

Pre-School Educators Inspired by KINDY TALK: English for STEM CSR Workshop

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Gambang - 3 November 2018 Due to tremendous response, KINDY TALK: English for STEM, that was supposed to be limited to only 30 participants, drew a crowd of forty pre-school educators at Tun Fatimah Hall, Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Gambang campus. The participants were mainly from Kuantan; some were from Pekan and some came from as far as Bera. The workshop emphasised on two key aspects with two hours focusing on motivation and another two hours on language.

It was heartwarming to get such commitment from participants on a weekend for this half-day workshop. Some even brought their children with them, all in the spirit of learning! And learned they did. The workshop began with a short welcome speech by Dr Noor Raha Mohd Radzuan, Head of the Department of English Language, who explained the history of KINDY TALK and the aims of having the workshop. The objectives of the workshop were manifold, mainly to (1) increase participants' confidence and motivation to use English at their pre-schools for STEM activities (2) provide appropriate language and activities for introducing STEM at pre-schools (3) enhance participants' "Heart Intelligence" and job engagement to be better early childhood educators in managing and dealing with children, particularly now, when there have been so many reports on abuse in daycares and pre-schools.

The first motivation slot, conducted by Dr Anita Bt Abd Rani, also the Head of Department of Soft Skills, introduced the term "Heart Intelligence" to the participants. "Heart Intelligence" is a higher level of awareness that arises through the integration of your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual intelligence for greater levels of performance, creativity, intuition and higher order thinking in every aspect of your life (Consalves, 2018). Dr Anita set the tone of the workshop and the participants were moved by her session and understood that one's roadmap in life should follow the roadmap of the Creator.

The second motivation slot was a talk by guest speaker Mdm Nor Afiza Bt Mohd Fuzi, Vice Principal of Rumah Kanak-Kanak Tengku Ampuan Fatimah, who explained the different types of abuse that often happen to children, drawing from her experience as a social service officer under the Department of Social Welfare, under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. Therefore, children need to be exposed to sexual education, even at an early age, or else they would not know the wrong that is done on them. Another take-away from the speaker is that we must always entertain children's curiosity by answering their questions no matter how sensitive or ridiculous the questions are.

The motivation slots were followed by the Confidence Building Workshop and English for STEM Workshop conducted by Mdm Wan Jumani Fauzi and assisted by Dr Fatimah Ali, Dr Asiah Kassim, all lecturers from the Department of English Language. Student interns were also roped in to facilitate the participants' learning during the workshop slots. Participants learned weather related STEM activities and language that facilitates the learning of weather related words. Participants enjoyed the many hands-on activities, and the weather-related songs that they shared that they were eager to apply them with the children at their pre-schools. Feedback from the participants show that they loved all the workshop slots and hoped to participate in more events like this.

Prepared by Wan Jumani Fauzi