
GC 2012-5654: MYLINE: PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR LEARNING IN ENGLISH ON-LINE

Ms. Fatimah Puteh, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

Fatimah Puteh is a Senior Lecturer at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. She is one of the key players behind the development of the Online Resources for Learning in English (MyLinE) portal in 2006 which was later adopted by the Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia in 2008 to be used and accessed by all registered students in the 20 public universities in Malaysia. Since its launch in 2008, she has been entrusted with the responsibility of managing the language learning portal which includes developing, maintaining and hosting the site. She teaches Computer Assisted Language Learning and Classroom Observation on the university's TESL programme and Effective Oral Communication skills in the language proficiency programme. Her area of interest includes CALL, CMC, self-directed language learning and technology in education.

MyLinE: Providing Resources for Learning English Online

Fatimah Puteh

MyLinE Task Force
Language Academy
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
<http://myline.utm.my>
m-fatima@utm.my

Abstract

Online Resources for Learning in English (MyLinE) was launched as a national language learning portal in 2008. Available free for use by undergraduates and postgraduates of all 20 public institutions of higher learning in Malaysia, MyLinE offers learning resources and activities for learning English and learning in English as it provides a platform to learn, practice, share and connect in English. As a portal that addresses the academic needs of students at tertiary level of education, MyLinE has attracted the attention of not only the local market but it has also gained recognition internationally. For the local markets, MyLinE taskforce has provided trainings and assistance to public colleges, polytechnics and the examination council; at international level, MyLinE has been introduced and used by students and staff from foreign universities which include Thailand, Indonesia and Kazakhstan. The online data on the use of MyLinE also shows a positive note as within November 2011 and May 2012, MyLinE has been accessed from 122 countries. Such is the impact of MyLinE, it has recently attracted the industries, where through TalentCorp Malaysia, 10 international companies has pledged to collaborate with MyLinE in sharing their content and training packages to be used by users of MyLinE.

Four years on since its launch, this paper aims to highlight the challenges that MyLinE taskforce faced over the years in catering to the needs of almost 500,000 users across the country and meeting the needs of many more interested would-be users worldwide; it will also discuss how the team has responded to address these challenges in meeting the changing landscape of online language learning in tertiary education in general. The challenges addressed in this paper include maintaining the quality of the resources, engaging the users in relevant activities and meeting the needs of users. With the huge number of users that the task force is serving, it is vital that the resources continue to meet the needs of the users, thus, MyLinE consistently looks for ways to improve the quality of the portal. Through WebSwami, the use of Moodle and designation of English Language Support Programme (ELSP) platforms for each participating university, through collaboration with the industries, MyLinE has been able to partially bridge these gaps. In addition, through analysis of access patterns to different parts of the portal, MyLinE is able to learn about the interests of users and thus, is able to offer more relevant and customised resources to meet the needs of the users. In ensuring

continuous increase of active users and maintaining its glue factor, MyLinE has implemented different competitions and has developed a model of self-access language learning that can be integrated as part of student learning time. To date, the model which was introduced in 2009 is currently adopted by at least nine participating universities.