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## BLENDED LEARNING COURSES FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPE (BLTeae)

By : Associate Professor Dr Margaret Chan

The 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Education in the Digital Ecosystem with the theme “Blended learning in Teacher Training – Innovation and Best Practises” held in Kuching gathered all members of the partners of the BLTeae project team under the EACEA-ERAMUS+ project under KA2 programme – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education (No: 574130-EPP-1-2016-1-FR-EPPKA2-CBHE-IP). The consortium was made up of four institutions in Europe (Aix-Marseille University in France, Aalborg University (AAU) in Denmark; Tallinn University (TLU) in Estonia and Audio-visual Technologies, Informatics and Telecommunications (ATiT) in Belgium) and seven institutions in Asia (Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) in Bhutan; Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and Batu Lintang Teacher Education Institute of Malaysia (IPGKBL) in Malaysia; University of Dhaka (DU) and Bangladesh Open University (BOU) in Bangladesh; National University of Modern Languages (NUML) and International Islamic University (IIU) in Pakistan). The conference was the final working package of the BLTeae Project tasked to UiTM as the organiser. The official opening by Right Honourable Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, the Chief Minister of Sarawak was graced on behalf by the Honourable Dato Sri Michael Manyin, Minister Education, Science and Technological Research Minister and also the patron on the 19 August 2019. The Chief Minister’s main message was “Education teaching culture in need of reform”.

There were over 300 participants from 13 countries. The local participants were made up of mainly lecturers from the local higher education institutions, teacher trainees from the teaching colleges and teachers from the Kuching-Samarahan areas. Financial support from the EU project had provided the opportunity for the local participants who expressed their gratitude for being able to attend an international conference and meeting expertise in digital teaching and learning. Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sarawak also provided financial support to cover the conference fees of lecturers who were presenters. Three keynote papers were presented. The first keynote ‘Classroom Orchestration’ was from Prof. Pierre Dillenbourg from the Computer – Human Interaction

Lab for Learning & Instruction, EPFL, Switzerland. This was followed by Prof. Lone Dirckinck-Holmfeld, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Aalborg University, Denmark on ‘Blended Learning in Teacher Training – Innovation and Good Practices’. The third keynote was delivered by Mr. Janne Lämsitie, Senior Lecturer and E-learning Advisor from Oulu University of Applied Sciences School of Professional Teacher Education, Finland on ‘Video Pedagogy in Competence-Based Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development’. This was followed by a forum discussion on the theme, ‘Blended learning in Teacher training – Innovation and Good Practices’ with the three keynote speakers including Mr Jamiran Bin Salam, the Director of Batu Lintang Teacher Education Institute of Malaysia as panelists moderated by Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan who was also the organising chairperson of the conference. There were four plenary papers. The first plenary paper “Participatory Design of Evidence-Based Assessment of Teachers’ Digital Competence in Estonia was presented by Professor Dr Mart Laanpere from Talinn University, Estonia. This was followed by ‘Technology Enabled Teacher Education in Bangladesh: Policy Implications’ Prof Dr. Khondoker Mokaddem Hossain, Pro Chancellor of the Bangladesh Open University. The third plenary paper was a joint presentation, ‘Online Professional Learning of Pakistan and Bhutan Teacher-Educators’ by Assistant Professor Dr. Maria Antonietta Impedovo (France), Assistant Professor Dr. Kinley Kinley (Bhutan) and Professor Dr. Sufiana Khatoun Malik (Pakistan). UiTM lecturers: Associate Professor Dr. Ling Siew Eng, Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan Kit Yok, Ling Siew Ching and Adeline Engkamat presented the fourth plenary paper on ‘Incorporating Social Media in Blended Learning Courses at Higher Learning Institutions’. There were altogether 48 papers presented in parallel sessions over the next two days. A ‘BLTeae Talk’ was also part of the programme on reflection of the three years’ partnership of the project and future directions. A two-day video workshop was conducted for the 30 teachers selected from Kuching, Samarahan and Serian Division conducted by Ms Sally Reynolds and Mr Mathy Vanbuel from Belgium. The official closing was done by Prof Dato Dr Jamil Hamali, Rector of UiTM Sarawak.

Group photo with the Honourable Minister of Education, Science and Technological Research Minister Dato Sri Michael Manyin

Welcoming Address by Dato Rector at the Official Opening Ceremony



PROF DATUK DR JAMIL HAMALI  
Rector UiTM Sarawak





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