

ENGLISH MATTERS

BULLETIN: MARCH 2023 (03/2023)



**DIRECT ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TRAINING**

**DIRECT ENGLISH
INTERNATIONAL
LANGUAGE CENTRE**

**BULLETIN
MARCH 2023**

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A CHAT WITH *Tunku Iskandar*

KEEP STORYTELLING SIMPLE

Telling stories have been the way to share information between people since time immemorial. Before even the spoken language evolved as the means of communicating, cave drawings and sign-language were used to inform. As Jimmy Neil Smith, Director of the International Storytelling Center said, "We are all storytellers. We all live in a network of stories. There isn't a stronger connection between people than storytelling."



**TUNKU DATO' SERI (DR)
ISKANDAR TUNKU ABDULLAH**
Group Executive Chairman, Melewar Group
Director, Melewar Learning Resources

Therefore we find that telling stories is the way to capture the imagination of the audience, be it in Kenya at the fireside telling epic stories of animals by village elders to young children or in Kelantan with narrations of historical warriors by the tok dalang of Wayang kulit or shadow puppetry with open-mouthed villagers entranced by this shadow-play story-telling.

Ibn Battuta the 14th century Moroccan explorer gathered together his experiences during his travels and concluded, "Travelling - it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller". J.K.Rowling of Harry Potter fame tells us, "There's always room for a story that can transport people to another place." We continue through the centuries to allow people to stoke their imagination by narrating history, folklore and daily happenings through various means. Of course today with the internet we can find and see all of this at the tips of your fingers.

However, the Internet is not a magical device that allows you to automatically access the stories, because it requires human input to upload it. Experts of hieroglyphs are needed to decipher the religious lore and exotic poems of ancient Egyptians and allow the world to appreciate them through the Internet.

In the 1920s, DeWitt Wallace started Readers Digest in a format and concept that has endured till today spanning 100 years, sharing anecdotal true-to-life stories. I have personally been an avid reader for the best part of 60 years following the path my late mother by becoming a subscriber myself. I try to encourage students and my own grandchildren to continue this "tradition" but I am not confident they will gain the advantages that Readers Digest gave me in becoming comfortable and proficient in the use of the English language as everything they access seems to be on an electronic device screen!

Any art requires creativity, vision and skill. Storytelling isn't different and perhaps practicing this art will hone the skills and allow you to master the art. Storytelling has its place in various modern day situations and vocations. Most successful marketing campaigns use storytelling as a key component of persuading the consumer or potential customer to become not just first-time buyers but also convert them to lifelong loyal customers.

This is no less true in promoting tourism because we need to tell potential visitors to the country about the history, customs, culture and attractions of the destination in order that they become interested to visit and experience. However, when indeed they do arrive as tourists, tour guides have just as important a role in narrating and storytelling such that their expectations do not become disappointments.

William Shakespeare persuades us however, to keep the message simple when he, in Richard III, has Queen Elizabeth saying, "An honest tale speeds best being plainly told", undoubtedly wise advice especially in today's world of messaging clutter.

Mitra Malaysia Sdn. Bhd's Employees Completed *Direct English Business Training*

The employees of Mitra Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. have successfully completed Business English (Direct English UK) training programme delivered by Melewar Learning Resources / Direct English Malaysia which started on 14 December 2022.



The participants' industriousness was recognized when a simple but meaningful certificate presentation ceremony was held at Mitra Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.'s office in Kuala Lumpur on the 20th February 2023 to celebrate their achievements.



The participants had the honour of receiving their Certificate of Achievement (by Direct English UK) from the Group Executive Chairman of Melewar Group, Tunku Dato' Seri (Dr) Iskandar Tunku Abdullah, who was present at the ceremony together with Dr. Fazil Khan bin Abdul Kadir, the Group Managing Director of Mitra Malaysia Sdn. Bhd., and S. Hemachandran, Corporate Manager of Melewar Learning Resources.





Direct English Malaysia was full of gratitude for all the support given by the team at Mitra Malaysia in making the training collaboration a truly rewarding experience for everyone.

NEIVCE Certificates Handover

Melewar Learning Resources (MLR) / Direct English Malaysia has a long-standing partnership with New Era Institute of Vocational & Continuing Education (NEIVCE) where Direct English courses are actively engaged for all students of the institution.

S. Hemachandran, Corporate Manager and Emily Chen, English Trainer of MLR/Direct English Malaysia were at NEIVCE to hand over more than 200 certificates of the Certificate of Achievement, Direct English UK, to Ong Kay Yong, the Academic Coordinator of NEIVCE. The certificates are for students from the recent cohorts who have completed their Direct English courses.



NEIVCE will be presenting the certificates to the students during their graduation from their respective programmes.

MY BLOG

10 English Abbreviations You Need to Know



Acronyms and abbreviations are wonderful little tools that make communication faster and more enjoyable, especially when attempting to text quickly on a slick smartphone. Everyone enjoys a little bit of code.

Here are 10 that you'll encounter often and that every English speaker should know.

But first, a quick cheat sheet:

- Abbreviations are shortened versions of words and sometimes end in a period (for example, accomm. for accommodation or adj. for adjective).
- Acronyms are pronounceable, so you read them out as if they're a name, and are formed by using the first letter of each word in a phrase (such as NASA – National Aeronautics and Space Administration).
- An initialism is when the word is pronounced letter by letter, such as the UN (the United Nations). (Fun fact – “the” is usually added before an initialism but not an acronym, as in “I’m an interpreter at the UN,” or “I have an interview at NASA.”)

1. RSVP – Please reply

As with so much of English, this comes from French. RSVP stands for “Répondez s’il vous plait”. You’ll see this request on invitations to weddings and other parties. And yes, please do reply – that way, the bride or host knows exactly how many salmon filets to order.

2. ASAP – As soon as possible

“Can you get this in ASAP?” reads the email from your boss. Depending on the project, this may or may not cause panic – but in any case, you don’t have much time to think!

3. AM/PM – Before midday (morning) and after midday (afternoon)

There’s a huge difference between 5 in the morning and 5 in the afternoon – and these little terms have it covered. Remember, don’t use them if you use 24-hour time (6 PM is the same as 18:00) and be careful to set your alarm correctly. A “morning” alarm that goes off at 7 PM doesn’t help anyone!

4. LMK – Let me know

Casual, friendly – perfect for the end of a text. LMK shows that you are expecting confirmation or more information.

5. BRB – Be right back

Sometimes when chatting, something demands our attention: be it the doorbell, a cat wanting to be let out or an irresistible caffeine craving. Don’t sweat it – just let your friend know you’ll BRB.

6. DOB – Date of birth

“What IS my DOB?” you might have wondered the first time you saw this. After all, it does sound like a poorly chosen item of clothing or foul type of medicine. Well, rest assured you do have a DOB – we all do.

7. CC/BCC – Carbon copy/blind carbon copy

Although they refer to the age of email, these terms take their names from the analogue years, when copies were made using carbon paper. Quick etiquette tip: when adding people to the CC email field, remember they “can clearly” see who else has received the email. (And don’t “reply all” unless you REALLY want to!)

8. BA/TBC- To be announced/To be confirmed

Remember your friend whose wedding invitation you need to RSVP ASAP to? Be careful if it says venue TBA or groom TBC. It means she doesn’t have everything organized just yet!

9. ETA – Estimated time of arrival

“See you on Tuesday, ETA 9 PM.” You might see this when someone is traveling but is unsure of when their flight gets in.

10. TGIF – Thank God it’s Friday

Sung by workers worldwide each Friday afternoon – the weekend is here!

EMILY CHEN
TRAINER

ENGLISH DIRECT

to the WORLD

Our Business English (Direct English, UK) course is tailored specifically for working adults and professionals as well as clients from the corporate sectors.

The course is designed to polish and enhance the Business English and communication skills of the learners to enable them to use Business English more competently and professionally in their work environment.

The course will also enable learners to build their confidence in carrying out their important work or business functions.

There are nine units to be completed in the course and these nine units cover a wide range of topics that include Presentation, Negotiations, Customer Care, Managing Change etc. There are also topics on Teamworking and Social English.



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info@directenglish.com.my

HRDCORP CLAIMABLE COURSE!

The course comes with a learning pack that consists of Course Book, Workbook and audio-video learning materials. Learners are also provided with online learning support materials to help enhance their English proficiency. This is made available through “Direct English Interactive”.

Learners are required to sit for the Direct English Placement / Proficiency Test prior to enrolling in this course. Direct English Placement / Proficiency Test is a 15-minute online test that can be taken anytime, anywhere. This multiple-choice test is designed to give you a quick way of assessing your knowledge of English grammar, English vocabulary and English usage.



MELEWAR LEARNING RESOURCES

 **DIRECT
ENGLISH**
INTERNATIONAL
LANGUAGE CENTRE


**DIRECT
ENGLISH**

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+603 2022 4128 / 4138



+60 12-605 4128



www.melewar-learning.com
www.directenglish.edu.my



info@directenglish.com.my
info@directenglish.edu.my



MYDECorptraining
deilcmalaysia



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deilcmalaysia



Direct English (Corporate
Training Centre) Malaysia

Direct English International
Language Centre

3B, LEVEL 3, BANGUNAN MING,
JALAN BUKIT NANAS,
50250, KUALA LUMPUR
MALAYSIA