

Introducing... KOTESOL International Conference, v.2018

By Kathleen Kelley, ICC Chair

I attended my first KOTESOL International Conference in 2014. I remember leaving that conference feeling inspired and reenergized. I was excited to get back to work and try all the new things I had learned. Now, as chair of the 2018 Korea TESOL International Conference Committee (ICC), I would like for this year's attendees to go forward with the same sense of inspiration and purpose.

The Conference

The 26th Annual Korea TESOL International Conference will be held on October 13 and 14 (Saturday and Sunday). The conference will take place at Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul. The theme is simply "Focus on Fluency."

Focus on Fluency

Fluency is a fascinating topic. In his well-known blog, *An A-Z of ELT*, Scott Thornbury writes, "Fluency is one of those elusive, fuzzy, even contested, terms that means different things to different people." Even though it can be a fluid concept, fluency is the goal many language learners strive to attain.

In the Korean English classroom, building conversational fluency is often neglected in exchange for more hours spent on vocabulary and grammar lessons intended to boost the students' all-important TOEIC scores. As one of my students once put it,

I always learned English only from books and only from CDs or seeing American movies. I had never actively learned English before this class. And now I know that English is interesting and we need learn English speaking as well.

My goal in the classroom is to teach my students to be confident and competent English speakers. I think this is a goal that many of us share, and that is why "Focus on Fluency" is the theme of this year's conference.

Invited Speakers

I am very excited to announce that Scott Thornbury, author of the book *The New A-Z of ELT* and much, much more, will be a plenary speaker at our international conference this autumn. We have also confirmed as invited speakers teacher, trainer, and author Jill Hadfield, best known for her resource and activities books; Steven Herder, an author and editor of *Exploring EFL Fluency in Asia*; millionaire instructor Kim Ki Hun of Mega Study; Jill Murray of Macquarie University; and Jennifer Book of IATEFL's TTEd SIG. We are also planning an invited panel discussion on English fluency in the Korean

context that will feature celebrity English instructor Lee Boyoung and Yeum Kyungsook, director of SMU-TESOL at Sookmyung Women's University. Additional speakers will be announced once confirmed.

In addition to our invited speakers, there will be hundreds of other sessions by teachers and researchers from Korea, across Asia, and beyond. The program team is currently vetting the many presentation proposals that have been submitted.

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Additional Information

Pre-registration will be open online from August 1 through September 30. I strongly suggest pre-registering. It will save you time and money, and help us accommodate you as well.

We will be using the Whova conference app again this year; more information will be available later on how you can benefit most from it.

If you are interested in learning more about the International Conference, and we hope you are, please visit our website at koreatesol.org/ic2018.

The Author

Kathleen Kelley teaches at Wonkwang University in Iksan. She earned her master's in marketing and communication from Franklin University. In addition to being International Conference chair, Kathleen is KOTESOL Publicity Committee chair and a past president of KOTESOL's Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her husband, bicycling, and eating barbeque.

