

# Getting creative with English

**VARIED APPROACHES:** Eight speakers and 20 presenters will be sharing their experiences and ideas at the International Conference on English Language Learning

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**M**ANY interesting approaches to teaching English language will be discussed in the International Conference on English Language Learning (ICELL) today and tomorrow.

Eight speakers and 20 presenters will be sharing their experiences and ideas at the conference which will be held at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

As this will be musician, author, TV broadcaster and journalist Stan Cullimore's first visit to the country, he is looking forward to finding out what the English language scene in Malaysia is like.

"With various expertise, I've always enjoyed going into classrooms and engaging with children and letting them inspire me as much as I inspire them.

"I just hope the same thing happens with the good people I'll meet at ICELL," he told *Streets*.

Often seen with a ukulele, Cullimore said that music and singing can really help build confidence and engage children.

"Children who might be shy or unsure in the classroom seem to open up and join in when they're singing along with their classmates."

At ICELL, Cullimore will be talking, playing his ukulele and singing some of the songs he used in United Kingdom classrooms.

"If I'm lucky, the people who come to see my presentation will feel inspired and excited enough to join in with the singing. Then we can help each other achieve our creative potential."

Victoria University School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies senior lecturer Jonathan Newton has worked with Malaysian

teachers and teacher trainees for over 10 years.

"I've seen many passionate young teachers enter the profession who are highly competent in English and keen to innovate in the classroom.

"Along with many of their more experienced colleagues, these teachers are already having a transformative influence in their classrooms and schools.

"I think that when the education system itself nurtures innovation and creativity in teachers and draws on solid evidence of best practice to guide and support them, the sky is the limit."

Newton said that from him, participants can expect research, principles for building fluency into programmes and lessons and various practical techniques.

So he aims to offer teachers a package of conceptual and pedagogic tools to help them better understand fluency and offer richer op-

portunities for learners to develop fluency.

Although he will focus on spoken fluency, the principles he will be highlighting are applicable to the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Newton suggested that when people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are learning English together, the language classroom offers a fertile space for them to develop intercultural competencies.

"Language itself overflows with often taken-for-granted cultural content and it can be a lot of fun for learners to be guided to discover this 'invisible' culture in their own language use as well as in that of others."

For more information, visit [www.icell.my](http://www.icell.my). Participation is RM180 per person for both days. *New Straits Times* is the media partner of ICELL 2013.



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