

# Abstracts of Papers

## 1. Anna Mary Perumal

*Institute of Teacher Education, Rajang Campus, Sarawak, Malaysia*

Anna Mary Perumal started off as an English language teacher in secondary schools in Sabah for ten years. She has served in Kuala Lumpur for two years and then landed in Sarawak and is currently a TESL lecturer in the Institute of Teacher Education, Rajang Campus, Sarawak.

### ***Acclimatizing with Smart Phones – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tool***

Technology is moving faster than one can imagine and so we, as educators, need to keep pace with this tool that can enhance learning. Skills needed for 21st century living are different from those that were needed for 20th century living. Our schools must shift from the mind-set of preparing students for the Industrial Age to preparing them for the 21st century. Heavy emphasis is on collaboration and communication skills. Among tools needed to support students in developing skills for 21st century learning and living include access to the Internet, educational games, and cell phones (Trilling, B. 2010) We assume that using the computers to teach suffices the fact that we are preparing the future generation for the 21st century, however educationists should go beyond the laptops to mobiles which now serve as salient tools in the teaching –learning process.

Indeed, that is exactly what is happening in many schools around the globe and a good example is Singapore, our very own neighbour. They are slowly beginning to realize that students have the availability to direct their own learning through the use of electronic devices. Cell phones, especially smart phones, provide students with immediate access to tools and information that help them in their academic endeavours. This research is to expose and encourage teachers not to ban the use of cell-phones but to make good use of smartphones as a tool and 'ready-made' teaching aid in classroom learning.

## 2. Baratithasan Narayanasamy

*Institute of Teacher Education, Tuanku Bainun Campus, Penang, Malaysia*

Baratithasan has taught in both primary and secondary schools in the state of Penang for more than fifteen years before he joined the Institute of Teacher Education in 2009. His areas of interest include TESL methodology and academic writing. He is currently attached to the Institute of Teacher Education, Tuanku Bainun Campus, Penang.

## ***Exploration of Malaysian Secondary School Teachers' Experiences in Learning to Become an Online Teacher***

This paper evaluates the impact that the recent introduction of e-learning in all secondary schools has had on teachers. It presents and discusses findings from a small-scale evaluation study with qualitative data gathered through an open-ended survey from sixty teachers in three secondary schools in a state in Malaysia. The paper argues that technological challenges and the sheer amount of change that teachers faced with were largely responsible for some of the negative attitudes reflected in teachers' opinions about the e-learning. However, the difficulties could also be traced to a number of other factors related to teachers' characteristics, the e-learning system adopted, and organization's support. Possible solutions for the identified hindrance from the teachers' perspective are also discussed in this paper.

### **3. Hazelynn Rimbar**

*LeapEd Services Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia*

Hazelynn Rimbar is an Associate Education Partner with LeapEd Services. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Education from University Putra Malaysia and Masters in Education (TESL) from University Technology MARA. Prior to joining LeapEd, she was a lecturer in UiTM Sarawak and Swinburne University of Technology. She also has experience teaching in several private and public secondary schools.

## ***The Influence of Spell-Checkers on Students' Ability to Generate Repairs of Spelling Errors***

Recent studies show that spell-checkers help to reduce students' surface errors in writing by flagging spelling errors and giving correct spelling suggestions. However, are the error corrections provided by spell-checkers internalised by students? This study investigates whether the presence of spell-checkers influences students' ability to repair spelling errors. A quasi-experimental two-group study was conducted on 30 Form 1 students, one group using spell-checkers, and one not using them. The students were given dictations which contained target words. The spell-checker helped the students revise their spelling. However, after the use of the spell-checkers, students still made the same errors in their spelling. The findings suggest that spell-checkers have very little influence on students' ability to repair spelling errors.

### **4. Jimmy Ma**

Brighton Education, Malaysia

Jimmy Ma has a B.Sc. from Clemson University and an M.Ed. from Western New England University. He has been teaching ESL since 2009 and in Malaysia since 2012.

## ***Student Performance Increase with Introduction of Reinforcement Activities and External Motivation***

This study was done to show the effect of the addition of homework into a classroom in its current state in order on material retention. The value of the homework was shown with tests each week. Another part of the research study was to test the positive effects of homework against homework that included parental involvement. The study was done over the course of three weeks in which the first week was a control week with no homework introduced, homework was given the second week, and homework with parental involvement was given the third week. The study was done with four classes of students in four different schools with similar ESL abilities. The results showed that homework helped almost all of students perform better; and therefore indicated higher material retention rates. Test scores from the second week (with homework) were higher than the scores from the first week. Test scores from the third week rose even more, indicating that parental involvement was a key factor in helping complete homework and retain material. The conclusion was that homework does have a positive effect on the students and the extra effort to create simple homework assignments is comparable to the outcome from those homework assignments.

### **5. Khwanchit Suwannoppharat**

*Chulalongkorn University, Thailand*

Khwanchit Suwannoppharat has almost 12 years of English teaching experiences in many levels in Thailand. She graduated with Master of Education in TESOL from Universiti Sains Malaysia in 2008.

## ***Content and Language Integrated Learning Approach: A Resolution for Developing English Communication Ability of EFL Learners***

Thailand is an EFL country where Thai language is solely used as a national and official language; as a result, most Thai EFL learners do not have many opportunities to apply their English skills in their daily lives. Learning environment is thus one of crucial factors causing their low level of English proficiency. Due to the narrower barrier among people in all countries around the world, English is highly demanded in any sectors, including business and education. Single focus on learning only content or language seems to retard learning results, while both content and language knowledge is required for their present education and future career. Accordingly, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach was selected to give opportunities for the use of English language in real situations since it is a teaching approach providing learning support environment by encouraging the use of English as an additional language, a medium of instruction. Furthermore, in CLIL class learning both content and language are focused. This study emphasized the application of CLIL approach in developing Thai EFL learners' English communication ability; consequently, the effectiveness of CLIL approach was investigated by the use of pre-and post-tests. Furthermore, a questionnaire was also used to find out Thai EFL learners' opinions towards learning English through the use of CLIL approach. The findings of this study present that CLIL approach enabled

Thai EFL students to develop their English proficiency significantly, and they had positive opinions towards learning English through the use of CLIL approach.

## **6. Letchumiprabah Ramachandran**

*Institute of Teacher Education, Penang Campus, Malaysia*

Letchumiprabah has been teaching English for close to 30 years. She is a National Trainer for Thinking Skills, Master Trainer in ELT from MARJON UK and a former Buzan Licensed Instructor.

### ***Writing Reflections: 'Getting there – Effectively & with Depth, The Simple Five Step Guide'***

The purpose of this presentation is to provide a hands-on experience into how reflective practice can be taught effectively using the LP's ESL Quadrant (2002) and the Multi Flow Map(T-8 Thinking Maps) as guide to writing more effective reflections. In turn making reflective practice a part and puzzle of the teaching career as well as in the daily life's of teachers and student teachers.

In professional practice there are several questions that surface when one mentions the word 'reflection':

Can reflection be seen just as an image reflected off the mirror we look into or deeper than that? What is reflection then in the eyes of a student teacher/teacher? How does a student teacher/teacher learn how to write a reflection? What does a student teacher/teacher need to know about reflective practice? Why does a student teacher/teacher need to know about reflective practice? What benefits can that bring to him/her?

Hence, this presentation is aimed to bring the answers to all the questions above to light and hope to be of help to student teachers and teachers in the process of becoming effective reflective practitioners.

## **7. Lin Siew Fong**

*Tunku Abdul Rahman University College, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

Lin Siew Fong is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Social Science, Faculty of Social Science, Arts and Humanities at Tunku Abdul Rahman University College, Malaysia. Her research areas focus primarily on classroom management, research methodology and curriculum design. She has written research articles for both local and international journals.

### ***Contextual Factors which Fostered Use of Peer Tutoring in Analysing Business Case Studies***

The main purpose of this study is to discover contextual factors which have impact on peer tutoring. Peer-tutoring sessions involving participants analysing 2 business case studies in a Business English course were conducted. 10 Advanced Diploma in Financial Accounting students with mixed English proficiency from an institution of higher learning formed two peer tutoring groups required in this study. Using video

recordings, interviews, diary entries and observations, the results of this study indicated that there were contextual factors which promoted the use of peer tutoring. Deep understanding of topic, detailed research conducted, simplification of information, sufficient opportunities to ask questions, efforts in being good listeners, establishing a relaxed environment, effective communication, wide sharing of knowledge and direct approach in correction of mistakes were significant factors having impact on peer tutoring. Simultaneously, the participants used a popular application for smartphones, WhatsApp, in order to continue their discussions outside the classroom. They found the tool of communication useful in helping them to bond with each other and providing informal teaching and learning opportunities for both tutors and tutees. It is recommended that debriefing sessions between the tutors and instructor be conducted when the former lack confidence in decision making in the course of tutoring. Furthermore, Reciprocal Peer Tutoring is strongly encouraged to be used as an approach in analysing case studies instead of having a tutor solely in charge of disseminating information to increase the effectiveness of tutoring. This is attributed to the diverse interpretations of scenarios presented in case studies, which in turn, provides different answers to questions accompanying the tasks.

#### **8. Marcus Kho Gee Whai**

*Polytechnic Kuching, Sarawak*

#### ***Areas of Academic Oral Presentation Difficulties Faced by Students at a Polytechnic in Sarawak***

The purpose of this study is to identify the areas of oral presentation difficulties encountered by the students at a polytechnic in Sarawak. It also examines the differences in the areas of difficulties in academic oral presentation faced by the engineering and commerce students. The total number of respondents who participated in this study was 223. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from the respondents. The information gathered from the questionnaires was then analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (independent samples t-test). The interviews were then transcribed and coded. The findings from the study showed the area of oral presentation difficulties that was most challenging for the students was delivery, especially when dealing with the language use and anxiety management. It was also found that there were significant differences between engineering and commerce students in areas of oral presentation difficulties such as preparation, organisation and delivery. It is hoped that the findings of this study would enable the lecturers to have a better understanding of how to prepare and train the students well in oral presentation skills before they enter the working world.

#### **9. Martina Gilmartin**

*Brighton Education, Malaysia*

Martina Gilmartin has been working in the ESL field in Asia for seven years. She has a MA TESOL from Lancaster University in the U.K and conducted research in her area of interest; multimodal pedagogy.

## ***Implementing Multimodal Reading Practices in Malaysian Primary Schools: A Case Study of Student and Teacher Practice***

In recent years, what qualifies as a text and what constitutes being literate has shifted due to the growing influence of multimedia technologies. Literacy is no longer considered only the ability to read and write but is also viewed as the ability to construct and understand different meanings, which are made available by multiple different text forms (Jewitt, 2005; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Research has supported the theory that a multimodal pedagogy affords students engagement in learning using multiple modes which promotes meaning making (Early & Marshall, 2008; Stein, 2004, Moss, 2003). However, few studies have examined both student engagement with, and a teacher's perspective of, a new multimodal reading practice in the classroom.

This dissertation examines how Malaysian students learning English as a second language (ESL) engage with a multimodal reading pedagogy implemented by their local English teacher, and if this pedagogy has the potential to afford students with a deeper comprehension of the text. The study also investigates how collaborative teaching of a new pedagogy affects teacher development, and what forms of support may enhance teachers' capacity to adopt new practices.

This is a case study which uses qualitative research methods. The data were gathered from a class of primary school students learning English as a foreign language in Malaysia (9 participants) and their non-native speaking English teacher via four instruments: (i) semi-structured interviews, (ii) observations, (iii) audio-recordings and (iv) running records.

The findings reveal how students engage with multimodal reading practices to promote a deeper reading of a text. The findings also support a collaborative approach to language teaching and professional development where a high quality collaborative mentoring program is recommended. This study concludes that any multimodal approach, collaborative teaching or professional development must be well-designed and based on an appropriate theoretical framework. Suggestions are made for further research where the effects of a collaborative teaching approach may be studied.

### **10. Mohd Nazri bin Latiff Azmi**

*University Sultan Zainal Abidin, Trengganu, Malaysia*

Before being an English language lecturer at University Sultan Zainal Abidin, Dr. Mohd Nazri was a school teacher who taught at both primary and secondary schools for about 12 years. He was also appointed as the English Language District Officer for about 5 years, who was in charge of developing the language curriculum and programmes for his district, handling courses for English teachers and students and also monitoring the academic development among school students. His specializations are on literacy and comparative literature studies. He has presented 10 papers inside and outside Malaysia and published 11 papers in indexed journals.

### ***Interlok: The Hypocrisy in Education***

*Interlok* is a social-intercultural novel that was written with a multicultural slant after the formation of Malaysia in 1963. The novel was written in the late 1960s for a contest commemorating the 10th anniversary of Malayan Independence by the national laureate, Abdullah Hussein. *Interlok* was one of the compulsory texts to be read by secondary school students in Malaysia. However, due to its content which claimed to contain 'sensitive' elements which has aroused the anger and caused discomfort among some groups of people in Malaysia, the novel was withdrawn from the public school syllabus. Therefore, this study aimed to portray the elements of hypocrisy in handling the issue whereby the sentiments of politics have overcome the importance of teaching literature in schools. Some essential measures and recommendation are proposed to handle this issue. Based on the content studies from daily and new media mainstreams, and interviews with several Malaysian scholars, the researcher found that the novel should not been withdrawn due to its richness in discussing the issues of social, culture and nation building. The government should not replace the novel with another novel written by the same novelist because such action reflects the weakness of the education system and disrespects the beauty of literature.

#### **11. Noraini Zulkepli**

*Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Perak, Malaysia*

#### ***What I Did and Why; ESL Learner Participation: A Social View***

In the domain of second language learning, the cognitive view has been dominant in explaining learner participation. It has been widely accepted that it should be in the form of participation in oral activities. The purpose of this study is to understand the issue of learner participation from the social perspective, where a broader understanding of learning informed by the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) and others, is employed. To do so, this study investigates the forms of participation of six ESL learners in suburban Malaysia in two contexts: in-class and out-of-class. The findings reveal that the six learners are members of or aspired to become members of several communities. Thus, they aligned their forms of participation with these various communities. In terms of classroom practice, this insight into learner participation suggests ESL practitioners to be more tolerant towards the various kinds of participation that they might encounter in the classrooms.

#### **12. Peter Crosthwaite**

*University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*

Dr. Peter Crosthwaite is Assistant Professor at the Centre for Applied English Studies in the University of Hong Kong.

#### ***Combining Diagnostic and Prescriptive Corpus Functions for ELT: The HKU CAES Learner Corpus***

The proposed paper for IELT-Con 2015 looks at the construction of a new multimillion-word longitudinal corpus of second-language (L2) English entitled 'The HKU-CAES Learner Corpus'. It will initially collect L2 data sourced from the

academic writing of undergraduate EFL students (mostly L1 [native] Cantonese- and Mandarin-speaking students), totalling 6 million words. This data will be collected at three key stages during the semester, making the HKU-CAES corpus a relatively rare case of a longitudinal corpus. The paper asks whether the academic skills taught on current undergraduate English writing programmes over one semester result in any improvement to the linguistic features of students' L2 English academic writing as evidenced by corpus analysis. In particular, suggestions for the building and annotation of learner corpora that do not involve substantial knowledge of coding (making them suitable for the majority of English language teachers) will be discussed, as well as how learner corpora can inform future developments regarding L2 assessment, curriculum and materials development that can be specifically and quantifiably tailored to ELT students.

### **13. Quah Seok Hoon**

*Institute of Teacher Education Tuanku Bainun Campus, Penang, Malaysia*

Dr. Quah Seok Hoon, Denise is a teacher trainer involved in training TESL students since 2002. Prior to this she was an English language teacher in primary and secondary schools in various parts of Malaysia. She is also the secretary of PELLTA and her special areas of research and interest include TESOL methodology, multimodal discourse analysis, systemic functional linguistics and social semiotics.

### ***Picture this...Mr. Mummy & Mrs Daddy???***

A picture paints a thousand words, and it's true...Pictures provide a great way of learning English especially for the young learner. It is extremely difficult to imagine a primary school coursebook or textbook or reader without pictures of some kind. However, in this era where working parents are common and sharing (if not reversal) of traditional gender roles is not uncommon, it has been argued that the visual representation of the male & female genders in the books that children read paints a different picture; a picture that does not reflect the progressive society we live in today. This paper examines the use of pictures in Malaysian primary English language textbooks. Adopting a critical discourse analysis perspective, it will attempt to answer the questions: "What gender-related roles are portrayed in these books?" and "Are gender stereotypes being perpetuated? Discussion will focus on the types of gender roles highlighted in the findings and their implications for teachers, parents, textbook writers and other relevant stake holders.

### **14. Rosemary Orlando**

*New Hampshire University, New Hampshire, USA*

Dr. Rosemary Orlando is a Professor at Southern New Hampshire University, USA and teaches in the Masters TEFL degree programme. She also teaches at Vietnam National University in Hanoi as a teacher trainer with Vietnamese teachers. She has worked with teachers in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and the US.

## ***Globalization through Collaboration: Advances in Vietnamese EFL Teacher Education***

In an effort to make a difference while working with English language teachers in Southeast Asia, teacher educators should strive to incorporate local practices and beliefs along with new ideas for teacher training and development. Until fairly recently, ELT in Vietnam consisted primarily of translation and grammar study. The methods and approaches from the past are being challenged in response to the quality of the teaching and the development of new programmes and discoveries. Due to the ever-increasing demand for additional, well-qualified English language teachers in settings such as Vietnam and Malaysia, enhanced ELT training methods are being introduced. The changing global economy and the need for more EFL teachers have resulted in new initiatives and international partnerships. In the context of globalization, a joint Master's degree programme between a Vietnamese and an American university is helping to bring about positive change in Vietnamese teacher professional growth and development. A Western language teacher educator based in Vietnam shares how she helps Vietnamese English language teachers meet the challenges of teaching English in Vietnamese schools while incorporating new methods into their instructional ways. The collaborative effort has resulted in exciting changes for the local teachers and continued professional development opportunities. While it is a challenge to continue to update knowledge and skills, it is important to ensure long-term success for Vietnamese teachers of English.

### **15. Shubashini Suppiah**

*Institute of Teacher Education, Kent Campus, Sabah, Malaysia*

An English language lecturer in the Institute of Teacher Education Kent in Sabah, Shubashini Suppiah obtained her B.Ed (Hons) in TESL from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland and her M.Ed TESL from University Malaysia Sabah. Her areas of research interests are language teacher professional development, language programme evaluation and literature studies.

## ***Through the Lens of a Teacher Trainer: A Trainer's Perspective on British Council Primary Innovations Training Programme***

Continuous professional development should be a lifelong, systematic and planned process to maintain and develop professional competence, creativity and innovation. The outcome has value for both the individual and their profession. In the context of teacher professional development, Kelchtermans (2004) defines continuous professional development as "a learning process resulting from meaningful interaction with the context (time and space) and eventually leading to changes in teachers' professional practice (actions) and in their thinking about that practice" (p.220). In view of this, this paper examines the value of the British Council Primary Innovations training course for teacher trainers. The training programme was carried out in 3 phases, which included three main curriculum strands namely professional development, trainer skills and knowledge of young learners learning and pedagogy. A qualitative research framework utilizing the case study approach was used in this

study. Anecdotal incidents, reflective learning logs and focus group dialogue sessions were the main sources of gathering the pertinent data. The three prevalent themes that emerged in this study are (1) a reconceptualization of teacher training (2) practical models of training and (3) reflective practice. The implication of this personal study points to the need and value of continuous professional development be it for a teacher or a teacher trainer.

#### **16. Su Chooi Hong / Azizan bin Ariffin**

*Institute of Teacher Education, Tuanku Bainun Campus, Penang, Malaysia*

Su Chooi Hong and Azizan bin Ariffin are lecturers at the Institute of Teacher Education, Tuanku Bainun Campus, Bukit Mertajam, Penang.

#### ***Parental Coaching at Home Improves Pre-schoolers' English Reading Skills***

This study aimed to find out the effects of parental involvement in coaching pre-schoolers' English at home. This study attempted to include the parents of 19 pre-schoolers for parental coaching in reading at home. Pre-schoolers' parents attended a sharing session to discuss how they spend time to help their children in English reading. The main problem faced by parents was they did not know how to coach their child to read in English. Children also could not concentrate on reading for a long time and would feel bored reading alone at home. Parents were oriented with 'Pause, Prompt, Praise' reading technique and were requested to coach their child to read 'Peter and Jane' books for at least ten minutes a day over a period of three months. The pre-schoolers' reading skills were monitored and recorded. Out of nine pre-schoolers who had parental coaching, six of them showed improvement in their pronunciation, fluency or word meaning. The findings of this research indicated that subjects with parental guidance at home showed significantly improved reading skills.

#### **17. Teoh Seng Aun / Ying Tang**

*Malaysian German Society, Penang, Malaysia / Shenzhen Xin'an Middle School, Shenzhen, China /*

Teoh Seng Aun majored in German Studies at the University of Wisconsin, USA. He currently manages the German language classes at the Malaysian German Society in Penang, Malaysia.

Ying Tang is a senior high school English teacher at Shenzhen Xin'an Middle School, Shenzhen, China. She received her MA in TESOL from the University of New South Wales, Australia in 2003.

#### ***Transforming Rote Learning into Enjoyable and Highly Effective Learning.***

Successful learners have mastered a variety of strategies according to different situations. Strategies can be further divided into keys. By employing a combination of keys, students will experience an increase in their comprehension and a rise in interest in learning English. All it takes is to follow the 5 simple steps of each key.

## **18. Tunku Mohani binti Tunku Mohtar**

*Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Perak, Malaysia*

Tunku Mohani binti Tunku Mohtar teaches at University Pendidikan Sultan Idris. Her areas of interest include TESL Methodology and Language Testing. She has published a number of articles both locally and internationally.

### ***Developing Speaking Skill among ESL Elementary Learners***

The issue regarding the command of English among Malaysian students has been raised and discussed very frequently. One of the language skills they are obviously weak at is the speaking skill. They may have passed the English Language paper in the final examination. However, many are not successful at interviews which are conducted in English. Several reasons are attributed to this problem. One of the reasons is the weak foundation laid at the elementary level.

This paper presents a case study on the teaching and learning of English at the elementary level. It focuses on developing the speaking skill at the initial stage among Primary One pupils. Although the focus is on the speaking skill, the other language skills are not ignored. In fact, they are integrated to reinforce the speaking skill. Various theories are provided to support and justify the undertaking. These theories aid in the understanding of acquisition of the speaking skill among young learners of English.

This paper examines a number of factors that enable the pupils to acquire the language within the classroom context. The objectives of the paper are: to find out the teacher's pedagogical practices that encourage pupils to speak in English; to find out the views of pupils regarding the learning of English; to evaluate the activities used to promote the speaking skill; to find out the challenges experienced by the language teacher.

## **19. Ying Tang**

*Shenzen Xin'an Middle School, Shenzhen, China*

Ying Tang is a senior high school English teacher at Shenzhen Xin'an Middle School, Shenzhen, China. She received her MA in TESOL from the University of New South Wales, Australia in 2003.

### ***Strategy Training for Effective Learning in Foreign Language Teaching***

Although we have long been aware of the importance of strategies in successful language learning, the question of how to provide effective strategy instruction remains controversial. This article will describe a study conducted in a Chinese middle school in which students were given strategy instruction over a period of one school semester. It was found that those who received the instruction considerably out-performed those who did not (the control group). Furthermore, reaction to the training was overwhelmingly positive, with students reporting increased enjoyment, confidence and success. A sequence of instructional steps are recommended, and directions for further research are suggested.

## **20. Yoon Sook Jhee**

*Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia*

Yoon Sook Jhee is a lecturer at the Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

### ***Exploring Pre-service Teachers Experience of Using Localised Digital Materials in a Rural School***

The development of ICT skills among pre-service teachers has become one of the priorities in teacher education. The TESL department in UMS acknowledges the needs to educate and develop pre-service teachers' ICT skills through the introduction of a new ICT course. Apart from formal learning, the department also organises community-based learning in rural schools to enhance their pedagogical and ICT skills. This paper describes the pre-service teachers' perceptions in participating in a community project which implemented the use of localised digital materials in a rural school in Sabah, Malaysia. A total of 12 second year undergraduates from TESL program participated in the project. They were involved in planning the lessons, handouts and activities related to the digital materials created by a team of researchers in UMS. Data to delineate their experiences were collected through focus-group interviews and questionnaire. Preliminary findings revealed that pre-service teachers' (i) require knowledge to operate digital materials (ii) use digital materials to mediate new knowledge and background knowledge and (iii) need supplementary resources to support the use of digital materials. This paper concludes with discussion of suggested measures to improve pre-service teachers' skills and knowledge of using digital materials through formal learning.

## **21. Zanurin bin Mohamad Safar**

*Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Kulim, Kedah, Malaysia*

Zanurin bin Mohamad Safar (B.ED TESL, MA TESL) has been teaching English Language in secondary schools for 22 years. Currently attached to Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Kulim in Kedah as a Master Teacher, the presenter has presented numerous papers at international language conferences. His research interests include ESL writing teaching methodologies such as humanistic language teaching.

### ***Advocating Humanistic Language Teaching in ESL Writing Classroom***

Humanistic Language Teaching (HLT) is one of the mainstreams of contemporary educational theories and practices which has influenced the second language pedagogy over the past two decades (Khatib, 2013). HLT places much emphasis on learners' affective domain and emotions in determining a successful language learning process. Learners' interest, readiness and attitude towards learning the language are fundamental (Chitravelu et al., 2005, Mehrgan, 2012). Learners, not the teachers are given the right to decide on the content of their lesson which means that learners are given the privilege to select the topics that appeal to them, hence making them feel motivated to learn (Lee et al., 2014). This paper aims to present a list of topics that appeal to the Malaysian secondary school ESL learners for their essay writing. Those preferred topics can be categorized into several categories. ESL teachers' exposure to these topics for essay writing is crucial as the preferred topics should promote better learner engagement in writing activities.