General

Professor Turun Padang's ‘Learn English Outdoor’ combines language skills and environmental awareness in Kuala Krau

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KUALA KRAU, 11 October 2024 – In a creative and impactful approach to language instruction, the Centre for Modern Languages (CML), Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA), in collaboration with the Centre for Industry and Community Network (ICoN) and Centre for Corporate Communication organised a corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme under the ‘Professor Turun Padang’ (PTP) initiative.

The PTP entitled Learn English Outdoor was held at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Kuala Krau, Temerloh, Pahang on 11 October 2024, which was also organised as part of the Kembara TVET@Kuala Krau programme organised by the Centre for Corporate Communication, UMPSA.

This programme brought together 100 secondary school pupils, which also include pupils from the Orang Asli community, aims to enhance pupils’ English language skills through outdoor experiences while fostering a strong sense of environmental responsibility.

With a focus on productive English skills, environmental stewardship, and the promotion of quality education, this initiative provides students with a new perspective on language learning.

Through activities based in nature and with the active use of environmental resources, the program aims to deepen students' connection to both language and the world around them.

The CML, UMPSA team was led by Associate Professor Dr. Hafizoah Kassim and her team of seven facilitators including Dr. Fatimah Ali, Nur syafawati Sabuan, Rosjuliana Hidayu Rosli, Dr. Nor Yazi Khamis, Dr. Azwin Arif Abdul Rahim, Dr. Mohamad Musab Azmat Ali and Mohd Aizat Zulkifli.

Utilising a module entitled Pick&Tell, the core of 'Learn English Outdoor' is to use environmental materials as tools to enhance students' productive English skills, especially in speaking, writing and storytelling.

Moving away from the traditional classroom setting, pupils engage in language activities, which immersive learning environment allows them to express ideas, strengthens their confidence and encourages creativity.

At the heart of the program were objectives that reflect the vision of SDG 4: Quality Education, which promotes inclusive and equitable quality education, and SDG 13: Climate Action, which calls for urgent efforts to combat climate change and its impacts.

The emphasis on quality education is to inspire curiosity, build confidence, and equip students with skills and experiences that extend beyond language skills and classroom settings.

By enhancing their English skills, pupils are empowered to engage with a wider world of information, ideas, and opportunities, and as a global language, becomes a bridge to knowledge and global perspectives.

Beyond language skills, the program aims to instill a sense of responsibility towards protecting and sustaining the environment.

By combining language learning with environmental education, the program provides students with skills that are both practical and globally relevant.

Three activities were conducted, where pupils explored their surroundings, picking objects from the nature as well as man-made objects to describe in English.

Whether examining leaves, stones, or trees, each student had to describe the objects, draw them and later create a story.

This exercise, which combines sensory exploration with language practice, helped students become more comfortable expressing their thoughts in English.

When pupils learn in a real-world environment, they gain practical language skills by communicating their experiences, which makes language learning more engaging and effective.

The pupils also practiced storytelling by creating short narratives based on the objects they selected, and their outdoor experiences.

This activity was carried out to develop their fluency and comfort in spoken English, building the foundations for confident communication.

The PTP team is grateful that this programme was conducted as part of the Kembara TVET@Kuala Krau, strengthening the relationship between UMPSA and SMK Kuala Krau, and promises more impactful programmes and activities between the two institutions in the future.

Feedback on the PTP program is also positive. In her feedback, the Head of the English Department of the SMK Kuala Krau, Asmaliza Md Isa stated the positive impact of the PTP programme, including the enjoyment pupils felt about the activities and the benefits of the learning experiences.

In brief, embodying the principles of SDG 4 and SDG 13, the PTP: Learn English Outdoor sets a compelling example of how education can drive sustainable change, preparing a generation of students who are not only linguistically skilled but also environmentally conscious and globally aware.

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