the crossed out prepositional words, while the other has to attempt to guess the correct preposition once the sentence has been read. This creates a learning environment where the students practice and test one another as part of a self-guided learning exercise. The difficulty increases the further through the exercise the students go, with the number of prepositions omitted increasing (as signified by the numbers in parentheses at the start of each sentence). Ideally, each student would only do three or four sentences chosen by their partner at random before switching partners with another pair in the classroom, creating varied exposure.

A third, larger group activity that could be considered is an unscramble game nicknamed "Sleeping Sentences." For this game two teams with a minimum of four students each are needed. With two pieces of paper placed on a hard surface at the back of the class (one for each team), students put their heads on their respective desks or cover their eyes (simulating sleeping). Taking a simple sentence but omitting the preposition of time (such as omitting the *on* of "On Wednesday, I go swimming"), the teacher

writes one word from the given sentence on the board and calls the names of two students (one from each team) to put their head up and look at the board, remembering the word written, and then silently put their head back down, with the teacher then erasing the written word. The teacher would continue this process with every word in the sentence and each student, until every player on each team has one different word from the sentence that only they have seen and memorized. By the end, every student on each team will have a single word from the sentence but not know the other words their teammates have. On the teacher's command, they first have to rush to get the paper; secondly, collect themselves as a team; thirdly, get all the words written onto their team paper by asking one another what word they were given; fourthly, put those words into the correct order; and then finally include the preposition, which has been omitted by the teacher before racing to give the full written sentence to them. This final step requires the highest level of understanding, as it includes a variety of skills, which is why it is important to place it last in the running order of activities.

Closing Remarks

This article has highlighted the nature of some of the problems regarding Korean students' uptake of temporal prepositions. These issues, if unaddressed, can exist uncorrected for significant periods of time due to the significant grammatical differences between Korean and English. I have explained three activities used to help teach this grammatical structure to students. Over a five-year period, the average improvement in the students measured was close to 30% per student when it came to temporal prepositional uptake. The methods and activities described above proved to consistently demonstrate high comprehension for students learning how to use temporal prepositions, and they also appeared to be an enjoyable and engaging way of learning what can otherwise be quite a dry and complicated grammatical structure.

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My CertPT Experience

By Hall Houston

For the past two decades, I've been teaching university students at universities in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Recently, I became interested in taking a certificate course that would help me expand my professional knowledge as well as give me some fresh ideas for teaching the courses I currently teach, including presentation skills, English conversation, and workplace English.

A couple of years ago, I heard of a new certificate program being offered by Trinity College of London,

It's a certificate course for experienced teachers who want to develop their teaching skills, but don't have the time or interest in pursuing a DELTA or a Trinity Dip.

called CertPT. It appealed to me because it's intended for practicing teachers (thus the "PT") and is designed for busy teachers, who lack the time to devote to a challenging diploma program in addition to working full-time. It sounded like it was just what I was looking for.

From November 2022 to August 2023, I took the CertPT course, which is a certificate course offered by Trinity. In this article, I will tell you more about the CertPT, describe the unique features of the CertPT, talk about my own experience as a student, and tell you what I liked (and didn't like) about the course.

What Is the CertPT?

According to the Trinity website, the CertPT was created for "teachers seeking to update, improve, and enrich their professional teaching practice." It's a certificate course for experienced teachers who want to develop their teaching skills, but don't have the time or interest in pursuing a DELTA or a Trinity Dip.

The CertPT is an Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) Level 6 qualification, which puts it somewhere between a CELTA and a DELTA. The core of the program are the four assessment tasks. Task 1 involves evaluating a resource. It requires one to find a resource (activity, worksheet, section of a coursebook) and write a description and evaluation of it. Task 2 involves adapting a resource, which means altering a resource so that it meets the needs and interests of students in your context. Task 3 involves creating a resource. That means

that one must write an activity or lesson plan. Finally, Task 4 is reflecting on a resource, which involves using one's knowledge and insight to report on how a resource (either the adapted resource from Task 2, or the created resource from Task 3) worked in the classroom. Trinity conveys very clearly what to include in the tasks. For all four tasks, teachers need to make reference to the students they regularly teach – their age, needs, interests, preferences, etc. Teachers also need to relate the tasks to their current teaching context – the school curriculum, common teaching practices, etc. In addition, when writing the four tasks, teachers must make reference to scholarly articles and research in ELT, and use consistent academic referencing. You can read the assessment criteria on the Trinity website ("CertPT," n.d.).

The four assessment tasks specified by Trinity are all the same, but the organizations that offer the CertPT course, such as Pearson, International House, NILE, and English for Asia, use different formats, materials and methods for the course. Therefore, it's important to keep in mind that the materials I describe in this article are the ones used in the Pearson course, but the materials will be different if you took the course with another organization. Also, I must mention that the course I took was completely online, but other organizations offer blended as well as face-to-face options. In addition, many course providers offer the CertPT with a specific focus, such as teaching young learners, business English, EMI, CLIL, EAP, ESP, and materials development. The focus of the course I took was English language teacher development. I chose the Pearson course because I wanted a course that provided an overview of many areas of ELT. Also, I was attracted to the description of the course that appeared on the Pearson website but isn't on the site anymore. The article was titled "CertPT: A practical qualification for teachers who want to upskill," written by Nicola Pope. The article still exists on the Internet Archive Wayback Machine site (Pope, 2021).

Pearson's course materials for CertPT were created by Chia Suan Chong and Mike Hogan, two highly regarded names in ELT. The course materials are available on Pearson's course portal, Pearson Connexus, which is accessible once one has paid course fees. The course begins with a Welcome module, which introduces the course and the four tasks. The material is divided into three modules: ELT Methodology, Teaching the Four Language Systems, and Teaching the Four Language Skills. The first module covers a range of topics, including language learning theories, motivation, lesson planning, different teaching contexts, assessment and testing, and learner autonomy. As one might be able to guess by the titles, Module 2 covers grammar, lexis, pronunciation, and discourse, while Module 3 addresses reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Each of the three modules contains four units, which each have 10 lessons, adding up to a total of 120 lessons, as shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1. The Three Modules of the Pearson CertPT Course.

The Three Modules of the Pearson CertPT Course	
Module 1	
ELT Methodology	
Unit 1 - From theory to practice	
Unit 2 - The roles of a teacher	
Unit 3 - Teaching in the real world	
Unit 4 - Developing your students	
Module 2	
Teaching the Four Language Systems	
Unit 1 - Teaching grammar	
Unit 2 - Teaching lexis	
Unit 3 - Teaching pronunciation	
Unit 4 - Teaching discourse	
Module 3	
Teaching the Four Language Skills	
Unit 1 - Teaching reading	
Unit 2 - Teaching writing	
Unit 3 - Teaching listening	
Unit 4 - Teaching speaking	

The Pros

I thoroughly enjoyed doing the course, even though some aspects of the course were more pertinent to the courses I currently teach than others. The units on reading, listening, and speaking, as well as the units on the roles of a teacher and student development, were the most relevant to my context. However, I greatly benefited from learning about other areas as well.

I found the four tasks to be submitted for assessment to be the most challenging part of the course. I liked the fact that the tasks all emphasized how the resources related to my teaching context and my students. Over the period of time I was focused on the tasks, I was constantly re-reading the specifications set by Trinity to make sure that I would meet the assessment criteria and (ideally) receive high marks. I used the lesson plan that I created for Task 3 to teach a class I taught on Friday morning. I think it's always a rewarding experience to try out in the classroom a piece of teaching material that you created yourself, and see the reactions from students. I usually focus on reading (and occasionally listening to) news items with the class that I taught on Friday mornings, so it was a change of pace for them to do the Task 2 resource, which focused on speaking and listening in pairs and groups, as well as a little bit of writing. I got quite a bit of feedback from the students, some positive and some negative, which helped me write my report for Task 4.

One of the best features of the course is that it covers a diverse range of topics related to language teaching, and it gave me an opportunity to review what I learned many years ago in my master's degree program at the University of Texas at Austin. Each unit contains enough basic information for teachers unfamiliar with the unit's topic, but also some new things for teachers who are very well informed about the topic and want to go beyond basics. Since the course was created a couple of years ago, the course creators included some topics that are fairly new, such as mediation, global issues, emergent language (Dogme), translanguaging, English as a lingua franca, and social-emotional learning. I particularly liked learning about these topics, as I didn't know much about them, and they weren't covered in my master's degree program.

I found the overview of John Field's work on listening a wonderfully clear summary of his ideas about teaching listening. Field's view on teaching listening is that teachers often use only comprehension questions to teach listening, which means that students end up being tested rather than taught how to improve their listening skills. Field suggests that teachers should invest more time in a process approach, attempting to discover what problems students have with listening and how they can help students improve.

I also really liked the unit on discourse, which included a substantial number of practical ideas for teaching discourse features. One example that I really want to try out is an activity where the teacher provides the first two lines of a dialogue, and students must try to predict what the two people are talking about and their relationship (also known as "field" and "tenor"), then provide reasons for their prediction. The discourse unit contains many other useful ideas focusing on communicative competence, adjacency pairs, politeness, backchanneling, and discourse markers.



▲ Chia Suan Chong delivers a CertPT course video lecture "From Theory to Practice: Activities for Any Classroom."

There are frequent quizzes and reviews that help teachers keep the course content fresh in their minds. I particularly enjoyed some of the tasks where one must put parts of a lesson plan in the best order, which helped me think about how to organize my lessons. Course material from one module often shows up again in later modules when relevant. For example, Module 1 covers the basics of the lexical approach. Later in Module 2, in the unit on lexis, the material refers back to the lexical approach, giving teachers an opportunity to revisit the information.

The Welcome module is superb. It provides a solid introduction to the course and the assessments. It also features a learning journal, where one can take notes and reflect on the course.

I was very impressed with the assistance I got from Pearson when I had questions about the course. The staff was always very helpful and quick to respond to my questions.

One additional strength is how the units in Modules 2 and 3 encourage course participants a chance to think about the four CertPT tasks and how the tasks fit in with the skills and systems of teaching English. This helps course participants prepare for the four assessment tasks that are required for this course. I also liked the variety of approaches used in the course material. This course



contains audio tracks, animated videos, podcasts (featuring the two course creators), short readings, and other materials. The course often asks teachers to review the material in a number of ways, including a clever format where the course participant guides a teacher to make the best decisions on how to teach their course and also lesson plans presented in random order that the course participant must put back in order.

One more winning feature of this course is its emphasis on practical ideas. The course has an abundant number of activities and lesson plans that are useful for teaching listening, speaking, reading, and lexis as well as using images, drama, dictation and error correction. As I teach a number of speaking and listening classes at the university where I work, I'm looking forward to trying out some of the speaking activities and lesson plans from the Teaching Speaking unit in my classes this semester. An activity in the mediation section of the Teaching Speaking unit that I really liked was the critical incident activity, where students discuss a situation in which there's a conflict based on difference in cultural norms. For more information about critical incidents in ELT, read Chia Suan Chong's article "What If? Motivating Students in All Classrooms with Critical Incidents" (Chong, 2020).

The Cons

I would now like to mention a few slight problems I had with the course.

One problem I had was lack of interaction. Although the Test Your Knowledge quizzes and review sections gave me some feedback and helped me see how I was progressing, I would have benefitted from having some direct interaction with a teacher trainer or course participants. However, this is a 100% online course, and that is a common disadvantage of taking an online course. Teachers who are interested in taking the CertPT and want a great deal of interaction might want to choose a provider that offers a face-to-face option.

Another problem I had was that some of the lessons contained errors, including quite a few misspelled words. Not hundreds of errors, but enough to make a bad impression.

Some of the lessons had photocopiable handouts with a summary of the lesson, which is a wonderful extra for the course participant. However, I thought this was done a bit haphazardly. In some lessons, I hoped that the activities and lesson plans would also be available as a handout, but many of them weren't. I would have preferred to see the activities and lesson plans from all the units featured

in a booklet that came with the course.

The course has an excellent Welcome section that introduces teachers to the course. Unfortunately, the course ends abruptly at the end of the last module, with a link to download a TEFL certificate and some instructions on completing the four tasks. I felt that the course needed something at the end to give the course participant a nice feeling of completion, perhaps a video from the two course creators congratulating the course participants for finishing the course, or a comprehensive test that helps participants review some of the most challenging parts of each module, or perhaps some suggestions on what course participants can do to continue their professional development beyond the CertPT. Maybe a future edition of the course could contain one (or all three) of these options.

Final Thoughts

Despite these misgivings, I strongly recommend this course for anyone who is currently teaching and would like to pursue a teacher development course that is expertly written and organized. It's an outstanding course for any experienced teacher who would like to review what they learned in teacher training as well as learn about many new developments in ELT. It also can help teachers have more insight into using and creating teaching resources.

If you're interested in learning more about the CertPT, please have a look at the reference list below:

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Glimpses of the 2023 Korea TESOL National Conference



▲ Conference Co-Chair Daniela Trinks helps attendees find name tags.



▲ Registration Chair Martin Todd and Program Chair Gregory Lewis setting up.



▲ Conference Chair André Jacobs giving his opening address.



▲ Featured Speaker Dr. David A. Tizzard chats with Victor Reeser.



▲ Michelle Ocricano speaks on English as a lingua franca.



▲ The 2023 National Conference team.



▲ Presenter Dr. Meerbek Kudaibergenov is all smiles.



▲ The conference comes to a close.



▲ Rhett Burton, organizer of the Kid's Café, with two of the little attendees.



▲ Featured Speaker Dr. María Teresa Martínez-García attends an early talk.



Congratulations!

At the 2023 KOTESOL Annual Business Meeting, held online on November 1, the results of the national elections and the annual national service awards were announced. National elected officers serve a one-year term of office, and national service awards are presented once a year. The staff of *The English Connection* and the entire Publications Committee extend our heartfelt congratulations to the national service award recipients and KOTESOL's newly elected national officers!

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Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter: Inquiries into AI & Globalization

By Frank G. Karioris

Introduction

Educators have long been at the forefront of key changes in society. While teachers are helping to create the next generation of leaders, we are simultaneously thrust into the position of working through the joys and challenges of each new innovation and their attendant problems. Two of the most pressing issues educators face today are technology and globalization.



▲ **Dennis Laffey presenting "There Is No Fate but What We Make: Language Education in the Age of Generative AI."**

In November 2022, ChatGPT burst into the world, bringing generative AI into the public sphere (Lock, 2022). Many of those who first took notice of this new technology were, unsurprisingly, teachers. Now more than ever we are living in a globalized world, whether it be the effects of the current conflict in Ukraine, or more grassroots, as a rise in cultural prominence of K-pop and K-dramas around the globe, or the innumerable ways that Korea has integrated other cultures into daily life here.

In September 2023, the Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter of KOTESOL met to tackle these issues head on. Seeking to open inquiries around the challenges and opportunities that they pose to educators globally, and particularly TESOL teachers in Korea, Dennis Laffey and Silayan Casiño shared their experience and expertise with us.

The Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter of KOTESOL has a monthly workshop, taking place from 2:45 to 5 p.m. on a Saturday. Each workshop has one or two presenters who share their experience and knowledge with us on topics prescient to KOTESOL members. Each presentation is followed by a question-and-answer session and discussion. After the workshop, attendees are invited to join the

presenters for dinner. In September there were roughly ten people present for the workshop.

Education & AI

Dennis Laffey's presentation, titled "There Is No Fate but What We Make: Language Education in the Age of Generative AI," was an opening inquiry into a new and crucial topic. Beginning from the premise that generative AI is "very much artificial, but not yet really intelligent," he provided some key background on what generative AI is. Broadly put, generative AI is a reactive system that responds to user input, synthesizing available data to create new content. Generative AI can be used to create textual, visual, and auditory outputs. Dennis discussed a few of the current forerunners in the field: ChatGPT, DALL-E, Midjourney, Gaudio Lab, and DeepFakeAI.

Dennis worked from a position of inquiry, seeking to understand the limitations of AI, as well as the ways that it might be used as a tool by both educators and students. Comparing the current reactions to previous hesitation around technology in the classroom, Dennis pushed for a balanced approach. He argued that it is important to set clear boundaries around certain issues (such as plagiarism), while simultaneously seeking ways to integrate the technology into the classroom. Some uses could include students using ChatGPT as a "conversation partner" to practice their discussion skills, as an intuitive research or search tool, and as a way for teachers to create reading passages for lessons.

...Silayan's pushing beyond cultural and social boundaries, and Dennis' pushing beyond the world-soon-to-be where AI will be integrated into daily life.

While there are benefits to AI, Dennis pointed out some distinct challenges it poses for language learners. These include the ability to use it to translate whole passages for the students or to use AI to write their assignments for them. In both cases these are not only ethical issues to be concerned about but also the possibility that students will become more reliant on the AI than on their own language abilities (and thereby stop building their language skills). During the discussion, the group talked about the ways that AI could be a component of our teaching and preparation, including as a time-saving method. While recognizing these productive avenues for AI, initial interactions with student usage has not always been positive, often involving deeply troubling and ethically complex issues.

Globalization in the Classroom

Silayan Casiño tackled the topic of culture's relation to language in her presentation entitled "Bringing a Taste of the World to the Classroom." Starting from the premise that we live in a globalizing world, Silayan recognized that many of her Korean students had a limited knowledge of many countries and cultures.

Using a variety of resources, Silayan designed a unit plan where students would get into groups to learn about a new country. Dividing the globe up into regions – eliminating countries that groups were already knowledgeable about – the unit focused on learning about a new culture deeply. Each region had one group assigned, which meant that the class had groups working on all regions.



▲ **Silayan Casiño presenting "Bringing a Taste of the World to the Classroom."**

Given the relation between cultural learning and expressing oneself in another language, Silayan had students write and give a (non-assessed) speech. Combining speaking skills with cultural research provided her Korean students the opportunity to integrate knowledge in new and important ways, and increased student motivation by allowing them to explore topics of interest. At root in the teaching of TESOL is an inherent understanding of the world as linguistically multivocal, and through this comes the recognition that the global society is one of myriad cultures. Languages are not simply isolated lexical applications but are rooted in and bound to cultures (Jiang, 2000; Kramersch, 2014). While a large part of teaching a language is grammar and words, aspects of it extends into recognizing the ways thinking and cultures are intertwined within the language.

Silayan's presentation provided a convincing case for using this type of unit in a classroom and was a strong reminder of the importance of ensuring that our language teaching is connected to cultural lessons. Having used this unit for a number of years, Silayan was able to show the positive impact it had on her students.

Discussion

Now more than ever, it is crucial that we as educators are providing our students the opportunity to engage beyond the localizing environment. Both presentations provided avenues for doing just that, with Silayan's pushing beyond

cultural and social boundaries, and Dennis' pushing beyond the world-soon-to-be where AI will be integrated into daily life.

Given the recent changes in the global political landscape, it is more important than ever to ensure that we are providing our students a substantive education in the world outside of our classroom. We need to give students the skills to not just enter the world but actively engage and create the world to come. Technology has been a consistent element in education, and it is becoming ever more so. We are at the beginning of AI's involvement in the classroom, and it is difficult to predict the ways it will impact teachers, students, and learning (Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023). While we cannot attempt to divine the future, educators should use the skills that we teach our students – such as critical thinking, research-based analysis, lateral reading, and question-based processing – to understand generative AI.

Chapter meetings such as these are an embodiment of the principle of continuous education. Often, teaching can make instructors create a silo of their classroom, and even with the best intentions, teachers can fall into ruts and routine. Both presentations provided the gathered teachers with theoretical and practical applications of ideas to consider. It was clear that everyone left the presentations having new topics to examine, important skills to apply, and new thoughts to bring with us into our classrooms.

Importantly, these presentations were a reminder that educators and students will have to learn to navigate the forthcoming world together. The impacts of globalization and technology in a rapidly changing world require us to work towards creating the world of tomorrow, a world rooted in collaboration and education.

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The Author

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Yongin Chapter: Steps of Determination

By James G. Rush, II

Christina Tsoy has quickly established herself among the regular contributors to the Yongin Chapter in the same way each of our nine chapters are key to Korea TESOL as an organization. Our “rookie teacher” is an inspiration. Undeniably authentic and passionate, her desire to help others are hallmark characteristics of KOTESOL members. Thank you, Christina, as you join all the other volunteers of this professional learning community. Let’s unpack how one individual’s journey is a reassuring reminder of why it is so important to take those first steps!

organization as a community resource and arranged for a representative to attend a chapter event. YISC sent Christina. Her responsibilities included the promotion of the center, consulting, and translation due to her strong English ability. At the time, she gave a short, informative introduction to YISC as though she had been with the program for years, like a seasoned professional. Was she really a university senior about to graduate in a couple of months? Like many soon-to-be graduates, she confessed to being unsure of her future prospects but was not overly worried. Even then, we could see she was a teacher-in-the-making. This all took place a year ago, to the month. Just after this visit, she became a member. Then, she graduated and found her first teaching job. Fast forward to September 23, 2023, and it was easy to see the same enthusiasm for educating, sharing, and helping.

The Member

“I wasn’t sure at first. I had low confidence. But I was given a chance and thought, ‘Why not?!’”
— Christina Tsoy

For this particular event, it was the first month back after the summer break. Christina had established a routine with her teaching responsibilities through the first half of the year and was comfortable with the fall date being chosen. The chapter made sure to give her time to plan her presentation. Typically, the events are held on the second Saturday of the month. Start times fluctuate depending on speaker availability or members committed to participate. Usually there are between 10 and 20 attendees, and we do our best to have two presenters. This event was below average with eight in attendance. Fortunately, they were all names and faces Christina recognized.



▲ Christina Tsoy with Yongin Chapter members.

As you read about the 2022 graduate turned 2023 first-year teacher, you are invited to reflect on Christina’s growth and realization about her identity. My guess is that it probably parallels you and your vocational safari. Interestingly, her travels – literally and figuratively – are the embodiment of the Yongin Chapter.

Pre-Presentation: A Few Notes

Before sharing details of Christina’s recent presentation as a member, some additional background and context will aid understanding of how an undergraduate visitor can become a valuable chapter member. The need for building her confidence as a *bona fide* educator with a story to share was evident. We scheduled her to use one of our monthly event time-slots to practice her presentation as she considered submitting a proposal to our annual fall conference. This was just one way we could truly be “teachers helping teachers.” We pointed out the fact that she could get feedback in time before making a final decision about the proposal. As with all relationships, trust takes time and communication. Our regular attendees and long-time chapter members are veteran teachers with experience as presenters who offered guidance. Now, they are also Christina’s peers. This presentation happened because of the numerous interactions over the past year.

The Visitor

Energetic and with a beaming smile, Christina Tsoy was first introduced to the Yongin Chapter in September 2022 as a part-time staff and student volunteer with the Yongin Immigrant Support Center (YISC). Yongin Chapter leadership wanted to know more about this

From Learner to Teacher: Navigating Life Abroad with Korean Roots

During the presentation, we walked alongside Christina. She told us about specific moments and enduring memories that helped define her teaching philosophy and professional perspective. During her September 2022 YISC introduction, she merely represented another organization and only briefly shared her background. In this presentation, we heard details about challenges she faced as a child, youth, and young adult. Matters outside of Christina’s control caused her to live a much different life compared to that of the majority of her peers. Growing up is difficult enough when important parts of identity, like nationality and language, are “normal.” She explained, “My identity is complicated.” Both of her parents are from

She told us about specific moments and enduring memories that helped define her teaching philosophy and professional perspective.

Korea. However, she was born in Uzbekistan. Her family lived there until Christina was 11 years old. During that time, she had been learning in Russian, in a Soviet Union-influenced education system. Moving caused her to start learning about herself differently, at an earlier age than most.

Expectations vs. Reality: Arrival in Korea

Little did she know that her parents had made a life-changing decision for the 11-year-old and her sister. Christina thought traveling to Korea would be a three-month summer vacation. She explained, "They told us about the trip, but they told us nothing about planning to send us to Korean school." She laughed softly, recalling the utter surprise and continued, "It was a complete shock to me. I couldn't speak. I couldn't read. I didn't even know any Korean letters. I started studying here from 'zero.'"

She clearly remembers being told about her new house on the very first day in Korea. Her father was driving the car, and they passed by a high-rise apartment building with the number "104" on its side. "My dad said, we are going to live in house number 1-0-4," she recalled. Christina went on to tell us how she mistakenly thought they would be living in that particular apartment building. She was saddened to learn the reality: Her new home was a one-bedroom place for all four family members. This was an extreme contrast to the ten-room house her family had back in Uzbekistan. "I never realized a home could be so small."

Christina then spoke about "reality checks" and the formation of her identity. This included funny anecdotes like learning about tomatoes as cake decorations and deeper lessons like fully realizing the "Soviet Union influence" on her primary education. (Ask her about them both at our next event!) A constant theme was the growth mindset and grit-infused focus. "I studied so hard to get away from my classmates saying "Oh, you are a foreigner" and hearing others say "I had no problems." This resulted in her steadfast goal to become a qualified TESOL teacher. In her abstract she summarized, "With determination and dedication, nothing is beyond your reach."

Author's Reflections

I marvel at how aptly titled and timely her presentation was: "From Learner to Teacher – Navigating Life Abroad with Korean Roots." Here she was, still learning. She taught about the most meaningful lesson: life. Her life story included valuable insights for us to ponder. The information helped us better understand our chapter theme for 2023: "A Multicultural Celebration." Reflecting on this particular presentation and presenter was a great honor.

These few stories gave the audience the opportunity to consider our own challenges and struggles, surprises, and triumphs. Some of us have been on a much longer trip than initially planned. Others of us are very concerned about our housing, with various wonders and expectations. In any and every situation, we must remember how difficulties and successes actually give us sensitive ears and an empathetic heart while serving English learners and English teachers. All types of teachers, with all kinds of backgrounds, come to our chapter events. Therefore, we must make it our priority to listen, connect, and offer ways to specifically encourage educators – teachers like Christina Tsoy. Do these instances sound familiar and cause you to recall your personal and professional steps? Would you like to share your story, too?

What This Means for Yongin Chapter and You

Asking insightful questions, bonding over shared

The chapter is very intentional about giving teachers "something to think about" and "something to try out in class on Monday."

understandings, and simply being available for our fellow English language teachers are the kinds of reflective practice we do at our gatherings. Yongin holds monthly events, mostly professional but others more social, throughout the year. The events focused on "PD" are usually in the form of a presentation or workshop. Common topics include methods, strategies, and practical topics such as classroom management. Equally important is to have the latest in research and in-depth discussions about theoretical matters. The chapter is very intentional about giving teachers "something to think about" and "something to try out in class on Monday." The social events have primarily been outings to local board game cafes and simply meeting up for a meal. Maybe you have an idea for a future social event? Please share it with us.

In addition to teaching-specific workshops, we see a range of initiatives and pursuits. Innovation and outside-the-box thinking are strongly encouraged. Two particular examples deserve to be highlighted: the chapter podcast and a Kids Cafe. The current podcast, hosted by Greg Lewis, started as an idea from long-time member and past-president Martin Todd. At first, the format was a 5- to 10-minute "wrap-up" interview being done with the monthly presenters. It has grown steadily to include conversations with featured speakers and interesting figures from throughout the KOTESOL-connected world. Well over 50 podcast episodes are now archived and offer in-depth exchanges covering multiple topics and often lasting more than 30 minutes. Secondly, in our most recent conference, we reworked an age-old matter into a potential solution. Offering child care at events, especially at conferences, has been brought up by planning committees. For the 2023 National Conference, the creative alternative and final decision was made to make space for a parent-led, child-inclusive "Kids Cafe." These are just two examples of how the chapter is, like the rest of KOTESOL, looking at the interests and desires of the members to keep looking ahead.

You. Are. Needed. Your ideas and your voice. Your heart and your experience. With your input, we will be able to serve our students, coworkers, and communities better. Consider joining the Yongin Chapter today!

The Author

James G. Rush, II is currently the president of the Yongin Chapter and has served in a variety of roles with KOTESOL since joining in 2016. As a committed lifetime member, he cherishes the opportunities provided at all levels of the organization because in the end, "it's all about relationships." Email: jamesrush.ltu@gmail.com



Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter: Language Exchange Ambassadors Give a Little but Get a Lot

By KC Washington

Busan-Gyeongnam KOTESOL's big professional development focus of the year was our September 23rd "Give a Little, Get a Lot" volunteer event. Arranged by Member-at-Large Patrick Conway, the idea was to gather in Hadong, in the southeastern province of Gyeongsangnam-do, and lead an adult conversation class. During his many trips with his in-laws to the area, Patrick had befriended Julie Lee, a local who offers weekly English lessons out of Julie's Antiques and Tea House, a charming café in the famed destination site of Choichampan-daek (최참판댁, Home of Choi Champan). Together they came

We met in Julie's café, where she plied us with coffee and gelato. Julie, one of the many Koreans who have studied in Canada, impressed us with her nearly flawless English as well as her generosity. We wandered around, taking in the beauty of the nobleman's house – the scene of many famous K-dramas – the Pak Kyongni Literary Park, and the surrounding farmland before heading to the Hwagae-myeon Community Center. The participants arranged tables and set up a lavish buffet of pizza, chicken, gimbap, salad, and fruit. Patrick had designed the evening to be loose, wanting to give the students the opportunity



▲ Julie Lee (front row, glasses) surrounded by her students and Busan-Gyeongnam KOTESOL Chapter members during the "Give a Little, Get a Lot" volunteer event.

up with the idea of hosting a combo class-mixer with her students, who, because of the remoteness of the area, had never studied with a native English speaker.

Coming from different areas, and most of us unfamiliar with Hadong, we arrived early so we could explore the countryside a little. Although we were there to teach, we all understood as veteran instructors that one method of effective communication and language transference is finding common ground. We have all found in our many years of teaching that our students get excited when they learn where we're from – California, New York City, Ireland, Colorado – and want to know more about us, but they also appreciate when we show knowledge and appreciation for Korea.

to meet all of us and practice their English in a relaxed environment. We did a group version of speed dating, sitting for 15–20 minutes before moving on. This was a good way to break the ice, reduce nerves, and covertly assess language levels. Although this was a one-time event, assessing language levels helped us adjust our approach throughout the evening.

There were 15 students with varying degrees of ability and confidence, but after introductions and small talk as we ate, even the most nervous became more relaxed. We then broke into teams where we played the children's game "Miss Mary Mack" and a trivia game with general questions about Korea and the instructor's home countries. The total physical response activity of the clapping sing-

along got everyone moving and laughing, the creation of team names forced everyone to tap into connections and creativity, and the trivia game brought out everyone's competitiveness. Answers were shouted and groans bounced off the beige walls as we all struggled with the questions. Prizes were provided, enlivening each round. Almost everyone won something or got a few questions right, leaving everyone satisfied.

We wrapped up after about three hours, cleaning the space, gathering up our prizes and gifts. Sleeping quarters at the gorgeous Sodam Heukjip Pension (소담휴집펜션), tucked high in the mountains, were provided for us by May, one of the students. In the morning, Violet, a professional chef, along with Julie and her husband, prepared a delicious traditional Korean breakfast alfresco. The picturesque morning scene was complete with a babbling brook overlooking the valley. As we ate, we reflected on the prior evening. May, Violet, and Julie assured us that they and the others had not only enjoyed themselves but had improved their speaking confidence and surprised themselves with what they knew and what they had learned.

As we packed up to go home, our group also reflected on the event. Our chapter members acknowledged the enjoyment we got from the experience. However, what struck us the most, besides the kindness and generosity of the students and our host, was the conviction that we had gotten more than we had given. We asked questions, gently corrected pronunciation and syntax, introduced new vocabulary, and exposed the students to native speakers. We got to meet people of varying ages and backgrounds, eager to learn and willing to push past filters to get to know us, however briefly, exchanging language and culture.

There's talk about holding the event again, which would be wonderful. It's always inspiring when one learns more than one teaches and one feels a real connection to one's subject matter and students. We came as ambassadors but left as collaborators. We indeed gave a little but got a lot.

We came as ambassadors but left as collaborators.

Information about the area and our hosts:
– Julie Lee at Julie's Antiques & Tea House
경남 하동군 악양면 평사리길 40-2
– Sodam Heukjip Pension: 소담휴집펜션
경남 하동군 악양면 봉대길 135

The Author

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Seoul Chapter: Conflict Resolution – What to Do When Someone Eats Your Ice Cream...

By Tom Wyatt

Conflict? Who wants that? Well, not most people. Luckily, on September 16th, I attended a workshop entitled “Learning English by Building Conflict Resolution Skills,” which taught me how to resolve such conflicts. This was Seoul Chapter’s bimonthly workshop (meetings are monthly but alternate between workshops and social events that usually run from 2:00–5:00). I very recently moved from Gwangju to Seoul, so this was my first time at a Seoul Chapter event. Already being an active member of KOTESOL, one of the first things I made sure to do when I moved was to find out about the Seoul Chapter, and I became aware of this meeting via the KOTESOL website and KOTESOL Facebook group.

surgery and walking with the speed of a turtle, I picked “annoyed.” I think this activity would work well as an ice-breaker or review speaking activity for students Grade 5 and up. My teaching experience is primarily with elementary school students. So in my estimation, picking cards would be far more fun than writing how they felt. Moreover, the cards themselves would present new vocabulary they could ask about.

For the next activity, we listed three of our values and three things we wished for. We then practiced our active listening skills by listening to our partners and summarizing what they said. Active listening is, after all, a key skill for conflict resolution.

This activity, I think, would work well with university and high school students and would act as a good ice-breaker because it gives people the chance to talk about themselves, which, in general, people enjoy. Well, personally, I enjoy it. Anytime I can talk about my desire for fully automated luxury gay space communism, I will take it.

The seminar continued with an explanation of conflict mediation. Conflict mediation is mediating between two parties so they can, ideally, stop fighting and come to an agreement. The mediator must be impartial and thus is not a judge, a point I will return to.

For demonstration purposes, with a partner, we had to roleplay conflicts on cards we were given. I was a child who was mad at a classmate for drawing on my backpack though that was revenge for calling her stupid. For Heidi’s demonstration, I volunteered. It was a bit hard to play the role of an elementary school student without being ironic, but that aside, Heidi effectively demonstrated how



▲ *Catching Tom Wyatt, Heidi Nam, Yoon Ji Young, and Cheryl Woelk in some serious conflict resolution.*

Despite being new, I felt welcome. After meeting some new faces (approximately 15), mostly EFL teachers, with a Spanish instructor here or there, the workshop began. The presenters, Heidi Nam and Cheryl Woelk, did an excellent job both managing time and explaining the concept of conflict mediation and its process. Moreover, the workshop was hands-on, showing us first how to do conflict mediation and then having us do it. We started with ice-breakers, followed by an explanation of what conflict resolution is, then a demonstration of the conflict resolution process, and then we participants attempted to resolve some conflicts ourselves.

For the first icebreaker, we picked an emotion card and then explained why we chose it. Recovering from

...impartial mediation may be the only way communication can happen, as being able to communicate is critical for conflict resolution.

Recovering from surgery and walking with the speed of a turtle, I picked “annoyed.”

introduction into real academic culture, and it was through KOTESOL that I developed most of my post-university academic development. And it goes without saying that academic development also enriched my teaching in ways that would not have been possible alone. Moreover, KOTESOL is how I ended up giving a presentation at an international conference, and the volunteer roles

to be a mediator, and my classmate and I eventually came to a compromise.

Next, we participants were split into two groups to practice conflict mediation ourselves. I mediated a conflict between two children; call them Jim and Steve. Jim ate the ice cream that Steve left in the fridge. This is where I (and apparently the presenters’ students) had difficulty remaining impartial. Jim said he ate the ice cream because it had taken up room in the fridge for too long. This was a weak rationalization, at best. Jim was clearly in the wrong, which I wanted to say, but the conflicting parties needed to find a solution, and my job was to only facilitate that discussion. That felt a little morally repugnant to me, especially since I was still salty about how, on vacation, someone took my bell pepper from the hostel fridge and then blamed me because I did not label it. The other group’s conflict – a father arguing with his son because the son was marrying someone of a different culture – made me think the same way, obviously the father is wrong. That said, I think the impartiality is necessary because, in my experience, accusations of wrongdoing (no matter how deserved) generally make parties defensive and cause the conversation to break down. Thus, in these situations, impartial mediation may be the only way communication can happen, as being able to communicate is critical for conflict resolution.

This activity is a good exercise because there is great value in learning how to mediate conflicts, questions of language learning value aside. It would be easily applicable to a student’s real life. As a language learning activity, I could see it working for university students, but it is probably too complex for elementary or middle school students, especially in an English-only environment. Remembering the student I was in high school, I doubt high school students’ ability to take the activity seriously.

Following the seminar, we went to a Mexican restaurant called Cuchara. I quite enjoyed the chicken tacos, and it was relatively affordable. I would eat there again. Also, it was nice getting to know new faces.

So to wrap-up, I hope this article has piqued your interest in both conflict mediation and the Seoul Chapter. As mentioned above, the chapter meets once a month alternating between workshops and social events. When I first moved to Gwangju, I did not really have an enduring social circle, as EFL teachers come and go, and KOTESOL filled that void. Moreover, KOTESOL was my first

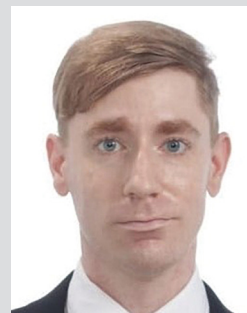


▲ Let’s taco ‘bout it after the workshop.

I was able to take on have been great for my resume. So I recommend coming out to a meeting and getting involved as that is where the magic happens, for lack of a better cliché.

The Author

Tom Wyatt is currently studying Korean as a full-time student in Yonsei’s Korean Language Program. Previously, he taught EFL to young learners in Gwangju and Cheonan. He is a member of KOTESOL and JALT and has an HBA in English and religion from the University of Toronto, and a CELTA. Email: jtwyatt1989@gmail.com



KOTESOL Spotlight: Andrew White

This issue's featured KOTESOL member in this Spotlight column is a person whose photo has appeared regularly in this magazine for years. Along with his photo appears his name and that he is the editor-in-chief of *The English Connection*. But aside from this, the magazine lets us know little about Andrew White, aside from the editorials that he pens. That is all about to change with this interview with Andrew. — Ed.

TEC: Hello, Andrew. First, I'd like to thank you for making time for this interview. I know you're busy with other matters in preparing the Winter issue of *The English Connection* (TEC). Would you begin, as we usually do in these Spotlight interviews, by giving us a bit of pre-Korea information about yourself?

Andrew: Hello, Dave. It's a little uncomfortable being on the other side of the Spotlight, so to speak, but let's give it a go. To start, I'm American, 53 years old, and from a Navy family, which makes me a military brat. I was born in Iowa, my parents' home state, then whisked to Florida while still an infant where Dad was in basic training. Our family was re-stationed roughly every 2–3 years after that all the way through high school. I've lived in five different states, as well as two years in London in the mid-70's. The popular Korean question, "Where's your hometown? Where are you from?" always gets me confused, so to avoid any overblown explanations at first greetings I just say "Iowa California."



TEC: Well, I see you were accustomed to moving from place to place, but how did the sirens allure you to Korea? In other words, when did you come, and what brought you here?

Andrew: Graduating from Cal State Humboldt, in 1995, I knew I wanted to do something with my BA in English, and perhaps journalism, as I wrote for the school newspaper. Teach in Asia (meaning Japan and Korea) was a popular battle cry back then, and the opportunities, recruiting, interviews, and contracts were all done through our school's Career Center, if I remember correctly, and made the entry level into the overseas teaching career much easier. This being before the internet, I thought of it as a Peace Corps adventure, a gap year, expecting dirt floors and hand-held chalkboards. I was pleasantly surprised on arrival in 1996, and yes, Korea has stepped up their global image since then.

TEC: Yes, changes occur quickly in Korea. Back in 2019, when KOTESOL was looking for a new editor-in-chief for TEC, can you tell us why you volunteered for the position, when it is more often the case that KOTESOL needs to go out and beg to fill the position?

Andrew: What? Beg to fill the position?!! If I knew that I would have better negotiated my compensation package. Actually, I had just recently been downsized by a well-known university distance TESOL MA program doing tutoring and supervisory work, and was looking to stay academically active. And the opportunity to start at the top as editor-in-chief was appealing.

TEC: What better compensation package than knowing that you are creating a product that is beneficial to so many? Would you summarize for our readers the process, from start to finish, that is involved in producing an issue of TEC?

Andrew: Being a quarterly publication, we operate on a three-month rotation per issue. In the first month, I look ahead and predict how full the 32 pages already are, based on article submissions I already have. Sadly this reserve is usually very low, and as a result, I often can't rely on out-of-the-blue submissions alone for content. (I must stress how important KOTESOL membership and TEC reader submissions are for the success of the magazine.) Then, if needed, I enjoy creating special themed editions, which allows me to research specialists in a field, track them down, and cold-call them for requests to submit to the magazine. Over the years we've had themed issues on switching to online teaching, reflection, classroom tips, gamification, ChatGPT, as well as previewing the annual international conference through its invited speakers. It's a motivating way to solicit and beg strangers to write for me. At any given time during the magazine's production cycle I'd say I'm corresponding with 15–20 people. In the second month, commenting, editing, and proofing takes place, and it can be a (usually) cooperative back and forth between me and the writer, sometimes requiring several drafts. At this stage, I must rely heavily on my editors – over the years being Suzanne Bardasz, Jocelyn Wright and Chris Miller, and most recently adeptly being done by Wesley Martin and Tom Wyatt. Final proofing is done by you Dave, the gold standard for APA formatting and editing. As I'm sure KOTESOL membership knows, Dave, when you drop the hammer, people listen. In the third month, all articles and other content (images, ads, announcements, editorials, messages, KOTESOL News and Happenings, columns) have been laid out on the spreadsheet, I sign off on it, and it's outsourced to the enigmatic MJ for layout and design. We anxiously anticipate its revealing, and then several rounds of read-throughs and corrections occur. It's then released as a PDF on our website on the first of the month. And copies mailed to members shortly after.



▲ Andrew receiving Seoul honorary citizenship in 2018 from Mayor Park Won-soon.

TEC: “The gold standard” – flattery will get you everywhere. In your almost five years as editor of TEC, what would you consider to be some of the highlights of the magazine?

Andrew: My very first assignment when I started with TEC was collecting words of sentiment after the suicide of Mitzi Kaufman, from those touched by her. Though I didn’t know her personally, it taught me about the powers that bring people together, to advocate for others, as well as the heartbreak for her friends and community she chose to leave behind.

It was an honor to interview both Rod Ellis and Jack C. Richards, two pinnacles in our field, in previews for KOTESOL international conferences covered in TEC. Our 25th anniversary edition, in Autumn 2021, had me collaborate with Rob Dickey on a photo collage of the 110 successive front covers of TEC, which was quite an undertaking and ended up being pretty impressive.

Overall, though, any time I can give a new writer an opportunity and a platform for their research and thoughts on EFL to be published, I feel like I’ve helped out. It’s my own take on the “teachers helping teachers” motto of ours.

TEC: Yes, I think TEC contributes a lot to teachers helping teachers. Do you have any plans, big or small, for future changes to TEC?

Andrew: Well, starting with this Winter issue, I’d like to feature more chapter-level events, be it monthly meetings, presentations, workshops, volunteer outreach events in the community, or whatever. We all know the importance and power these local-level meetings have to KOTESOL members, how they ignite involvement and a community spirit amongst English teachers. And they’re such a socially imaginative and creative contrast to the larger, structured national and international conferences.

TEC: Moving from TEC to focus more on you... I know that you teach at a university in Seoul. Could you give us the who, what, where, and how of your English teaching, and any anecdotes that you might wish to include?

Andrew: I started working in the English Department of a community college in NE Seoul in 1999. In 2005, I was rehired, so to speak, to a tenure track position (Yes, in the interview I actually wore the nametag “후보 1” [Candidate #1], despite a large majority of the hiring committee being students in my professors’ English conversation class.). I’d be curious to know how many foreigners have stayed at the same school for 25 years. Actually, many of those answers appear in this edition’s Editorial of mine, as I write about some of the unique problems my school and department are facing.

If I had to state an EFL teaching philosophy, it would be “Don’t delude yourself into thinking you have something important to teach in the classroom.” At the college level, they’ve already been exposed to and lectured about it all. Do all of your “teacher’s role” in preparation, time and dynamics organization, and theories on communicative learning. The little time students have in your classroom, to be “on” and speaking and interacting in English, is so valuable that it should be dedicated to student-led learning and activities as much as possible. Think of yourself more as a coach on the sidelines, directing and supporting.

TEC: Let’s now move from the classroom to free time. Earlier this year, I saw in my Facebook feed that you had won a prize in the 2023 Korea Home Brewing Championship. Tell me more, and what other hobbies you might have?

Andrew: Yes, beer homebrewing has been a hobby of mine for decades, stemming from the fact that I couldn’t go out and buy in Korea the styles I like to drink – ales, West Coast

IPA’s, Belgians, saisons, porters. There is a strong craft beer and homebrewing culture here in Korea, and yes, I’ve been lucky and won some national events over the years.

I have to say, however, that my main pastime is Korean traditional archery, something I’ve been active in for twenty years now. In fact, in 2018 I received Seoul honorary citizenship for promoting Korean archery, here and abroad, as a sport and cultural heritage. Since the Covid years, I’ve also been getting into woodworking, drawn to the simple lines of Shaker end tables, as well as wooden framed artworks inspired by the Korean “dansaek-hwa” art movement of the early ‘70’s. I’d love to pursue my woodcrafts more, if only I could set up a workshop. I miss American garages!

TEC: What does your personal fortune teller say that the future holds for Dr. Andrew White?



▲ Andrew and his artworks displayed at a 2022 international exhibition at Yongsan City Hall.

Andrew: Well, that’s a tough one. America is always looming in my mind, and I really want to give my second daughter an American high school experience, after seeing what her older sister has gone through. But it’s such a crazy circus over there right now. And it’s hard to find any substantial fault with Korean living, try as we all do.

TEC: Speaking of which, I know that you have a family here. Would you tell us a little about them?

Andrew: My wife and I have been married for 19 years, and we have two daughters, in Korean high school third year and middle school first year. Lola, our eldest, takes the Korean SAT – Suneung (수능) – in November, and by the time people are reading this, results will have let us know whether we’ve given her the master bedroom or she’s been banished to the veranda closet. She’ll be entering a university in Seoul next spring one way or another. Betty, having more of her dad’s appearance, is a standout in a sea of conformity at her middle school, and I’ve been proud of her bravery and bold spirit, being popular and fitting in.

TEC: Well, thanks for that. Is there anything else that you would like to share with our readers before we conclude this interview?

Andrew: Nope. Thanks, Dave! Now I’m back to the office. Deadlines’ looming, and this magazine isn’t gonna publish itself.

Interviewed by David Shaffer.

The Development Connection



Trust and Institutional Professional Development

By Bill Snyder

Mistrust begets mistrust; trust begets accomplishment.
— Attributed to Lao Tzu

I mentioned trust in my last column as one of the five essential conditions for reflective practice, according to Farrell (2018). I'm currently doing a lot of reading about trust because of the results of research that colleagues and I carried out during the pandemic. We collected data about the wellbeing of part-time teachers during 2020–2021 on a weekly basis from the start of emergency remote teaching (ERT) in April 2020 through the end of that academic year. The two main themes that emerged from the data were resilience and vulnerability. Part-time teachers started ERT with a strong sense of professionalism that was largely maintained throughout the year, but at the same time, their vulnerabilities were exposed to a greater extent than ever.

Trust is both a lubricant of social interaction and a glue that holds communities together (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Teachers work in educational institutions, tied to the other people there in a network of relationships of mutual obligation and responsibility. Teachers must meet their obligations and fulfill their responsibilities, while trusting that the other people – students, administrators, and other teachers – meet theirs in return. These trust relationships are mutual. Teachers have to trust that students are working honestly on assignments; students have to trust that the assignments teachers ask them are truly going to be helpful to them in achieving their educational goals. When everyone meets their obligations and fulfills their responsibilities to each other, people trust each other. The institution as a whole works well and moves towards the accomplishment of its educational goals. One institutional goal that should be shared by all parties is the maintenance of trust.

Building off of earlier work by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), Day and Gu (2010) locate trust in people's beliefs that those they trust will look after their physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing; are reliable, competent, honest, and transparent about their actions; and that they strive to keep

things positive overall. But when I looked deeply into the data my colleagues and I collected from part-time teachers, what struck me was how many teachers lost trust in the administrations of their institutions across so many of these factors.

Part-time teachers often teach the bulk of classes in language programs at universities, not just in Japan but in many other countries as well. They teach for lower pay, often at undesirable hours, and because they often teach at multiple

Trust is both a lubricant of social interaction and a glue that holds communities together.

institutions, they have to deal with the different systems at each one. They should be seen as essential in universities that require students to study English and need a large number of teachers to meet their students' needs but are usually treated as marginal to the overall operation of the institutions. They accept these conditions of vulnerability with the belief that the universities will support them in terms of basic teaching needs.

One key issue was that many part-time teachers felt that they were being asked to carry out ERT without administrators giving them the professional development support that they needed to do so. In order to make the best use of the new tools they were being asked to use in their classes, they needed fast training on them. Instead, they were sometimes excluded from training sessions offered to full-time teachers. Or they received training that did not really prepare them to use the tools in class. Much of the time, they were left to figure out the tools on their own. In fairness, a few teachers acknowledged

that the administrators of their schools were also overwhelmed by a pandemic that they were not prepared for and were probably doing the best they could in the situation. But overall, the part-time teachers felt that the situation emphasized their marginal status in their workplaces. Decisions were being made that didn't consider their wellbeing because they were not really considered fully members of the community. The help they needed to deal with the situation was not being provided. The teachers felt that their trust that institutions would support them in their need was betrayed.

Where the part-time teachers did find more support was from other teachers. Teachers who were already experienced at teaching online began offering support to colleagues at some universities. Groups were set up on social media sites where online teaching novices could ask questions and get serious responses from more experienced teachers. And what was most impressive was the sincerity with which all this support was carried out. The online groups, at least the ones I joined, were remarkably free of snark, condescension, and trolling. Experts were sincerely trying to help the less experienced, and those being helped came to see that they could trust that the advice they were receiving was solid. With that support, many teachers were able to successfully navigate ERT. In many cases, they came out at the other end feeling that they had grown professionally with the help of other teachers during the experience.

The tale I have told here is very abridged, focusing just on the issue of professional development support for part-time teachers during ERT. That may seem like a very specific situation, leading to the question of what it has to do with professional development now or more generally, and where trust fits into the picture. I think there are some lessons that we can take away that do have importance for all of us going forward.

First, professional development is not just an individual issue but also an institutional one. Teachers are often told that professional development is their responsibility, that efforts to improve themselves is part of the job. They should locate professional development opportunities for themselves, and often cover the expenses for this out of their own pockets. There is a sense that taking action to improve themselves and gaining credentials is a way of positioning themselves for better opportunities in the future. Teachers should, of course, want to improve their skills to be better at their work, and perhaps also to be able to take advantage of greater opportunities. But institutions should also be interested in the professional development of their teaching staff because a more professional teaching staff should mean better instruction and increased learning now for students. Some institutions do provide some forms of support for teachers, either through direct delivery of professional development opportunities or by providing funding for professional development activities. I'll talk about the issues with in-house professional development in a few paragraphs. The financial support provided often doesn't meet the total costs to teachers for what is expected of them. And many teachers work at institutions that don't provide such support or are, like part-timers, not eligible for the support that exists.

The Columnist

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Second, as with any systemic issue, the success of professional development programs depends on trust. As noted in the last paragraph, in some institutions, teachers are trusted to pursue professional development independently, at their own expense. In cases like this, teachers may trust that they will be rewarded somehow by the institution for their efforts. Where in-house professional development is offered, teachers have to trust that what is provided is relevant to their needs, while administrators have to trust that the teachers will make use of what is offered, especially if it is presented as meeting institutional goals. But trust is fragile. The part-time teachers my colleagues and I studied lost trust in their institutions because they felt that the professional development support provided did not meet their needs, and this reinforced their sense of being marginal to the institution.

Perhaps a better way forward is to create spaces for cooperative professional development among teachers, driven by teachers.

Third, institutions may do better by moving away from top-down professional development programs. Farrell (2023) notes in the foreword to a new book on critical friendships and reflective practice that top-down approaches to providing professional development to teachers are often met with dread because what is provided has not been decided with the teachers' views taken into consideration. Such an approach, while sometimes necessary, may be taken as untrusting when done consistently. Perhaps a better way forward is to create spaces for cooperative professional development among teachers, driven by teachers. Having times for teachers to talk with each other without a top-down agenda and make contributions to how institutional goals should be met may be the most productive and long-lasting approach to professional development for both teachers and the institutions they work in.

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The Brain Connection

Metaphor Is the Brain's Learning Tool

By Dr. Curtis Kelly



Love Is a Journey

Love is a difficult journey. There are many bumps in the road and no promise you'll get anywhere. Sadly, most relationships end up on a dead-end street, where you just end up spinning your wheels until you go your separate ways.

This passage uses a common metaphor, that romance or marriage is a trip. The metaphor gives it meaning. The relationship is the vehicle and lovers are the passengers. Common goals are the destination, and difficulties attaining it are represented as impediments to travel. This metaphor helps us understand an incredibly complex social relationship, love, by comparing it to a simple physical experience, a trip (Lakoff, 2014).

So, what does "metaphor" mean to you? To me, until I started reading and listening to Lakoff, I thought of metaphor as a literary device, something poets and novelists use and not of much value in the kinds of low-level classes I taught. But now I realize metaphor is a far more important part of language, the basic way we come to understand language from the very start. And here is how.

How the Brain Uses Metaphor in Language Processing

First, almost everything we learn comes from a single principle about the brain: Things that fire together, wire together.

If you see a dog running, it will activate existing neural routines for eyes, ears, fur, and even your own motor routines for running. After a few encounters, since all these parts fire together, they wire together and become your mental model for a dog. When you learn the word *dog*, the related oral/aural/lexical routines get wired to this model too.

That is how the brain learns. It wires things together. And

even if you break down the most exquisite thought, it is composed at the base of the simplest of routines that we once created through physical sensory and motor experience with the world. This is even true for abstract thoughts. We understand fairness through the base physical experience of balancing. We frame marketplace competition as battle that itself is wired to personal experiences of struggle and fighting.

Think about this. Why do we say prices go "up" when they get more expensive rather than go "down," or "right," or "left"? Why do we always associate increase with an

Metaphor is more than just a literary device. It is embedded in all language as clusters of simple schema representing physical experience.

upward motion? This metaphor of larger as "up" pervades our language and is universal across others. Lakoff explains how we come to this metaphor in a simple way. As babies, day after day, we see our mother pour something in a glass and the level goes upwards. Or a father might pile books on a desk, and they go upwards as well. Two primary schemas are activated together, that of amount and that of verticality. Since "neurons that fire together, wire together," these schemas do so as well, giving us a powerful primary metaphor. This metaphor can then be reused in more complex ideas to give us a handle on them, as in "Flak from

the lawsuits damaged the president's otherwise soaring popularity." ("Up" is conveyed in the secondary metaphors, flying, flak, and soaring).

So, metaphor is more than just a literary device. It is embedded in all language as clusters of simple schema representing physical experience. How can we take advantage of the brain's metaphoring in language class? I am pondering this question.

Using This Power of the Brain in Language Teaching

About 30 years ago, this young, somewhat nerdy teacher told me about his brilliant idea for teaching idioms. He had students draw pictures of them. For "a heated argument," two people might be standing in a hot frying pan arguing with each other. For "ironing out a problem," a T-shirt with "problem" written on it was being ironed. I thought the idea was ridiculous at the time, a waste of class time, but now I realize that he had created a method that was brain friendly in many ways. Drawing requires movement, which enhances learning. It is fun, another impetus to learning. And it helped them define new abstract language with known physical routines, metaphors. And as we have seen, metaphor is the brain's Deep AI. Were I still in the classroom today, I think I'd try to use this metaphoric drawing technique to teach all difficult vocabulary, not just idioms.



In fact, just as I was writing the sentence above, I realized that I had been doing so! I used to have students remember vocabulary words through gestures. I'd say the word with a gesture, like *aggressive* while making a fist, or *disorderly* moving my hand in a bumpy line, and have them repeat the vocabulary and make the same gestures. It worked! Even with far-off gestures, their retention rates went way up. I credited the success of this method to multisensory input and the power of movement in learning, but now I realize I was also using the power of metaphor. Try it!

Stories, of course, are another way to use metaphor to

learn language, deploying that language in real-world physical activities, with the story also serving as a personal metaphor. Every story connects to some aspect of our lives, usually the challenges we face.

And, of course, it is always fun to have students make their own metaphors (usually as similes) and incorporate them in their speaking or writing. You might have them rewrite

...multisensory input and the power of movement in learning, but now I realize, I was also using the power of metaphor. Try it!

"a starry night" with something like "a night in which the stars were spread like diamonds across a blanket." Or you might have them describe themselves in some situation as a metaphor: "When my brother teases me, I am like a

beehive. I might look calm on the outside, listening quietly, but I am crawling with feelings on the inside, waiting for a chance to sting him back." And, of course, poems tend to be full of metaphors, though I don't have good advice on how to use them in class.

To Wit

The main point here is that metaphor is far more than just a literary device; it is a fundamental principle of the brain used in the creation of even the simplest of thoughts,

and essentially, all language. In terms of language learning, it is one of the still untapped riches of the brain, full of potential. It is a solid vein of gold just below the streams where we have heretofore only been harvesting nuggets. So, which of you is going to turn the earth aside and find a way to exploit this treasure? Up!

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The Columnist

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



Happy Holidays



A remarkably fruitful and rejuvenating year is drawing to a close at Korea TESOL, marked by immensely valuable events: the KOTESOL National Conference (top photo), offering a plethora of professional development opportunities, and the dynamic KOTESOL Connections Day, where plans for the upcoming year were meticulously crafted.

As the festive holiday season graces us with its presence, the dedicated staff of *The English Connection* extends heartfelt wishes to all our members and to everyone touched by the reach of KOTESOL. May your holidays be joyous, and may the year 2024 be exceptionally productive and rewarding!