

# TIRF TODAY

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Promoting research and best practices to improve the use of English in the emerging global knowledge economy of the 21st century

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### In this Issue:

Interview with Doctoral Dissertation Grant Recipient Mr. Jaehan Park	1
TIRF Trustee Elected to AAAL Office	1
Recent TIRF Publication Presented to Sheikh Nahayan	2
ELT Conferences in Argentina	2
Chair's Report — Your Support is Changing Lives	2

## Interview with Doctoral Dissertation Grant Recipient Mr. Jaehan Park

**Editor's note:** In this piece, 2013 DDG recipient Mr. Jaehan Park talks about his dissertation, current work, and research interests. Jaehan is completing his PhD at the University of Indiana.

### 1. What were the main findings of your study for us in a few sentences?

Through my dissertation research, I wanted to explore Korean professors' pedagogical knowledge of English-medium instruction (EMI), as they teach mostly Korean students using English as the language for learning and teaching. I was able to identify a variety of instructional strategies for EMI, including language use and instructional strategies in and outside of the classroom.

There were two other fascinating findings. The first is that the professors used translanguaging as pedagogy of EMI in the classroom. To do so, these professors used multiple linguistic and non-linguistic resources to make and co-construct meaning to achieve their primary instructional goal – students' content learning. The other finding of interest is that besides using instructional strategies, the professors negotiated university language policy through classroom-level language policy-making and implementation.

### 2. What did you learn about doing research in the process of completing your dissertation?

Interestingly, I learned that the approach I took for my data collection can contribute to the professional development of those professors. I started building relationships with my study participants by having conversations about their lives as learners and teachers. Based on the information they gave me, I tried to understand their instructional approaches and needs for support and professional development. Through these relationships, I was able to build trust and share my understanding of effective pedagogy of EMI and answer their questions related to using English as a language for learning and teaching.

### 3. Where are you currently working and what does your position involve?

For the past five years, I have been a program coordinator of ESL/EFL teacher education programs at Indiana University School of Education. As I write the discussion section of my dissertation, I am seeking a university teaching position. I am overjoyed every time the interviewers recognize my TIRF DDG on my CV and see my potential as an emerging researcher!

**4. What did receiving the TIRF Doctoral Dissertation Grant mean to you?**

When I was preparing my application for the TIRF DDG competition, I had growing doubts about my career as a researcher in the field of English language education. I saw the need for classroom-based research on English-medium instruction in Korean universities and decided to conduct the research using my own private funds. Due to both financial difficulty resulting from my doctoral study abroad and a lack of recognition of the value of the work, when submitting my application for the DDG competition, I said to myself, "If I don't get this one, maybe I should give up and find a career other than as a researcher in ELT." A few months later, as I was looking at the email message that said TIRF had decided to award me a DDG, I was literally in tears. I still vividly remember the moment when I said to my wife "This award has saved my life!"

### 5. What would you say to someone who is considering donating to TIRF?

Your donation to TIRF will give emerging researchers like me much needed affirmation and encouragement as they go through one of the most challenging tunnels of their lives. Moreover, receiving a TIRF DDG does not merely mean recognition and financial support to the recipient. For me, the DDG gave me an opportunity to meet with TIRF Board members who are accomplished researchers, which also allowed me to establish relationships with them. Dr. Kathi Bailey met with me in the midst of her busy schedule during AAAL and TESOL and introduced me to new colleagues. Similarly, Dr. MaryAnn Christison, the Chair of the Foundation's Research Advisory Committee, has also supported me. I feel as if I was adopted into a special family of ELT researchers through being awarded a TIRF DDG. These experiences all started from donors' financial contributions to TIRF. Your donation will enable TIRF to do important work in supporting and developing researchers in English language education.



Jaehan with His Former Students in Mongolia



Jaehan and His Wife

## TIRF Trustee Elected to AAAL Office



TIRF Trustee Kathi Bailey has been elected to the office of Second Vice President (VP) of AAAL – the American Association for Applied Linguistics.

AAAL is an affiliate of AILA – the Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée.

"I am very excited to take on this new responsibility," said Kathi. "I expect to learn a great deal and develop a

new network of colleagues." The role of the Second VP lasts for one year, followed by a year as First VP, then a year as President, and finally a year as Past President.

According to the AAAL website, "the mission of AAAL is to facilitate the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and understanding regarding these language-related issues in order to improve the lives of individuals and conditions in society." In this regard, TIRF and AAAL have much in common.

Congratulations, Kathi!

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[Proposals for the 2015 TESOL Convention are due June 2nd!](#)



**Kathleen Bailey,**  
Chair of TIRF

## Recent TIRF Publication Presented to Sheikh Nahayan

*Editor's note: In this piece, Dr. Yehia El-Ezabi details his recent trip to the UAE. Please note that TIRF does not incur travel expenses for such trips.*

On Friday, April 18, 2014, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), TIRF Trustee Emeritus Yehia El-Ezabi and former Trustee Ali Al Sharhan had the distinct pleasure of meeting with His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan, UAE Minister of Culture, Youth, and Community Development. On behalf of the TIRF Board, Dr. El-Ezabi and Dr. Al Sharhan presented to Sheikh Nahayan the landmark book entitled *Teaching and Learning English in the Arabic-Speaking World*. The book, edited by Kathleen M. Bailey and Ryan M. Damerow, and jointly published by TIRF and Routledge, was dedicated as a festschrift to Sheikh Nahayan. The Sheikh was recognized in this way for his generous gift to the Foundation, which funded the pioneering research of nine scholars selected by TIRF as "Sheikh Nahayan Doctoral Fellows." These Fellows' research investigates key issues in the teaching and learning of English in Arabic-speaking countries, in fulfillment of the requirements for their doctoral degrees at leading universities.

At the time of publication, eight of the nine Fellows had completed their research and had received their doctoral degrees. Each of these nine Fellows contributed chapters to the book, based on their dissertations.

In the words of Professor El-Ezabi, "The Sheikh was visibly pleased to see the book as a concrete outcome of the Fellowship program. It was one of those moments which captured the meaning and value of a clear vision and a fulfilled initiative."

The initiative started some years ago when Sheikh Nahayan, then UAE Minister of Higher Education and Research, and Chancellor of the UAE University, was

## ELT Conferences in Argentina



Two organizations will hold their conferences in Santiago del Estero, Argentina later this year. Both events will take place from September 18-20, 2014.

The Asociación de Profesores de Inglés de Santiago del Estero (APISE) is organizing FAAPI's (Federación Argentina de Profesores de Inglés) XXXIX Annual Conference. This event is one of the most important meetings in Argentina, as it offers the opportunity to meet colleagues

## Chair's Report — Your Support is Changing Lives

At the AAAL Conference this spring, I had the good fortune to meet Jaehan Park, a 2013 DDG awardee, and to hear his story in person. I was so moved by Jaehan's account of receiving the award that I asked him to share his thoughts with our newsletter readers. As you can see from this month's lead story, receiving a grant from TIRF has had a profound impact on this young scholar's life.

We are now once again in the midst of reviewing DDG applications, as the 2014 competition submission period has just closed. We have had over twice as many applications as ever before! The review process will involve many more readers than in the past, and we are grateful to those language professionals who have volunteered their time to read proposals.

For me, as a fundraiser in a field that often has less-than-sexy anecdotes to share with its stakeholders, Jaehan's story (on the front page of this newsletter) goes a long way in showing that TIRF's work is changing lives. It is far too seldom that we hear stories like Jaehan's, but I know of many others.

If you were wondering where this Chair's report is going, I will now tell you. We are preparing for our mid-year appeal, and we will be sending out requests for your financial support in the weeks ahead. It is my hope that Jaehan's story will compel you to take a deeper look at how the Foundation's work is benefiting the lives of teachers and learners. I implore you to join in our cause of not only helping to improve others' lives, but instilling confidence in our grant recipients and

briefed on the mission of TIRF. The Sheikh has long believed that investment in education is the best investment for the future, and that English, both as an international language and as a language of instruction in various subject-matter areas, is a crucial component of that investment. As a dedicated leader, his response to and support of TIRF's mission was immediate.

It is noteworthy that the research made possible under the Fellowship program was conducted in nine Arab countries: Egypt, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. However, many of the research findings extend well beyond the geographical boundaries of these countries. Thus, the Sheikh Nahayan Fellowships have contributed to the growth of the research network of English language education scholars in the Arab World. In fact, one of the first three Sheikh Nahayan Doctoral Fellows became the doctoral supervisor of one of the last three!

The volume dedicated to Sheikh Nahayan is the first book-length publication produced by TIRF. It is part of an agreement with Routledge (Taylor & Francis) to publish studies completed by TIRF grant recipients. Further details about the book, including how to order, can be found by [clicking here](#).

from different parts of the world and to engage in professional development opportunities.

The second event is the first ever Latin American Conference for Teachers of English. This conference will be held at the same time as the event described above. The theme of the conference is "EFL Teaching & Learning in the Post Methods Era." The call for proposals deadline is May 30, 2014.

To find out more information about the Federation, the Association, registration, and other conference-related information please visit <http://www.faapi.org.ar/> and <http://www.apise.org.ar/>.



From left to right, Dr. Yehia El-Ezabi, His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan, and Dr. Ali Al Sharhan

helping make their professional dreams come true.

Please can you help us with supporting other young scholars like Jaehan? TIRF can continue to have such an impact if we can fund research conducted by doctoral candidates as they finish their studies. We are thrilled about the number and diversity of proposals we have received this year. Ryan and I work very hard on the mid-year appeal letter, and we have solicited ideas from our colleagues on the TIRF Board of Trustees. When you receive your copy of the letter, I hope you will read it carefully and remember Jaehan's moving story.

*Kathi Bailey*