The English Connection

A Korea TESOL Publication

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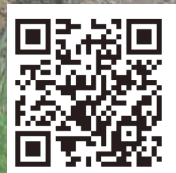
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The English Connection

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

Editorial
Don't You Tell Me to *Look* and *Listen*

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

It was well before the 2016 American presidential election when I first noticed it (and perhaps coinciding with my doctoral research); cable network pundits, usually political, getting more confrontational, more bombastic with their commentary and "analysis" as they bantered and pedaled their ideological views in a back-and-forth, feverish discourse, veiled as some semblance of political discussion. "What do you think of this current situation?" the host might ask. "*Look*," the pundit would start off, "we need to …" "*Listen*," another would declare, "it's about time we...." That's awfully rude, I thought, recalling a junior high school coach who would dole out punishments the same way. "*Listen*, it's my way or the highway," or "*Look*, you guys need to get your act together. Five laps!" You know it's a threat before you even hear it. It's disturbing.

Linguistically, *look* and *listen* are discourse markers, specifically labeled as interpersonal discourse markers (also in this category are *you know, honestly, you see*, and *in my opinion*). This type of marker holds the social aspects of spoken grammar, and functions to mark the shared knowledge between speakers. They are often used in turn-initial position to perform an ostensive act, i.e., to draw the listener's attention and direct it to the relevant information. In the social communicative system, they can be used to call upon and introduce positive or, more likely, negative attitudes. And that's why I don't like them.

For one, *look* and *listen* are imperatives. They're literally direct commands, and nobody likes to be told what to do, especially as the first word out of one's mouth, and more so in a heated exchange that just got raised up a notch. They leave no room for question, which is exactly what lively and possibility triggered debate participants need awareness and sensitivity towards. On the sliding scale of speech acts available in English to show pragmatic politeness through illocutionary force, they are most direct and potentially face-threatening. Imagine "Could you please open the window?" vs "Open the window" or even "Open." *Look* and *listen* suddenly got a whole lot more inconsiderate, didn't they?

Secondly, they're unnecessarily superfluous, because it's already assumed in the context that the listener is listening, or looking, anyway. The speaker is telling someone to pay attention when obviously the listeners are vested and paying attention thus far. To think otherwise and demand it is simply insulting to the listening participants of the discourse. You wouldn't say "Look" or "Listen" to someone daydreaming or nodding off, would you (where it's perhaps fitting and more appropriate to demand it)? So why the need to say so to the already attentive and courteous, as if it's a finger snap or a *hey hey* attention-getter? The absurdity of their use can be illustrated by something similar in the turn-final position, as a closing off of one's speaking turn: "... and that's why we need to tighten our belts. 'Talk.'"

Thirdly, the illocutionary force of *look* and *listen* are bordering on straight-up rudeness, an affront on the freedom of action. A command has taken place, a hearer-oriented booster. In essence, the speaker has commanded the listeners to do something, and the listeners are expected to actively follow. For the listener, on the other hand, the object of the utterance (to look or to listen), is naturally going to happen. The listener has taken the illocutionary directive, the action, and it potentially creates a perlocutionary effect in them. While for most hearers, any face-threatening effect may be minimal (after all, discourse markers are commonly disregarded as nonvital grammatical units, often overlooked and unnoticed, especially in spoken discourse), I consider them to be loaded and emotive language. Look (Whoops! That slipped in. Forgive me!) at the way *look* and *listen* compare with some more gentler boosters:

A. We need to get this inflation under control.
B. (*You see*) (*You know*) (*Naturally*) (*Look*) (*Listen*), the crisis needs our direct attention….

While all five markers are hearer-oriented, the first three appeal to the assumed shared knowledge between speaker and listener, and soften the stance of the new speaker. Even *you see* or even *see* has a nuanced quality, an important sensitivity needed for any kind of interpretation in pragmatic functioning. The command and draw to attention, however, is much more blunt in *look* and *listen*.

It seems as if *look* and *listen* are meant to be taken both literally and figuratively, which adds to their complex functioning, and to my disdain. Fellow round table pundits, and by association the audience viewers, are directly being told to look and listen at something (what exactly is never clearly stated), yet ostensibly the following pearls of wisdom that the speaker is desperate to share is a sound bite in their precious punditry turn. But more and more their use is more figurative, as a cognitive attention getter and social marker of new information, with an urgency and coarseness attached. They ratchet up the intensity in an already heated context, an interjection when one would be better without.
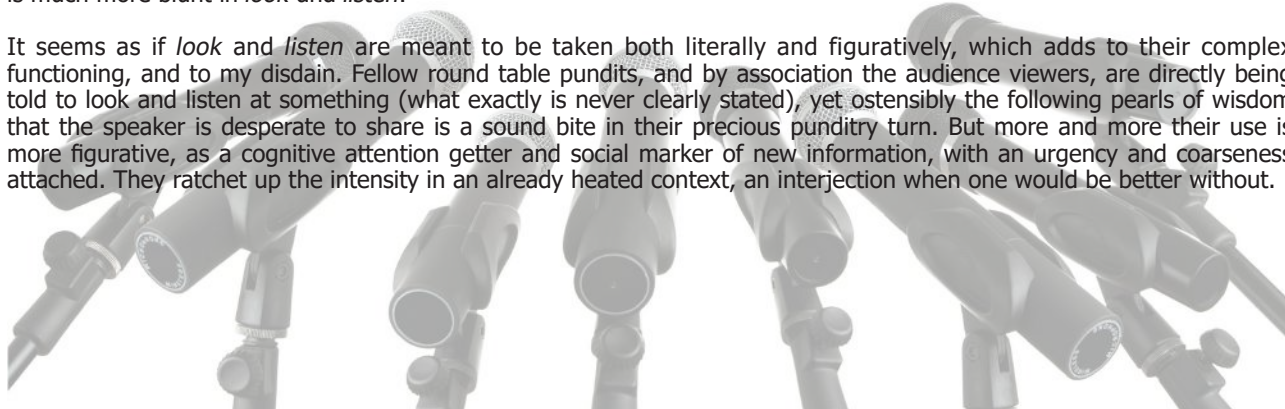
President's Message
KOTESOL at 30: Agile and Energetic as Ever

By Lindsay Herron KOTESOL President

Did you attend the 30th Korea TESOL International Conference and PAC 2023 at the end of April? It was the thirtieth anniversary of our international conference, our first face-to-face conference since 2019, and our first in-person conference ever to be held in the spring – and I must say, it was quite spectacular! There were approximately 560 participants representing around 30 countries, with about 430 of those attendees participating in person in Seoul. We were joined by representatives of our friends in the Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies (PAC), with ETA-ROC (Taiwan), JALT (Japan), and ThaiTESOL (Thailand) participating in person. Many of our other international partners were also represented either in person or online, including CamTESOL (Cambodia), ELTAI (India), HAAL (Hong Kong), MAAL (Macau), MELTA (Malaysia), Mongolia TESOL/ELTAM (Mongolia), and TEFLIN (Indonesia). Three invited sessions were live-streamed on Zoom, and nearly 50 sessions (either posters or videos) were available for asynchronous online access through the end of May. A majority of the videos will be made public on the Korea TESOL YouTube channel this December.

It was wonderful to be back at Sookmyung Women's University, our old stomping grounds. The university is just as lovely in the spring as it is during the fall! In-person participants braved rainy, cool weather on Saturday morning to attend the opening ceremony and plenaries in the Centennial Building, but apart from those sessions, everything was conveniently held in the same building, the Prime Complex. Wandering around the basement level of the Prime Complex, I enjoyed perusing booths from our wonderful sponsors, including the University of Birmingham, the University of Missouri, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Seed Learning, National Geographic, Express Publishing, and Cambridge University Press and Assessment; KOTESOL chapters and SIGs; and the Membership Committee, which debuted some very eye-catching new KOTESOL pens and bookmarks. The Saturday evening social event was held just down the hall in the university museum's lovely lobby; attracting around 100 attendees, the social was catered by Spoon Seoul and sponsored by the Membership Committee, the Seoul Chapter, the Busan-Gyeongnam Chapter, the Daejeon-Chungcheong Chapter, the Gangwon Chapter, and the Gwangju-Jeonnam Chapter. Thanks to this financial support, KOTESOL was able to heavily supplement the ticket prices for members, keeping the price very low – though even the full-price tickets were an excellent value, I thought!

Several awards were also announced during the conference. The *KOTESOL Proceedings* Best Paper Award (for a paper published in the *KOTESOL Proceedings* 2022) went to Gordon Carlson, Daniel Markarian, and Steven Hecht for their paper "Utilizing Online Exchanges to Enhance Experiential Learning and Intercultural Competence." The TEC Article of the Year Award (for the best article published in *The English Connection* in the past year) was presented to Dr. Joel P. Rian for "Less Is More... in Coursebooks: Arguments Against Using Four-Skills Coursebooks for General English Classes," which appeared in the Winter 2022 edition (Volume 26, Issue 4). Kara Mac Donald, the editor-in-chief of the *Korea TESOL Journal*, was on-hand to present the Research Paper of the Year Award to Dr. Warren Merkel and Scott Findlay for "The Tensions Between English and Korean Language in Uzbek Students' Academic Experiences." The 2023 Reflective Language Teacher Award was presented by the award's founder and sponsor, Dr. Thomas S.C. Farrell, to Heidi Nam for her "excellence in employing reflective practice." Finally, the conference committee celebrated our thirtieth anniversary with the announcement of the "Korea TESOL 30@30": thirty members who have made noteworthy contributions to KOTESOL over the past three decades. Additional information about these awards and their recipients, including the complete "30@30" list, is available on the KOTESOL website. Congratulations to all!

Speaking of congratulations, I'd like to offer gratitude and recognition to everyone who participated in the conference. Congratulations and thanks go to Garth Elzerman, the conference chair; the 200+ presenters, invited speakers, and representatives who shared their work and insights; the online and face-to-face attendees from around the globe who joined us either in person or in spirit; and the 70+ volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this conference possible. I hope you've all recovered well – and I hope it's not premature to say that I can't wait to attend next year's conference!

If you were unable to participate in this year's international conference, never fear: KOTESOL has an impressive line-up of events scheduled for the coming months. Chapter events, opportunities to represent KOTESOL overseas, SIG online meet-ups, and more grace the calendar and news pages on our website. Also coming up soon: The AsiaTEFL International Conference in Daejeon this August offers some great perks for KOTESOL members; our website, koreatesol.org, is expecting a makeover sometime this year; and in the late summer or early fall, our Nominations and Elections Committee will put out a call for nominations for president, first and second vice-president, secretary, treasurer, Nominations and Elections Committee chair, and International Conference Committee co-chair. Consider putting your hat into the ring! In the meantime, I wish you a summer full of energy, inspiration, and joy. See you at a KOTESOL event soon!

Using Music to Teach Students at Any English Level

By David Allen

"Teacher, music, please!" A student asks.

All students had already finished their work. With five minutes remaining, we finish class with the lyric video of *Painkiller* by pop artist Ruel, a popular choice among the nine South Korean middle-school students that I am teaching in South Chungcheong Province. I sigh, relieved, as it seemed they had finally gotten over Ariana Grande's *Santa Tell Me*, a song which still induces mild PTSD due to year-round requests. Even among struggling students, everyone knew *Santa Tell Me* by heart. Everyone.

English teachers familiar with this situation may wonder, "How can I bring music into the classroom to improve students' English skills? And how can I justify its use in class?" Since people often listen to music for fun, it can feel as if music doesn't fit into a classroom designed for hard work and competitive academic performance. However, music has a noticeable effect on language acquisition.

The Measurable Benefits of Music in the Classroom
Literature reviews about music and language learning, like one written by Engh (2013), describe how the same areas of the brain light up when processing language or music, called Broca's area. The same author also promotes the anthropological argument that "odes of praise and stories of the tribe were passed on through song so that the texts would not be forgotten before the written word developed" (p. 114). If music was made to be remembered, then its use in class is more than justified. In a 2014 study, French university students who listened to English music more than once a week for an hour or more did over 14% better at translating song lyrics than students who listened less than once a week (Toffoli & Sockett, 2014). The group that listened more frequently scored 9.9% better on listening assessments and 14.4% better on reading assessments. If informal time spent listening to English-language songs can produce such results, then it is worth using music language activities in the formal classroom environment.

Music can be used actively or passively in the classroom. For active use, students must pay attention to the music in relation to an activity that trains their listening and reading skills (receptive skills) or their writing and speaking skills (productive skills). In my personal experience, most music-related activities focus on growing listening and pronunciation skills. Teachers can also use music passively to aid learning without it being the main classroom activity. Some examples include playing classical music to help students focus while doing an activity or playing pop songs as a reward for hard work once an activity is done.

Using music actively in the classroom can lower what educator Kara Wyman calls the affective filter (Wyman, 2020). The affective filter is the sum of the mental and psychological factors that inhibit learning, such as the amount of motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety a language student has when engaging with English. Wyman suggests that teachers overcome the affective filter by getting to know students' prior knowledge via backgrounds, interests, and strengths. These getting-to-know-you questions don't just build rapport and show that you care about students; they are also the foundation for selecting material (including music) that they will engage with. Wyman also mentions that overcoming the affective filter requires students to adjust to the unknown. Because music includes slang, idioms, and a bank of vocabulary that students haven't likely heard before, a lesson including these and connecting them to things students have heard before will allow them to understand the meaning of what they haven't heard many times and recognize the use of such things in other contexts.

To select ideal material, consider that "the best songs for learning are not too long, easy to sing along, in everyday English, and clear" (Cambridge English, n.d.). Young learners can benefit much from nursery rhymes, as they tend to have a major "happy-sounding" melody, and the songs are often shorter in length than most commercial music. For teenagers and older, I recommend widely known pop songs because of their greater familiarity to the English learner, their choral repetition, and their tendency to cause less anxiety due to their familiarity. Of course, teachers can challenge intermediate or advanced students who want something more challenging with rock or rap, where lyrics are delivered faster, or with louder instrumentation behind them.

Music-Based Activities from Beginner to Advanced Level
Teachers can also use many music-based activities to develop students' productive skills across different levels. Beginner students learning rhyming sounds can replace the ends of song lyrics with other words that have the same rhyming sound. The song can then be sung that way by the students for a laugh. Using an abridged version of any song (first verse and chorus) can make the task more manageable. Beginners can also familiarize themselves with simple words by taking the lyrics to a pop song and, while listening to it, making a word-cloud poster, writing the most-frequently used words larger and the less-frequently used words smaller. This helps students improve their subconscious understanding of writing and spelling, while helping them better recognize the difference between content and filler words, even if their level is too low to articulate that difference.

Intermediate students familiar with the "fan chants" that audiences do during K-pop performances can form a group and create fan chants of their own for performances of English songs. These songs can be played via YouTube or another source while the group chants together. Be sure to give students enough time to make the chant and practice it before presenting it to the rest of the class. Beginners can receive a pre-made chant to an assigned song, and then learn to do it. This was well received during an English summer camp I did for elementary and middle school students in 2020.

Higher-level students can explain the meaning behind song lyrics. Teachers can suggest political songs like Eddie Grant's *Gimme Hope Jo'Anna*, Buffalo Springfield's *For What It's Worth*, or something with a counter-intuitive tone, like OutKast's *Hey Ya*! – one of the happiest-

sounding sad songs ever written. Students, of course, can also choose their own songs that have a deeper meaning.

Advanced students can also do a presentation about their favorite musician, ranging from 10–12 minutes long, with five minutes devoted to music videos, concert footage, or music that the class can listen to (Lems, 2018). An activity like this requires reading, writing, listening, and speaking – making it a perfect activity for intermediate and upper-level students. It only takes one standardized language test for students to recognize the need for competence in both reading and listening for the listening portions of tests, and reading and writing for the writing portions. Imposing ever-decreasing time limits to such research and presentations can challenge advanced students and build up their skills before they prepare for these assessments

To address learners' receptive skills, which I discussed earlier in the article, other activities can challenge and grow your students' English. The most popular is the cloze worksheet, which allows students to fill in the missing lyrics as they listen to a song. This can be customized for nearly any level once a student has basic reading. In class, teachers can visit a site like LyricsTraining (www. lyricstraining.com), where YouTube videos can be played with lyrics appearing below. There, students must choose or write the missing words as the song plays. The "choices" option seems more user-friendly as opposed to "fill in

the blanks," as the site doesn't give great feedback if a student doesn't know the right answer. Initially, lower-level students can pair up in class, listen to a song and speak out the answers in a competition. As homework, students can screenshot the song they played and their score. Ambitious students may repeat the activity to send teachers the best score possible, perhaps for a prize.

Based on recommendations from Cambridge English, beginner-level students can also correct "wrong" lyrics. The instructor can give the students the lyrics to a simple song after changing five to ten words. While listening, students can circle the wrong words, and if they are closer to intermediate level, write in the correct ones. Teachers can also give students a list of words appearing in a song, but in random order (10–15), while mixing in three to five more words not in the song. As students listen, they can check off the words on the page as they hear them.

Meanwhile, intermediate or advanced students can boost their reading level quickly by participating in a group karaoke competition. Students can learn a song in groups of two to five people (in case anyone is shy). Advanced

students can try songs that have rap or a faster tempo. I personally recommend students make a recording of their first day of practice and then a recording of their last day of practice, if given multiple days to work on the assignment. This will enable them to track their progress with pronunciation. Songs by The Beatles seem to be popular choices in ESL classrooms, but if younger students prefer Charlie Puth or Sam Smith, that's fine too; just make sure it's a song they don't already know by heart.

Advanced students can translate and explain, in English, the meaning or significance behind a song written in their own native language. For example, why has the Girls' Generation K-pop song *Into the New World* been used in so many protest movements? Remind students to keep the themes age- and culture-appropriate. Advanced activities often combine receptive and productive skills, so make sure there is an activity for the listeners, like writing notes about what they are listening to and asking questions at the end of each presentation.

The Last Note

Listening to targeted music can be so enjoyable that students will do it in their free time. Even a few hours doing so each week can produce a measurable improvement in students' English abilities. By using music-based activities such as the ones in this article, students can develop nearly every necessary skill for fluency, regardless of their level. On the productive skills end, music listening sharpens students' pronunciation skills. In reading and listening, this fluency results in students being able to recognize common four-grams (blocs of four words together) in lyrics, contributing massively to lexis and thinking in the target language. Most importantly, it may cultivate a passion and curiosity for language that can motivate students to learn for more than just a grade or to pass a test.

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Embracing Peers Through Interpersonal Competence

By Timothy Ang

The Outburst

A colleague told me about an incident at a recent English teaching conference in Japan. A presenter was in the middle of his talk when suddenly a member of the audience interrupted. The issue was the excessive use of the presenter's Japanese. The title of the talk was on translingualism, and the presenter switched from English to Japanese during their talk. However, this audience member took a particular dislike to this method of explanation. Several more interruptions continued until the attendee was firmly asked to stop by other members of the audience who had enough of the interruptions.

I found it amusing that, even as language learners and educators, we are not immune to moments of communicative lapses. More importantly, outbursts like this, especially within academic circles, have long-lasting implications. Lashing out can become a scarlet letter, and it may harm your reputation and diminish your contributions. Colleagues may avoid collaborating, and academic institutions may be hesitant to hire you because it brings to light your potential attitudes towards students. When people in positions of teaching lack people skills, it can adversely affect the curriculum and students' learning experience.

It is here that I am reminded of Lave and Wenger's (1991) idea of community of practice (CoP), characterized as a group of individuals having a shared interest in carrying out continual discussions and negotiations in order to engage in collective learning. The collaborative aspect allows individuals to more effectively improve their abilities as well as achieve common goals. Examples of these communities include KoreaTESOL (KOTESOL) and the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), both stalwart organizations within the global language educator community.

However, like any other construct of society, the individual parts that compose a community are complicated and multi-faceted. Each member has their own feelings, beliefs, with an almost dizzying amount of nuanced identities. These positive and negative emotions play a role in identity formation that allows for instances of self-transformation but also resistance (Zembylas, 2003).

This resistance is due to conflicts of different ideologies and beliefs. These conflicts are exemplified by incidents such as the unfortunate presentation interruption. By looking at the community through this lens, one realizes its vulnerability and the need to take action.

The easy solution would be to suggest a dispassionate approach and eliminate conflict altogether. But you cannot simply remove emotions from an interaction, it is what gives our beliefs purpose. In fact, it is our emotions that turn us into powerful educators, capable of creative ideas and putting up with failures and hardships. Furthermore, Wegner himself has acknowledged that conflict is a part of any CoP (2010). The onus now is to build an environment where communities are exemplified by effectively handling situations of conflict.

Interpersonal Competence

One means to address conflict in situations and encourage productive self-transformation is through interpersonal skills, colloquially known as "people skills." Being knowledgeable and passionate teachers will not suffice; you can be the smartest person in the room, but you can also be socially inept and isolated. To improve peer-to-peer relationships and for CoPs to flourish, we need to practice these interpersonal skills. I have come up with several interpersonal drivers listed along with examples (see Table 1).

Table 1. Interpersonal Competence Drivers

Driver	Description	Example
Empathy	Understanding what someone else might be feeling or experiencing, as well as recognizing and appreciating their feelings.	Checking in on coworkers that you haven't talked to in a while. Understanding the current emotional state and well-being of your peers.
Self-Awareness	Often a component of reflective practice, refers to a person's capacity to comprehend their own feelings, thoughts, and behaviors and how they affect others.	Realizing that your demeanor and tone of voice when dealing with others may sometimes come off as aggressive, flippant, or distant.
Active Listening	Focusing on the intent of the message, comprehending context, and remembering in a non-judgemental way of what is being said or done.	Paying attention to the feedback of others. Waiting until a colleague has said everything that they had intended during a discussion.
Collaboration	Working with one another on solutions to problems and engaging in projects collectively that have a benefit for the group and the individual.	Offering to substitute for a teacher if they are unable to teach that class, or engaging in active discussion on course materials.
Humility	Keeping ourselves grounded and practicing restraint on our egos.	Giving equal weight to everyone's opinion regardless of the person's background, position, or affiliation.

Going back to the conference incident presents an exercise into interpersonal competence drivers. It is easy to label the interrupter as temperamental, but pigeonholing or snap judgments of someone also results in ignorance. Practicing empathy would have resulted in a less antagonizing stand. Was it the way the presenter was talking that was contentious, was it the content of his message that needed clarification, or was it that the attendee felt very strongly about her opinions? Put even more simply, perhaps she needed to be heard because she was just having a long and stressful day. Practicing empathy offers us additional solutions and realizations.

Indeed, the incident was further addressed days later by one of the conference organizers, stating the need for respecting opinions and exercising humility. However, another solution would have been to offer the offending attendee a chance for her own presentation opportunity, at the current or future conference as a means to share her counterpoints. This way, constructive confrontation and collaboration can coexist, and both sides are allowed to thrive. After all, the goal of any conference is to exchange ideas in the spirit of mutual support and camaraderie.

When collaboration works it is wonderful. This mindset can blossom into new projects, mentorship roles, and joint discoveries of knowledge and research. And it does not always have to be about academic progress, we can also mingle and make new friends along the way. Interpersonal skills should not be underestimated and potential repercussions of their dearth should be taken seriously. Everyone needs to be aware of practicing interpersonal skills as they go about their lives.

> ... the individual parts that compose a community are complicated and multi-faceted.

Conclusion
COVID-19 and the online world have magnified and fueled moments of extreme conflict. Fear and forced isolation have worsened opposing ideological and pedagogical rhetorics. These in turn have eroded our fundamental interpersonal skills. It is the symptom of a bigger underlying problem. We have forgotten how to conduct civil discourse, which makes integrating back into society tumultuous. In addition, we have our own moments of negativity, which make it difficult to approach this issue as it forces us to look at our faults.

But the pandemic has also blessed us with opportunities. A lot of communities have risen and persevered during the pandemic, both online and face-to-face, supporting and helping their members. And now they are at a crossroads, either face a slow institutional death or continue to be productive and inclusive. I hope that this article has reintroduced the importance of interpersonal skills,

> ... the importance of interpersonal skills, especially as they come into play in maintaining CoPs, holding fruitful conferences, understanding emotions, and creating positive work environments.

especially as they come into play in maintaining CoPs, holding fruitful conferences, understanding emotions, and creating positive work environments.

The Japanese have a very popular saying: "The nail that sticks out gets hammered." In highly homogenous societies such as Korea and Japan, through our beliefs, identity, and emotions, we are often labeled as nails. How we collaborate but also embrace our differences and confront each other in a productive manner will determine our professional and personal growth. After all, we nails have to stick together.

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Learning Students' Names for Increased Engagement and Accountability

By Brian Raisbeck

Brian was the KOTESOL Reflective Language Teacher awardee for 2021, an honor bestowed by Dr. Thomas Farrell, the founder of this award. One of the benefits of the award is the option to contribute an article on reflective practices to The English Connection, *which appears here.*

Making Connections Through Names

When I came to Korea to teach English more than a decade ago, I had no classroom experience. My first teaching job was at a high school in Seoul. While most of my classes ran smoothly, I had one first-year class filled with rambunctious teenagers who made my first semester of teaching much more of a challenge than I was prepared to handle. I did everything I could think of to get the class to pay attention, do the assigned work, and stay on task. However, nothing I tried worked.

read Korean at the time. Additionally, Korean names were unfamiliar and difficult for me to pronounce and remember. However, what did I have to lose by at least trying to memorize a few of them?

Using a class roster with each student's school photo, I spent two weeks memorizing the students' names for the class I was struggling with and practicing each name's pronunciation with my co-teacher. When I finally had them all memorized and had put the names to the faces, I was
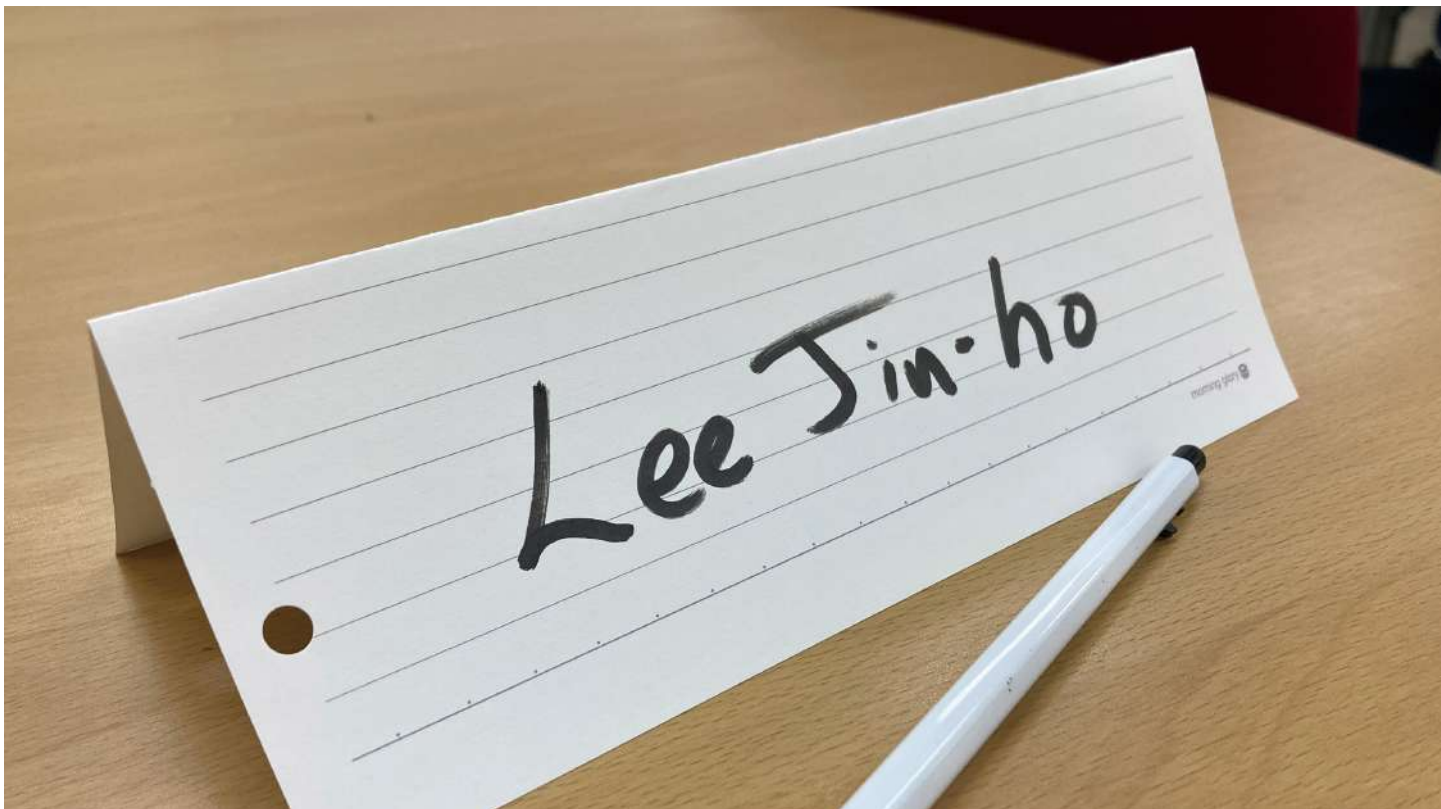
At the time, I taught with a co-teacher who was responsible for helping me with any problems that arose in the classroom. After she and I discussed the classroom management issues I was having, she brought up some suggestions, all of which I tried to no avail. She then asked me how often I used students' names in class when addressing them. She also asked if I had taken the time to learn any of their names. I was embarrassed to admit that I hadn't done either.

In some Korean public high schools, class sizes can be large. Thirty-five to forty students per class isn't unheard of. I thought it would be next to impossible to remember the students' names, given the fact that I could barely

able to enter the class with newfound confidence. Instead of looking at a sea of anonymous faces, I now had a name to pair with each individual student.

The day things changed, class began as usual. Instead of beginning with my usual warm-up activity, I started the class by announcing to the students that I had taken the time to memorize all of their names. I instructed them to cover the name tags embroidered on their school uniforms, and I then pointed at each student while reciting their name without the help of a seating chart or attendance book. As I went up and down the rows, saying each of their names loudly and confidently, the once chatty and rowdy class became very quiet. By the time I

had said the last student's name, the mood in the class had shifted dramatically. The students suddenly seemed quieter and more attentive, and the remainder of that period ran more smoothly than it had all semester.

As I used their names during class that day, instead of just pointing to a student or straining awkwardly to read the names on their uniforms, I noticed a few subtle but significant changes. When I called students by name, and they knew I knew their names, they gave me their complete and undivided attention. If a student's attention wandered, I just had to say their name once (sometimes twice) to get them to refocus. Using their names went beyond just getting their attention. It also allowed me to build relationships with them and showed the students that I saw them as individuals.

For the remainder of that semester and the school year, I used the students' names at every possible opportunity. Any time I called on a student, I used their name. If I saw any of them outside of class, I would greet them by name. If I needed to get their attention, I always addressed them using their name. And by the end of the school year, this group of rambunctious teenagers had transformed from being one of my worst-behaved classes to one of the best.

I soon moved to a new high school where I vowed to learn every student's name. Although it took me almost a year, it was well worth the effort. Along the way, one colleague suggested giving the students English names to make memorizing them easier. However, imposing a new identity on them never sat well with me, so I quickly rejected the idea. By the end of the year at my new school, I knew all 475 students by name.

What the Research Says
What is it about knowing and using someone's name in class that is so important to students? Why had the behavior of that class turned around so quickly just by learning and using their names during class?

I believe Bonwell and Eison (1991) had the right idea when they said,

> The single most important act that faculty can do to improve the climate in the classroom is to learn students' names. Among many other benefits, doing so acknowledges the decentralization of authority in the classroom and recognizes the increased responsibility of students for their learning and the learning of others. (p. 37–38)

While empirical research into the effects that learning students' names have on learning outcomes and other measures of their well-being is scant, one such study was carried out by an English professor at a Japanese university (cited in Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). He wanted to determine the impact of learning students' names on their overall attitude toward the class. Not only did most students care whether or not their professor knew their names, their perception of the class and of their own learning outcomes was higher in the group of students whose names the professor had memorized.

I was fascinated by this study, considering my own positive experiences with memorizing students' names, so

When they pay better attention and are more engaged, learning outcomes can improve, and they feel part of the group.

I decided to do a name survey with my own classes.

I polled 294 first- and second-year high school students in my school (equivalent to 10th- and 11th-graders in the United States), and this is what I found:

- 83% of my students said it was important to them for their NET (native-speaking English teacher) to know their name.
- 54% said no NET had ever taken the time to learn their name before taking my class.
- 84% of my students with an English name preferred that their Korean name be used.
- 52% of my students without an English name didn't want one.

I found the survey results remarkable for two reasons. First, the overwhelming majority of the students really cared that I knew their names. Yet sadly, over half of my students had gone through years of English instruction without a single NET ever having taken the time to learn their names. Second, most students without an English name didn't want one, and if they did have one, they preferred that their Korean name be used.

While bestowing an English name on English language learners is commonplace in many teaching contexts throughout East Asia (Sercombe et al., 2014), the results from my survey suggest that Korean high school students strongly prefer their Korean name over an English one. These results are supported by a more formal study I conducted a few years later for my master's thesis. Data from that study found that 65% of students with an English name preferred their Korean name, and 52% of students without an English name had no interest in having one (Raisbeck, 2019).

As mentioned, there is a paucity of peer-reviewed research on the topic of learning students' names within an EFL classroom. Nearly all of the academic literature is anecdotal and only focuses on the tips and benefits of doing so (Glenz, 2014; Handy, 2008; O'Brien et al., 2014). However, data from one study conducted at a Korean university with students enrolled in English as a medium of instruction (EMI) classes (Murdoch et al., 2018) suggested that students were more confident in their own English ability and had greater satisfaction with their professor if those students believed their professor knew their name.

> **... we may need to be challenged about our beliefs and the only real way of doing this is to share them with other teachers.**

students' names over the years that doing so has made a world of difference.

By learning students' names, we, as teachers, can bring students out of the shadow of anonymity and let students feel valued as individuals who are an integral part of a community of learners. In doing so, students feel more accountable for their actions in the classroom. When they feel more accountable for their actions, they are more likely to pay attention and be more engaged. When they pay better attention and are more engaged, learning outcomes can improve, and they feel part of the group. By taking the time to learn their names, you will help your students feel recognized and valued as the individuals they are.

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Tips for Memorizing Students' Names

Many teachers may feel they don't have the time or even the inclination to learn their students' names, especially if there are hundreds of students and class sizes are large. Memorizing names can also be difficult if you aren't familiar with Korean names. However, students will greatly appreciate the time and effort you put in to do this.

These three ways to learn students' names have worked well for me:

1. Have students make name tags using large index cards that they place on their desks. Always use their name any time you call on a student or speak to them during class. If you forget a name, you can always just look at the name tag on their desk.
2. Have students sit in order alphabetically (or by their student number) for the first few classes, and create a seating chart that includes each student's name and photo. This may help you associate names and faces more quickly.
3. Have students quiz you. Ask them to come to your desk or stop you in the hall and ask you what their names are. After just one or two times, you'll be surprised at how quickly you remember those students' names the next time you see them.

Final Thoughts

Revisiting the question as to why learning names is so important, Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) said this: "A student who even thinks the teacher does not know their name will often feel they are invisible in the group. Being anonymous is almost as if you do not exist in the group" (p. 27).

Learning students' names isn't always easy. It's a continuous effort that takes time and a will to commit to the process with each new group of students. However, despite limited research on this topic, I can confidently say from my own experience of memorizing numerous

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What's in a Name?

By Anthony Kaschor

Back in 2003, when I first arrived in Korea, I discovered that many of my students had English names to be used in English classes. Fresh off the plane, I was tossed into an academy, meeting five-year-olds with names like *Candy, Mint, Leo*, and my favorite, *Dr. Lee*.

"My name is Dr. Lee!"

"Dr. Lee, what is your favorite color?"

– Silence –

"Dr. Lee, stop eating your pencil. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COLOR!!"

It is an odd situation when your five-year-old student is named *Dr. Lee*. Is it an English "name"? Are titles English names? How about fruits? (Hello, *Cherry*). Is there an official definition of what dictates an "English name"?

In my experience, teaching students of all ages, most of those with an English name got it at a young age, depending on when they had their first English class. There seem to be a few different ways in which students gain English names.

1. From the Parents

One method that parents use to choose English names for their children is to use their Catholic baptismal names. Practicing Catholics used to give a baptismal name during the christening of the child, however, in modern times, the parents choose the name at birth, rather than wait until the christening. It will often be their proper name for life. Commonly, parents would choose the name of a Christian saint. However, Korean Catholics have their primary Korean name given at birth (frequently chosen by consulting a fortune teller) as well as a Catholic name, which can also be their English name, but they may also choose to use a different English name at school. Starting to seem confusing?

2. The Students Themselves

Sometimes the students choose their own names. Hence the example of *Dr. Lee* above. Although that may seem fun and playful at a younger age, as students became wiser to the "English name" game, they would choose names that were beyond ridiculous, or below the teacher's radar. I asked some colleagues who had taught high school students about their experience, and they replied that the students would choose names like *Pig, President*, and *Onion*. Another concern of theirs is that it makes communication difficult with Korean coworkers if they are using their Korean names instead of their in-class English names. It is difficult enough to learn 200 children's English names, without having to match them up with 200 Korean names.

3. The Teachers

Thirdly, the other option for choosing names is by asking the teachers, or more specifically, the native speakers. I have been regularly asked to give English names to my students in the past (although this hasn't continued in

the post-secondary institutions where I have worked). I would try to give contemporary names – ones that I felt somehow portrayed their personalities, based on my own upbringing in Canada. I might label the tough kid *Kevin*, in reference to the athletic kid in my elementary school. The quiet girls would frequently get *Sarah*, based on another classmate from my youth. For myself, the associations helped me remember more names. However, names can have different meanings or "feelings" across different cultures (Mabuza, 2014), and that became more apparent when the common names (in my opinion) that I would choose were subsequently rejected by the parents. They would decide to go with Catholic names (which I felt were outdated) or names similar to their Korean names (*Jini = Jenny; Jaemin = Jayman*). As a colleague expressed, "It felt kinda weird to give a child who isn't yours a name, or has a name from a different culture."

Acquiring an English name seems to be a very subjective situation. Whether it's the parents, the teachers, or the students themselves, so many variables such as culture, generation, and geography come into play. So, it seems it

So, now that they have their English names, the question I believe we should all be asking is, simply, why?

is quite difficult to agree as to which names are considered "English."

So, now that they have their English names, the question I believe we should all be asking is, simply, why? What are the advantages? Or possibly, what are the disadvantages? Some believe that names are associated with success. Levitt and Dubner (2005, para. 14), cited the case of *Loser* and *Winner Lane*, two brothers from a large New York City family. Loser went on to become a successful law enforcement officer, whereas Winner became a career criminal. Was this just a coincidence? Or did the father's name choices actually have an effect on his sons' outcomes? They went on to conclude that a "name is an indicator – but not a cause – of [a] life path." Rather, upbringing and economics played bigger roles in determining people's successes in life.

Let's explore some possible advantages, as well as disadvantages, for acquiring an English name.

Advantages of Choosing an English Name
1. Improving Pronunciation
Pronunciation is an important component of language study, and many Korean students struggle with the differences between the phonetic systems of their native Korean and English. By choosing English names, they not only get to hear that name pronounced correctly by the native teachers but also practice pronouncing the names.

2. Avoiding Confusion
In my experience, it is simply easier to remember English names than Korean names (for a native English speaker). Reading and pronouncing Korean names can be a challenge for instructors, especially if they are new to the country or just haven't learned to read Korean efficiently. There are also a lot of repetitive names, both surnames and given names. Many teachers in Korea have likely experienced having *Jinny 1, Jinny 2*, and *Jinny 3*. By giving English names, the teacher can avoid these overlaps.

3. Cultural Immersion
Choosing an English name can also help Korean students immerse themselves in English-speaking cultures, if they were to move or study overseas. This can help with increasing motivation, as they have immediately joined the English team. It eliminates some awkwardness when interacting with English speakers in other countries, as there are no pronunciation issues, such as with the Korean name *Yuna*. Is it pronounced "yoona" as in *tuna* or "yunna" as in *gonna*? However, once again, defining an English name is quite subjective. After all, English is an international language, so why can they not use their original name?

4. Self-Expression and Confidence
Having that English name allows students to express themselves in their own unique way (Wills, 2018, para. 11), such as "tributes to their idols or as expressions of their own passions and identities." Just as online gamers choose and customize their names and avatars for their online communities, why not allow them to express themselves in the classroom as well? As educators and adults, we constantly encourage students to "be themselves," and "express themselves," so why not allow them to do so with their name as well?

I remember, in my first year in Seoul, making a young Korean student cry every time I took attendance, when I pronounced his name *DdongHee*, rather than *DongHee*. My strong pronunciation of the first syllable, *dong*, came across as "poo." You can imagine his classmates' reactions every morning at 9 a.m. and his trepidation as I got closer and closer to his name on the list. In this case, an English name may have saved him the embarrassment. Some suggestions to avoid or minimize the embarrassment of a mispronounced name include sharing a personal experience where the teacher's name was mispronounced, acknowledging that you may have difficulties calling out students' names correctly and relaying to them that it happens to just about everyone at some point (Cochran, 2018).

Overall, acquiring an English name can be a useful strategy for Korean students who are studying English, as it can help with pronunciation, avoid confusion, promote cultural immersion, and allow self-expression in their English study environments. However, there are also potential disadvantages to consider.

Disadvantages of Choosing an English Name
1. Loss of Identity
While choosing an English name when living abroad may prove advantageous in adapting to the new culture, choosing an English name to use in the classroom can lead to a loss of cultural identity for Korean students. Korean names often have cultural and historical significance (LTL

Team HQ, 2022), and using an English name can cause Korean students to feel disconnected from their cultural heritage. The new name may feel disingenuous. Moreover, choosing an English name may imply that Korean names are difficult or less desirable, which can contribute to a sense of cultural inferiority. There is also the risk that the instructor could come off as too lazy or disrespectful to learn their given names.

2. Linguistic Bias
Choosing an English name to use in the classroom may reinforce linguistic bias and perpetuate the idea that English is the superior language. This can be particularly concerning in countries like Korea, where there is a strong emphasis on English language proficiency and a perception that speaking English fluently is a prerequisite for success in many fields (Lee, 2014).

As well, if one adopts a nickname from another culture, some people may view that as an example of cultural appropriation, particularly if they choose a name that is not traditionally associated with their Korean culture.

3. Potential for Misunderstandings
Just as I mentioned in the advantages of giving an English name, the opposite can be true of choosing an English name, which can also lead to potential misunderstandings. In some cases, an English name may be misinterpreted or misunderstood by others, leading to confusion or embarrassment. For example, the name *Bob* sounds similar to the Korean word for rice, *bap. Sam* comes across as the popular abbreviation *saem* meaning "teacher," and *Kim* sounds like *seaweed* in Korean.

4. Inconsistency
Another potential disadvantage of choosing an English name is inconsistency. Although a teacher may give a student an English name in their class, that student or another teacher may choose a different English name in another class, leading to confusion and inconsistency for both the teachers and the students. As well, they may change their names over time, choosing to emulate a favorite pop singer or feeling that their original name was too childish. They might be *Cherry* when they're five and then change to *Julia* when they're twelve.

5. Grading
Teaching at the university level, with larger class sizes than the typical academy, I prefer using their Korean names for the simple fact that I don't confuse them when uploading grades and attendance records. Although the confusion of which one is Jinny 1 or Jinny 2, I find I have fewer errors in entering data. It usually takes me until the end of the semester to finally remember most of their names, but having to learn and match a Korean and an English name is unfortunately a struggle! So in this case, it can be a disadvantage for the teachers as well.

Conclusion
Every country around the world has its own extensive challenges when it comes to learning the English language, whether it be pronunciation issues, cultures, or traditions. Overall, there are both advantages and disadvantages to adopting an English name in the classroom. It may just be a matter of case by case, where it works in some settings but not in others. It may also simply depend on the needs and preferences of each student. Despite the fact that I

> **It may just be a matter of case by case, where it works in some settings but not in others.**

am better at remembering a given English name, I prefer and will continue to use their original Korean names in the classroom. Just as I have found no utility for my Korean name, Tae-ha, given to me by an old Korean friend in 2003, I'm not fully convinced there is a need for students to have English names. But if it makes it more enjoyable or beneficial for the students, then maybe it is something we should consider.

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Snapshots of the 30th Korea TESOL I

▲ Kathy Moon and associates preparing staff lunches.

▲ IC staff and associates take a break to pose for a selfie.

▲ Conference Chair speaks at Saturday m Opening Ceremony.

▲ Featured Speaker Raichle Farrelly speaks at one of her sessions.

▲ Chatting in the Presenters' Lounge between sessions.
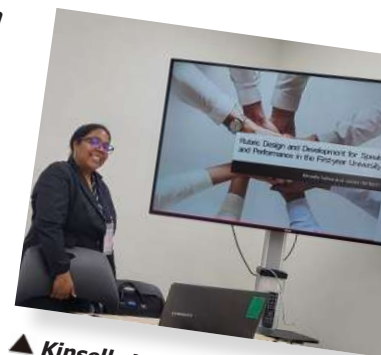
▲ Kinsella Valies presenting action research.

▲ Lisa Casaus and Jocelyn Wright in their principles of design workshop.

▲ A happy winner of the Closing Ceremony raffle.

▲ Lindsay Herron sells branded merchandise on Sunday.

▲ James Rush and Micheal Free in good form at the Saturday evening Social.

▲ Bill Mulligan at the registration desk on Saturday afternoon.

Garth Elzerman
morning's

▲ A panel discussion on professional growth.

▲ Small group discussion at one of the IC's many workshops.

▲ Tory Thorkelson and associates at a buzzing help desk Saturday morning.

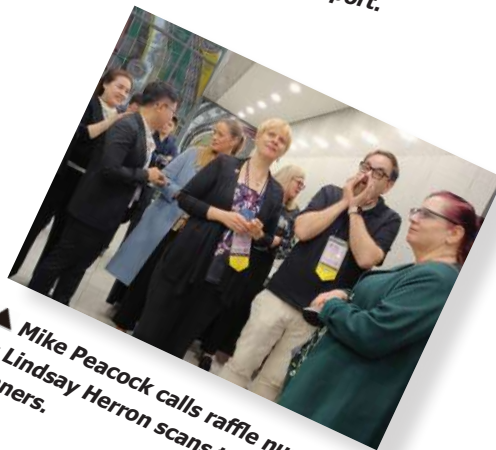▲ Christopher Haswell presenting a research report.

▲ A room monitor keeps the presenter to their time limits.

▲ Plenary Speaker Jack C. Richards and Conference Chair Garth Elzerman.

▲ Mike Peacock calls raffle numbers as Lindsay Herron scans the crowd for winners.

▲ Conference Chair Garth Elzerman with Plenary Speaker Thomas S.C. Farrell.

▲ A crowded hallway before Saturday workshops.

A Short Dialogue on International Students Adapting to Korean Culture

Dr. Christina D. Jung and Cyril Reyes

The following is a short dialogue that is based on our research on international students' perceptions of their acculturation and adaptation process into Korean society. The results of our research reveal that there are several factors impacting international students in Korean universities that help shape their experiences learning and residing in Korea. The contents of this dialogue highlight the key findings presented in the Daejeon-Chungcheong Chapter 2023 Online Workshop Series, March 29, via Zoom.

Cyril Reyes: Why do you think EFL teachers should care about international student experiences in South Korea?

Dr. Christina D. Jung: As you are aware, the matriculation rate of the domestic student population is shrinking. More and more schools will try to recruit students to reduce the deficit. As educators, we must provide a teaching environment conducive to a supportive atmosphere for types of learners who need sociocultural understanding and positive acculturation. What are your thoughts?

Cyril: EFL teachers in Korean higher education should care about it. First, we live in a time of global education and mass migration. Voluntary migration for the sake of economic opportunities is now an integral part of higher education, and universities worldwide need to adapt to it. Second, we work in a country that exemplifies this trend. Korea has the lowest birth rate of

all OECD countries. Once we consider Korea's aging population, stagnant economic growth, and weak job market, recruiting and retaining international students will be two significant goals of Korean higher education. People should care about it because the increasing number of international students indicates more remarkable changes in Korean demographics. We are examples of Korea's continuing ethnic and cultural diversity. The country's social milieu has drastically transformed in the last twenty years, and our negative experiences are not far removed from international students. Our continued growth and Korea's dependence on foreigners collectively represent a potential challenge to the homogeneity of Korea's national identity.

Christina: Can you explain how you think our situation as expatriate EFL teachers is like an Indian student studying at a Korean university? I see some significant differences.

Cyril: There is a difference in social standing. Teachers have a higher place in the Korean hierarchy. There is also the fact that a person's country of origin matters. EFL teachers in Korean higher education usually come from countries of relative privilege, while many international students come from the Global South. Although Koreans are more open to international people, the multiculturalism we took for granted in North America is still a work in progress in some parts of Korean society. There is also a

financial difference between EFL teachers being paid to be here and international students paying to be here.

Despite all these differences, both groups face similar challenges with regards to the need for Korean language proficiency, differential treatment compared to Koreans, and sociocultural barriers that impede successful acculturation and integration into Korean society. Both must find ways to adapt to Korean culture. What did you learn from the students you met? Don't you think you could relate to them?

Christina: I did learn a lot from the international students I interviewed. I thought of my journey as a new teacher in South Korea. I remember this student named Samuel who was ready to leave, but then he made friends, and his whole experience and his real life changed for the better. Once he learned more about Korean culture and understood the language, Samuel found his place here. He found a job and met his Korean girlfriend. His willingness to adapt was rewarded with a positive reception from members of Korean society. It was the same for me. It's the reason why some of us choose to stay.

After a long period of discussing and reflecting on Samuel's and other students' experiences, I realized that the issues of acculturation and cross-cultural adaptation are especially pertinent to the current state of Korean higher education. Long-term integration should be the goal; ideally, there would be a collective effort on all sides. Government officials, educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders would make it their mission to reduce acculturative stress and adaptation issues by accommodating international students. Accommodating international students ranges from small gestures of broadening access to food services and Korean language learning to more complicated policies, such as economic opportunities and changing nativist attitudes of Korean people.

Cyril: Can you elaborate on what recommendations we can make to improve international student experiences?

Christina: At a local level, universities should create more opportunities for domestic and international students to interact. Engaging both groups in extracurricular activities would foster positive acculturative experiences to encourage integration and promote Korean higher education. Unfortunately, many services in Korean universities need to be bilingual. Adding an English language function to school websites and administrative services is a subject I have frequently discussed with international students. One reason why university services and websites need to be bilingual is because international students are unable to complete important administrative tasks related to their studies, such as registering for their courses without departmental assistance. A more pressing issue is fairness. Domestic students

have access to counseling, mentoring, and internship programs, and international students often feel marginalized because they lack the information, or they haven't been told that these programs exist.

Cyril: Your paper discussed a positive feedback loop on experiences that enable international students to thrive in Korea. Do you think that this loop starts with communication?

Figure 1. The Positive Feedback Loop of Cross-Cultural Adaptation and Integration
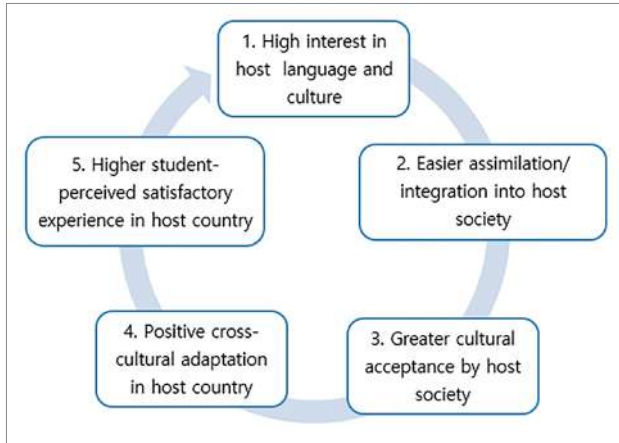
Christina: The positive feedback loop starts with international students interested in the Korean language and culture. Without that, life here is just hard. From there, these students will need frequent interactions with Korean people to improve the quality of their experience here. It starts with precise information, but the value of their education and time in Korea is relative to the host country's support.

Cyril: To be clear, are you stating that an international student needs to be interested in the host culture, but the institution is responsible for providing services to promote positive acculturation?

Christina: Ideally, it would not be just the institution. Due to the low birthrate, Korea has a shrinking population, which therefore makes the accommodation of international students a concern for Korean society at large. One way to alleviate the shrinkage in Korea's workforce is for the Korean government to prioritize expansion of international students' employment opportunities in Korea upon graduation. Therefore, as the size of the international community in Korea increases, accommodating international students is not just an educational necessity but also a social one. They are the new stakeholders, and we must demonstrate the return value of their financial and personal investment in studying here.

Cyril: Can you share more examples of the positive feedback loop from your research?

Christina: I talked to this young woman from Indonesia. Before coming here, she was already interested in Korean culture. She was listening to Korean music, and she had learned how to read Hangeul before arriving. For the past two years, she has lived and studied in Daejeon, and she's had positive experiences with Korean people. There are instances of miscommunication and misunderstanding, but the student exemplifies the behavioral traits of cultural openness and learning that attract Korean people. It helps that the student is female, Asian, and attractive, but her personality and willingness to adapt to her circumstances are key factors to her present positive acculturation.

Cyril: What kind of help and support do you think this student needs, given that she's doing better than some of the students you have interviewed?

Christina: The same issues still apply. This Indonesian student still encounters linguistic difficulties, and the type of support she's

seeking is usually found outside her immediate environment. Her Korean is far from native. She's still learning and must use her phone to translate text messages and conversations with strangers. Her attitude makes a huge difference in helping her navigate her daily life. There must be some reward system for these individuals in their visible attempts to integrate into Korean society to encourage the better acquisition of Korean linguistic competence and cultural understanding.

Cyril: Coming from Toronto, a multicultural city, what kind of lessons in integration and acculturation can Koreans learn from? What practical approaches do you recommend?

Christina: Generally, it's unfair to expect Koreans to embrace a multicultural policy like Canada's at all levels of society due to their significant differences in their past historical trajectories. However, it is in the best interest of Korean universities to do so. Given the ubiquitous practice of English content instruction in higher education, the literature has been clear. English is the mode of communication since the goal has been internationalization and the recruitment of international students. To rise in global prestige requires English publication and partnerships with Western universities. Parts of Korean society may resist the growing international communities in their spaces, but embracing a multicultural integration policy is necessary, especially for institutions that want to survive.

Cyril: I can see the tension between the interests of Korean higher education and public support for nativism and homogeneity. Do you have any examples from your work that could highlight that?

Christina: Surprisingly, there aren't many stories of outright discrimination and racism. Perhaps Daejeon is a multicultural city, which differs from other cities that have more examples of negative experiences for international students. There are more examples of linguistic and institutional barriers that lower student morale and satisfaction compared to experiences of discrimination and prejudice. However, the most common story that is still worth mentioning is how some Korean people would not sit beside a foreigner on the train or the bus. These students felt that they were not welcomed, as if they were a threat or an alien. That is a real issue that needs to be addressed at all levels of Korean society. This country's future is one where unfamiliar faces and languages will be more common, and we should talk about the tendencies of how Korean people treat those who are different from them.

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Inclusive Teaching Through New Media: Effects of Using YouTube for Teaching Multilingual Learners

By Keirah Comstock

Introduction

Teaching through Web 2.0 tools, YouTube, blogs, or wikis requires a concrete framework (Duffy, 2008). Teachers should not just share YouTube clips and let students work on the content. Instead, teaching through Web 2.0 tools requires a solid lesson plan that will make sure students receive clear learning objectives. Inclusive teaching requires a careful and meaningful approach within the learning environment. When multilingual learners (MLs) come to the United States and try to learn, they face both academic and social challenges, including language barriers, new cultures, and different social environments. Classrooms should be welcoming for newcomers so they can feel secure sharing their thoughts and ideas in any situation. To set up a secure and positive classroom environment, teachers need to have a welcoming classroom setting and display positive attitudes (Bender et al., 1995). To offer positive support to MLs, a variety of conceptual frameworks, such as blended learning, technology integration, and art-based learning, are available to teachers. When teachers integrate their teaching with multimodality using digital technology or an art-based learning approach by incorporating techniques such as hands-on activities or collaborative work, students are more engaged and demonstrate greater participation levels during class (Bradley et al., 2019). If MLs do not feel secure, there is a great chance that it will have a negative impact on their education, and eventually, they might not want to return to school at all. This article explores how Web 2.0 tools, especially those that teach through YouTube, affect students' learning and the teachers' strategies for teaching MLs within the guidelines of inclusive teaching.

This study was a three-month-long study held in a K–12 public school with an inquiry group. All the names of schools and participants are pseudonyms to protect privacy. The participants met weekly to develop their technology integration. This paper explicitly examines how the teachers used YouTube clips to support their MLs' learning. Data collection included participants' observations, individual interviews, teachers' journals, and artifacts. Due to the limited amount of research currently available, this study explores insights into teaching skills that are necessary to assist MLs within inclusive teaching. There is one main research question in this study: What is the impact of using new media for teaching MLs?

Theoretical Framework

Two theories were framed through technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (TPACK) and community of practice (CoP) lenses in this study. TPACK is grounded in Shulman's pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), which focuses on how teachers execute their lessons, especially looking into background knowledge related to students' diverse backgrounds and teachers' content knowledge in their lessons (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). Since this study was focused on MLs, it is important to understand how TPACK could be framed for this study and how PCK could be used to support teachers' content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). Additionally, CoP theory supported this study through a better understanding of working relationships among the participants. To succeed in CoP, the participants should share their knowledge and experiences by sharing their thoughts, suggestions, and comments with each other (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Throughout the study, the participants shared their ideas, thoughts and suggestions, teaching materials, and lesson plans. By sharing these, the participants were not only

able to learn together but dynamic relationships among the participants were also created through legitimate peripheral participation (LPP). LPP is essential to engage in a CoP to develop relationships through activities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative design-based research (DBR) approach. The DBR methodology is a process that uses iterative development to find solutions by analyzing, discussing, and collaborating throughout the practice (McKenny & Reeves, 2014). Since there was not much research about teaching content available for MLs through YouTube clips, the DBR approach greatly benefited the study by exploring using multiple perspectives and employing an explicit focus on dynamic interactions to gain a deeper understanding (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This was a step-by-step process related to practice to support and develop the teachers' technology integration, which was created as an explementary study process instead of seeking to find a solution (Brown, 1992). Throughout the study, I focused on the relationship between the participants, *what could be* happening (or could happen), and *what should be* (Bakker, 2018).

This study shared four different phases: orientation and introduction, design of ideas through discussions (Phases 1 & 2), sharing ideas (Phases 2 & 3), developing and supporting teachers' technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Phase 3), and reflecting on their teaching (Phase 4). Each phase is an iterated process but not necessarily in chronological order because it was based on what topics the teachers brought up, as well as their thoughts and ideas during the weekly meeting. Therefore, each week's phase varied purposefully.

Preliminary Findings: Students Build Their Background Knowledge Through YouTube

The study found that MLs could build their background knowledge through YouTube clips. Although the MLs came from different countries with different background knowledge, they had gaps in their knowledge regarding both their home country's history and culture as well as that of the United States. Therefore, when the teacher found several clips related to the MLs' background knowledge information and shared them with her MLs, the breadth of their background knowledge grew stronger. For example, Ms. Jones, a high school English as a new language (ENL) teacher, shared how she taught her students by sharing various video clips to teach social justice. Most of her MLs did not know who Martin Luther King was, so she shared several video clips related to their home country's social justice leaders, just like Martin Luther King. She said,

> We did some brainstorming on what justice looks like and what injustice looks like. We did the Frayer model for each one and discussed what they would look like and what they look like, their characteristics, and so on. And then they've been watching videos on Martin Luther King, Kailash Satyarthi, fighting against child slavery, and Malala Yousafzai fighting against inequality for girls. And so we've been watching videos, kind of one video in their background. And usually, the other video is like a speech that they give her something like that, where they're talking about what needs to be done. So it's really about building background and context because

none of us knew who Martin Luther King was. (Ms. Jones, PD #7, 4/13/22)

Instead of telling the students who Martin Luther King was, she approached hands-on activities that ensured her students understood what social justice meant and who Martin Luther King was by differentiating teaching. She was also very careful about what videos she was going to share. She said,

> But we have students from Yemen, with a war going on there. We have students from Ukraine, going on there. As a student from Cuba, you know, human rights issues there, student from Guatemala who had to leave, because conditions were so bad there. I mean, they all have personal experiences that can lead them to a topic. I believe that they and, therefore, individuals are related to injustice. So I wanted to give them the opportunity to someone because they've all seen it in some form and in their home countries. (Ms. Jones, PD #7, 4/13/22)

Ms. Jones' careful and thoughtful approach was based on and grounded in inclusive teaching. She was not only planning to share various video clips step by step, but she was also very careful about which videos she would share. This was a cautious and meaningful approach within the learning environment.

Familiarity with YouTube Created Smooth Working Environment Transitions

The new generation was raised with technology and Web 2.0 tools. As a result, most students are already familiar with social media. Ms. Smith, a kindergarten teacher, shared how her MLs were ready to record their readings through the Seesaw application. She said,

> *We'll either read it together or read it in small groups, and then they read it to themselves or on the computer. And it's been really great. And some of it has been very funny because of, like, some kids, you could just tell that they are watching, maybe possibly too much YouTube at home, like they'll start... they're like, "Hey, guys, I'm gonna read you this book."* (Ms. Smith, PD #3, 3/16/22)

Although Ms. Smith's students were familiar with YouTube and not afraid of recording their readings, she had to guide her MLs through the process of recording their readings via step-by-step instructions. The MLs were unfamiliar with the Seesaw application, which contained technical parts through which they had to learn. When they learned how to access the recording feature in Seesaw, they were able to record their readings stress free.

YouTube Makes It Easier to Understand Learning Concepts Due to Visual Learning

The study also found that the students progressed when they understood the content by looking at the YouTube clips instead of reading. This was helpful for some of the MLs who were struggling to read academic content. Ms. Jones said,

> And it's been awesome. The kids are super engaged. Even the beginners, I've got three students who are like beginners who probably would not have wanted to read a text about this, but they can see very visually what's going on and how people are affected. They can actually see suffering or pain or the problem. (Ms. Jones, PD #7, 4/13/22)

Ms. Jones also shared how the students could use the translate feature to put up their home language, which would allow them to have an easier time understanding the content. The only part she had to do for them was switching from English to their home country's language.

Discussion

The study found that teaching through Web 2.0 tools such as YouTube was beneficial for supporting MLs when the teachers taught with solid lesson plans. The study shared how using YouTube clips helped ground the MLs' background knowledge by checking the YouTube clips. The study also found that watching YouTube clips was helpful to understanding course learning instead of reading academic content due to eliminating the difficulty of reading academic content.

Although the MLs showed strong improvement in their background knowledge by viewing the YouTube clips, finding the right YouTube clips for learners is not a simple task. Teachers have to spend some time putting together a solid lesson plan and checking each video clip to ensure all the YouTube videos viewed are age appropriate and contain accurate information for learners. If an ENL teacher has students from different countries, setting up appropriate YouTube clips from different countries might take a while. Additionally, the study found that there were difficulties encountered when trying to switch to the students' home language. Nonetheless, since there were limited studies available about MLs learning through YouTube clips, the findings provide important insight for future development of teaching strategies using Web 2.0 tools.

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A Review of *A Descriptive Grammar of English* by Andrew Rossiter

Reviewed by Christopher Miller

Quick! A student asks you why their (or "his or her" depending on your perspective on gender neutral pronouns!) teacher at the learner's academy said that the statement "I don't have some money" is improper English. What do you do? (Now in Keanu Reeves' voice from the classic 1994 movie *Speed*: "What do you do?") One choice is to look through Andrew Rossiter's text *A Descriptive Grammar of English*. There are many merits in this concise work.

The book clocks in at a lean 199 pages. Yet, it addresses a wide range of challenging minutiae regarding producing competent English. Over 60% of the text is focused on dimensions of verbs and noun phrases. The remainder of the text focuses on "other parts of speech" (pp. 132–152; adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs), which is followed by the final main section of the book, "sentences and clauses" (pp. 153–186). The text finishes with a solid glossary of "essential grammar terms" (p. 187) and a sparse appendix. An abundance of examples accompanies all sections of this work. Among the 19 subcategories are those related to verbs, gerunds, conditional structures, and the bane of many an ELL: phrasal verbs, which are addressed rather competently. Rossiter breaks down noun phrases into nine subcategories, two of which are rules for possessiveness and quantifiers, including the difference between *some* and *any*, which had puzzled our hypothetical learner at the beginning of this review.

Rossiter does a decent job of demystifying often baffling aspects of grammar. For instance, phrasal verbs are addressed. Rossiter lists three clear rules for determining which phrasal verbs are separable and which are inseparable. Furthermore, phrasal verbs are broken down into various subcategories, such as transitive phrasal verbs and transitive prepositional phrasal verbs. For separable phrasal verbs Table 1 can help learners recognize patterns of phrasal verb formation.

Table 1. Separable Phrasal Verbs

Principle Roots of Separable Verbs	Sample Object Pronoun	Main Particles Used
break, bring, call, check, cut, give, hold, keep, leave, let, look, make, put, run, set, take, think, turn, work, writeSite Facilitator	**it**	back, down, in, off, on, out, over, round, through, up
Example: Let me check **it** out.		

Reproduced from Rossiter (2020, p. 70).

There are several other positive features worth mentioning. The text (in the e-book version) is continuously updated by the author; we see sentences reflecting current events, rather than exclusively archaic samples, for instance: "most of us were very worried about the pandemic" (p. 112). Well-known authors and pop culture references punctuate examples illustrating the grammar points including Shakespeare, J. K. Rowling, and *Star Trek*. This work is concise; at less than 200 pages, it is a quicker reference work compared to comparable (but far from equivalent) texts in the field. Price is also an advantage. The Amazon Kindle version is priced at US$4.39. Finally, the author is an expert in the field (former, now retired, head of Applied Linguistics at the University of Franche-Comte), and this work reflects his practical experience teaching sometimes salient and at times arcane aspects of English grammar. That expertise shows through when adding occasional asides such as "less is now frequently used with countable nouns, even in the most reputable publications" (p. 111).
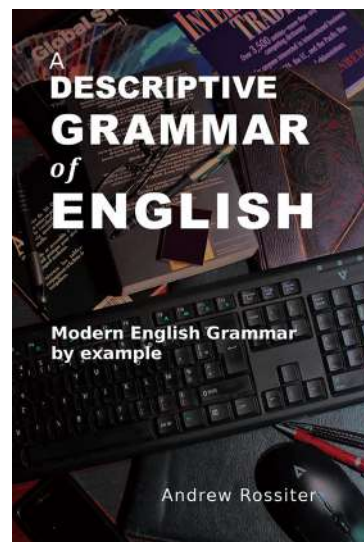
It may be useful to compare this work to other similar works in the field: Michael Swan's *Practical English Usage*, Keith Folse's *Keys to Teaching Grammar to English Language Learners*, and Martin Parrott's *Grammar for English Language Teachers*. Rossiter has a narrower scope than the other three texts. For instance, his work lacks a formal section on linking verbs or the copula, though Rossiter does devote a section to the various conjugations of *be* verbs. Similar to Swan, but in sharp contrast to Folse and Parrott, there is limited opportunity for the reader to actively process the material in *Descriptive Grammar*…. Rossiter provides straightforward explanations and illustrations. Parrott's text is rich in consolidation exercises. Folse offers similar activities as well as pre-reading activities, such as an extensive self-quiz to start *Keys*…. Both Parrott and Folse offer commentary on typical learner challenges. Folse includes typical sources of L1 interference from other widely spoken languages in the world as well as standard answers to a variety of learner queries, common learner mistakes (though there are occasional negative counter-examples provided by Rossiter), as well as 20 teaching tips. In Rossiter's defense, this text does have a separate companion workbook *A Practice Grammar of English Verbs*.

To some degree *Descriptive Grammar* is a book in search of an identity. As alluded to previously, the major strong points of Rossiter's work are concision, practicality, and price. Yet, there are random bits of arcane linguistic trivia scattered throughout this e-book. For instance, we get this aside about the present perfect: "which Samuel Johnson called quite appropriately, the *compound preterite*" (p. 39). (For some reason, references to Samuel Johnson persist, popping up at least three more times in

commentary and examples). On a related note, there is a significant amount of unessential jargon in this work. We get words such as *lexeme* (p. 76), *catenative* (p. 39), and *pluperfect* (p. 18). If this work aims to be a definitive, thorough treatment of grammar, then perhaps such jargon and precision is justified. However, for a practical text, this borders on superfluous and runs the risk of cognitively overloading the reader.

This begs the question: Who is this book for? Linguistic and layout choices should reflect regard for the intended audience. Is it for harried classroom instructors? Probably. Then why the superfluous, little-known jargon? Is it for advanced ELLs or NNESTs? I feel these two could benefit from much of the main content of this book. However, the language in this volume is difficult to comprehend at times. I concede this is a requisite feature inherent in a reference work such as this. Nevertheless, even if it is a challenge to soften some of the essential jargon, such as "inseparable phrasal-propositional verbs" (p. 72), there is much the author could have done to reduce the cognitive load for reading this text.

Two possibilities that readily come to mind are (a) pre-reading activities prior to the start of a section – this might include consciousness-raising activities (e.g., In the following examples, how do the use of *some* and *any* vary?) – and (b) using signaling in the text to illustrate a key concept (see Table 2 for an illustration of signaling). For instance, consider this dense sentence: "In a negative statement in English, negation is normally expressed through the verb, negation can however be expressed by adding a negative value to the subject or the direct object of the sentence" (p. 101), which is followed by a number of illustrations. Speaking from personal experience, it is incredibly easy to glaze over such a statement and fail to genuinely comprehend the gist of the passage. The author could have provided, for select examples (certainly not every item), signaling of salient points to make the concepts clearer, thereby reducing cognitive load for what is unavoidably a challenging read given the subject matter (I myself had to do several double and triple takes while trying to comprehend some of the passages of this work).

Table 2. Textual Signaling

There is much empirical support related to the role of textual signaling in aiding comprehension (Clark, 2010, p. 105). For the above cited statement, examples with signaling could look like that in Table 2, (which I have contrasted with the original text). Not only does signaling aid comprehension, it gives the reader a visual break rather than an unbroken train of text that can inhibit

comprehension and overload working memory (see Clark, 2010, pp. 102–103).

There are other somewhat minor, potentially rectifiable issues with *Descriptive Grammar*. There are multiple typos, most amusingly, an inaccurate quote from a Rolling Stones' song: "I ain't got no satisfaction," to illustrate a language point. Citations are absent. The book is called *A Descriptive Grammar*; however, the author clearly has a preponderance of inauthentic illustrations for grammatical concepts, and this text abounds with prescriptive statements. For example, "demonstrative pronouns cannot be preceded by adjectives nor by possessives, but *that* and *those* can be followed by prepositional phrases starting with *of* or *in* or other prepositions" (p. 95). There is nothing inherently censurable for providing such statements; indeed, in this age of standardized language assessment, most instructors and learners welcome such clear prescriptive guidelines. Nevertheless, Rossiter's text by and large is not descriptive in the classic linguistics sense of the term (Fromkin et al., 2010).

Conclusion

Ultimately Rossiter's *Descriptive Grammar* is a useful text for classroom practitioners and ELLs. What it may lack in rigor and thoroughness it compensates for with an abundance of often accessible explanations and concepts. So, the next time a student asks you about why "I don't have some money"* is "improper" English (summoning my Keanu Reeve's voice once again), what will you do? That depends on a lot of factors, but you could certainly do worse than accessing a copy of *A Descriptive Grammar of English*.

* As Rossiter notes, "*Some* is used in affirmative statements; it is replaced with *any* in negative and interrogative contexts" (p. 100).

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Member Spotlight: Lisa MacIntyre-Park

Down in the province of Jeollabuk-do, one finds the relatively quiet city of Jeonju, the provincial capital, noted for its Jeonju bibimbap (but which should be just as noted for its makgeolli and its accompanying table fare). Nestled in a still corner of Jeonju is an English academy that is stirring inside with Lisa MacIntyre-Park as its operator and teacher. Lisa is also quite active in the Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter of KOTESOL and as national secretary before taking on the role of Financial Affairs Committee chair. Lisa found time between classes for this interview with The English Connection. — Ed.

TEC: Thank you, Lisa, for agreeing to do this interview with *The English Connection*. To begin with, would you give us some background information on your years before coming to Korea – where you lived, where you went to school, and so forth?

Lisa: Thank you for offering me this opportunity to share my story. I grew up in Welland, a small city in the Niagara Region of Ontario. But I always knew I wanted to move to somewhere bigger. Before I came to Korea, I was working in Toronto at an academy teaching English to Hong Kongers who were new to Canada. As a kid, my dream was to become a teacher. Also, I've always enjoyed studying languages – especially those with different alphabets. It seemed only natural to combine my love of teaching, my crazy enthusiasm for English editing and grammar, and my love of other languages by becoming an English teacher abroad.

TEC: When did you come to Korea, and what exactly attracted you to this specific country among the many abroad? You went to Brock University, where Prof. Thomas Farrell teaches. Was that in any way an influence?

Lisa: I came to Korea in 1997, and while I did graduate from Brock University with a BEd (TESL) degree, it was too early to meet Prof. Farrell there. I wish I had been able to take his class, as reflective journaling suits my style. At Brock, some of my peers had been teaching English around the world but returned to learn about teaching methods. Some classmates had exciting stories of teaching in South Korea. Dreams of teaching abroad, combined with my own curiosity about the land of one of my father's co-workers, and fond childhood memories of a friendly Korean exchange student were enough to convince me to come here and experience it myself.

TEC: And one of those experiences was getting married! Please tell us a little about your family if you would. I met your son once but only very briefly.

Lisa: I met my husband through a friend as he was finishing up at Wonkwang University, and we eventually got married in 2002. We have two kids: Our son is in middle school, and our daughter is a high schooler. If I recall, you met my son late last year when he stopped by our Jeonju-North Jeolla KOTESOL meeting to help tidy up afterward. You may have also met his elder sister when she was volunteering with the 2019 National Conference here in Jeonju. My family enjoys spending our free time together having weekend porch barbecues and going on road trips around the Jeolla provinces or up the west coast in spring or autumn.

TEC: Your KOTESOL chapter meetings are now being held at the "I Can!" English Academy, your language school. While most of us work at a school, you operate one! How did that all come about? It must have been a difficult decision to open a language school.

Lisa: It was a very surprising decision at the time! My husband had been working in the head office of a local academy, and I was working at an English art kindergarten. It was so surprising for me because I was pregnant with our daughter at the time he quit his office job! Thankfully, he got wind of an academy looking for a manager – and we loved it so much that we took the opportunity to buy out the owner. It was a wonderful decision, which worked out the best for our family. The academy is like our second home. I enjoy seeing my children there after their school day has finished, and we have our supper together before evening classes start.

TEC: You've been very active in Jeonju-North Jeolla Chapter of KOTESOL. What roles have you had there, and what are your goals for the chapter going forward?

Lisa: I enjoy participating in KOTESOL. But I was a bit slow in catching the buzz, being unable to get out to most meetings when my children were still small. I became more active in late 2018, after returning from a year in Canada with my kids. I have held the position of chapter web-editor and Facebook promotion from 2019 through the pandemic, but I've also been interested in the workshop speaker coordinator position. These days, our chapter officers have been sharing the task of promoting events that I've set up. One of my chapter goals is to rebuild our attendee base after the pandemic slow-down by inviting thought-provoking speakers.

TEC: You have also been active on KOTESOL's National Council in recent years. What has that experience been like?

Lisa: I love being involved in the group and hearing about plans while they're in the works. Until recently, I held the position of National Council secretary, taking the minutes at meetings. That was a busy job, but I learned a lot while doing it. The funny thing is, I recall attending an earlier Council meeting, noticing the secretary, and thinking I was glad I didn't have to pay close enough attention to take notes! But when it came down to it, I'm happy to have helped out where

I could. This year, I stepped away from such a busy job so that I could devote more time to rebuilding our local North Jeolla Chapter, but I still help out on National Council in an appointed position: Financial Affairs Committee chair.

TEC: Your definition of "stepping away" must be a little different from mine! Now, putting on your KOTESOL analyst's hat for a moment, what do you see that KOTESOL has

the calligraphy you did may be similar in that when you apply pressure on the brush you get a wider line, and for a narrower line you exert less pressure. But the rules for modern calligraphy in English dictate where and how the variation in line width should occur. The thing I like about modern calligraphy rather than traditional forms is that there is more freedom to create my own style. Sometimes, I'll write in a classy style, and at other times, I'll use a more playful style of bouncy or stretchy letters. I've also been teaching others to do brush pen calligraphy for the past couple of years. I'm interested in working more with my pointed pen to add this to my calligraphy skills and teaching services in the future.

TEC: Do you have any other hobbies or pastimes?

Lisa: Along with calligraphy, my hobbies are reading and playing the ukulele. I enjoy encouraging others to join in – it's more fun to experience hobbies as a group, be it a book club or ukulele practice group. My other pastime is setting up seasonal social lunches for foreign ladies in the province to get together to meet friends and welcome newcomers.

TEC: Now, if you put on your fortuneteller's hat and read the tea leaves in the cup, what do you see in Lisa MacIntyre-Park's future?

done well? What might KOTESOL improve on? And what directions should KOTESOL take going forward?

Lisa: I think KOTESOL has provided a place for teachers to share skills and to learn from each other and our mentors. But I feel it would be more effective to diversify methods to get the word out about the organization. I find many people don't realize we're open to having anyone attend meetings and that many mistakenly think a TESOL degree is required to get involved. I'm glad to see that KOTESOL has joined the online trend – making it possible to participate in SIG meetings from anywhere, but I'm also very happy that we've gotten back to in-person

▲ *Lisa at a calligraphy workshop with daughter on right. (Free template: @lisaslovelyletters.)*

meetings and workshops. Going forward, I would like to see KOTESOL broach new ideas and methods in teaching so that all will see the organization as an indispensable resource for their teaching career. I'd like to see KOTESOL make itself more well known amongst new teachers so they feel comfortable attending meetings and getting involved.

TEC: I was into calligraphy in my younger years in Korea when I had more time. I did traditional Chinese-character ink-brush calligraphy. I hear, however, that the calligraphy you do is a quite different kind of calligraphy. Please tell us about it.

Lisa: I do modern calligraphy in English with a flexible, felt-tip brush pen or a flexible, metal-tipped dip pen. I guess

Lisa: In the near future, I look forward to welcoming many interesting presenters to our KOTESOL meetings. I love my job teaching at my academy and also teaching at the local cultural center, so I can't see that changing any time soon. As for my calligraphy and artistic pursuits, I'm planning on taking the rest of the year off from promoting my lessons to focus on taking a few more courses that I've had lined up for a while now.

TEC: Well, we're glad to hear that you plan to continue to volunteer your time to KOTESOL in addition to continuing your teaching and learning. Thank you for the interview, Lisa.

Interviewed by David Shaffer

The Development Connection

Some Observations on Observation

By Bill Snyder

I am making final preparations for the start of spring semester at the moment, going over syllabuses and support materials, clearing up inconsistencies between them and making revisions based on what happened in the most recent iterations of the courses I teach. In two of these courses, Practicum and Principles of Second Language Acquisition, I require students to do classroom observations and make reports about them. Looking closely at what I ask students to do as part of their professional education has caused me to reflect on what my purposes are and on the process of observation more generally.

Observation has come to be a regular part of many teachers' professional lives. My university expects all teachers to participate in peer observation every semester, both as an observer and by opening their classes to observation by others. In the master's degree program that I teach in, many classes besides the ones that I teach have observation requirements for our students. Clearly, the university and the faculty in the master's program both value observation as a way for teachers to learn about teaching and learning. And I think this is well founded. Observation provides a number of benefits to teachers. As an observer, teachers can see different approaches to teaching, focus attention on small groups of students to see how they are taking in the lesson, and most of all, notice things in the classroom that would pass unseen when you are in front of the class. Being observed can bring benefits, too. Another teacher can be asked to give feedback on an aspect of your teaching that you have questions about. A peer may notice something in your practice that you weren't aware of. A more experienced teacher could provide advice for the future about how to deal with a situation that came up. We use observations so much because they offer so many possibilities for professional growth.

But observation has its limits, and in some cases, isn't popular with teachers. The biggest limit is that an observer can only see behavior and may not provide insight into the reasoning behind it. Why a teacher takes one action and not another may be hidden unless the subject is addressed in a post-observation debriefing. And even then, the teacher involved may not be able to recall why they took the action they did. The justification of a decision made on the spur of the moment may be lost by the end of class as other things happen. And of course, even the most observant observer can't notice everything that happens in such a busy, complex place as a classroom. There will always be things that are missed.

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For teachers, observations can sometimes be seen as a bother. Both for the observer, who has to take time to observe someone else's class and for the teacher being observed, who may feel that the presence of an extra person in the room changes the chemistry of the class, making themselves and the students behave differently from the norm. Sometimes, the teacher being observed may feel that the person observing is not a good source of feedback for them because of differences in experience or background. Even more uncomfortable is when the teacher being observed feels that the process is being used to evaluate them and pass judgment on their teaching. This kind of situation is far too common and can work against professional growth for the teachers involved. There are many ways for observations to go wrong, be ineffective, and counterproductive.

I want the observations that I require my students to do to be valuable for them and avoid the possible negative outcomes I've mentioned above. I want my students to see observation as something that can contribute to their professional growth rather than as a burden so that they will continue with observation as a tool in the future. In order to make such an outcome more likely, I organize the process as much as possible, from finding willing partners, spreading out the observations, and making the goals of observation and reporting as clear as possible. Each of these organizational steps is intended to reduce

the burden on students and let them focus on doing the observation itself.

As I noted above, being observed is something that not all teachers enjoy. To save my students the trouble of asking such people and being turned down, at the start of the term, I send an email to all teachers in the language program at my university, asking if they would be willing to be observed and if yes, for a schedule of the classes that are available for them. Doing this lets me compile a list of teachers who are likely to respond positively for my students, saving them time in scheduling their observations. I still make my students write formal requests for each observation not only because it is good professional practice but also because the teacher they ask may have a reason for turning them down, such as a testing day or student presentations. Sometimes, it is because another student has already asked to observe on that date and the teacher wants to limit the number of observers in the room. When a refusal occurs, the teacher asked often suggests an alternative date for an observation for my student.

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In each of my classes, three observations are required, and I make my students spread them through the semester. In part, this is to prevent any student from putting off the observations until the end of the semester, then trying to schedule all of them at the last minute, a strategy that is not likely to be successful and not likely to produce quality observations. I also want students to spread out the observations because classroom environments change over time as teachers and students get to know one another, student skill levels improve, and learning goals change. Having students do observations at different points in the term spreads work out for students and makes sure that they see the differences in classroom environments.

The goals of observations in Practicum and Second Language Acquisition are different, so I prepare separate observation guides for each course. The Practicum guide has students focus more on the actions of the teacher, while the Second Language Acquisition guide has students looking more at what learners are doing in the class. Of course, it is not possible to write out either the teacher or the

learners from any observation. What the guides do is foreground one or the other. The guides help my students know what they need to attend to in the complexity of any classroom and provides them with templates for writing their reports and helps make them more aware of what they are learning through the observation.

The last observation for Practicum is special in this regard. It comes at the end of the term, when the students are ready to teach an entire class on their own. They record their own teaching and observe themselves. For this observation, they choose what aspect of their teaching they want to focus on and report about. I hope their previous experience with observations makes it easier for them to think about what they will focus on and how they can focus best. Most of all, I hope that giving them this control over the process of observation gives them confidence for carrying out observations in the future and helps them recognize the value of the tool for their practice.

> ### *I believe in the value of observation and participate willingly in opportunities to observe and be observed.*

My program believes in the value of observation. I believe in the value of observation and participate willingly in opportunities to observe and be observed. I think if we want novice teachers to feel the same, we need to structure observation to make it easy for them to take part in and make it clear to them in terms of what they can get out of it. Doing these things will make observation non-threatening and help teachers use it to its full potential for learning about themselves, their students, and the classrooms they share.

The Columnist
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The Body–Brain Learning Tool

By Dr. Curtis Kelly

Cognition. It is not just thinking but all the neural processing that takes place in the brain, including attention, emotion, perception, memory, and of course, language. It is the exact target of all our teaching. And now I am going to tell you two stories about cognition.

The first one you probably already know. Cognition works like this: First, the brain gets sensory input; it then processes that sensory input to determine what it means and what to do about it. Finally, the brain sends signals to the body to carry out that response. Very simple: (1) input, (2) processing, (3) decisions, (4) output. The brain is the absolute ruler at the top, the dictator, the CEO, the Gru that directs the minions below.

It is an old story, one you probably learned in school. In fact, it even goes back as far as Descartes, who identified the two parts of our being, the brain and the body. For more than a century, this perspective has dominated neuroscience and popular culture. There was even a 1940s book and movie about a brain in a vat, *Donovan's Brain* to be exact, that used ESP to control the scientist taking care of it. Yummy. Brain in a vat.

This story of the brain matters because it has so shaped education. The predominant way we have taught, and are actually still teaching (despite poor results), is by transmission. Teacher says. Student learns. We feed new information directly into the vat because, for the CEO brain, just knowing is enough. The brain's basic job is to hold information, and then deploy it amongst the minions when it is needed. Knowledge is an arsenal. *Memorize this list of words. Learn this grammar. Look at these functions, registers, corpuses, and so on.* That is how we learn language. Most important, just sit there because it is your brain we are working on, not your body.

The problem is, this story is hugely wrong. The brain and body are not separate. The brain is not an absolute ruler in a control room. The body also takes part in cognition, and it is highly integrated with the brain. A look at the nervous system shows that. The neurons that pass on messages inside the cranium are also spread throughout your whole body. These are a part of the brain too. Your nervous system, including the 500

million neurons in your gut are not just "connected" to your brain, they are a part of your brain, and without them, you could not think, you could not know language, you could not form memories.

Wow. What a claim. But the role of the body in cognition has been one of the ideas that has dominated neuroscience in the last ten years, the idea that cognition is embodied.

I won't go into all the details here, but the crux for us as language teachers is as follows: The brain uses its sensory and motor cortices to form memories and mental models. In other words, the same patterns of sensory neuron firing that occur when you see a cat is the pattern that eventually, after numerous encounters, leads your brain to form a mental model of cats. That includes visual, auditory, somatosensory (touch) elements, and other neural impulses from your body. Cats move too, and the way they move becomes part of the cat model as well. When you see a cat walking, the same neurons that move your own legs muscles fire to simulate what the cat is doing (but at lower amplitude so that your legs don't flop around). The motor neural patterns your brain uses to make you walk, jump, or bat at a ball are the foundation for understanding how a cat walks, jumps, and bats (as a footnote, this mirror neuron action was long misunderstood as representing empathy or learning by copying, but it is really just the way our brains simulate to make meaning out of sensory input).

All these are integrated into the cat model along with the sting of a bite, the pain of a clawing, and your visceral reaction to cats.

Meaning is encoded in sensory signals from the body, motor signals move the body, that is why we call it embodiment. In short, everything you know has come from your own body's experiences of the world.

And here is a cool trick your brain-body does. When you hear the word "cat," the same visual, auditory, motor, and other body-based neural routines fire as well, just as if you were seeing or hearing a real cat. The word "cat" is part of the model too.

If you hear "the cat jumped on the sofa," a series of neural firing patterns for *cats*, *sofa*, and *jumping* are activated to give that expression meaning. By the way, metaphor is a specialty of the brain, so we also believe that abstract concepts and language are based in neural simulation as well, as suggested by expressions like *"rising* prices" or "*unraveling* a mystery."

So, if cognition is embodied, and all our understanding of the world is based on our own
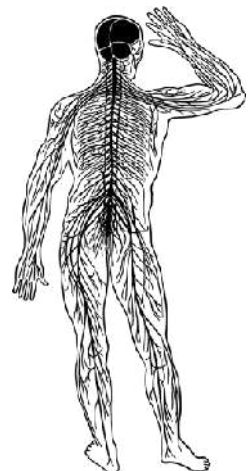
experiences with it, then teaching to the brain in a vat, inputting knowledge, doesn't seem right, does it? We *know* through our prior experiences, and that suggests we *learn* best through experiences too, including learning language. Except, take out the "best." It is the only way we learn. Ultimately, all language comes from connecting personal experiences with the world to words. Language learning is embodied.

> ## *Ultimately, all language comes from connecting personal experiences with the world to words.*

It should be clear now (but I'll bet dollars to donuts you knew this already) that having students memorize vocabulary lists, practice grammar rules, and sitting quietly is a hard road to learning. It is cutting through the jungle with a machete. Using pictures, sounds and videos along with the language might add a little pavement, and having some actual movement in the learning, like standing up for pair work, or having learners use gestures to practice vocabulary, gives us marching boots, but experiential learning like this is not always easy to do. We need a stronger, more flexible approach to move us along. Something like a Humvee.

Well, guess what? That something exists. It is a method most of us are already using, but not enough, and generally missing how powerful it is. This experiential learning tool, a super tool really, engages the entire body, even while sitting motionless. What is it? Stories!

Think about it. Stories are encapsulated experiences, your own and others' (but as we explained above, you process others' stories as your own). They are full of sights, sounds, and actions, and even if these parts of the story are not put into words, you generate them anyway: You visualize a character. You imagine her voice as she speaks. You feel her emotions and physical sensations. You activate your arm muscles when she lifts her tea. It might not be done consciously, but to give meaning to the language of the story, memories of your own life experiences, recorded as neural firing patterns, are activated. You live the story yourself. You embody it.

> ## *We are not only built to process stories, we are stories ourselves.*

So, stories, far more so than other means of information delivery, fit the brain's natural way of processing the world. We are not only built to *process* stories, we *are* stories ourselves.

Both research and personal experience should tell you so. The research can be summarized as showing that information passed on through stories is generally learned twice as quickly and remembered twice as long as information presented other ways, such as in lists or lectures. In two studies done by Bower, Callaghan, and Clark, and one by Higbee, students were put into two groups and asked to memorize word lists. The first group was told to memorize the words any way they wanted. The second group was told to make stories out of them. I suppose you can guess which group had greater recall, the second of course, but how *much* better these story makers did might surprise you. They remembered from two to seven times as many words! Imagine that! At the very least, using stories to teach words might get your students to remember twice as many!

> ## *We have underestimated the potential of stories as a language teaching tool for too long.*

As for personal experience, well, do you prefer to read academic papers or novels? Study manuals or watch movies? Listen to a friend list the names of the people in an office, or share gossip about them? I rest my case.

We have underestimated the potential of stories as a language teaching tool for too long. Neuroscience tells us they do more than just entertain and inspire; they turn neutral language into meaningful experiences, both at the neural and psychological levels. So, from tomorrow, tell stories. Show touching videos. Let students share their experiences. Don't fall into the trap of burdening each story with pages of language tasks, such as vocabulary pretraining and grammar practice. As long as the story is comprehensible, most of that kind of processing will happen on its own. Instead, concentrate on the story – as extensive reading does – as being embodied cognition on a stick.

Take that, Descartes!

The Columnist
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