

ENGLISH MATTERS

BULLETIN: OCTOBER 2023 (10/2023)



DIRECT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING

DIRECT ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CENTRE

BULLETIN
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A CHAT WITH

Tunku Iskandar

URBAN SLANG - HIPSTER

Can someone who is not a “hipster” write about things that are “hipster”? I am not quite sure what a “hipster” is but I have seen it described as a person who follows the latest trends and fashions in clothing and lifestyle, especially those regarded as being outside the cultural mainstream. Not satisfied with that, I went searching for more insights and came across “Hipsters are people that try to be different (and genuinely do think that they are different), by rejecting anything they deem to be too popular”. I am not any the wiser.

Why am I looking to know what “hipster” or being a “hipster” is? The other night I was idly scanning TV channels and there was a game show that asked the contestants what is sold in a hipster café. There were all kinds of wrong answers until someone said, “Coffee” which was judged to be a popular item but that set me thinking as almost every café sells coffee. So I was still not any wiser.



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

I first came across the term “hipster” in the 1960s while a student in London. Someone who is a “hipster” supposedly follows an alternative lifestyle including quirky dressing and non-mainstream music and political opinions. Anyone who thinks differently instead of following popular trends was deemed a “hipster”. However, it also became trendy to be a “hipster” and so what was considered different and alternative started to become an offshoot of mainstream outlooks. Also, low-slung, hip-hugging pants were called “hipsters. I don't think I became any the wiser.

The term “hipster” was originally derived from the slang “hip” and taken to describe a person who is up-to-date. In the 1990s it identified as a subculture made up mostly of young and educated bohemian types. Bohemian? It had nothing to do with the early kingdom in central Europe in what is today the Czech Republic, although why a person who is interested in artistic and unusual genres of art, music, or literature, and lives in an informal way is akin to the Bohemian way of life is not clear at all to me.

So back to where I started this discourse. The puzzle of what a “hipster” café is. Firstly, they are almost always called “cafés” not restaurants and not outlet or kedai. Coffee is indeed a main feature and some have a full menu page of different coffees. Then there are usually organically produced salads, meats and cakes. The names of the dishes tend to sound avante garde. The coffee mugs may have been pickle-jars in a previous life. The décor could be retro with old posters or items such as vintage phones and radios. The furniture is usually non-standard with a mix of different types. Sometimes these cafés are also called bistros. Now perhaps it is becoming clearer what a hipster café is but still not the term hipster!

Anyway, the late John F Kennedy 35th President of the USA once said, “The greater our knowledge increases, the greater our ignorance unfolds.” I believe however my knowledge has increased but that also my ignorance is decreased a little, and hopefully yours too.

MFA MEMBERS' MEET DAY

MFA recently held an engagement session with its members, mostly from the education sector. Being an enthusiastic association member, Melewar Learning Resources Sdn Bhd (Direct English) took part in the session alongside other members QC Group Sdn Bhd (HOME Maths Therapy), Genius Aulad International Group Sdn Bhd (Genius Aulad), A Plus Edu Sdn Bhd (A Plus Edu & Les Education), and LMS Education Holdings Sdn Bhd (Smart Reader Kids).

This engagement session, which was led by the MFA Main Committee's Mr. Daniel Sim, concentrated on the franchise registration process, market penetration insights, and many other topics. Mr. Neoh Eng Kee, along with Mr. Amran Abdul Hamid, was a third member of the Main Committee present at the meeting.

The participants' engagement session was successful because several problems were brought up and solutions were discovered. In order to succeed in the franchise sector, MLR will continue to collaborate closely with MFA and its members.



TRIP TO FOOD AND HOTEL EXHIBITION

Recently, DEILC English class embarked on an exciting field trip to the Food and Hotel Exhibition in Kuala Lumpur. It was a sensory adventure that combined language learning with culinary exploration. As we strolled through the bustling aisles of the exhibition, we not only learned about the latest trends in food and hospitality but also engaged in meaningful conversations with industry professionals. The diverse range of cuisines and innovative hotel designs sparked our creativity and provided ample material for our subsequent writing assignments. Overall, the trip was a delightful blend of education and gastronomic delight, leaving us with a newfound appreciation for the world of hospitality and a deeper understanding of the English language in a real-world context.



HANDOVER OF NEIVCE CERTIFICATES

The New Era Institute of Vocational & Continuing Education (NEIVCE) and Melewar Learning Resources (MLR)/Direct English Malaysia have a long-standing relationship in which all NEIVCE students actively participate in Direct English courses. More than 300 Certificates of Achievement from Direct English UK were presented to Mr. Lee Yin Loon the Deputy Director of New Era Institute of Vocational and Continuing Education and Mr Chai Yu Yii, Academic Liaison Officer, New Era Institute of Vocational and Continuing Education. The certificate was presented alongside Mr. Daljit Singh, the course's primary English trainer from MLR. Students who have finished their Direct English courses from the most recent batches are eligible for certificates. At the time of the students' graduation from their individual programmes, NEIVCE will award the certificates to them.



MY BLOG

A GLOBAL EXPLORER FROM CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



ILSE NORTJE
DEILC ENGLISH TEACHER

Born and raised in the picturesque city of Cape Town, South Africa, my nurturing spirit has always been a defining characteristic of my personality. Throughout my corporate journey, I was known for my empathetic approach and genuine care for both clients and colleagues. It was this quality that ultimately led me to explore new avenues for making a difference. I left the corporate world to live and travel abroad in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe.

I decided to pursue a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) diploma course. This decision opened up a world of possibilities, allowing me to explore my passion for teaching English to non-native speakers.

Language learning, in my opinion, involves more than just learning grammar and vocabulary; it also entails developing a sincere passion for the target language. At Direct English International Language Centre (DEILC), I use narratives to make English language instruction an exciting journey by bringing the magic of storytelling into the classroom. Through stories, I'm glad that my students not only learn new words and phrases but also develop their listening and comprehension skills.

Language learning is a dynamic process that thrives on engagement and personal expression. I strongly stand by the quote that language education goes beyond conventional methods. By harnessing the power of art, games, and relevant, current topic discussions, a teacher should create a dynamic learning environment where learners feel confident and inspired to express themselves. I take pride in seeing my students not only acquire language skills but also develop cultural awareness, critical thinking abilities, and a lifelong love for learning. I hope that my innovative approach serves as a testament to the transformative potential of language education when it is rooted in creativity, engagement, and meaningful communication.

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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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 Proficiency Assessment prior to enrolling in this course. Direct English Proficiency Assessment 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.



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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



MYDECORtraining
deilcmalaysia



mydecortraining
deilcmalaysia



Direct English (Corporate
Training Centre) Malaysia

Direct English International
Language Centre

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