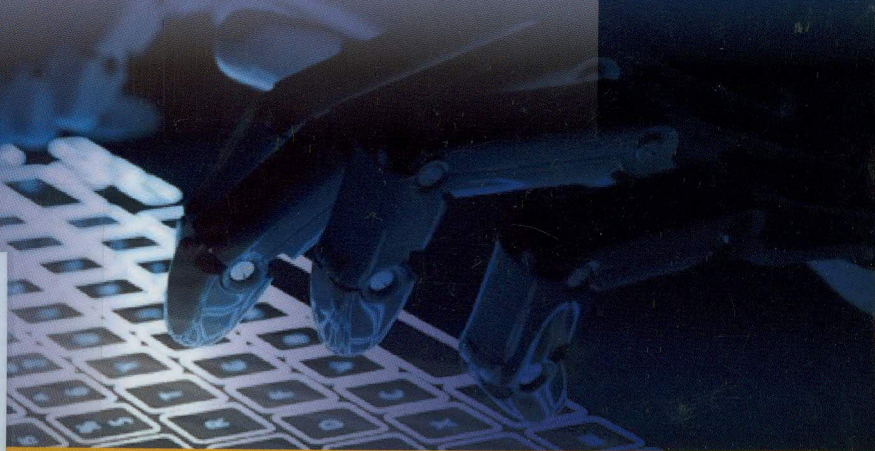


# **TOOLKITS** for **21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TEACHING**

## **PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS** for the **4<sup>TH</sup>** **INDUSTRY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**



Editors

**FAIZAH ABDUL MAJID  
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Wan Nur'ashiqin Wan Mohamad is an English teacher at a public university. She believes that learning a language is best done in context for the learning

experience to be meaningful, so that learning can take place. The actual behavioural output of such learning can be seen immediately or even many years later. As a practicing lateral thinker, she advocates brainstorming and the ability to listen well, as the first steps towards creative and complex problem solving.



## CHAPTER 12

# Reflections on a Never-ending Journey: Some Thoughts from the Editors

*Faizah Abd Majid, Mohd Fauzi Kamarudin,  
Ainul Azmin Md Zamin*

The editors are pleased to offer this final chapter as a piece of creative work that entails how we feel about teaching both as a profession and as a passion. Also, we hope to reminisce the joyful journey we had as we endeavored in the journey of preparing this book. Since all three of us remain truthfully to our love about the idea behind this book, let us walk the audience through what is in our mind as we come to the end of the book. Hence, this chapter is organised in three parts, each written by one of the three editors. Each part is a representation of who we are as a TESL advocate-cum-professional development trainer and most importantly a lifelong learner.

### PART A

#### **Never too late to start trying**

*Faizah Abdul Majid*

*"Your life as a teacher begins the day you realize that you are always a learner."*

Robert John Meehan

Let me begin this write-up with a simple story. It is a story about a boy who was having a stroll along the beach with his grandpa on a hot sunny day. As the boy and his grandpa were walking along the beach, they could see thousands of starfish lying on the beach drying up due to the hot scorching sun. Hence, as they walked the boy picked one starfish and threw it into the sea. He continued on, picking one starfish at a time and throwing it into the



sea. Looking at his grandson the grandpa could not resist asking, "Now boy, what are you doing? Can't you see there are thousands and thousands of dying starfish on this beach? How could you make a difference?" Looking up at his grandpa the boy smiled. He bent, picked up another starfish and threw it into the sea. He looked at his grandpa and said, "Now grandpa, I made a difference to that one."

This story is perhaps a common story to some. You might have heard it before. But, I am always inspired by this story especially by the boy. The story reminds me so much about how pathetic teaching could be. We try and try all our might to help the students become better and yet more often than not we were tested with frustration. What we could learn from the boy is not to see the failures but to celebrate the success even if it is a small success. It is that small success that has actually made a lot of difference to the life of the one we managed to help.

I agree, it is easier said than done when it comes to teaching. That is why there is this famous saying, 'Teaching is both science and art' and also this one, "A great teacher inspires". Though anyone could become a teacher, not everyone could make a difference to the students' life. The good news is, it is not too late to give it another try, should we think we have yet to give some kind of impact in our teaching. This book could perhaps be one of the keys to such success; an impactful teaching to meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and better still the needs of the 4<sup>th</sup> industry.

## PART B

### Redesigning future workforce: Learn, unlearn and relearn

*Mohd Fauzi Kamarudin*

*"The illiterate of the 21st Century are not those who cannot read and write but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn."*

*Alvin Toffler*

The world is changing due to globalization trends, economic forces, demographic changes, technological innovation, government policies and educational practices. The concept of work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is actually being redefined. The 21<sup>st</sup> century generation will face the landscape of different jobs requirements and qualifications. Graduates of the future will be evaluated in various aspects. In addition to achieving excellent academics, they need to possess skills that give them the ability to work in a different set of environment: colleagues that come from all parts of the world with the growth of the 'human cloud', a different workplace structure, massive use of automation and artificial intelligence, as well as more workplace monitoring and coaching by their superiors tracking their performance and assisting productivity. Graduates of the future must be prepared with not only common skills such as communication, leadership, and teamwork; but also the ability to think critically and creatively, solve problems, be flexible, connect with others, and possess knowledge of entrepreneurship.

An uphill task now awaits educators to produce such graduates. In a time whereby prioritization is given to performance indicators, metrics and standardization often at the cost of holistic, affective and well-being education, educators must rise to put the value of education back to where it belongs in the society. Students must be taught to learn, unlearn and relearn. They should be able to function in any given situation, meet and connect with people from various backgrounds and possess the ability to solve problems no matter how complex it is by providing credible useful solutions that are not only practical but most importantly sustainable.

On a lighter note, it's always an honor to be associated with the TESL Pioneers. The TESL Pioneers are the first batch of TESL degree holders who graduated in 1993/94, a product of a collaboration between the Universiti



Teknologi Mara (UiTM) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). The program was the first of its kind aimed at producing English teachers from local universities. When I mooted the idea among the TESL colleagues to write this book, it was amazing to see the responses. It was really an overwhelming feeling. Many believed that it was about time that a group of academics who are now serving various universities, all from the TESL Pioneers, start collaborating. A meeting was planned and the group decided that the best place to meet would be at UiTM, Section 17 where it all began.

This book presents the work of academics from the UiTM/UKM TESL Pioneers who are mostly serving the country in several higher learning institutions. Almost all of the authors are doctorate holders in the field of Education with 25 years of experience teaching in schools and at tertiary level. This book is thus a symbol of their passion to education and nation building.

## PART C

### The 4 Critical Skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

*Ainul Azmin Md Zamin*

*"Knowledge is not measured upon how much is memorized but rather how much it is acted on."*

Imam Al-Shafiee Rahimullah

The four critical skills that make up the fundamental pillar for developing the 21st Century skills for a global society are 'Critical Thinking and Problem Solving', 'Communication', 'Collaboration' and 'Creativity and Innovation'. These skills are valuable and inevitable for students to learn and acquire in order for them to face the challenges in today's world.

'Critical Thinking and Problem Solving' cover the aspects of reasoning effectively, using the systems thinking, making judgement and decisions and solving problems. This is an essentially important component of the 21st century skills as these skills prepare the students to interact with each other in order to produce an overall outcome in complex situations involving deductive and inductive reasoning. The chapter on Critical Thinking has dwelled on the fast pace of the digital world, demands for innovation and effective communication, and the need for high quality productivity. Because many problems are mostly complex and difficult to understand, the use of the world wide web (www) can be optimized to resolve all interrelated issues. Chapter on Judgement and decision making offered not only ideas on making a sound decision but also cautioned on several habits that can impede the resolution. In addition to that, the first skill set could assist in comprehending the issue by having a clear visual representation of the situation which is essential in solving problems.

The second skill set on 'Communication' prepares the students to be learners who are able to articulate their thoughts and ideas. The chapter on Negotiation in this book provides explanations and examples in understanding how communication can be taught in class. Lesson plans are provided on negotiation skill to provide a clear example of how a win-win situation can be achieved. The scenario using a Football star in signing a deal is certainly an interesting topic for students in class. The chapter on Service



Orientation provides explanations and examples on how communication plays an essential role in fulfilling other people's expectation based on the role that the learners play. Service is about fulfilling other people's expectations and needs in different situations. Whether they are supervisors, customers, bosses or any other stakeholders, services are provided as a means to communicate between two parties. Learning to provide a good service not only prepares the students to become good communicators, it also prepares them to be flexible in dealing with the diversity of every level of the society. One of the lesson plans has provided a role play between employees and employers. This is crucial in helping them to visualize and experience the real working world.

The third C that is 'Collaboration' dwells on students' ability to work as a team in diverse situations. Exercising flexibility and willingness to compromise in order to accomplish a common goal is the crux to this important skill. The chapter on Cognitive Flexibility is one example where this skill is thoroughly discussed. The authors have laid out theories and examples for teachers and practitioners to understand the skill. Although it is not an easy skill to acquire, they have recommended several ways how this habit can be inculcated. They include amongst others; altering everyday routine, thinking creatively, meeting new people and transferring new learning.

Finally, 'Creative and Innovation' sets its discussion on the ability to use a wide range of ideas to propose new concepts and originality at work. Students are supposed to be equipped with this vital skill so that they can be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives. Creativity and innovation are part of the main discussion in one of the chapters where the authors put forth theories involving tangible and intangible forms. The lesson plan encouraged the use of task-based activity to hone the creativity and innovation skill.

### Final Words

All in all, the compilation of the chapters on the TEN super skills for the 21st century is timely. The focus is to provide a clearer picture about the TEN super skills and how the skills could be trained. This initiative is done solely to facilitate teachers, educators and trainers alike in their effort

to inculcate the skills as part of the subject matter or content teaching. The teaching and learning process across all disciplines and levels could find the contents of the book handy and easy to follow. For all of the above, we have nothing but one aim that is to prosper together as the force behind the development of the human talents serving the 4th industry, in whichever industry and part of the world our students and future students may land on.

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*What are the super skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?*

*Can the skills be taught deliberately in classrooms?*

*How will the teachers deliver their lessons effectively for the present generation?*

**Toolkits for the 21<sup>st</sup> century Teaching: Practical Implications for the 4<sup>th</sup> Industry Skills Development** is a comprehensive book and reference guide for teachers who wish to equip their students with the 10 super skills in order to survive the current and future challenges. The book is ideal for all educators who are engaged in improving and preparing their students for the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution.

The result of an innovative and collaborative work, this book provides the perfect combination of theoretical discourse, pedagogical recommendations and practical solutions that help educators derive maximum benefit from its content. Each chapter is organised in four central sections; an introduction of the skill, the underlying theories behind it, several recommendations on how to position the skill in education and sample lesson plans as an added value. The reader can use the lesson plans by simply following the steps provided or adapt them to suit the needs of their learners.

This book is a commendable effort from 20 lecturers from various higher learning institutions all over Malaysia. The pioneers of UiTM/UKM TESL degree holders draw on more than two decades of teaching experience with their talent in academic writing to produce this reference book as a torch for clear explanation and effective teaching. This book is an invaluable reading for those who wish to strategise their teaching using integrated methods that can enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes.

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