

## Principled Techniques for Social Interaction in the Classroom

By Jake Kimball

Providing optimal opportunities for learning is what we all aspire to do as classroom language teachers. However, setting up optimal conditions for language learning in our unique contexts is no easy task. In order to afford learners the best conditions for language acquisition, teachers must make principled choices as to how their lessons will unfold step by step.

First, take a look at your physical surroundings, specifically your seating arrangement. Which students are at the front and at the rear of class? Do you predominately teach at the chalkboard in front of class or do you move around? One reason to be cognizant of these issues is the concept of *action zone*. A teacher's *action zone* is the area of classroom, typically front and center, or wherever the teacher makes eye contact with students who are close by. Studies using classroom observation schemes have borne out that the most active students are those in a teacher's *action zone*. To expand your *action zone*, and increase interaction, avoid standing front and center; teach from the back of class; always walk around, meandering around rows.

Another way to increase classroom interaction is to fine-tune your questioning techniques. There are two types of questions typically asked by teachers: display questions and referential questions. Display questions are the questions we ask to students where we know the answer, and we expect students to follow through with grammatically correct patterns. The teacher holds out a pen and asks, *Is this a pen?* The expected answer is *Yes, it is*. A referential question would produce more complex answers, one we do not know the answer to. For example, *What's in your pencil case?*

Other ways to increase interaction include *wait time* and *planning*. These are both critical for improving the quantity and quality of classroom interaction. *Wait time* means allowing students more time to answer questions.

Usually, the teacher may call on other students if a student does not answer quickly enough. Extra planning time also helps to facilitate interaction. In my experience, giving more time for brainstorming or taking notes before beginning an activity leads to better results than allowing less time to prepare. Even younger students benefit by producing more accurate and fluent responses.

Students also interact with their classmates and their teacher when they are more at ease and feel happy and secure. In many cases, student boredom with the teacher's delivery or materials is a contributing factor to a lack of interaction. One of the best ways to engage students is to personalize content. This can be done by introducing the day's topic with an engaging story of anecdote that is familiar to students. It is also worthwhile to use students' names, local restaurants or other well-known marks your students can identify with.

Engaging young learners is easier said than done, especially without resorting to edutainment or clowning. I have had great success with activities such as Listen and Color. Learners have a paper with common scenery. At first I ask students to color ordinary objects: a blue sky, green trees, black hair. Then begin to have students color in unexpected ways: pink grass, green hair, black cakes. Upsetting their sense of normalcy in a safe and fun way creates additional interaction among students and also bolsters creativity.

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**Jake Kimball** presented this topic in his plenary session at the March 12 Gwangju Chapter and Young Learner SIG Conference. He is the Facilitator of the KOTESOL Young Learners and Teens Special Interest Group and is Director of Studies at ILE Academy in Daegu. Jake has served in various KOTESOL positions, including National 2nd Vice-President and head editor of *The English Connection*.

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Membership payment may be made by:

- Bank transfer to **KOTESOL**, Korea Exchange Bank account number: 630-006952-841
- Payment in cash to the Chapter Membership Officer at a Chapter Meeting

# Putting Technology to Work in the YL Classroom

By Jennifer Booker Young

**M**any teachers who did not grow up with computers around them are reluctant to make full use of the technology available to them in the average public school classroom. At the very least, present day Korean public school classrooms are equipped with either a jumbo monitor or touch screen. There are many ways these monitors can be used to improve a lesson. Also, PowerPoint games can be used to enhance review activities. A quick Google search will lead you to a plethora of templates and ready-made games, most of which are free for the taking. I choose to focus on the games available at the website which I use in my classroom. Some of the content is free, but some is accessible via a one-time fee.

The games covered, along with game rules, tip sheets, and video tutorials can be found at: [http://people.uncw.edu/ertzbergerj/ppt\\_games.html](http://people.uncw.edu/ertzbergerj/ppt_games.html). Most of these games can be used with minimal teacher preparation. Simply have a sufficient number of questions, and you are ready to go! Others require having the questions typed in prior to use. Because varying numbers of teams can play, some games require the teacher to manually change the score as the game is played. However, whether you are inputting questions and answers, or tallying points, nothing requires computer knowledge beyond the ability to overwrite or erase something that has been written and type something new in the same space.

In order to demonstrate both the ease of using these games, as well as the fun the students will have playing them, four games are presented below with an explanation of the rules and whatever teacher preparation it required. (I was amused to see that during the presentation teachers got just as excited about stickers as my students do.) Here are four of the six games played.

## Big Board Facts

■ This game requires the most teacher preparation. Twenty-six leveled and categorized questions must be entered on slides prior to play. Inputting the answers is optional, as two versions of the game (with and without answers) are available.

- The teacher must manually update the scores during the game.
- The points are based on the difficulty of the question, so it is best for students of similar ability.

## Car Race

- Teachers ask the questions verbally. Twenty-five questions, or more, should be prepared because the game allows for up to five teams and one team must answer five questions correctly to win.
- This game is best for students of a similar level, unless the teacher modifies the questions based on a group's ability.
- There are no points to be tallied. The teacher clicks on a team's car if they answer correctly, and the car advances.

## The Big Wheel

- Teachers ask the questions verbally. Two to eight teams can play. There is no minimum, or maximum, number of questions.
- The teacher must update the score manually.
- The teacher clicks on a wheel which spins to show how many points have been scored, so it is good for mixed ability classes because a team may answer more questions correctly, but get low point values for those answers.

## Align the Stars

- Teachers ask the questions verbally. Thirty-six questions should be prepared at a minimum, because the game allows for two to six teams and a team must get three to five stars in a row to win.
- This game is best for students of a similar level, unless the teacher modifies the questions based on a group's ability.
- Like Bingo or Connect Four, there is no score; you win for making a line. The teacher can choose how many stars are needed to make a line.

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**Jennifer Booker Young** presented on the topic of technology in the young learner classroom at our Chapter and Young Learner SIG Conference in March. She works at Uchon Elementary School in Seoul and is currently the National Secretary of Korea TESOL and serves as Advisor to the Seoul Chapter.

# Gwangju-Jeonnam KOTESOL April Chapter Meeting

- Time: Saturday, April 9, 2011, 1:30 p.m.
- Place: Chosun University, Main Building, 2nd Floor, CU TESOL Room 2123

## Schedule

1:30 pm: Registration and Welcome

2:00 pm: Presentation 1: ***Helping our Students to Become Successful Users of English***  
Dr. Joo-Kyung Park (Honam University; KOTESOL National Past President)

2:50 pm: Refreshment Break

3:10 pm: Presentation 2: ***The Importance of Collocation in the Classroom***  
Vivien Slezak (Chosun University; Chapter Treasurer)

4:00 pm: Teaching Idea & Activity Share-time: Open to Everyone  
Bring your favorite activity or idea to share with us. (3-5 min. each)

4:30 pm: Announcements  
Book Drawing  
Closing

(Admission is free. Membership is encouraged.)

## Upcoming Chapter Events

### May 7, 2011. Chapter Meeting

- *Building Sentences the Hemingway Way*  
Julien McNulty (Chosun University; KOTESOL International Conference Committee Chair)
- Second Presentation: *To Be Announced*

### June 11, 2011. Chapter Meeting

- *Extensive Reading*  
Scott Miles (Daegu Hanny University)

### July 9, 2011. Chapter Meeting

- *Active Listening*  
Peadar Callaghan (Daegu Chapter President)

## Upcoming KOTESOL Events

### April 23, 2011.

**The 3rd Franklin Global SpellEvent with TESOL**  
Korea Preliminary Round hosted by KOTESOL  
Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul

### April 30, 2011.

**Jeonju-North Jeolla Regional Conference**  
*Building Blocks for Better Learning*  
Geun Young Girls High School, Jeonju

### May 14, 2011.

**The 2011 KOTESOL National Conference**  
*Advancing Korean TESOL in the 21st Century*  
KAIST, Daejeon

### June 4, 2011.

**Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter Conference**  
Pusan National University, Busan

### August 27, 2011.

**Daejeon-Chungcheong Chapter Symposium**

### October 15-16, 2011.

**The 2011 Korea TESOL Intl. Conference**  
*Pushing our Paradigms; Connecting with Culture*  
Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul

**For KOTESOL, Korea & International ELT Events:**  
<http://www.koreatesol.org/ConferencesAndEvents>

## Upcoming Korea ELT Events

### The 15th STEM Conference 2011

*Conversation Analysis through Movies*  
April 23, 2011; Busan Natl. University of Education

### LAK-SMOG 2011 Spring Conference

Discourse, Language, and English and Linguistics  
May 21, 2011; Jeonju University, Jeonju

### KATE International Conference

Empowering Teachers in the Globalization Era  
July 1-2, 2011; HIT Bldg, Hanyang Univ., Seoul

### Asia TEFL 2011: The Asia TEFL Intl. Conference

*Teaching English in a Changing Asia*  
July 27-29; Hotel Seoul Kyoyuk Munhwa Hoegwan