

# Integrating technology with language skills

ROZANA SANI  
rsani@nst.com.my

**A** HIGH quality workforce in the 21st century needs to be versatile and be able to rapidly adapt to a constantly-changing market environment.

Therefore, producing graduates with high language skills, as well as good management and entrepreneurial capabilities, is instrumental for Malaysia to remain competitive and achieve its goal of becoming a developed nation.

In realising this, Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), through its Centre for Modern Languages and Human Sciences (CMLHS), is introducing its new Master of Science in Technology-Integrated Language Studies (MSc TILS).

The first intake is expected to commence learning in February.

The programme aims to develop the skills of its graduates, especially in communications, so they can become part of the skilled workforce that contributes towards achieving the country's aspirations.

According to Associate Professor Dr Ainol Haryati Ibrahim of the Department of English Language at CMLHS, the MSc TILS is the first in the country to integrate technology in language studies, equipping learners with skills that enable them to multifunction in relevant organisations.

"Traditionally, university programmes have always produced graduates with skills in one specific area. For example, it's either in lan-

guage studies or information technology.

"However, with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0) and the Internet of Things (IoT) being ubiquitous entities in academic programmes, the current trend in language studies is shifting towards multidisciplinary realms.

"For example, people who are in web marketing may be required to generate accurate interpretations of discourse analysis to optimise linguistic content that appeals effectively to consumers," she said.

"The ability to utilise technology will boost the confidence of learners in their workplace. In other words, this programme will raise their awareness, transform their mind and drive change in teaching and learning."

The MSc TILS combines technological applications with a conventional foundation in language studies, which will be conducted in a blended learning environment.

The focus is to allow learners to experience hands-on learning and engage in technology-integrated tasks.

"Learners can update their knowledge in a flexible and well-supported environment. In addition, the tasks and assessments are meant to enrich their research competency and encourage lifelong learning," said Ainol Haryati.

The programme consists of six core courses — two of which are Technology in Language Studies and Web-based Tools in Teaching and Learning.

Technology in Language Studies is designed to train learners through three learning do-



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**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR AINOL HARYATI IBRAHIM**

Centre for Modern Language and Human Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Pahang



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mains. The domains (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) cover language-learning theories and strategies, and how they can be applied in technology-mediated studies.

The Web-based Tools in Teaching and Learning introduces learners to core principles of integrating Internet tools in teaching and learning.

It includes lessons on Web 2.0 tools to support language learning. Students will be introduced to various issues of using web-based tools in language assessments.

And who are the potential learners to enrol in this programme?

Ainol Haryati said they would be fresh graduates and working professionals.

"The MSc TILS is designed to equip workers with practical and state-of-the-art experience for career development and professional enhancement. For fresh graduates, it will provide them the competitive edge in pursuing their occupational endeavours," she said.

"Graduates will have vast opportunities in the education and service sectors. The integration of technology in the programme will meet the demand of vocations that require technological knowledge and communication skills.

"Employers in the fields of training, research, media services, information technology and technopreneurship are inclined to hire graduates with such skills," said Ainol Haryati.