

LC Hosts APCA-ANPOR-UBD Conference



UBD Vice Chancellor Dr Hazri Kifle presenting tokens of appreciation to the presidents of APCA and ANPOR

The Language Centre (LC) had the honour of co-organising the APCA-ANPOR-UBD Conference from 27 to 28 May 2025, involving top-ranked international universities and institutions such as Tsinghua University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and Xi'an Jiaotong University, to name a few. This collaboration also marks the first conference where LC served as the primary host, receiving delegates from all over Asia.

The conference was officially launched on 27 May 2025 with an opening ceremony at the Pro-Chancellor Arts Centre, UBD. The event began with a welcoming speech by LC Director, Dr Juliana Shak, followed by welcoming remarks from the chairpersons of each co-organising body: APCA President Mdm Changfeng Chen and ANPOR President Dr Jantima Kheokao. The ceremony culminated with an inspiring opening address by the guest of honour, UBD Vice Chancellor Dr Hazri Kifle.

The ceremony also featured the conference's first keynote address by Professor Jack Qiu from Nanyang Technological University, who opened with 'LLMs and RLWs: A Critical Communication Reflection on Learning in the Age of GenAI', offering timely insights into artificial intelligence and education.

With the theme 'Communication and Languages in Asian-Pacific Regions: Connection, Collaboration and Sustainability', the conference focused on sustainable communication practices; innovations in language education; language, communication and connectivity; linguistic diversity and communication; language policy and sustainability; and education and training in

communication partnerships and networking.

Aiming to provide a dynamic platform for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, the conference explored pressing challenges and opportunities within communication and language studies, with a particular focus on integrating sustainable practices into communication and language research as well as education across the Asian-Pacific regions. By emphasising the pivotal role of sustainable communication, the conference underscores its capacity to enhance meaningful collaboration across diverse cultural landscapes and reflects the organisers' commitment to contributing meaningfully to the advancement of communication and language studies.



Professor Jack Qiu Linchuan delivering his keynote address

Keynotes and Parallel Sessions Mark Day 1 of Conference at UBD

After a memorable opening ceremony, the first day of the conference continued with two inspiring keynote addresses and dynamic parallel sessions, beginning with a keynote by Professor Shuhua Zhou from City University of Hong Kong, who spoke on ‘Understanding and Curbing Scams: Typology and Appeals’. The session challenged participants to reflect on pressing issues in media, technology, and communication. This was followed by a keynote address by Professor Wei Ran, Chair Professor and Associate Dean of Research and Development at the School of Communication, Hong Kong Baptist University, who spoke on ‘Generative AI, Cognitive Strategies and Knowledge Acquisition in the Era of Attention Scarcity’, highlighting how emerging technologies are transforming the way people learn, communicate,



Presenters and participants after a parallel session

and engage with information in a digital-first world.

In the afternoon, participants engaged in parallel sessions at the ILIA Building, where scholars presented their research on themes including language policy, communication connectivity, social media influence, and sustainable practices. Sessions such as Bias Risk in GPT-Driven Data Analysis, Negotiating Language Values in Bilingual Contexts, and Global Dialogues in Communication Studies drew active discussion, while Q&A segments encouraged exchange of ideas between speakers and participants.

The day concluded with a lively mix of academic dialogue and networking opportunities, setting a strong tone for the rest of the conference.



Participants at a ‘Global Dialogues’ session



Professor Sung Kyum Cho delivering his lecture



Professor Mutiara Kartini delivering her talk

Day 2 of International Conference at UBD Explores AI, Language, and Sustainable Communication

Day 2 of the international conference began with an insightful keynote address delivered by Associate Professor James McLellan, from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UBD. His presentation, ‘Sustainable Development Goals and Translanguaging in the Context of Southeast Asia’, explored how language practices and inclusive communication can support sustainability and cross-cultural understanding across the region.

Following the keynote, participants engaged in parallel sessions that explored language, culture, and technology from multiple perspectives. Topics ranged from multilingual education and gender bias in AI to cultural identity, digital communication, and the preservation of minority languages.

In the afternoon, discussions turned toward education and sustainability in action, featuring research on innovative teaching practices, empathy, and mindfulness in language learning, as well as how technology can enhance classroom experiences. The day concluded with reflections on communication, governance, and how connected communities can drive sustainable progress.

By day’s end, the conversations underscored the conference’s shared vision: building more connected, sustainable, and culturally inclusive communities through communication and collaboration.



Professor James McLellan delivering his keynote address

Closing Ceremony Highlights: Reimagining Sustainable Communication

The two-day international conference concluded on 28 May 2025 with a thought-provoking final keynote and a celebratory closing ceremony.

The highlight of the afternoon was a keynote address delivered by Dr Siti Badriyah binti Hj Mohamad Yusof, Assistant Professor in Malay Language and Linguistics at UBD. In her address, 'Sustainable Communication Reimagined: Opportunities for Language Research and Policy', Dr Badriyah emphasised the importance of aligning communication research with real-world sustainability goals.

The closing session was marked by the arrival of Associate Professor Pg Dr Mohamad Iskandar bin Pg Hj Petra, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Education) of UBD. The ceremony featured reflections from Professor Min Hang of Tsinghua University, and tokens of appreciation to keynote speakers, before concluding with a group photo.

The event ended on a high note, celebrating two days of dialogue, collaboration, and a shared commitment to advancing sustainable communication in an interconnected world.



Distinguished guests with the conference's keynote speakers



Attendees during the closing ceremony



Professor Min Hang delivering her closing remarks



Presenters, guests and co-organisers of the conference at the farewell dinner

36th Japanese Speech Contest Showcases Linguistic Talent

The 36th Japanese Speech Contest was held on 26 March 2025, at the Lecture Theatre of The Core. The event was co-organised by the Language Centre (LC), the Embassy of Japan, and the Lifelong Learning Centre of the Ministry of Education (L3C).

The event was graced by the presence of several distinguished guests, including His Excellency Mr. Kikuta Yutaka, Ambassador-Designate of Japan to Brunei Darussalam; Mr. Lim Kian Boon, Acting Director of the Lifelong Learning Centre (L3C); Dr. Min Shen, Deputy Director of the UBD Language Centre; Mr. Julaihi bin Mohamad, Director of the Department of Co-Curriculum, Ministry of Education; Ms. Hirata Yuna, Lecturer from the Japan Foundation Kuala Lumpur; Mr. Okabe Kohji, President of the Japanese Association in Brunei; and Ms. Hajah Najmina Fairuz Hj Abdul Latif, President of the Brunei Association of Japan Alumni.

Representing the LC, Dr. Min Shen served as one of the judges for the Group Presentation category. In the Advanced category, Wan Mohammad Aidi Bin Jufriza and Shamil Bin Shrain from LJ-3403 (Level 5) achieved first and third place respectively, demonstrating their strong command of the Japanese language and impressive presentation skills.

In the Beginner category, all winners were from LJ-2403 (Level 3). Nurin Aneesah Binti Baharin won first prize, followed

Ak. Abdul Ghafur Ur Rahman Bin Pg. Abdulrahman in second place and Siti Damia Syahmina Binti Haji Harun in third place.

Congratulations are extended to all the winners and participants for their hard work, dedication, and passion in learning and promoting the Japanese language.



Distinguished guests and participants of the 36th Japanese Speech Contest

French Ambassador Highlights the Importance of Effective Intercultural Communication

The Language Centre hosted a talk by Her Excellency Madame Eve Lubin, Ambassador of the French Republic to Brunei Darussalam, at the Pro Chancellor Arts Centre on 9 April 2025. The session, titled 'Communication and Negotiation at Work: Bridging the Intercultural Gap', explored the importance of cultural awareness in effective workplace communication.

Mdm Lubin shared that meaningful communication goes beyond language; it involves understanding cultural differences in values, time perception, leadership, and feedback. She emphasised that success in intercultural settings requires empathy, adaptability, and openness.

During the lively Q&A session, participants discussed strategies for building trust and connection across diverse cultures. Mdm Lubin encouraged the audience to see diversity as a strength

and to approach every interaction with curiosity and respect.

The Language Centre is grateful to Her Excellency for her insightful talk and to all attendees for their enthusiastic participation.



Her Excellency Mdm Eve Lubin delivering her talk

First French as Minor at DELF Award Ceremony Mineure en français et cérémonie de remise des diplômes du DELF (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française) pour les étudiants du LC

The Language Centre is delighted to announce that Ms. Arina Zawani Binti Mohamad Adam @ Siti Amina has become the first UBD student to graduate with French as a Minor. Additionally, she was awarded the DELF (Diploma in French Language Studies) Level B1 Certificate at the official residence of the French ambassador to Brunei, in a ceremony attended by Her Excellency Ambassador Eve Lubin and Mr. Guillaume Graff, Director of the Alliance Française. The Language Centre congratulates Ms. Arina on her remarkable accomplishments.

Le « Language Centre » a le plaisir d'annoncer que Mlle Arina Zawani Binti Mohamad Adam @ Siti Amina est devenue la première étudiante de UBD à obtenir une mineure en français. De plus, elle a reçu le certificat DELF (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française) de niveau B1 à la Résidence de France, lors d'une cérémonie en présence de Son Excellence l'Ambassadrice Eve Lubin et de M. Guillaume Graff, Directeur de l'Alliance Française. Félicitations à Mlle Arina pour ses remarquables réussites.



Her Excellency Mdm Eve Lubin with Ms Arina Zawani and Assistant Professor of French at LC Dr Omar Columbo

Guest Lecture at State University of Medan

On 4 June 2025, LC's assistant professor of German Dr Balazs Huszka delivered a guest lecture on developing German language skills at the German Language Department, State University of Medan in Medan, Indonesia. The event was attended by around 50 undergraduate students of German, along with several faculty members of the university. Dr Huszka's invitation came from Dr Surya Masniari Hutagalung, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Languages of State University of Medan.



Dr Balazs Huszka with undergraduate students of German from State University of Medan

Guest Lecture at UIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon

On 5 June 2025, Dr Balazs Huszka delivered a guest lecture titled Teknologi dalam Pengajaran BIPA: Menjembatani Bahasa, Budaya dan Transformasi Digital (Technology in Teaching Bahasa Indonesia to Foreign Speakers: Bridging Language, Culture, and Digital Transformation) at the Indonesian Language Education Department (Jurusan Tadris Bahasa Indonesia) of UIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, Indonesia. The lecture, conducted online, was attended by local Bahasa Indonesia students and researchers in the field.



Dr Balazs Huszka delivering his online guest lecture

16th Cohort of Professional Communication Skills for International Officers

The Language Centre welcomed another batch of international officers from the Southeast Asian countries of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand in August, marking it as the 16th cohort of the programme. The eight-week programme, which primarily focuses on participants' professional communication skills, concluded with a final presentation and a closing ceremony, with the acting deputy director of the Brunei Research Department Hj Md Shariff Hj Ali as the guest of honour. Students delivered an engaging final presentation on the hidden gems of their respective countries, effectively displaying their overall improvement with their proficiency in the English language.



LC Director Dr Juliana Shak delivering her congratulatory remarks

Bridging English Course Resumes

The Bridging English Course (BEC) officially resumed at the Language Centre in March 2025 after a significant hiatus at the university. This English language programme is designed for students who have met university entry requirements but need to further enhance their English proficiency before embarking on their degree studies. Over 14 weeks, students attend four sessions per week and complete regular assessments, concluding with the UBD English Proficiency Test (UBD-EPT) as their final evaluation. Earlier this year, students from the January 2025 intake successfully completed the BEC and subsequently sat for the UBD-EPT in June

2025. Those who achieved a passing score were eligible to use their results to gain admission into UBD's undergraduate programmes.

The BEC will continue to serve as a pathway for students aspiring to strengthen their English skills and pursue higher education at UBD. The next session will be open for application from January 2026 and interested applicants can find more information via the UBD Online Admissions Application System (OASys) or contact the Language Centre at office.lc@ubd.edu.bn.

Osaka-Shizuoka Students Take on Oral Presentation Skills

Students from Osaka University and Shizuoka University recently took part in a special programme aimed at enhancing their oral presentation skills through the UBD Global Discovery Programme – English Communication for Career Advancement, facilitated by English Communication Skills lecturers from the Language Centre. Originally launched for Osaka University students, the programme has since expanded to include participants from other universities, this time from Shizuoka University, reflecting the growing collaboration and academic ties between UBD and these institutions.

Throughout the programme, students developed essential communication skills, focusing on public speaking, confidence-building, and the fundamentals of formal presentations. The

classes combined theory-based sessions with interactive practical activities, giving participants ample opportunity to apply techniques in real-time. The programme concluded with individual student presentations on topics linked either to their own research or issues relevant to Brunei, showcasing their growth in both confidence and delivery.

This collaborative programme not only strengthened students' presentation abilities but also reinforced the partnership between UBD, Osaka University, and Shizuoka University, promoting mutual understanding and intercultural exchange. The experience highlighted the enduring importance of strong communication skills as a foundation for students' future academic and professional success.



Participants and facilitators of the programme



A visit to Gadong Market, one of the programme's communicative activities

Academic Activities by LC Staff

- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Stark, A., Hajah Zurinah Haji Ya'akub, Nur Ezzati Rasyidah Haji Abd Rahman, & Robita Ika Annisa (2025) on Temporal Metaphors as a Linguistic Phenomenon: Conceptual Frameworks across Different Languages. *LingPoet: Journal of Linguistics and Literary Research* 6(1), 31–43.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Stark, A., & Kurniawan, Y. (2025) on The Significance of Akidah-Akhlak. A Comprehensive Literature Review of Hamka's Penuntun Jiwa. *International Journal of Humanities, Philosophy and Language* 8(29), 48–59.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Hajah Zurinah Haji Ya'akub, Rabi'atul Adawiyyah Haji Hassan, Siti Ifwah Fauzani Haji Chuchu, & Stark, A. (2025) on The Metaphorical Construction of Cultural Identity in Malay Proverbs. *International Journal of Arts and Social Science* 8(4), 124–161.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Indah Aini (2025) on Tradition, Transition, and Identity: The Malay Literature in North Sumatra. *Social Science and Human Research Bulletin* 2(4), 125–129.
- Dr Omar Columbo published an article along with Huszka, B., Nghia Tran Trong, & Yuki Akita (2025) on Vocabulary Learning Strategies among Bruneian University Students of French, German, Japanese and Vietnamese. *Quantum Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 6(2), 16–28.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Zurinah Ya'akub, Rabi'atul Adawiyyah Hassan, & Ifwah Fauzani Chuchu (2025) on Linguistic Sustainability in The Malay-Speaking Nations of The Historical Nusantara: Comparative Approaches to Minority And Indigenous Language Preservation. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 8(5), 3796–3810.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Stark, A. (2025) on Knowledge on Its Own is Insufficient: Hamka's Educational Theory and Its Implementation. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 10(5), 1–13.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Indah Aini, Surya Masniari Hutagalung, & Stark, A. (2025) on Narrating Indonesia to Non-Native Speakers: Cultural Representation and Digital Transformation in BIPA Instruction. *International Journal of Arts and Social Science* 8(6), 244–280.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Aini, I., Adawiyyah binti Haji Hassan, R., & Perdamean, A. S. (2025) on Perancangan kurikulum dan representasi budaya dalam BIPA dan BIPA: Analisis perbandingan. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bahasa Indonesia Bagi Penutur Asing (UMSU, 2025)*, 372–384.
- Dr Balazs Huszka published an article along with Stark, A., & Hassan A. A. (2025) on Stress Management According to Traditional Minangkabau Adat. *Semarak International Journal of Islamic Studies and Culture*, 6(1), 1–11.
- Dr Suciyati Haji Sulaiman published an article along with Huszka, B., Indah Aini, Ike Revita, Siti Rabi'atul Adawiah Jaffar, & Sharina Saad (2025) on The Motif of Ungrateful Son in Nusantara Folklore: A Proppian Morphological Analysis of Malin Kundang, Si Tanggang, and Nakhoda Manis. *International Journal of Arts and Social Science* 8(8), 134–161.
- Dr Balazs Huszka delivered a talk on Warisan Sastra Melayu di Sumatera Utara: Menelusuri Tradisi, Genre, dan Pengaruh Sejarah at the Language Centre Seminar Sessions. Place and date: Universiti Brunei Darussalam, 12 February 2025.
- Dr Balazs Huszka, Rabi'atul Adawiyyah binti Haji Hassan, Indah Aini, & Ahmad Sahat Perdamean delivered a talk on Perancangan Kurikulum dan Representasi Budaya dalam BIPA dan BIPA: Analisis Perbandingan. Event: SEBIPA 2025 (Seminar Nasional BIPA UMSU). Place and date: Medan (Indonesia), 15 May 2025. Organiser: Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.
- Dr Balazs Huszka, Hajah Zurinah Haji Ya'akub, Rabi'atul Adawiyyah Haji Hassan, & Siti Ifwah Fauzani Haji Chuchu delivered a talk on Linguistic Sustainability in The Malay-Speaking Nations of The Historical Nusantara: Comparative Approaches to Minority And Indigenous Language Preservation. Event: Communication and Languages in Asian-Pacific Regions: Connection, Collaboration and Sustainability, APCA-ANPOR-UBD Conference 2025. Place and date: Universiti Brunei Darussalam, 27 – 28 May 2025.
- Dr Balazs Huszka delivered a guest lecture on Erfolg beim Sprechen. German Language Department, State University of Medan (Medan, Indonesia), 04 June 2025.
- Dr Balazs Huszka delivered a guest lecture on Teknologi dalam Pengajaran BIPA: Menjembatani Bahasa, Budaya dan Transformasi Digital. Jurusan Tadris Bahasa Indonesia, UIN Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon (Cirebon, Indonesia), 05 June 2025.
- Dr Balazs Huszka delivered a guest lecture on Warisan Sastra Melayu di Sumatera Utara: Menelusuri Tradisi, Genre, dan Pengaruh Sejarah. Event: Language Centre Seminar Sessions. Place and date: Universiti Brunei Darussalam, 12 February 2025. Organizer: Language Centre of Universiti Brunei Darussalam.
- Dr Min Shen delivered a talk on From Heritage to Global Citizenship: Language Education and Sustainable Futures. Event: Language Centre Seminar Sessions. Place and date: Universiti Brunei Darussalam, 1 October 2025.

UBD-EPT





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