Quicksteps

With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts.
~Eleanor Roosevelt~

Editor's Desk

2018 has almost come to the end. Memories had been carved down the lane of 2018, now it's time to lay down the plans for 2019. Are we ready to face the new year? Are we ready to make changes, or are we going to remain as we are? Whatever we do, our intention is the most important, as *"actions are by their intentions" – Sahih Bukhari and Muslim.* Straighten up our intentions, and our actions will be of good deed.

2018 has seen English Unit of PTSS going through numbers of successful events. The unity of this unit has brought it to where it is today. Proving its tag line *"together we stand"* the lecturers of English Language Unit (ELU) have successfully organized, be in-charged, participated as well as hosted both national and international level events in 2018. This online bulletin is one of its great successes. Started off with only a few articles contributed by its own lecturers, this issue which is the third has received articles and contribution from others including other polytechnic. Moving a step forward, *QUICKSTEPS* this time has also invited the Deputy Director of PTSS to join us in this issue and share her views as an invited writer. We are really grateful for their contributions and hope that in our next issue more writers, not only from polytechnic but also from other institutions will contribute and share their writings with us.

Let *QUICKSTEPS* be a place for you to share your stories and experiences, voice your opinions, express your feelings etc. No doubt every one of us has different stories to tell – successful ones, happy ones and sad ones. No matter what you have experienced, *"success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts."* - Winston Churchill. No matter what your stories were like, it's the courage to continue that counts. Don't be afraid to fail, as failure is not the end but rather a new beginning. You are the one who will walk down your path, thus embrace yourself and be strong!! It's a bonus if along the way you find someone to walk with and share your joy and happiness as well as your sadness. We learn from our mistakes, as well as from others' and shall not do or repeat the same mistakes over and over again or it won't be a mistake anymore, but rather an error.

Let by-gone be by-gone. Move forward and let's make this world a better place by starting with our own selves. Once again, never be afraid to fail, as *"Winners are not people who never fail, but people who never quit*!!" – Edwin Louis Cole.

Happy new year and may 2019 filled with success and joy for us. Aamiin.

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Is There A Better World After All?

By Marziana Abdullah

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

I found the above quote by Mrs. Roosevelt when I was in Form 3 and have sworn by it since then. The key word is 'believe'. At the age of 15, although I was living in a peaceful country, (well, I was oblivious to politics and what those politicians were constantly bickering about, unaware of the consequences of bad governance and mismanagement, etc.), I knew there were people in other parts of the world who were not as fortunate as I was. Millions were either starving, killed in cold-blooded wars, oppressed or perished in natural disasters around the world. I read about them in newspapers and on tv news (there were no social networking sites then). They were living in really bad conditions, some almost inhuman conditions. Waking up to hunger, poverty, deaths of family members was not unfamiliar. I could feel their pain, and how I wished I was able to help them. My heart broke for them. I felt so helpless. I dreamed of a better world without hunger, wars, disasters and discrimination in the world. I couldn't stop thinking.

The question "Is There A Better World After All?" on the other hand was the title I threw at the finalists of a public speaking competition at my institution recently, thirty years after I found the quote. The participants were students from various Malaysian polytechnics. They were youngsters with a big heart and mature thinking. I was totally mesmerized as I listened to their speeches which were inspiring, uplifting and convincing that there is a better world after all – for everyone. Suddenly I felt there was hope – for everyone.

But personally, what do I think? Well, I too think that there is hope for a better world but we have to really work together, fight together, to find the balance. Looking at how minority ethnics are oppressed in some parts of the world, it shows that we are living in an unfair world, but hey, remember the quote? We can make the difference if we *believe* we can. I strongly feel we can do it. How? Well, it's so simple. To me, we should be kind - to our own self, to other humans, to the animals and to mother nature. Treat others with kindness as you want to be treated. Kindness goes a long way. As my mum always says, kindness is energy from God the Almighty. It is kindness that feeds the hunger, it is kindness that provides shelter for the oppressed, it is kindness that helps us see beyond the colours of our skin, our religions, our ethnicities and our political beliefs. Kindness connects. And believe me, it is kindness that can turn our dreams into reality. So, let us all be advocates of kindness. Spread it around.

ENGAGING LANGUAGE LEARNERS THROUGH OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

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Outdoor experiences are often more enjoyable compared to the formal classroom lessons. These activities are often stored in the long term memory as one of the memorable experiences. These opportunities contribute towards internalizing language structures taught. Stephen Krashen (University of Southern California) who is well known for his second language acquisition theories since the 1980s, stated that there are two systems in the language learning acquisition, namely the 'learned system' and the 'acquired system'. The 'learned system' refers to the formal education where language and grammar rules are explicitly taught to learners as knowledge to be absorbed in the classroom. On the other hand, the 'acquired system' refers to implicit learning through meaningful interactions that result in, incidental learning. Krashen further highlighted that '*Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill*' as used in the traditional teaching and learning process. So what do we need to do to enhance language acquisition, apart from consciously teaching grammar rules, as well as, forms and functions of the language? Krashen elaborated by saying '*acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language- natural communication-in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding.*' Hence, appropriate outdoor activities can be carried out to provide learners with the opportunity to use the language through meaningful and authentic interactions.

The transformation in the polytechnic curriculum and approaches used in the teaching and learning process, require lecturers to carry out student-centred activities and focus on learning outcomes. This is in line with the Outcome-based Education, where Towers(1996) stated, 'Outcome-based Education is a learner centred, results oriented system founded on the belief that all individuals can learn.' Kember (1997) further stated that currently, lecturers play the role of facilitators rather than provider of information. In experiential learning, learners' are directly and actively involved in the use of the language through activities carried out rather than remaining passive. This is in line with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) that had been introduced in 2015, to be implemented in all the different levels from preschool to tertiary edution. This framework is stated in the 2015-2025 Education Blueprint where this CEFR would be adopted and adapted in the English curriculum throughout Malaysia. The communicative approach and focus on can do statements is seen to be complied in the Polytechnic English Curriculum.

Relying solely on formal learning is no longer enough. Students of this era, are no longer expected to just learn grammar rules, but to apply the knowledge they have learnt, by engaging in relevant outdoor activities. Hence, activities such as English Camp, Language Carnival, Explore Race, Broadcasting and other activities can be introduced in schools and institutions. Proficient students can be trained to be facilitators, enhancing their language skills, as well as, their generic skills. On the other hand, less proficient students are given the opportunity to use the language spontaneously, whilst being exposed to various activities that develops different language skills. The only issue being budget and time constraints.

Let me share an outdoor activity carried out with my Pre-Diploma students. Based on the curriculum, one of the topic to be taught is travelling and among the objectives are reading , describing and writing description of places of interest. Hence, the output having taught the students in class, was broadcasting on a chosen location. An activity such as broadcasting may be considered as a waste of time to some, whilst some may find it intimidating, but in actual fact if done correctly, encompasses various skills. For example, first several tourist locations were identified and students were put in groups of 3. Students were required to look for a few articles on the identified location and read them. Students also developed note taking skills and created relevant mind maps, before writing the script according to the structures taught. Throughout this process, a lot of interactions and discussions took place. Students were also taught interview skills, question formation, communicative skills, to enable them to approach a foreigner and interview them. This allows students to en-hance their speaking skills, as well as, develop the confidence to approach strangers. Part of the preparation for this activity was carried out in class to enable the lecturer to monitor the progress, while part was carried out during students' independent learning time. The whole process of teaching the relevant skills and preparation for the broadcasting stretched up to 4 weeks with 6 hours of teaching week. There was ample time to cover the curriculum and still go the extra mile to enhance skills through this outdoor activity. The field trip to town for the recording was carried out the final week of the topic and the students were able to edit the video to 5 minutes and submit within the week. Each broadcasting video was viewed by all to get feedback and provide constructive criticism. It is believed that this activity, although is time consuming and requires commitment from all, can easily be adopted by others, as it does not involve any cost. Not only does it comply with the curriculum, it helped to develop generic skills among students, enhance their language skills and confidence and most importantly the students enjoyed themselves.

It is indeed very satisfying for an educator when the objective of a lesson is achieved. It is of course a bonus if we are able to make the lesson fun. Fun and meaningful lessons are often more impactful compared to mundane lessons that demotivate learners. If we are able to spark an interest in our lessons and make their learning experience a pleasure, I believe half the battle is won. The other half would be to try and provide them with a stress free platform to engage in experiential learning. As John Dewey stated, "Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results." Hence, the need for lecturers to think out of the box and collaborate among themselves to provide these opportunities for students is essential.

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Ready to Change

By: Roseliza Shaari

In the last 10 years, research in technology has been rapidly advancing, promising better life quality to human being. Every new discovery led to new approaches in not only the health, environment, economy, transportation, sports but also education. In the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, various technologies introduced have affected our life and we need to adapt. Having leaders with wisdom, experts, newly-discovered approaches, are not the only factors that guaranteed a bright future. Changes is one of the crucial aspect that also need to be considered. A change in the method of education, a change in the culture of doing things and a change in the way we think. Are we ready to change?

Indeed, education has been proven to be one of the pillars in building a better world. Steve Deening wrote in his article on how the world is getting better and part of it is due to the improvement in the education system. Our education system plays a great role in shaping future generations. Therefore, providing a well-refined education regime that complement the modernization is regard as a must. Nowadays, methods of teaching and learning should change. Living in this era of technology, the implementation of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) in education should have not been considered as uncommon anymore. Online learning is becoming a norm, providing a wider reach to every kind of knowledge. There would be other development in the future and living in this borderless world, these changes should be well-received and adapted.

Besides the need to be ready for the changes in the education, it is as equally important to change our way of doing things. Technology has changed the way we obtain information and news, the way we pay bills and transfer money and the way we communicate. As mentioned, technology has brought out great changes in term of education, communication, transportation, and many others. However, it is undeniable that alongside the changes, problems may occur. For instance, technology has created environmental problems such as global climate changes. In response to this matter, green technology is introduced, recycling is highlighted, reducing plastic waste and many other improved technology are expected to be introduced in the near future. The question is, are we ready for the changes? Are we willing to change our usual way of doing things and jump into the changes that promised a better world ahead? In conclusion, the old way of doing things would halt the good.

Lastly, the biggest change that we should be ready for is to change the way we think. A quote from 'The Book of Tea" written by Kakuzo Okakura "…. *the art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surrounding…..”* which stressed on the need for us to change in life. The mentality of human should change cooperatively as the world changes. There would be no use of good technology, new approaches in education and other modern improvement made if people are not ready to accept the change. We stay unchanged when our mentality choose comfort over improvement. One of Maya Angelou best quote, **“….if you can't change it, change your attitude…..”.** In moving towards a better world, we must be ready to change. Staying in your comfort zone, preserving your status quo may not be the best practice.

In conclusion, changing the world without changing ourselves does not complete the idea of a better world. The completion to this vision strongly depends on us. Human being who would be occupying this changed world, must change. Realizing this vision is not only the work of few intellectuals out there, but everyone plays the role and ready to change.

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Animation

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1.0 Use Animation Movies

The use of animated films is not limited to movies for children only or entertainment films, but is also used in various fields, especially to describe things or information that they want to convey to the surrounding community. Here's an example of using animated films:

2.0 Forensic Animation:

Animation is developed to describe the occurrence of an accident, based on the eye as a witness or data as a result of a vehicle test.

3.0 Animation Simulation:

This animation is developed to help illustrate the process of occurrence of something or what will be encountered, or how something will happen that is commonly known as Infographic Animation.
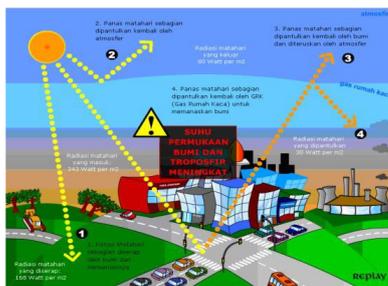
4.0 Animation for Architecture:

The use of animation for architectural fields will help, for example, describe the structure of a building. Structural building structure from the beginning of construction until the construction process is completed. Animation is not just the construction

of a building but rather a more detailed interior design.

5.0 Animation for education:

It is useful to clarify about movement coordination, where the body structure shows the movement of certain bones and joints and their relationship to muscle motion, which stretches which muscles and muscles do the movements are interesting.

6.0 Animation for entertainment and commercial:

At present the amount of animation produced is so widespread, not just for children, but also for the surrounding community with attractive character traits, each of which has its own character as if it were a living character current era. In addition to creating fantasy characters to reinforce the visualization of a scene or scene, and are often used also for ad-

vertising purposes on television.

7.0 Conclusion

This animation can be used in various fields. Animations become more interesting and easier for our work. Animation can also be combined with movies to appeal to the audience. Animation can be expanded to a higher level.

Computer Generated Image (CGI)

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1.0 What is Computer-generated image?

Computer-generated image (also known as CGI) is the application of a computer graphics field, or more specifically, 3D computer graphics for special effects in movies, television programs, commercials, simulators and general simulations, and print media. Video games typically use real-time computer graphics (rarely referred to as CGI), but also include pre-rendered "cut scenes" and movie intros which will then be typical CGI applications. This is sometimes referred to as FMV (Full motion video). CGI is used for computer visual effects because the result effects will be more control than others based on physical process, such as building miniatures for image effects or hiring additional for the scene of the crowd, and therefore allow the creation of inappropriate images using other technologies. It may also allow an artist or producer to produce content without the use of expensive actors.

Computers such as 3ds Max software, and open source Blender, LightWave 3D, and Virtual Softimage Auto-Desk are used to create computer-generated images for movies, etc. Acceptance of CGI software and computer speed improvements has allowed a person and small companies to produce a professional grade of film, games, and art from home computers. It has brought about the subculture of CGI itself with a global set of celebrities, clichés, technical and vocabulary.

2.0 Example Computer Generated Image (CGI)

3.0 Conclusion

The real effect is actually to bring the audience to the world of shadow realities created through technological sophistication such as CGI and also from the aesthetic aspects of narrative narrative art or in other words the special effects also create a new form of experience to the general public.

DO YOU KNOW ?

THE FIRST ANTIBIOTICS

Ancient Egyptians used mouldy bread to prevent wounds from becoming infected. This is not as strange an idea as it sounds. In 1928, Scottish Professor Alexander Fleming was clearing out his laboratory when he noticed a dish of bacteria had become contaminated by a mould called *Penicilliumnotatum.* He observed that the bacteria had been killed where they had come into contact with the mould. After refinement, the mould became the first antibiotic wonder-drug, now known as '*penicillin'*.

(*source: The World's Best Book, 2008*)

Alexander Fleming
1881- 1955
A Significant Contribution to Modern Medicine
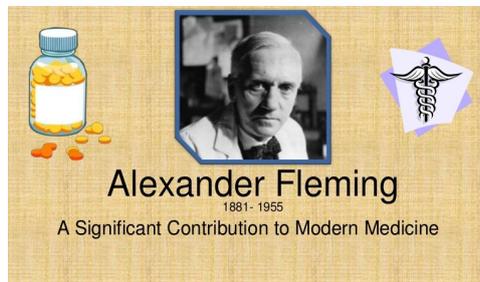
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