ACADEMY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES, UITM PULAU PINANG

eLingua

Academy of Language Studies
Universiti Teknologi MARA (Pulau Pinang)

... from the Editorial Team

Dear readers,

Yet another issue of our in-house electronic bulletin has seen the daylight, albeit with some delay. As usual, this issue carries a variety of news items and articles on events that have taken place around us, mainly those pertaining to our department. One new addition to this issue is the 'Getting to know you' column where we get 'up close and personal' with members of our staff. Besides, this issue also carries a special compilation of the workshop series of our very own Dr. Mah on his WeCWI. To all of you, have a great time reading this issue.

Thank you.

Majlis Perjumpaan Rektor Bersama Warga 2.0
By Mr. Liaw Shun Chone

The rector addressing the campus staff

A meet-up event with our campus rector, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Fozi Ali took place on Friday, 3 March, 2017. It started around 9.30 am and the session, which was attended by both the academic and non-academic staff, was held at Dewan Besar, UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang.

Essentially, the content of his message in the meet-up session centralized on several issues pertaining to the past achievements in 2016 and the directions and objectives for 2017. They were 2016 reflections and achievements, 2017 challenges and objectives, income generating activities, concerns and actions and the Happiness Index feedback. He reminded everyone of our vice-chancellor's 2017 message of UiTM's 60th anniversary celebration (1956-2016) in urging the staff to innovate and spur the university to attain greater heights globally.

In 2016, the rector reported on many focused areas such as on graduate employability(GE), graduate on time (GOT), iCGPA, flexible education agenda, voluntary activities, income generating activities, research indexing , research grants, operating excellence variables of which 56.8% of the projects were completed. Of course, when it came to highlighting the achievements for 2016, APB could hold its head high up as three of its staff members managed to put UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang on the world map. They were Dr Rofiza Aboo Bakar who won 2 gold medals at the 6th AIREX 2016 at UniKL MIMET, Lumut, Perak on 8 December,2016, Mr Lim Teck Heng who won a gold medal at the International Invention and Innovative Competition (InIIC Series 2/2016) at Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan on 5 November, 2016 and Dr Mah Boon Yih who was chosen as one of the 14 global award recepients of Education Leadership Award for 2016.

Apart from the individual awards, APB also came up as the top winner in terms of the most number of contributions in writings and referred academic publications according to faculties and departments at UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang for 2016. It managed to produce 70 out of the total 286 writings and publications for last year. Incidentally, some of the publications were published in UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang very own ESTEEM Academic Journal which was awarded as the best UiTM journal indexed in MyCite for both the Science & Technology and Social Sciences categories.

Another interesting highlight mentioned by the rector touched on UiTM Happiness Index or the measurement of a 'Happy University'. It included lecturers' promotion, Raya celebration, Iftar Perdana, Khidmat Masyarakat Mega, Family Day, Quality Day and Gotong Royong Perdana. The rector's presentation of his report ended at 12 noon and was followed by a short Q and A session.

ENGLISH EXIT TEST 2016 Workshop
By Dr. Rushita Ismail

The APB Auditorium at the Academy of Language Studies in Shah Alam was swamped again and this time with English lecturers from all over Malaysia. Three to five representatives from all UiTM campuses attended the Training of Trainers (TOT) for EET (English Exit Test) workshop held from the 1st to the 5th August 2016. The aim of the workshop was to get these lecturers exposed to the assessing and scoring of the new code EET699.

On the first day of the workshop, participants were greeted and welcomed by the Dean of the Academy. According to Associate Professor, Dr. Normah Abdullah, the English Exit Test (EET) was conceived to enable prospective employers gauge UiTM graduates' English Language readiness for the workplace. Comprises of productive skills components; speaking and writing, EET is an exit requirement for graduating students. The cohort of March 2015 intake is the first group to sit for this test.

Detailed briefing on EET and trial markings of speaking and written component took place in the afternoon. A sample of recordings of 5 students was played and 5 essays scripts were distributed for each participant to grade. Grading is based on the CEFR description of levels: A1 and A2 –basic user, B1 and B2- independent user and C1 and C2 – proficient user.

There are three tasks, namely, simulated conversation, job interview and oral presentation for speaking component. In writing component, students were tested on two tasks – business email writing and essay writing on workplace issue.

On the second day of the workshop, participants were ushered to the APB Language Lab. With the headphones on, participants spent the whole day listening to the responses done by the students in EET Speaking Test and graded them s accordingly. That afternoon, participants were given feedback on the trial markings of the written component done on the day before.

Grading on writing component resumed on the third day and participants were handed bundles of answer scripts to be marked. Participants spent the whole Thursday evaluating the scripts.

On the last day of the workshop, all scores were keyed in to the respective templates as instructed. There was a bit of confusion as some of the templates were not labelled accurately. However, the problem was rectified by the staff from the main campus.

It was a long stay for Dr. Mah Boon Yih, Dr. Rofiza Aboo Bakar, Dr. Rushita Ismail and Ms. Suzana Abd. Rahim in Shah Alam but these representatives from Penang Campus found that the workshop was stimulating and informative. The next EET699 code to be assessed, graded and keyed-in will be in December 2016 in Penang campus.

'English is Fun' Workshop
By Suzana Ab. Rahim

An "English is Fun Workshop" was conducted for the students of Sek Keb Desa Murni by the lecturers of the Academy of Language Studies of UiTM Penang on the 9th of September 2016 from 730 am -1 pm at the school itself. It was a smart partnership between the educational institutions which aims at boosting the level of confidence of these students especially where interaction is concerned. The community project also aims at changing their perception towards learning the English Language and embracing the various learning techniques via the activities prepared for them. The three activities namely Using Dictionary, Singing and Storytelling received a lot of positive response from the kids as they were seen to be excited to take part in the sessions. The enthusiasm shown by the school children involved has prompted the Principal, Mr Rusli to suggest that we make a comeback in the following year since he believes such networking can help motivate the rest to not shy away from wanting to learn the language. His conviction of the programme's success is such that he believes the workshop has been able to expose and explore the potentials of these school children. The presence of the Yang Berhormat ADUN Sg Dua together with a few Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah officers made it more memorable for us to be there for the programme. Perhaps, we will be back with more fun activities for them in the near future.

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Program 10000 Langkah

By Mr. Liaw Shun Chone

Aerobic warm-up exercise

Rector encouraging the crowd to join in the walk

Hooray! We made it.

The 2nd 10000 steps walk programme was carried out successfully on Wednesday, 19 April 2017. It was Academic Affairs Unit's turn to organize the programme. The event kickstarted at 8.15 am with the campus rector's terse speech of encouragement and followed shortly after by the energetic aerobic exercise. The participants, consisting of academic and non-academic staff followed through the slow to moderate pace of rhythmic movement to get everyone's adrenalin pumped up. After a 15-minute warm-up, the participants were led by the auxiliary police on their motorbikes to brisk walk around the campus. The 10k steps walk started at the car park in front of the library and then proceeded to the front section of the mosque and headed towards Delima and Intan's hostels, passed through the Hotel Block, Dewan Besar, journeyed on behind the engineering workshops, entered Zamrud hostel's car park and finally ended up again at the campus library. Around 9.30 am, when everyone had completed the round and gathered together, the participants had a group photo session and then were treated to a lucky draw. 80 prizes were given to the lucky winners. Four APBians, En. Azli, Pn Melati, Dr Mah and En Liaw took part in this event and none won any prize but had fun in losing their calories. The rector announced that the third 'Program 10000 langkah' would be held next May 2017 just before the start of the fasting month and the baton is passed to the librarians to host the next monthly event.

Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.

Neale Donald Walsch

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CEFR Training

By Ms Wan Noorli Razali

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) has impacted the world at national policy level. Some amendments have been made to educational language policy in countries like China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Singapore to ensure that it is aligned to this standard. It has been translated into 40 languages and now known as CFR or Common Framework of Reference. This framework aims to describe comprehensively what language learners have to learn to do to provide common basis for the elaboration of language curriculum and educational policies and to define the levels of proficiency based on lifelong learning.

Given its importance, Malaysian Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education have taken an active step to adapt CEFR at national policy level through series of trainings that starts with CEFR Familiarisation Training. At UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang, the English lecturers were trained by Dr. Siti Zaidah from Universiti Malaya from 7th to 10th November 2016. The first session started with a brief introduction to CEFR as an action-oriented approach which consists of six different levels based on a range of different scales. The second session continued with the explanation on The Cambridge Baseline 2013 on spoken interaction and spoken production by looking into the qualitative aspect of speaking.

The next day continued with the detail discussion on speaking level, scales, competencies and strategies. The training has also become a platform for an interactive and insightful discussion on the scales and assessments. No doubt that there were a lot of questions from the lecturers that invited more and more discussions on the remaining days of the training. Overall, the training has achieved its main objective of familiarising the educators with CEFR.
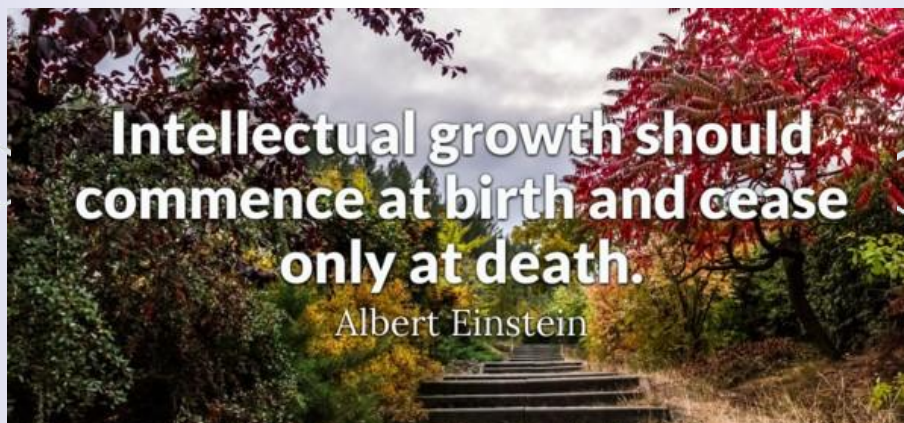
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ICEdSS 2016

By Ms Wan Noorli Razali

The first International Conference on Education and Social Sciences (ICEdSS 2016) has been organized by Department of Computer and Mathematical Sciences UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang on 2-3 November 2016 at Park Royal Resort, Penang. Acted as a platform for presentations and discussions on updates and future directions of educational and social sciences issues, the conference has managed to gather national and international experts, practitioners and academicians.

The conference was also participated 14 language presenters from Academy of Language Studies (ALS) UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang who have presented their interesting studies on different language areas. Among them were Mr. Liaw Shun Chone who presented on Oracy Assessment Toolkit (OAT), Dr. Mah Boon Yih on WeCWI Course Integration, Mr. Budiman on Learning Written and Spoken English, Mr. Lim Teck Heng on Quickset-Exam, Mr. Rasaya on Collaborative Learning via Edmodo, Dr. Rofiza Aboo Bakar on Digitised Storytelling, Miss Noraziah Mohd Amin on Jawi Script and Assoc. Prof Dr. Hoe Foo Terng on Mandarin Teachers.

The presenters have received positive, constructive and encouraging responses from the audience and their papers have been successfully published in the IAR Journal (International Academic Research Journal of Social Sciences) recently. Kudos to all of them on their effort and hard work!

Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.
Albert Einstein

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Implementation of iCGPA Trainers-on-trainers (TOT) Workshop at UiTMCPP

By Mr. Liaw Shun Chone

On 24 August, 2016, a half-day workshop on the implementation of iCGPA TOT workshop was held on the sixth floor of the Hotel block at Hotel Management and Tourism meeting room. It started at 9 am after 50-odd attendees had taken their breakfast half-an-hour earlier.

There were three presenters throughout the session. Dr Mohd. Mahadzir , the Deputy Rector of Academic Affairs, started the ball rolling by briefing all the participants on the latest information on Integrated Cummulative Grade Point Average (iCGPA). In essence, he was elaborating on the procedures of iCGPA implementation and keying-in marks for the new i-RES system. According to him, in the latest updates, the respective university can either follow either Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) mechanism which has nine learning outcomes (Los) or Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) system which concentrates on just eight domains of LOs. He stressed that there are 10 shifts in the higher education for the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 and that these shifts are to develop holistic, entrepreneurial, and balanced graduates in line with the National Education Philosophy. He also gave the progress of iCGPA which started in 2015 and the two phases of implementation and projections from March- June 2016 and also from July – December 2016.

Next was Associate Professor Dr Hoe Foo Terng's turn from the Academy of Language Studies (APB) to brief the participants on constructive alignment. He started off with a short movie clip on the ideal attributes of graduates who have relevant disciplinary knowledge and skills (ilmu), ethics and morality (akhlak) along with the suitable mindsets, behaviours, cultural and civilizational literacy (beradab) to uplift themselves to a higher platform so as to bring about a more harmonious living with their family members, nation and global community. He also highlighted APB's updated iCGPA template and how APB UiTM Penang branch, being a servicing department, can provide LO5 (Communication Skills) marks to other faculties and subsequently map and align them in their Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs). He also explained to the other faculties that APB has come up with a comprehensive iCGPA template of its own and other faculties need only to extract whatever information they need from this template.

Lastly, Dr Ng Wen Kuan from Faculty of Civil Engineering (FKA) spoke at length on the affective and psychomotor evaluation rubric and working paper preparation for Jawatankuasa Induk Kurikulum Universiti's (JKIKU) approval. Like the other two earlier presenters, he also touched on the six steps for Generation of an iCGPA Spider Web starting from the Outcome Based Education to Spider Web for Grade Point Averages of Learning Outcomes. He also gave a sample on how to create an effective rubric on assessing managerial and entrepreneurial skills with the attributes and sub-attributes. In other words, for APB, we need to come up with a rubric for assessing students in verbal communication even though we may not have a rubric provided by the resource person at Shah Alam.

The last part of the session was on Q&A and all the presenters tried to provide answers to the best of their ability. Dr Mahadzir ended by saying that at UiTM Penang branch, EC110 programme code will kick-start by using i-CGPA template for diploma programme for June – November 2016 semester, followed later implemented by EH224 and EM241 codes as pioneers for degree programmes beginning September 2016 – January 2017 and later on involving all major programmes (EE111, EE112, EE113, EM110, HM112, HM115, HS111 & HS113) commencing December 2016 – April 2017.

Language Carnival 2017

By Ms Noor Laili Mohd Yusuf & Raja Rosila Raja Berahim

Academy of Language Studies (APB) UiTM Penang Branch offers a variety of Asian and European language courses to diploma and degree students. Apart from English as a second language, the third languages offered are Mandarin, Japanese, Arabic, French and German. Therefore, Language Carnival 2017 was crafted to promote the utilisation of the languages in informal and enjoyable setting besides classroom learning. The diversity of the languages and cultural differences infused in the activities are aimed to enrich UiTM students existing knowledge and horizon.

Language Carnival 2017 was conducted for 3 days. The 48 registered contestants competed in the preliminary rounds that were held on 20 and 21 February 2017 at Dewan Kuliah Hotel B and Dewan Kuliah Perdana 1. The top 12 entries were selected to unleash their hidden potential in the semi-final round which was held on February 23 from 9 am until 12 noon at Dewan Besar UiTM. Consequently, 6 finalists were shortlisted to showcase their talent in the final round which was held on the same day from 2.30 until 5pm. The carnival was enlivened with cultural exhibits, games, demonstrations and sales.

This program has received funding from Tabung Amanah Pembangunan Akademik (TAPA) for the amount of RM 1996. Besides that, we also received sponsorships from a few institutions. Dewan Bahasa dan pustaka (DBP) had given their books as prizes for lucky draw winners. The very established telco company, Celcom had also sponsored 20 SIM cards as prizes for lucky draw winners. We got 40 Goodies Bag from the very famous company selling beauty products, AVON for VIPs and APB lecturers.

262 students were involved in the competitions conducted during Language Carnival 2017 besides a few other students who assisted the lecturers as committee members. The theme nominated for the language carnival is "UiTM Penang's got talent: Live up to your dreams". The competitions were initially divided into a few categories such as Public Speaking, Musical Drama, Poetry Recital, Singing and Demonstration. Later, the committee had decided to make it an "Open Category performances" to provide more space for the participants to explore their hidden talents. Consequently, we had diversified competitors like public speaking, short sketch, poetry recital, musical drama, solo and group singing, musical games, magic show and henna drawing demonstration.

On the final day of Language Carnival 2017, 11 exhibition booths had been set up to acknowledge the contribution of the language clubs and sponsors. They belongs to English Club, Japanese Club, France Club (with the invited French guests from Alliance Française Penang), Mandarin Club, German Language Unit, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DPB), Celcom, AVON, Photo Booth (by the committee), Henna Drawing, Sushi and Sugar Figurines by the Hoteliers.

Mandarin Club served Chinese tea to their booth visitors. They also conducted demonstration of Chinese calligraphy writing.

Japanese club promoted renting services for Yukata (a casual summer Japanese kimono). They also conducted Origami demonstration besides selling book maker and key chains.

The advisor of French Club, Mdm Er Ann Nah, with two invited guests from Alliance Française Penang. They sold Madeleine (a traditional small cake from France).

The best performer of Language Carnival 2017 manipulated plastic glasses in their performance.

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UPALS Language Colloquium 2016
The Academy of Language Studies
UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang

8.00—5.00 pm * 30 September 2016 (Friday) * Bilik Perdana 1, Level 2, UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang

The UPALS Language Colloquium 2016 was successfully held as scheduled on Friday, 30 September 2016 at BP1. A total of 14 papers, all related to language teaching and learning were presented during the colloquium. The presenters were made up of APB UiTMPP lecturers, with the exception of Prof. Madya Dr. Tan Teow Ghee from APB UiTM Kedah and Ms. Khor Gek Suan from USM. The colloquium ended at around 5.00 pm with Puan Muriatul Khusmah Musa, representing Ms. Rosmaliza Mohamed, KPP of APB UiTMPP in giving away the certificate of participation to the presenters, followed by a group photo session.

Here is the complete list of papers that were presented at the UPALS Language Colloquium 2016:

PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED UiTM PENANG ESL LEARNERS FACING DIFFICULTIES IN PRODUCING GRAMMATICALLY WRITTEN AND SPOKEN ENGLISH—*Budiman Sabri Ahmad*

PEER-ASSESSMENT – A METACOGNITIVE APPROACH TOWARDS DEVELOPING PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS—*Emily Jothee Mathai, Dr. Rushita Ismail, Suzana Ab Rahim & Farina Norzakiah Tazijan*

FLIPPED CLASSROOM: FOSTERING ACTIVE LEARNING—*Farina Nozakiah Tazijan, Azianura Hani Shaari & Sakina Sofia Baharom*

SOME POINTERS FOR POTENTIAL LECTURERS OF MANDARIN AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN MALAYSIA—*Hoe Foo Terng, Liaw Shun Chone, Lim Teck Heng, & Rasaya Marimuthu*

FACTORS AFFECTING MANDARIN PRONUNCIATION AMONG ENGINEERING UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA: A PERSPECTIVE VIEW—*Gek Suan Khor, Boon Yih Mah & Voon Foo Thomas Chow*

ENHANCING STUDENTS' SPOKEN LANGUAGE SKILLS IN ROLE PLAY THROUGH ORACY ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT (OAT) - *Liaw Shun Chone, Rasaya A/L Marimuthu, Lim Teck Heng & Hoe Foo Terng*

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON THE COURSE SELECTION FOR WEB-BASED INSTRUCTION (WBI) INTEGRATION—*Boon Yih Mah, Lim Teck Heng, Rosmaliza Mohamed, Rasaya Marimuthu, Liaw Shun Chone & Rushita Ismail*

KEPELBAGAIAN TEKNIK TERJEMAHAN DALAM TEKS UCAPAN -*Melati Desa & Raja Rosila Raja Berahim*

IMPROVING RETENTION OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY USING CARD GAME: A PILOT STUDY—*Wan Noorli Razali, Noraziah Mohd Amin, Nazima Versay Kudus & Muriatul Khusmah Musa*

THE PERCEPTION OF UNITEN STUDENTS TOWARDS THE MASTERY OF JAWI SCRIPT FOR ITS SUSTAINABILITY—*Noraziah Mohd Amin, Noor Azam Abdul Rahman & Wan Noorli Razali*

MENGENALPASTI DAN MENGANALISIS GAYA BAHASA PUJIAN DALAM TEKS UCAPAN EARL SPENCER SEMASA PENGEBUMIAN PUTERI DIANA—*Raja Rosila Raja Berahim & Melati Desa*

ONLINE COLLABORATION THROUGH EDMODO AS A WAY TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE SPEAKING CLASSROOM—*Rasaya Marimuthu, Liaw Shun Chone, Lim Teck Heng, & Hoe Foo Terng*

EXPERIENCING CREATIVE PROCESSES THROUGH DIGITAL STORYTELLING: A TALE OF TWO ENGINEERING UNDERGRADUATES—*Rofiza Aboo Bakar, Hanani Ahmad Zubir, Nur Darina Ibrahim & Che Nooryohana Zulkifli*

L2 MOTIVATIONAL SYSTEM OF MALAY STUDENTS WHO LEARN MANDARIN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE—*Teow Ghee Tan; Lim Teck Heng & Hoe Foo Terng*

Some of the presenters in action during the UPALS Language Colloquium 2016

Khidmat Masyarakat di Rumah Warga Emas Darul Hannan
oleh Dr. Rofiza Aboo Bakar

Seramai kira-kira 25 orang pensyarah dari Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang telah mengunjungi Rumah Warga Emas Darul Hannan, Pongsu Seribu, Kepala Batas pada 20 Ogos, 2016 yang lalu untuk menjalankan sebuah program khidmat masyarakat.

Setibanya kami di sana, sedikit taklimat tentang Rumah Warga Emas Darul Hannan te-lahpun diberikan. Perbelanjaan untuk membina bangunan-bangunan rumah telah di-sumbang oleh Tan Sri Syed Mokhtar al-Bukhary di atas tanah wakaf Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Pulau Pinang (MAINPP) seluas 8 ekar. Pengurusannya pula diuruskan sepenuhnya oleh Zakat Pulau Pinang. Penempatan dan penjagaan warga emas Islam termasuklah warga emas lelaki dan perempuan yang tidak mempunyai zuriat ataupun waris dan tidak mempunyai wang simpanan melebihi RM10,000 pada satu-satu masa kerana mereka dikira sebagai asnaf yang layak menerima zakat.

Antara prasarana yang disediakan adalah bangunan asrama, perpustakaan, cafeteria, surau, wad, dewan serbaguna dan bengkel. Kompleks ini boleh menampung jumlah ma-ksima warga emas seramai 200 orang dan mula beroperasi sepenuhnya pada 1 Februari 2010.

Aktiviti-aktiviti warga emas di sini bermula seawal lima pagi dengan bersolat sunat sunat Tahajjud sebelum diikuti dengan solat Subuh secara berjemaah, kuliah subuh dan solat sunat Subuh. Kemudian, mereka akan bersarapan pagi, makan tengahari dan bebas mela-kukan aktiviti masing-masing sebelum bersembahyang lain-lain solat wajib secara ber-jemaah pula. Boleh dikatakan, aktiviti seharian mereka dipenuhi dengan kefahaman dan penghayatan agama Islam.

Sesekali, mereka akan dikunjungi oleh orang perseorangan ataupun organisasi yang prihatin, termasuklah jabatan kita baru-baru ini. Antara aktiviti yang telah kita lakukan ialah mengemas bilik-bilik penghuni warga emas ini dengan menukar cadar dan mencuci bilik air, menggembur tanah di kebun-kebun kecil, serta bersembang-sembang santai dengan mereka.

APB turut menghulurkan sedikit sumbangan berupa lampin pakai buang dan barangan makanan serta keperluan harian lain. Sumbangan kita mungkin kecil tetapi ia membawa makna yang besar kepada warga-warga emas ini. Aktiviti sebegini turut mengajak pe-nulis berfikir sejenak tentang kehidupan. Apakah bekalan yang akan kubawa ke sana nanti? Bagaimanakah kesudahanku nanti? Paling penting, bersyukurkah aku dengan apa yang aku ada sekarang?
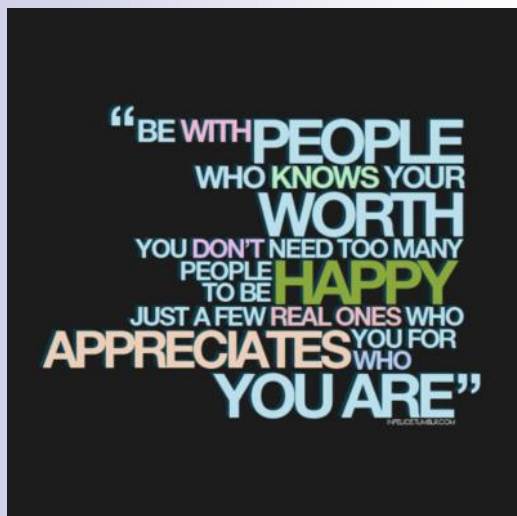
Sebahagian ahli jabatan bergam-bar sebelum memulakan aktiviti membersihkan bilik-bilik warga emas Darul Hanan.

'Men at work' – ahli-ahli jabatan bertungkus-lumus mencuci lantai.

Sumbangan terjemahan ayat-ayat Al-Quran tanda kenang-kenangan.

Ahli-ahli jabatan bergambar ber-sama warga-warga emas Darul Hanan. Moga pengorbanan kecil ini diterima olehNya.

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Community Service project at Kampong Perak, Batu Kurau, Perak

Compiled by Ms Wan Noorli Razali

Fun with English

Academy of Language Studies (ALS) UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang has organised three community service projects this year. The first is called 'Fun with English' at Sekolah Kebangsaan Kampong Perak, Batu Kurau, Perak Darul Ridzuan on 20th April 2017. This half day program aims at capturing the students' interest to learn English in a fun way. Twenty five facilitators have conducted three different interesting activities mainly story-telling, vocabulary games and singing. The activities started at 9.15 am after a short briefing by the English teacher at the school hall and ends at 12.45 pm with a closing ceremony. The students were participative as they were encouraged by the facilitators to get involved in the group activities. They found the program helpful and fun.

1 Kamus 1000 Makna (Siri 1)

The second community project reached its peak on the same day, 20th April 2017 when 117 students from Standard 5 and 6 who are mostly from poor family background were given an Oxford Dictionary each. Prof. Madya. Dr. Mohd Fozi Ali, the Rector of UiTM Pulau Pinang was happy to hand them the dictionary himself during the closing ceremony of 'Fun with English' program. The receivers were also from Sekolah Kebangsaan Kampong Perak who attended the earlier program. This is a collaborated project of three different departments; the Academy of Language Studies, the Applied Sciences Department and the Computer and Mathematical Sciences Department. The first series started on 1st of February with the fund collection and purchasing of the dictionary. Aims at helping to provide poor students in the northern region schools with a dictionary, the program is expected to continue in the coming semesters.

Reading Corner at Anjung Ibnu Sina

The third project that took place on the same day has been successfully completed in the afternoon. The reading corner at Anjung Ibnu Sina, Masjid ar-Ridzuaniah Kampong Perak were equipped with reading materials mainly the revision books, story books and magazines. It is hoped that with this small contribution, the youngsters will find the mosques attractive not just as a religious institution but also as a knowledge seeking avenue. Well done to all ALS members for making all the three events a success!

International Invention & Innovative Competition (InIIC Series 2/2016)

By Mr. Lim Teck Heng

InIIC Series 2/2016, a competition organized by MNNF Network and MNNF Publisher which are based in Senawang Negeri Sembilan, was held on 5 December 2016 at Puteri Beach Resort Port Dickson.

The participants, comprising professionals, educators as well as students from Malaysia and Indonesia, were from three categories namely Professional Education & Social Science, Professional Engineering, Science & Technology and Higher Institution Students. This one-day event highlighted numerous innovative, cost-effective and practical solutions to a variety of problems.

APB UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang was represented by Lim Teck Heng, Rasaya Marimuthu, Liaw Shun Chone and Assoc Prof Dr Hoe Foo Terng. The team presented a project named QuickSet_Exam v2.0. The project highlighted a Microsoft Word add-in which creates a customized UI ribbon. Users of the add-in are able to use the icons on the customized UI ribbon to perform typography tasks as well as to insert instructions / rubrics.

QuickSet_Exam v2.0 greatly reduces the time spent on customizing the typography of examination papers. The test setters can now spend more time and focus on the test content instead of worrying whether they have adhered to the stipulated typography guidelines. This add-in could be an indispensable tool for institutions that are still grappling with the typography of examination papers.

The easy-to-use and cost-effective features of QuickSet_Exam v2.0 managed to impress the judges and the team was awarded a Gold Medal for its effort. Apart from the medal, an article detailing the add-in was also published as a chapter in a book entitled Growing Creative and Innovative Solutions.

Kamus Cendekiawan Bahasa Cina-Bahasa Melayu

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hoe Foo Terng
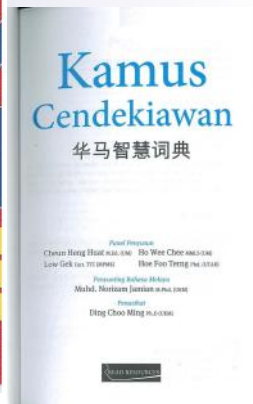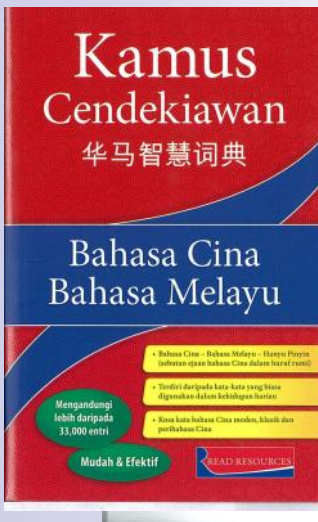
From the initial drafting to the printing of this dictionary, it has undergone numerous modifications and revision. These modifications involve drafting of content, format, entry word, dictionary size, word revision and manuscript editing. Finally, the Chinese – Malay Wisdom Dictionary "Hua - Ma Zhihui Cidian" (Kamus Cendekiawan Bahasa Cina- Bahasa Melayu) was published and launched on August 26, 2016. The launching ceremony is simple, just notification on facebook and newsletter without any news conference or VIP invited for the ceremony. "Hua - Ma Zhihui Dictionary" was compiled by UiTM Associate Professor Chuen Heng Huat, Senior Lecturer Ho Wee Chee, Associate Professor Dr. Hoe Foo Terng and Ms. Low Gek, SJKC Kah Wah Headmistress. Muhd. Norizam Jamian from National University of Malaysia was appointed as the Malay language editor, and National University of Malaysia professor Dr. Ding Choo Ming was invited as the advisor. The dictionary was published by Read Resources, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, with a total of 33,000 entries. The entry Word is in Chinese, followed by Hanyu Pinyin word and explained in Malay word or phrase. According to the chief editor, Associate Professor Chuen Heng Huat , the dictionary is specially catered for Malaysian, Indonesian, Singaporean and Bruneian secondary and primary Chinese schools students and those students learning Mandarin as a second language. The dictionary can be bought at book outlets in Malaysia, and all are welcome to use this dictionary.

Getting to know you ... *featuring* Dr. Rofiza Aboo Bakar

In this section, we will get 'upclose and personal' with colleagues from our department ...
(Interview conducted Mr. Liaw Shun Chone)

Dr Rofiza Aboo Bakar actually needs no introduction. She has been with UiTM Penang branch since 1997 at the old campus site situated at Permatang Pasir. She helmed the coordinator post of Academy of Language Studies (APB), UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang from 2001-2004. In this short interview with her, she shares with us some insights on her personal interests, work experiences, academic pursuits and motivational tips for potential Phd holders.

LSC: *Name three persons you idolise? (one of them would be your dad who was your source of inspiration- INDEED, hehe)*

RAB: My late dad – who named me after a Dr. Rofiza he read about in a newspaper article in the 1970s, and who showed all his children that we need to work hard but reminded us that 'All work no play makes Jack a dull boy'.
My mom – who endlessly prays for my well-being, cooks good food, sews me beautiful clothes, and who has embodied 'creativity' long before I actually investigated it for my PhD studies .
My better half – who knows my strengths and weaknesses, and accepts me just as I am.

LSC: *What makes you laugh the most?*

RAB: Watching 'Sponge Bob, Square Pants' and 'Shin Chan'

LSC: *What is your favourite vacation? (you may have trouble here summarising all the many places you have visited)*

RAB: All places because all God's creations are wonderful.

LSC: *When was your proudest moment?*

RAB: When I received the Gold Medal for being the best PhD student. That really, really took me by surprise. And that was a real bonus because all I asked for was just to pass it after all the enduring years. That was really my proudest moment.

LSC: *How is it like being a risk taker? (you may want to relate to how you took up the life – saver's course or how you took part and won two gold awards in the recent innovation competition in Perak)*

RAB: I would not see myself as a risk taker but I listen to my better half's advice that in life, if it is for a good cause, I would not lose a thing trying. I may not always be successful but I will learn something along the way. For example, when I wanted to take up the most basic life-saving course, i.e. Bronze Medallion, I knew it from the beginning that the training would be hard, my face and skin would suffer from sunburn because of the strong sunlight, and I may also fail the test. Since, I wanted to follow in my late dad's footstep who was a life-saver himself, I tried, and I tried real hard so that I could pass the course. The examiner was impressed and offered that I went on with a higher level life-saving course, Bronze Cross. I passed that too though I struggled. Recently, I completed a Swimming Teacher course and passed its exam whose certificate is endorsed by the United Kingdom.

LSC: *What motivates you to work hard?*

RAB: Really, I do not know whether I work hard. It is truly subjective. But I do know that if I want to do something or if I am given a task, I would try very hard to deliver my best.

LSC: *Do you like or dislike surprises? Why or why not?*

RAB: Emm… it goes to what kind of surprises. If it is about getting a bouquet of flowers, or a box of chocolate from a friend, I wouldn't think I mind. It's a beautiful surprise. I would love it! Wouldn't you too, for that matter? However, in life in general, I don't really think I have had many surprises. I am not that adventurous. I like anything at all to be orderly. So, mostly, things are planned in advance, and consequently I am not much taken by surprise. I just like to lead a quiet and an ordinary life. Not too mundane though.

LSC: *Share with us briefly of your experiences and feelings when you were the APB coordinator.*

RAB: Oh… I do not envy those being in the KPP / Coordinator positions. They hold great responsibilities. We must thank them. However, I think I became the APB Coordinator then because it was just a rotation. I had never imagined that I would become a Coordinator in a university's department because I was not even a school prefect! Work was aplenty but time was always short. I worked long hours, and on weekends too. I gave my best, but being the youngest in the department at that time, only 29, scared a lot out of me. Almost always, I felt incompetent and was under intense scrutiny. God knows how I had to drag my feet to come to work. Truthfully, holding the position the last time wasn't something I really favoured. Maybe I am just not cut to be a leader. Besides having friends, I did not realise that I had enemies too. Three and a half years being there left me with a lot of bittersweet memories. I was just doing my job but I had given my best.

LSC: *What do you intend to do in future now that you have successfully obtained your doctorate degree?*

RB: Daydream for more ideas.

LSC: *Do share with your APB colleagues your struggles (if any) while doing your Phd study and how you finally managed to triumph against all odds.*

RAB: A lot of struggle! My titles were changed a few times. Changing titles means reading a lot more, and writing all over again. Then, my proposal (or my three chapters) was rejected. I was left not knowing what to do. I was in the 'incubation' period for a very long time because I was afraid. Anyway, I tried reading and writing all over again although a little a day. For each statement made, I ensured that it was backed up. It was a long process. I wasn't sure of myself until the day of the viva when the chairperson announced that I passed. I passed because God helped me. There was nothing really great. My advice is pray a lot, and work hard.

LSC: *Thank you so much Dr Rofiza Aboo Bakar for your time in sharing with us some of your personal and work related details. Your invaluable advice on how to cope with difficulties is a source of inspiration to all fellow APBians.*

Dr. Rofi's handsome dad

Dr. Rofi, with her mom during her proudest moment

and ... with her beloved hubby

A special compilation of Dr. Mah Boon Yih's activities

A Critical Review on the Course Selection for Web-Based Instruction (WBI) Integration

In order to tackle the students' writing problems based on the writing needs of UiTM learners and instructors as well as the limitations found in the existing web-based writing systems, researchers proposed using web-based instruction (WBI) as a supplementary instructional tool (Mah and Khor (2015). After reviewing the existing English courses as well as the course content, it was found appropriate to be integrated with WBI as the content development as this course focusses on developing the learners' writing competency to produce a research report. Below is the abstract from the original paper entitled *A Critical Review on the Course Selection for Web-Based Instruction (WBI) Integration* authored by Boon Yih Mah, Lim Teck Heng, Rosmaliza Mohamed, Rasaya Marimuthu, Liaw Shun Chone and Rushita Ismail presented in UPALS Language Colloquium 2016 on 30 September 2016 at UiTM Penang Branch, Permatang Pauh Campus, Penang, Malaysia:

Web-based instruction (WBI) has been proposed by Mah and Khor (2015) as a supplementary instructional tool to tackle the writing problems faced by Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) students besides to fulfil the writing needs of UiTM learners and instructors due to the limitations found in the existing web-based writing systems. Hence, the objective of this study is to select an appropriate English course by conducting a critical review of literature based on the past studies involving UiTM English courses as well as the types of English courses offered by UiTM before embracing WBI as the course's supplementary instructional tool. After scrutinising all the UiTM English courses offered in 2013, BEL422 Report Writing was identified as the most proper course to be integrated with WBI owing to its syllabus, course structure, and assessment components that focus on proposal and report writing as the main learning outcome. Through the integration of WBI for instructional purpose, students who have registered in this course can acquire their writing competency to communicate effectively in an academic form of written English. Therefore, BEL422 Report Writing was opted to be integrated with WBI as the content development to facilitate the teaching process as well as enhance the learning outcomes. The future study will look into the adoption of Web-based Cognitive Writing Instruction (WeCWI) as the framework of WBI development for the enhancement of writing performance and critical thinking.

Becoming 21st Century Teacher: Transitions of a Teacher's Role in a Classroom & Sustaining Educators Competencies: Delivery of 21st Century Skills

OIC Higher Education Conference 2016 was held on 20 & 21 October 2016 at Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with the theme "Innovative Pedagogy". In line with the rapid growth of digital natives, this conference focussed on the possibilities of implementing and enhancing the existing educational innovations and their applications towards becoming the 21st-century educators. Dr Mah Boon Yih was invited as a speaker to share his insights on two different topics: Becoming 21st Century Teacher: Transitions of a Teacher's Role in a Classroom and Sustaining Educators Competencies: Delivery of 21st Century Skills. The key takeaways of his speeches are shown as below:

- educational key trends
- today's learners: the digital natives
- tech-enabled collaborative learning space
- EdNovator: innovate teaching to design learning
- differences among educator, lecturer, teacher & trainer
- educators' competencies
- 21st century skills
- EdNovator: competencies & delivery of 21st century skills
- 10 WeCWI essences & instructional shifts

Creativity & Innovation; Awards & Accolades

A special compilation of Dr. Mah Boon Yih's activities

A Review of UiTM Students' Writing Needs, Writing Problems, and Language Courses Prior to WeCWI's Course Integration

Based on the performance analysis and the writing challenges prescribed in the SIL domains (Mah, Irfan Naufal Umar, & Thomas Chow, 2013) as well as the poor writing skills based on SIL's learner domain (Mah & Khor, 2015), seven L2 writing challenges faced by UiTM students were identified. Hence, a supplementary WBI grounded on WeCWI was proposed and it was found appropriate to be integrated with WBI for an English writing course. A paper entitled *A Review of UiTM Students' Writing Needs, Writing Problems, and Language Courses Prior to WeCWI's Course Integration* were authored by Boon Yih Mah, Lim Teck Heng, Rosmaliza Mohamed, Rasaya Marimuthu, Liaw Shun Chone and Rushita Ismail, which has been presented by Dr Mah Boon Yih in International Conference on Education and Social Sciences 2016 (ICEdSS 2016) on 2-3 November 2016 at Parkroyal Penang Resort, Penang, Malaysia. Below is the abstract extracted from the original paper:

As reported in the past studies, an online instructional platform was needed to facilitate language teaching. Therefore, web-based instruction (WBI) was proposed as a supplementary instructional tool to tackle the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) students" writing problems besides fulfilling the learners and instructors" writing needs. To develop a WBI for enhancing writing performance and critical thinking, a hybrid e-framework namely Web-based Cognitive Writing Instruction (WeCWI) was recommended. A qualitative systematic review of literature was conducted on the related studies of UiTM students" writing needs and challenges as well as UiTM English courses before embracing WBI as a supplementary instructional tool of an English course. Based on the course syllabus, course structure, and assessment components focussing on report writing, BEL422 Report Writing was identified as the most appropriate course among all the UiTM English courses as offered up to 2013. Besides, this course was also vital to equip the students with the necessary writing skills to communicate effectively in their future workplaces. Thus, BEL422 Report Writing was selected to be integrated with WeCWI.

WeCWI: The Third Keynote

The 6th ICLEI organising committee invited Dr Mah Boon Yih to participate as a keynote speaker at the 6th International Conference on Language, Education and Innovation 2016 held at Royal Plaza on Scotts Hotel, 25 Scotts Road, Singapore 228220 on 29-30 October 2016. This is the third time Dr Mah being invited to deliver his keynote address in the international conference entitled *From SIL to WeCWI: Overcoming L2 Learners' Barriers to Writing through Web-Based Instruction*. The abstract of the keynote is shown as follows:

Rooted from the performance analysis based on the results of an English course offered by Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in two consecutive semesters, nine L2 writing challenges were identified. These barriers to L2 writing were further analysed and elucidated in a form of chain diagram namely "SIL", which means system (S), instructor (I), and learner (L). SIL proposes a sequence of deductive remedial actions for writing predicaments. Its learner domain was further scrutinised to examine the writing difficulties faced by UiTM undergraduates as the L2 learners. Based on the qualitative systematic review of the past studies on UiTM students' writing problems supported by the instructors and learners' writing needs, seven perspectives of poor writing skills were determined: writing complexity, literacy, proficiency, critical thinking, information literacy, interlanguage, and writing anxiety. Owing to the global impact of the internet, the positive outcomes of web-based writing instructions, as well as the high demand for developing a supplementary web-based instructional tool, an e-framework namely WeCWI was formulated grounded on the theoretical-and-pedagogical principles, which comes with four significances that promote in literacy, language, cognitive, and psychological developments. WeCWI synthesises the selected principles of theories, approach, and models from language acquisition, composition studies, cognitive theories, and e-learning. The injection of web 2.0, blog, into the framework as the instructional platform to enhance the writing performance and critical thinking.

Creativity & Innovation; Awards & Accolades

WeCWI: The Fourth Keynote

The fourth keynote address entitled *WeCWI Integrated Formula: Empowering Teachers through Adaptive Learning Technology* was presented by Dr Mah Boon Yih in ICELD 2016: International Conference on Education, Learning and Development on 1-2 December 2016 at Bayview Hotel Georgetown, Farquhar Street, 10200 Penang, Malaysia. The abstract of the keynote is shown as follows:

Web-based Cognitive Writing Instruction (WeCWI) is a theoretical-and-pedagogical multidisciplinary hybrid e-framework formulated to empower teachers through the adaptive learning technology particularly the internet. WeCWI Integrated Formula is the first framework synthesising the principles of language acquisition, cognitive theories, composition studies, and e-learning to construct a hybrid digital framework for developing and designing a web-based instruction (WBI) based on learners' information processing preferences. The four main theoretical rationales—language acquisition, composition studies, cognitive theories, and e-learning—are seamlessly integrated as the core of WeCWI, which can be summarised into a formula as: (Language Acquisition + Composition Studies + Cognitive Theories) e-Learning = WeCWI. This integrated formula of WeCWI is represented by a Venn diagram. To promote adaptive learning, teachers are encouraged to develop their web-based instructional tools using the web 2.0 platform such as blog based on their students' preferred interface designs that correspond to different perceptual learning styles. The process of WBI construction through the four stages (acquaint, develop, integrate, and design) in four different types of discoveries (instructional, technological, pedagogical, and theoretical) can empower the teachers to plan and manage the entire instructional process. Besides, WeCWI Integrated Formula also provides a remedy of second language (L2) writing barriers in English faced by the students by fostering their writing performance and critical thinking. This is achievable through the integration among the four WeCWI's theoretical rationales that promotes literacy, language, cognitive, and psychological developments. These four areas are equally essential to tackle the issues of complexity of writing skill and low literacy skills, interlanguage errors and low language proficiency, lack of critical thinking and low information literacy, and L2 writing anxiety. Therefore, language teachers are encouraged to develop and design their WBIs to improve the students' writing process and product.

WeCWI: The Fifth Keynote

Dr Mah Boon Yih has delivered his fifth keynote address entitled *WeCWI: Integrating Language Acquisition and Composition Studies towards Literacy Development* in the 6th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture & Education (ICLLCE) on 10-11 December 2016 at Liberty Central Saigon Citypoint Hotel, 59-61 Pasteur Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The abstract of the keynote is shown as follows:

WeCWI is an e-framework grounded on the theoretical-and-pedagogical principles of language acquisition, composition studies, cognitive theories, and e-learning to promote literacy, language, cognitive, and psychological developments. This study aimed to tackle the writing complexity and deficiency of literacy skills among the second language (L2) learners by reviewing the literature on the integration of language acquisition and composition studies to become a hybrid framework. Three fundamental language acquisition theories such as acquisition-learning hypothesis, input hypothesis, and reading hypothesis were adopted in WeCWI. To develop a tool of web-based instruction (WBI) using WeCWI, instructors are encouraged to publish greater functions and more up-to-date reading materials by utilising the web widgets and hypertext, which offer the direct access to specific online reading materials to the learners. This will also promote reading on voluntary basis in informal setting or free reading, which is the major source of literacy competence in various aspects including vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and writing (Krashen, 1992). Besides, formal reading can also be made available on WBI through posting the targeted reading materials related to the course's learning outcomes. Furthermore, WeCWI adopted Yan (2005)'s six typical writing steps based on Badger and White (2000)'s process genre approach. This approach helps instructors to create the writing tasks driven by specific purposes and forms that enable the learners to be engaged in the recursive writing process through six writing steps: preparation, modelling and reinforcing, planning, joint constructing, independent constructing, and revising. Since guided writing is the most imperative factor on how to develop and formulate abstract ideas (Lan, Hung, & Hsu, 2011), interactive media in the form of web widget or hypertext can be embedded to assist these writing steps. In conclusion, the integration of language acquisition theories and process genre approach into WeCWI empowers WBI towards literacy development.

From the Third Languages

The German Language

Let's Learn German

By Ms Raja Rosila Raja Berahim & Dr. Rofiza Aboo Bakar

German Language is one of the third languages offered as an elective course for about 4 years in UiTM Penang. German language is only offered to Mechanical, Electrical and Civil Engineering Degree students. They have to learn three levels of German. These are Introductory German Levels 1, 2 and 3 which are all basic German.

Today, let me teach you the German greetings and simple phrases that you can use to greet your students in order to give them support in learning German.

German	English
Hallo	Hello
Guten Morgen	Good morning
Guten Tag	Good afternoon / Good day
Guten Abend	Good evening
Gute Nacht	Good night
Wie geht es Ihnen?	How are you?
Mir geht es gut, danke.	I am fine, thank you.
Wie heiβen Sie?	What is your name?
Ich heiβe…	My name is …
Woher kommen Sie?	Where are you coming from?
Ich komme aus … (Deutschland / Malaysia)?	I come from … (Germany / Malaysia)?
Danke schön	Thank you
Bitte schön	You are welcome
Willkommen	Welcome
Herzlichen Glückwunsch/ Gratulation	Congratulations
Kein Problem	No Problem
Ja/nein	Yes/no
Entschuldigung	Excuse me
Tschüss (informal)/ Auf Wiedersehen (formal)	Bye/ see you again
Bis später	See you later

Student Contributions

Realist vs Idealist

By Muhamed Dhiya Ulhaqq Bin Uslan (2016457318)

PEM1102Q1 (Semester Dec – Apr 2017)

Humans become more mature as they live their life. As the Chinese idiom says, human are born to be like ginger – the older, the spicier. This means that as we age, we experience more and become much wiser. With the experiences a person went through, the individual will automatically developed perception towards reality which is generally categorized into either realistic or idealistic perception. This article will highlight the comparison of the two.

Realism is a thought based to the perception of things as they are, which often viewed as practical. However, human views are usually tied to a pessimistic basis as they view the situation in less hopeful eyes which results in achieving a 'minimum' result as they weigh their option before making any decision. Realist believes in rational thoughts and will only perceive things the way they are without any type of interpretation. In simple words, realist are regarded as a thinker.

On the other hand, idealism is a thought based on the perception of things as they should be and is usually viewed as visionary. As their thinking are usually tied to an optimistic basis driven by hope, they tend to take risks in their judgements in order to achieve a 'maximum' result. This in return will make them set higher goals. Idealist believes that our reality are shaped by our thoughts and ideas whereas realist believes otherwise. Idealist tend to interpret surroundings to be in an ideal situation before accepting them. Idealist can be generally known as a dreamer.

By comparing idealism and realism, majority of the people will accept a realistic thinking as a better option compared to an idealistic thoughts. However, everything in this world have their pros and cons. This is also applied to the perception of an idealist and realist. Humans are creatures of improvement since ancient time as they use their ability given by God to think. Therefore, if a realist is truly regarded as superior perception, the advancement of humanity will become stagnant. Then again, there is no such thing as a pure realist or idealist as humans are basically a complex being.

That being said, it is best if we balance the two perceptions when applying them in daily basis. My half-sister once said to me that if one continually looks up towards an ideal, one will stumble on the rocks by one's feet but if one were to only look down at reality, one will lose sight of the path to one's destination. That is why both must be used together. Of course achieving a perfect balance in maintaining both perceptions in daily basis is somewhat a difficult task but do keep in mind that any form of extremism is a form of excessiveness.

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THE CREATIVE CORNER

When it comes to expressing themselves artistically, there's no holding back our lecturers. eLingua takes great pride in providing them with an avenue to unleash their creative power. See for yourself below!

What do you see in a mirror?

By Mr. Liaw Shun Chone

The advent of 2017 has brought some major physical changes to UiTM Penang branch façade and interior renovations. One of them you cannot miss is the minute when you enter one of the four elevators located at Perdana Block. You suddenly come directly in contact with someone familiar that looks exactly like you. A perfect replica. In fact, when you turn yourself to face both flanks, you soon realise that the person staring back at you is yourself. Yes, there are now mirrors placed on all three sides of the four elevators.

So, what have all the mirrors installed at Perdana Block done to you? I don't know if they make any difference to you or not. For me, it makes me a little bit more self -conscious of my appearance. At my age, I am not thinking about vanity and egoism. Such considerations I have long discarded. I am more concerned about my appearance for work. Talk about 'sahsiah rupadiri' or self-grooming. Am I attired appropriately for work? Have I tugged in my shirt properly? Is my hair combed properly or is a tuft still sticking out stubbornly? Somehow, I noticed that my appearance looks different from the guy in the mirror at home. In comparison, my face still looked perfectly normal – the wrinkled expressions and same balding 'salt and pepper' hair. However, my shirt seemed a bit shrunken and the belly slightly bloated. As a true aging Malaysian, I blamed it on my poor eyesight playing tricks on me and when that reason was still not convincing, I accused it all on mirror defect. True enough, I had some 'young- at- heart' female lecturers who vouched that the mirrors are indeed not built with the customers in mind. In short, not so user-friendly ... for the eyes.

Not one to rely on only the lecturers' feedback, I decided to get more feedback from the students. Here were some of their comments on the new mirrors placed at the elevators. Most of them agreed that the mirrors made them more conscious of their appearance. They also commented that the mirrors helped them to adjust their uniforms and clothing before entering the labs and classes. When it comes to whether they like the installed mirrors, the majority were in favour of them as they could see themselves at full length, a quarter of them remained indifferent to these new mirrors while a few disliked these mirrors as they viewed them as unnecessary distractions. 'What happens if someone scratches the mirrors or worse still, deliberately crack and damage them? Will such vandalism then pose a safety threat to us?'

One even commented that there are cctvs installed behind those mirrors. I wonder how? Well, that calls for some Bukit Aman investigation. I guess the student must have read or watch a lot of spy stories. Another said that it's quite spooky especially when you're alone in the elevator. ' Takut-lah seorang dalam lif macam ada orang tengok'.

These were some of the many interesting comments from our students. Maybe I shall get permission to present all such findings in this year's apb colloquium (just kidding).

The next time you're in the elevators, you probably can pose a question or two to yourself, 'Mirror, mirror on the wall, ...'

What do you think apbians?