

KOTESOL International Conference 2017 Preview

By Sean O'Connor and Kathleen Kelley

As Conference Committee Chair and Co-chair, we are very excited about the 25th Annual Korea TESOL–PAC International Conference scheduled for October 21–22, 2017, at Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul. This year's conference is being held in conjunction with the Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies (PAC), of which KOTESOL is a founding member. The International Conference Committee (ICC) has been working diligently to prepare for the big event, and things are falling into place. Our major speakers are confirmed, the venue is booked, and this year's call for proposals was a success. We received close to 400 proposals from prospective presenters, and our vetters worked very hard to select the best of the best for us.



▲ Robert S. Murphy speaking at the 2016 KOTESOL International Conference

Why Are We Here?

A lot has changed over the last twenty-five years, especially in the area of information and communication technology. These changes have inspired our conference chair Sean O'Connor to select the theme *Why Are We Here? Analog Learning in the Digital Era*. This theme was chosen to stimulate a dialog about the relevance of face-to-face learning in an increasingly digital world. Why pay to attend conferences when you could stay home and watch TED Talks on YouTube? Is it necessary to get dressed and go to school when you could take online classes in your pajamas? These are just a couple of the questions we hope to discuss at the conference.

Invited Speakers

We have a great lineup of speakers this year. Our plenary speakers will be Andy Curtis and Nicky Hockly. Dr. Curtis will deliver a session directly related to our conference theme titled *Confessions of an Online Instructor: Returning to the Classroom*. Nicky Hockly will speak about futuristic technologies and how these are transforming teaching and learning.

We also have nine featured speakers: Glenda Rose, Ted O'Neill, Marti Anderson, Chan Kyoo Min, Mark Dressman, Helen Slatyer, Kalyan Chattopadhyay, Kathleen Kampa, and Bodo Winter. They will offer us some interesting topics such as making informed decisions on choosing analog or digital, critical thinking in the digital era, new technologies and their uses in English education. We will also have a guest presenter from *Talk to Me in Korean*, Mr. Hyunwoo Sun. We feel confident that there will be something for everyone's taste.

Testing the Digital Waters

At the International Conference, we will not only be discussing the digital era, but we will also be wading deeper into it. For the first time in KOTESOL history, we will use a conference app. The conference app, by Whova, will provide you with a digital version of the conference book and so much more. In the app, you will be able to peruse the schedule and read presenters abstracts and bios; then you may select the sessions you are interested in and build your conference schedule. You will also be able to provide us with instant feedback during the conference and share your thoughts with other attendees. Most of all, the app promises to make networking easier. You just set up your profile, and then you can explore the professional profiles of event speakers, presenters, and attendees. You can also send in-app messages, exchange contact info, and network: find attendees with common affiliations and education experiences, shared networks, and social profiles.

It is also our hope that by using the Whova app we will enhance the conference experience. Both the conference book and app will be free to all attendees. However, if you are one of our more digitally inclined members, we would like to encourage you to opt out of the printed program book when you pre-register. By opting out of the printed program book, you will be

helping us save money and trees, and you will have one less thing to lug around all weekend. Also, don't forget to bring your phone charger, we plan to provide easily accessible power strips for recharging your mobile devices.

For Members

We have some member-only events that we are looking forward to this year. Of course, we will again host a members' wine-and-cheese social on Saturday evening. Plus, new this year, we will be offering members the opportunity to have *Tea with the Speaker*. Our plenary speakers Andy Curtis and Nicky Hockly, and featured speakers Glenda Rose and Kathleen Kampa will each be available for tea. The *Tea with the Speaker* sessions will be informal Q-and-A sessions with the speaker soon after their main presentation. Each tea will be limited to 10–12 KOTESOL members, and light refreshments will be available. You may register on site for the opportunity to have tea with a speaker; if a seat is available, an extra fee of 10,000 won will apply.

Conference Hotel

If you need a place to stay in Seoul while attending the conference, we suggest checking out the Best Western Premier Seoul Garden Hotel. It is the official conference hotel, and if you book your stay through us, you will receive a discounted rate. The hotel is

rich for your blood, there are plenty of other hotels and motels in the area, just check your favorite booking website to see what is available.



▲ **Members' Wine-and-Cheese Social at the 2016 KOTESOL International Conference**

Closing

We look forward to seeing you this October at the 25th Korea TESOL–PAC International Conference: *Why Are We Here? Analog Learning in the Digital Era*. Discounted online pre-registration for the conference is available August 1 – September 24. An additional discount applies to KOTESOL members. For more information and conference updates, please visit the conference website at koreatesol.org/ic2017.

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close to the Sookmyung campus, and if enough people reserve rooms through KOTESOL, the Best Western will provide a free shuttle bus to the conference. If the Best Western Premier Seoul Garden Hotel is a little too

The Author

Sean O’Connor, 2017 Conference Chair, is working his 17th consecutive international conference, many of those years as Technical Director. He is affiliated with Coaching Pros in the Seoul area.



Kathleen Kelley, 2017 Conference Co-chair, will be next year’s conference chair. She is also presently National Publicity Chair and Conference Publicity Director. She teaches at Andong National University.

