

## CENTRE FOR EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE



Activa

VOLUME 1/2020

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### In this Issue:

Director's Address  
CEL Undertakings...  
Teaching In the Time of  
Covid 19  
English Lessons &  
Interactive Sharing Session  
Via Online  
Covid-19: New Normal  
Language Games ...

# Director's Address

Hello people! This is our first volume of the Chalk and Talk for the year 2020. So much had happened ever since. We were delayed in the writing and publication of this first volume of the year due to the shockwaves of the outbreak of the Covid 19 virus and the MCO.

The situation that we find ourselves in now is something that we have never faced before. It came unexpectedly and never in our dreams did we expect this to happen. We always assume that it will happen to others and not to us. When reality sets in, we have to accept and adapt as much as we could because after all life still has to go on and work has still got to be done and done well at that.

Work and commitments continued as ever before, but this time they were on a different mode and medium and at a different pace. Almost all at once, we were engulfed with work and there were numerous documents and reports to prepare and we found ourselves overwhelmed with these tasks. We were also apprehensive of the new medium - zoom and google meetings; all these were just terms that we came across while browsing through some pages in an IT magazine but had suddenly become routine, compulsory platforms with which to communicate. As time passes by we got used to these cyber tools of communication in carrying on our vital work of managing academic affairs and teaching the students.

Our first online EAP classes started on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, but the preparation for this was started much earlier. Students were at first apprehensive and doubtful of how to participate and even how to access the classes. But as time moves on, they were able to adapt although some are still having technical problems like having no data or even a lap-top. Lecturers tried to assist by varying the mode of classes in giving tasks and assignments via whatsapp.

Later on more classes were also held online - English University subjects, Academic English and Business English subjects. Lecturers were well- prepared for the classes as they had ample time to do so. Still there were some hiccups, but none that cannot be overcome. For the MPU subjects, 100% online classes were nothing new as modules were already taught online ever since September 2019.

This new normal in teaching and learning will continue for quite a while, most probably until the end of the year. But changes are fast and always happening and we could expect some students returning to Campus as early as this July. Whatever the scenario is, we have to always be ready to face them with all the necessary preparations and strength of mind and body.

Last but not least, I extend my warmest welcome to our pioneer Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Diploma in Education TESL students to CEL, MAHSA University. I wish you all the success in your future academic undertakings and may your years with us be fruitful and rewarding.

I wish all of you a new era of teaching and learning in the new normal corona virus age and may you be steadfast and diligent in all your academic undertakings.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Professor Azian Abdul Kadir

# CEL UNDERTAKINGS

## TEACHING IN THE TIME OF COVID 19

By Bukhari Shafie

Have you suddenly found yourself teaching online during these trying times?

You're certainly not alone. English teachers all around the world are in the same situation and it can be difficult to know where to start. I would like to share with you my techniques and methods to navigate me through and make the best out of it. Some teachers choose **Google Classroom**, which is a free online learning management service for schools. It facilitates collaboration, creativity, file sharing and grading and of course works well with all other Google platforms, like Google Docs, Google Slides, and so on. Google classroom has been a great service to us all to reach out to the students because of its user-friendly features. I don't have to worry much about explaining the technical parts of it because students can easily follow the lesson delivered.

The screenshot shows a Google Classroom interface. At the top, there are three assignment cards: 'UNIT 5 GRAMMAR 1 QUANTIFIERS' (14 items, Edited Apr 28), 'UNIT 5 LISTENING 2' (3 items, Due Apr 27, 2:30 PM), and 'UNIT 5 LISTENING 1' (3 items, Due Apr 27, 2:30 PM). The 'UNIT 5 LISTENING 2' card is expanded, showing a post from Apr 27 with the instruction: 'Listen to audio 1.40 to two conversations. Answer the questions. You can also refer to the audio script to understand the conversation better.' To the right of the instruction, it shows '10 Turned in' and '9 Assigned'. Below the instruction are three attachments: '40 Track 40.mp3 Audio', 'Pre-Int\_Unit6\_1.40.docx Word', and 'LISTENING 2.png Image'. At the bottom of the expanded card, it says '3 class comments' and a 'View question' button. Below the expanded card, there are two more assignment cards: 'UNIT 5 READING' (3 items, Due Apr 27, 12:00 PM) and 'UNIT 5 SPEAKING' (4 items, Due Apr 27, 12:00 PM).

Listening activity can be easily carried out but a word of advice, try to attach the audio script for the students to refer to.

Another thing, **Google Hangouts** is a useful tool if you have a Google account. Providing screen share, file sharing, live captions and chat, it's simple to use but is not specifically designed for teaching. Learners can sign in without a Gmail address. This online session also helps to make lessons more effortless. Interacting with students virtually can be quite demotivating but when they are able to see our expressions, it will somehow lighten the mood. Face is indeed an integral part of communication.



I do my best to develop a routine in the classroom. It helps my students feel they're in a safe learning environment and makes giving instructions faster and more efficient. For example, I start with a lead-in activity that involves all the students (for example, a game, a review or a few student-centred discussion questions), then go into the class objectives and review homework or project work. Also, I make sure I mix study with energising games or mini-breaks and have students share their ideas.

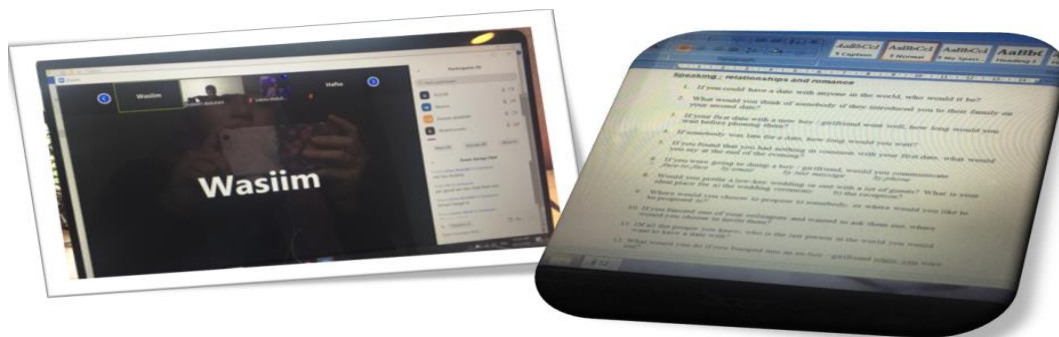
## English Lessons & Interactive Sharing Session Via Online By Nik Mazleen

During this MCO season, in order to curb the spread of the deadly virus, Covid19, our Prime Minister urged us all to be safe and keep our distance from each other all the time. Therefore, like it or not, with only a minimum exposure to the advancement in science and technology, all lecturers must conduct their lessons via online.


It was very hard for me to accept it at first. To be frank, I am not a technology savvy person. I will have to learn from scratch on how to conduct efficient online lessons in a very short time. Communication via whatsapp is the main key. I dealt with students' difficulties in finding the right medium and other technical problems like poor internet connection, no access to the internet, no laptop and computer and so much more. Communicating with students via the social media demanded sacrifice in terms of time and patience.

However, there are silver linings in every dark cloud. Eventually, I found it quite interesting to conduct virtual lessons. I learnt so many things. From how to use different forms of communication medium, to finding related and reliable sources for my daily lessons. As for students, throughout all the difficulties, they were actually quite independent when it comes to learning. Some of them did not have access to laptops, but somehow, they managed to face the challenge by learning to use the hand phone with no complaint. Some of them also claimed they faced a lot of trouble pertaining to the strength of internet connection, but somehow they made it through all the virtual practice and exercises. I was quite impressed with their determination.

We also had a lot of fun conducting Interactive sessions via online. On one fine evening, I have assigned the students different topics related to 'relationship'. As I called their names, each person was given a topic randomly from the list (refer to the picture), and each of them was asked to perform an impromptu speech. Much to my delight, they were all willing to voice out their opinions with open hearts, while their friends listened to them with open minds. Some of them even dare to ask personal questions related to their relationship status, and indeed they all had fun!



“ Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important.”  
-Bill Gates

[www.goedonline.com](http://www.goedonline.com) 

## **Covid-19: New Normal**

**By Nurul Najwa Abu Bakar**

As we are all aware of, the world has been infected by a newly discovered coronavirus, or what is called Covid-19. The first outbreak was in Wuhan, China in November 2019 and now spreading rapidly around the world. According to worldometers.com website, 210 countries and territories around the world have been affected by the disease as of 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, the day that this article is being written, with USA leading the record of the total case of 1,064,572. Cases are rising daily not only in America, but in Africa and Europe.

It is said that this pandemic is the major global health crisis of our time and the ultimate challenge we have faced since World War Two. It is moving like a wave and it affects everyone. In Malaysia, there have been 5954 as of today with the total deaths of 100 people. However, in my humble opinion, we are still lucky to be living in Malaysia as we are well taken care of by the government. A heartfelt thank you to our front liners, doctors and nurses, policemen, soldiers and firefighters who work very hard in order to make sure that the pandemic outbreak could be controlled and that everybody is safe.

Our life has also changed unexpectedly due to this pandemic outbreak. The Malaysian government has swiftly implemented the movement control order (MCO) in order to prevent the spread of the outbreak starting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 and this continued to be extended until 12 May 2020. During the MCO, everyone is quarantined at home and that they have follow a set of curfew rules. It obviously has taught us many lessons on how to continue to be productive in life while being quarantined at home.

First, it has taught us to be self-disciplined. Even though we have to be quarantined at home, we still have to continue working or studying from home. The digitalization of education is accelerated when the MCO was implemented as students have to attend their online classes, do tasks and participate in class activities set by lecturers. If they do not manage their time effectively, they may not be able to achieve the learning outcomes that they are supposed to achieve on a particular day. They will be left behind and their time will be wasted and spent in vain.

It has also taught us on how to still reconnect with people while not meeting face-to-face. People use different platforms on the Internet to stay connected, to have discussions, meetings and so on via Google Hangouts, Google Meets, Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams (just to name a few) more than ever! It seems like the Internet is part of our necessity in life now where the demands to use it for various purposes increase rapidly.

Most certainly, the way we socialize will never be the same anymore due to fear of contagion. For most Malaysians, we always shake hands when we greet people or when we first meet every time. After MCO, this will not happen as often anymore, particularly with people that we don't know well. I also believe that when we meet or talk to people outside, we will always practice social distancing among ourselves and not many people will dare to join big gatherings anymore. Concerts or events might not be organized as often as had been before and people will be more comfortable to stay connected using social media.

As someone who likes to travel to different countries, I don't really see that this will be something that I anticipate for at least 2 to 3 years from now. I am still afraid to be at public areas like airports and tourists spots. Since the pandemic outbreak, I feel safer to stay at home and when it requires for me to go out, I make sure that I use my own transport.

The struggle is real but this pandemic outbreak will eventually be over. While not having many choices left, we have to be ready to face our new normal for the sake of being safe and to stay productive. Let's pray that this will end soon! Amin!



# LANGUAGE GAMES

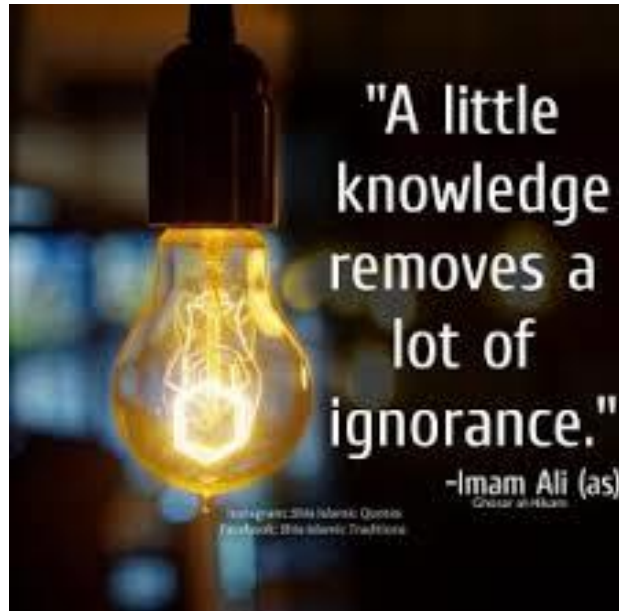
Can you find the hidden words? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.

1. Your key word is: *Communication*

S	T	N	T	O	N	A	E	M	U	L	O	V	G
S	C	H	O	O	S	E	W	O	R	D	S	M	I
U	E	V	I	T	C	E	F	F	E	C	E	R	E
M	V	O	I	C	E	L	M	T	E	I	H	E	V
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