

OFFICIATING ADDRESS
PROF. DATUK DR. AHMAD YUSOFF BIN HASSAN
VICE CHANCELLOR OF UTeM

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROGRAMME FOR ACADEMICIANS

23 March 2011, 2.00pm, PBPI

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Thank You Madam Chair Person

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

in the name of Allah, the most compassionate, the most merciful
alhamdulillahirabbil alamin ...

Assalamualaikum wrt. wbt. and a very good afternoon

i) SALUTATION

Y.Bhg. Dato' Professor Dr. Mohd. Nor bin Husain,
Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International)

Y.Bhg. Professor Dato' Dr. Mohamad Kadim bin Suaidi,
Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

Dr. Mariana binti Yusoff
Dean, Centre For Languages and Human Development

Senior officers, lecturers and participants

ii) **OPENING REMARKS**

1. First of all, I would like to express a warm welcome to all of you for taking the time to be at the inauguration of a communication self development programme for University academic staff.
2. This is the first time that we are gathered to “Kick Start” a communication programme involving our academic staff. I am sure the Faculty Deans have carefully selected the participants,

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participants who I hope will immerse completely to the demands of the sessions. The University can organize any kind of self development programme for our staff, but at the end of the day how much one gains from it, will to a large extent depend on how much one is willing to put into it.

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. As early as in the 6th century, Emperor Charlemagne’s remark :

“To have another language is to possess a second soul”

shows how far-sighted he was in the acquisition of a second language. In many countries today, knowing more than one

language is the norm rather than the exception. Perhaps some of you might start to comprehend why we as a university place a certain emphasis on the development of languages among our students.

(iii) **PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE**

4. We are here today to address an issue which as a result of neglect or complacency has placed a number of us in a difficult position. It is a situation which will not improve unless we start taking **proactive measures**. Here I am referring to the problem many of our lecturers face today **in communicating coherently and confidently in the English Language**.

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5. The question is what can the University do to help. We are already committed to a vision of internationalization and to fulfill this vision, **our lecturers have to be good at the language**. We need to expose our lecturers to the world academic arena for their development as well as the university, and in turn the nation. This is only possible when our lecturers can participate internationally.

6. **Mastering a language** is of course not an easy task, especially when we are in an environment where we can easily get away without using it. However, if we are sincerely concerned about **improving our capabilities**, then it is all within our power to put into place activities that would help us move forward. Apart from

the course that the University is providing, each participant can start by **speaking more English** among yourselves. Simultaneously you should start reading newspapers, watching T.V programmes and even join the Malacca's Toastmasters Club in an effort to be **competent speakers of the English language**. Every one of you can master this language and all it needs is a genuine effort from each one of you.

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. A language attracts people because of the wealth of literature and knowledge enshrined in it. The latest and the most advanced discoveries and inventions in science and technology are being

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made in the universities located in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany and India where English is the means of scientific discourse.

(iv) **ADVANTAGES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

8. **English poses no danger to Bahasa Malaysia.** English is available to us as a historical heritage in addition to our own language. We must make the best use of English to develop ourselves culturally and materially so that we can **compete with the best in the world of mind and matter**. The English language is our window to the world.

9. English language is one **tool to establish our viewpoint**. We can learn from others experience. We can check the theories of foreigners against our experience. We can reject the untenable and accept the tenable. We can also propagate our theories among the international audience and readers.
10. Please bear in mind that **English is the international official language** of air transport and shipping; the leading language of science, technology, computers, and commerce; and a major medium of education, publishing and international negotiation. For this reason scholars wishing to be up-to-date in their respective disciplines have no choice but to ensure that they have

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the **capability to converse and write in English** in order to cope with what is called today World English.

Ladies and gentlemen,

(v) **PROGRAMME INFORMATION**

11. This **two hour weekly programme of seven weeks** I hope will allow you to extend your English language skills to new heights and turn you into confident and competent speakers of English.
12. I am indeed very grateful to Dr. Mariana, the Dean of PBPI for coming up quickly with a weekly session modeled along the well tested Toastmaster International communication development

programme. Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the Deans, Head of Departments and participants for attending this event today and also to the organizing committee for making this occasion a possibility.

13. I am made aware that the **first session starts immediately** after this officiating ceremony. And on that note I wish you all smooth sailing on the rough seas of the English language! **Wabillahi taufik walhidayah wassalamualaikum wrt. wbt** and salam sejahtera. Thank you.