Academic

Little Learners, Big Future 2.0 Empowers 33 Preschool Educators with practical instructional approaches in teaching English to young learners

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KUALA TERENGGANU, 19 October 2024 – Building on the success of its first workshop in Dewan Tun Fatimah, Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA) Gambang Campus, the Centre for Modern Languages (CML) proudly organised the “Little Learners, Big Future: Practical Instructional Approaches for Teaching English to Young Learners Workshop 2.0” in Kuala Terengganu, this time held at the Open University Malaysia, Kuala Terengganu, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., in collaboration with Persatuan Pendidik Taska Swasta Negeri Terengganu (PPTNT).

Thirty-three enthusiastic preschool educators and owners-majority of whom are registered members of PPTNT-participated in this programme.

Both workshops were supported by UMPSA’s Centre for Industry and Community Linkages through a community grant aimed at bridging the gap between the university and industry as well as the community at large.

According to the Programme Director, Associate Professor Dr. Noor Raha Mohd Radzuan, this workshop, much like the former, aimed to introduce practical techniques that would not only improve educators' English proficiency but also boost their confidence in using the language within preschool settings.

These workshops, part of the ongoing Kindy Talk programme emphasise the powerful impact of early language exposure in building a child’s basic English skills through their preschool educators.



The Kindy Talk programme began as KTP Kindy in 2015 under the Knowledge Transfer Programme (KTP) Grant awarded by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), was developed by Associate Professor Dr. Noor Raha Mohd Radzuan and Dr. Wan Jumani Fauzi alongside Dr. Anita Abd. Rani, Dr. Ezihaslinda Ngah, Noor Azlinda Zainal Abidin, Dr. Fatimah Ali, Haslinda Hashim, and Siti Airin Abd Ghani.

Under the mentorship of Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr. Aminah Ayob, the programme first started with two specialized modules to enhance early childhood English education, the former focusing on daily routine and instructional language, and the latter on effective storytelling techniques.

Since then, Kindy Talk has come up with two more modules, English for STEM and Little Learners, Big Future: Practical Instructional Approaches for Teaching English to Young Learners.

The first workshop, held on 28 September 2024, set the stage for this initiative's impact and presented valuable insights on providing correct language input, utilizing interactive methods through meticulously designed animal-themed materials, which allowed the early childhood educators to incorporate English learning with playful and hands-on activities that engage children's imaginations and encourage language retention.

At the recent Terengganu workshop, the animal theme remained central, and five trainers on hand were Dr. Wan Jumani Fauzi, Associate Professor Dr. Noor Raha, Dr. Ezihaslinda Ngah, Noor Azlinda Zainal Abidin, and Alia Najaa Md Nor, and supported by the technical expertise of Nurul Ishafira Ismail.

Following a warm welcome from Dr. Noor Raha whose speech emphasized the significance of early childhood educators in the lives of children and PPTNT Chairperson, Che Rohimah Hassan who spoke of the importance of English for the children, our future leaders and workforce, participants dove into a full day of learning.

The day concluded with a closing ceremony, where participants received certificates, and the best groups received prizes for best performances to celebrate their commitment to professional growth and the promise of more engaging, effective English teaching for young learners.

With each workshop, *Kindy Talk* reaffirms its role in reshaping early childhood English education, equipping educators to confidently bring the world of English to the next generation.

This Terengganu workshop further strengthened the collaborative ties between CML and PPTNT, underscoring the importance of partnerships that combine academic expertise with hands-on community experience.

By: Associate Profesor Dr. Noor Raha Mohd Radzuan, Dr. Wan Jumani Fauzi, Dr. Ezihaslinda Ngah, Noor Azlinda Zainal Abidin And Alia Najaa Md Nor, Centre for Modern Languages (CML)

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