

English Language Club Report

What's up world with Ian Yee!

By Syed Amir Haikal and Dr Nur Ilianis Adnan

In the second episode of "What's Up World!" on 11th November 2021, Ian Yee was invited as a guest speaker by English Club UiTMCPP. He is an editor and executive producer from R.AGE (an investigative and journalism team under THE STAR), nominated TWICE for Peabody Awards in consecutive years and has been selected for the inaugural APAC cohort of the Obama Foundation Leaders Program.

This session was hosted by students of UiTMCPP, Syed Amir Haikal and Syaqille. In the session, they explained to the audience about Journalism as well as listing out the challenges that journalism faces. 4 questions were discussed in the session which include what journalism entails, the job description of a journalist, the various types of journalism and the problems faced by journalists. Before the hosts introduced the guest, they played a 1-minute clip of a documentary that R.AGE has done entitled "The Malaysian Drug Trade: Investigating Malaysia's Drug Mule Syndicates".

During the interview session, the hosts asked the guest to explain a bit of his background and working experience as a journalist under R.AGE before the 2 main questions were then posed .



R.AGE is the youth section under The Star. It started out by covering news regarding youth entertainment. Later it then shifted towards being an investigative journalist team covering social issues in Malaysia. He then explained some of the difficulties that the journalism industry faces. An example given by Ian was about articles written by journalists from primary news sources that were copied and republished on the internet. This act of "copying and re-editing" the article from professional journalists takes away their credit for their hard work getting the resourceful information. Hence, to combat the problem R.AGE focused on publishing well - crafted investigative journalism with the aim that if professional journalism is done correctly, it can bring better and quality information to the society. With that, this led them to creating many well-made documentaries.

The 2 main questions that were asked to the guest by the host were

1. Why did you become a journalist?
2. Based on the problem that modern journalism is facing, as a journalist how can you tackle these hurdles?

In the beginning of the interview, the host asked the guest to explain his reasons for taking up journalism. In his response, he opted for mass communication because it was a course with cheaper fees to take up in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (TAR UC) since he was not born with a silver spoon. He also considered taking mass communication due to its versatility in the workforce. During an internship at The Star, he was exposed to the world of journalism and realised the importance of it. This was truly significant when he had to do his first report on the bird flu outbreak that happened in a village near Jalan Genting in Klang. A lot of people asked him for updates on the situation as it was affecting a lot of stakeholders and institutions. This experience dawned on him on how crucial journalism is in providing accurate information to the public. Moving to the second question, Ian explained the types of challenges of journalism and how to overcome them. The examples of challenges faced by journalism today are misinformation of news and the algorithm of social media. To overcome the problem, all classes of society must understand the principle of journalism so they can support journalists in ensuring that all information is treated with fairness and accuracy.

There were 3 questions asked from the audience: -

1. What kind of article would normally attract university students' interest to read?
2. What advice can you give to the students to kickstart their writing?
3. What do you do to cope with writer's block or if you read someone else's material and think yours is lacking?

Regarding the first question, Ian responded by stating that it follows the elements of "news value" to help instil students' interest to read. These "News Value" elements will show how impactful and worthy a certain article is to read on. Moving to the second question, Ian mentioned that the best way for students to kick start their writings is by reading very good, published articles or literature so they can develop a great way of writing. Lastly for the final question, the best way to cope with writer's block is by having great substance and gathering all the information needed in the essay as usually, having all the resources will help in forming a very good story/written article.

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