GREETINGS FROM THE CENTRE DIRECTOR

Dear respected readers,

seaqilNews has entered its third year since its first publication in 2014. In this edition, we would share our programmes and activities conducted on July-December 2017.

To support the implementation of 2013 Curriculum, various activities had been carried out by SEAMEO QITEP in Language (the Centre). These activities focused on the enhancement of teachers’ competence on thematic learning models, teaching strategies and techniques on German language, English language and Indonesian language as well as using HOTS as language teaching strategy. As for the continuous programme, the Centre conducted Workshop on SEAQIL Goes to Schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Furthermore, research and development programme also became the Centre’s focus in this fiscal year. To increase the teachers’ interest as researchers, the Centre held several trainings in improving the teachers’ competence in writing a good proposal on classroom action research in DKI Jakarta, South Kalimantan and Yogyakarta provinces. Not only training, the Centre’s team were also sent to 12 cities in Indonesia to conduct a need analysis research on HOTS-based programme development.

It is also worth mentioned here that two innovative activities, namely early literacy development for early childhood education and teachers empowerment through language and culture, were also conducted. Last but not least, the Centre also carried out its routine programmes. They are AISOFOLL and Governing Board Meeting.

May this reading bring you more insights and knowledge that will increase your interest in our Centre.

Bambang Indriyanto
Director

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Early Literacy for Early Childhood Education

Based on the research of The National Early Literacy Panel on “Early Beginnings: Early Literacy Knowledge and Instruction” in 2009, it stated that the period from birth through age 5 years is a critical period for children’s learning development. The pattern of learning in early childhood education is closely linked to the children achievement afterwards. Children who obtain various skills at the early childhood education level will perform better in the primary school level. One of the skills that needs to be developed early is literacy.

Regarding the importance of the early literacy development, the Centre held Workshop on Literacy Development for Early Childhood Education. The workshop was held on 14–15 November 2017 at HB Jassin building, PPPPTK Bahasa, Jakarta. The aim of the workshop is to improve the competence of early childhood teachers in developing early childhood literacy in the learning process in schools and literacy environment in schools.

The Centre invited Mr Yudy Komarudin (Directorate Development of Teachers and Education Personnel for Early Childhood and Community Education), Ms Mareta Wahyuni (Directorate Development of Early Childhood, Directorate General for Early Childhood and Community Education), Dr Nurbiana Dhieni (Universitas Negeri Jakarta), and Ms Emilia Nazir (Indonesian Section of International Board on Books for Young People, Jakarta) to be the resource persons of the workshop.

Sixty-four early childhood teachers from DKI Jakarta Province attended the workshop. During the workshop, the participants learnt how to identify the characteristics and aspects of early childhood development. Furthermore, the participants obtained input on learning strategies of early literacy skills to stimulate early childhood development aspects such as cognitive, social, emotional, phychomotor, language, art as well as religious and moral value.

At the end of the workshop, the participants were able to create and present an action plan on early literacy development. The Centre expected the participants to be able to implement their action plan and develop literacy environment in their schools. •DH, NK
MORE FOR CIHIDEUNG ILIR VILLAGE!

In 2016, the Centre held the first batch of Training on Thematic Learning Models for Primary School Teachers. The training was to introduce the concept of integrated thematic learning approach. The training was a realisation of the Centre’s commitment in a programme entitled SEAMEO STAR (Sustainable, Technology-equipped, Ability-rich and Responsible) Village. Through the programme, the six SEAMEO Centres in Indonesia aim to develop a community-based sustainable development model. Cihideung Ilir village is the target of the programme.

Taking another role in the programme, the Centre fulfilled the enquiry of Cihideung Ilir village primary school teachers for more in-depth concept of integrated thematic learning. On 7–10 August 2017 at Bogor Agricultural Institute, Bogor, West Java Province, 30 teachers from the village and its vicinity learned the things they desired in the second batch of the training.

Through various engaging activities, they deepened their comprehension about Core and Basic Competence of Indonesian 2013 Curriculum. They were able to make a web of theme to integrate several subjects in a theme and determine Basic Competence for each subject. They learned to select appropriate materials which could be of use in creating interesting learning process. This would prevent them from being bound by textbooks. They practised to use concrete operational verbs in formulating learning indicators. They acquired knowledge on the types of assessment, namely authentic, self-assessment, portfolio-based and tests. All of the knowledge and skills would help them in designing comprehensive lesson plans and making necessary preparations for a motivating learning process.

The Centre is grateful for the assistance of Dr H. Yadi Mulyadi A.R. (Office of Education for Bogor), Dr Sri Sumarni (Universitas Negeri Jakarta) and Dr Indrani Dewi Anggraini (SEAMEO QITEP in Language) during the training. Not only did they provide explanation but also examples which eased the teachers in comprehending integrated thematic learning.

The teachers stated that they were benefitted from the training. It enhanced their competence and professionalism, hence they requested the Centre to continuously organise the training.

Nevertheless, to fully understand the impact of the first and second batches of the training as well as SEAMEO STAR Village programme in whole, the centre conducted Monitoring and Evaluation (MONEV) on 7–9 November 2017. The Centre did class observation to three participant-teachers from SDN Cihideung Ilir 03, SDN Cihideung Ilir 04 and SDN Cihideung Ilir 06. The Centre also gathered 10 head teachers, 10 colleagues and 30 participant-teachers of the training to complete a set of questionnaires in SDN Cihideung Ilir 04. The questionnaires consisted of items reflecting teachers’ competence, be it in the pre-, whilst and post-teaching phases. In addition, some of the items sought the teachers’ involvement in improving their colleagues’ competence.

From the observation and questionnaires, the Centre found out that the training impacted the participant-teachers’ professionalism in a way that they were able to apply and develop integrated thematic learning model and share their ideas and thoughts on the said learning to their colleagues. Despite the positive effect, there was an indication that they still need further reinforcement, particularly in determining appropriate learning activities.

This preliminary result of the monitor and evaluation will serve as a reference for the Centre in planning and organising a better programme for STAR Village.
In response to the high number of German teachers in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara Province, a training on teaching methodology was conducted for seven days. On 4–10 September 2017, twenty-four secondary school teachers managed to enhance their competence in teaching German language using the latest Indonesian 2013 Curriculum.

The training was convened in LPMP Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur, Kupang and led by Ms M. Sally H. L. Pattinasarany (Universitas Indonesia) and Dr Irene Risakotta (Universitas Negeri Surabaya). The teachers were invited to seek understanding on communicative approach in teaching German. Then, they were also introduced to various learning styles and teaching methods.

Related to the students’ learning style, each student is different in his/her own way as one may be an auditory learner, while the others may be visual learners, audiovisual learners or kinesthetic learners. Consequently, teachers must vary their teaching methods to comply with the needs of the students so that all students are able to absorb the learning. During the training, the teachers also practiced to develop learning materials suitable for the students’ learning styles and to bring contextualized learning into the classroom.

Another important thing in teaching and learning process is assessment. With the guidance of Ms Limala Ratni Sri Kharismawati (SEAMEO QITEP in Language), the teachers were expected to develop standard test and non-test instruments. To stimulate their learning process, the teachers were given various activities to enhance their knowledge and improve their competence on developing the test and non-test instruments.

By the end of the training, the teachers shared and refreshed their knowledge on lesson plan. The session was facilitated by Ms Talitha Ardelia Syifa Rabbani (SEAMEO QITEP in Language) who encouraged the teachers to develop a lesson plan referred to the 2013 Curriculum.

In groups, they then held a microteaching in which they simulated and put into practice of what they had learnt during the training. Afterwards, the teachers were given constructive feedback from the resource persons to improve their teaching skills.

During the training sessions, the teachers were grouped into five different groups and had many group works in-between. By doing this, they were not only able to learn from the resource persons, but also to learn from each other.

From the training, it is expected that the teachers are able to create a fun and interesting learning environment through various teaching strategies and techniques. Ultimately, fun and interesting learning environment will encourage students’ concentration and absorption of learning. *Deutsch macht Spaß!* – German is fun! ■ AF, AR
TEACHERS AS RESEARCHERS:
SOLVING PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOM
THROUGH ACTION RESEARCH

To become professional, teachers should continuously make innovation in their teaching and develop teaching strategies to improve their teaching quality. Therefore, teachers should preside over Continuous Professional Development, one of them is to conduct Classroom Action Research.

Focused on the quality improvement of teachers, three activities on research methodology for language teaching were organised. A total of 105 language teachers consisting of Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Indonesia and Japanese participated in these activities held in Jakarta, South Kalimantan and Yogyakarta.

Assisted by Dr Bambang Indriyanto, Dr Indrani Dewi Anggraini, Ms E. Nilla Pramowardhanny, Ms Hasanatul Hamidah and Ms Itra Safitri from the Centre as well as Ms Sri Sulastini from Universitas Negeri Jakarta, the participants learnt how to write a good proposal on classroom based action research. During the training, they acquired knowledge on concept and characteristics of classroom based action research as well as problem identification, literature review, data collection techniques and data analysis.

To give an in-depth understanding on action research, participants practised to identify components of classroom action research taken from journal articles. In this activity, they analysed the title, research question, problem solving techniques, literature review, data collection techniques, research setting and findings as well as strength and weakness of the research.

Before embarking on their own research questions, the participants analysed the samples of research question given by the resource persons. Starting from the research question, they determined the problem solving techniques and then developed into a research title.

Afterwards, with the guidance of resource persons, the participants developed their own research proposal and presented it at the end of the training. From the three provinces, the participants tended to choose the improvement of writing and speaking abilities as their research topic due to the students' competence in both areas and/or the teachers teaching strategy. These abilities also have higher level of difficulty compared to the other language skills.

The participants' proposals will be included in the selection process of SEAQIL Research Grants for FY 2018. With the grant, the participants will have a chance to execute their research. Then, the research result will be presented in the Centre's Annual International Symposium of Foreign Language Learning (AISOFOLL) in 2019.
21st century pedagogy is an issue that educational practitioners worldwide echo, including in Southeast Asia. The issue is also embraced by the SEAMEO Seven Priority Areas, especially on the area of Adopting a 21st Century Curriculum. There are many aspects that need to be developed to implement the 21st Century pedagogy and one of them is the use of various strategies to achieve Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

HOTS development in learning required teachers to be able to develop a lesson plan that facilitates students to think deeply and critically through activities such as discussion to reach an agreement and create something. The process will encourage students to capture information independently and critically by taking advantage of various media.

Realizing this, the Centre conducted Workshop on the Development of HOTS for Language (10-16 September 2017 at LPMP Provinsi DKI Jakarta, Jakarta) to improve the participants' competence in understanding the concept of HOTS to nurture critical thinking skills and in embedding HOTS in language teaching and learning process. Thirty secondary school teachers from Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi areas as well as four Centre staff participated in the workshop. Moreover, the Centre had the privilege of having Ms Eileen Jessie Ah Guan (Ministry of Education, Malaysia), Dr Bambang Indriyanto, Ms Ms E. Nilla Pramowardhanny and Ms Talitha Ardelia Syifa Rabbani (SEAMEO QITEP in Language), to be the resource persons of the workshop.

On the workshop, the participants learnt the correlation between HOTS and teaching strategy as well as integration of HOTS in learning model. In addition, they learnt several types of questions and how to develop the questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy through narrative text.

By the end of the workshop, the participants, grouped based on their language focus, designed a lesson plan using narrative texts derived from various sources as teaching materials. Then, they presented the lesson plan and obtained the feedback from the colleagues and resource persons. It is expected that the participants can apply the knowledge acquired in the workshop into their teaching process for their students.
SEAQIL GOES TO SCHOOLS 2017: COMPILING LANGUAGE TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Aiming to compile language teaching techniques from language teachers of Southeast Asia countries, the Centre conducted Workshop on SEAQIL Goes to Schools (SGTS). The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Kingdom of Cambodia, from 4-9 September 2017 at Institute of Foreign Languages (IFL), Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In line with the Centre’s mission in enhancing the quality of teachers and education personnel, this workshop was conducted on the premise that shared language teaching techniques and strategies will enhance and enrich teachers’ knowledge and skills.

The workshop is a part of SGTS workshop series which has been designed and conducted by the Centre since 2014. The previous workshops on SGTS were mainly conducted in Indonesia provinces and resulted in the SGTS publication entitled Language Teaching Techniques: Good Practices from Indonesia. Therefore, the SGTS workshop held in Cambodia was the first SGTS workshop held outside Indonesia and will be followed by the next series of workshop in the rest of SEAMEO Member Countries in 2018 as planned by the Centre. The workshop’s participants were thirty Cambodian language teachers with various language background such as Chinese, English, French, Korean, Japanese and Thai language. Moreover, resource persons from Cambodia and Indonesia were invited to impart the knowledge and enhance participants’ skills in the subject matter of the workshop. They were Dr Neau Vira from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Dr Keuk Chan Narith, Mr Tith Mab and Ms Monh Sarina from Institute of Foreign Languages, Royal University of Phnom Penh, and Dr Bambang Indriyanto and Ms E. Nilla Pramowardhanny from the Centre.

To ensure the achievement of the objective of the workshop, the resource persons from IFL-Royal University of Phnom Penh and the Centre exposed significant knowledge and techniques on how to write good practices in language teaching. In addition to the materials of the workshop, some related issues such as policy related to language teaching in the Kingdom of Cambodia, policy of SEAMEO QITEP in Language, overview of the SGTS in Indonesia and latest trends on language teaching were also discussed in the workshop.

Considering that it was a good chance to reveal and share their good practices on foreign language teaching with their colleagues, the participants confidently wrote the language teaching techniques they had used so far. At the end of the workshop, after being presented, the participants submitted drafts of their good practices on foreign language teaching. Then, all drafts would be reviewed and edited before compiled with other drafts produced by language teachers from other Southeast Asia countries.

The workshop had made a deep impression to the participants. “This workshop has helped me a lot, and provided necessary information on latest trends in foreign language teaching”, said Mr Sos Rovy, an English teacher from Russey Keo High School, Phnom Penh. His opinion was seconded by his colleague, Ms Peng Chanpanny, a teacher from Toul Sovanaram Secondary School, “This workshop provides good practical examples”. Mr Chap Vikrant, an English lecturer from Royal University of Phnom Penh, added, “It has been a joyful and meaningful experience and it is always great to learn from my colleagues as well as the Centre”.

Last but not least, the Centre would like to express deep gratitude to Mr Tith Mab from Institute of Foreign Languages, Royal University of Phnom Penh, who is also Governing Board Member from The Kingdom of Cambodia for enabling the Centre to have the workshop organised. ■ES
SUSTAINING THE PERFORMANCE OF
SEAMEO QITEP IN LANGUAGE

The Centre successfully hosted its 8th Governing Board Meeting (GBM) on 2–6 October 2017 at Sheraton Mustika Resort and Spa, Special Region of Yogyakarta. In the annual programme, Governing Board Members from SEAMEO Member Countries assembled to discuss the Centre’s programmes and operations.

Nine Governing Board Members and Representatives from SEAMEO Member Countries, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam participated in the meeting.

In the opening ceremony, Dr Pattama Punthawangkul, the representative of SEAMEO Secretariat, congratulated the Centre on achieving significant accomplishments in enhancing language education in the region. She also expressed her appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia as well as other SEAMEO Member Countries for their continuous support to sustain Centre’s performance.

The opening ceremony was enlivened by Dr Luizah F Saidi (Head of Centre for Development and Empowerment of Language Teachers and Education Personnel), Dr Wahyudi (Director of SEAMEO QITEP in Mathematics), Ms Ratih Dewanti (Representative of Bureau of Planning and International Cooperation of the Republic of Indonesia) and Ms Triana Purnamawati (Representative of Office of Education, Youth and Sport for DI Yogyakarta). Besides, Ms Dayang Alinah Binti Haji Ali Ahmad (Education Officer of Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam) also attended the meeting as an observer.

The meeting took note and endorsed the Centre’s reports on programmes and activities conducted in Fiscal Year 2016/2017 as well as programme proposals to be conducted in the upcoming years. The meeting discussed ten matters, one of which is Working Paper No. 06: Proposed Initiative Programme of the Development of HOTS-based Literacy Competence through Language Teaching. Upon endorsement, the Centre would develop a training syllabus and materials focusing on advancing HOTS through language in Fiscal Year 2017/2018–2018/2019.

The 8th GBM was special. Besides conducted in paperless, it allocated a session for the Governing Board Members to present latest trends of language education in their respective countries. The session was not only important and useful for the Centre, but also for the Governing Board Members who had the chance to share and discuss their ideas in the fruitful session. Thus, the next GBM would allocate one session for similar activity.

In the closing ceremony, Dr Bambang Indriyanto, the Centre Director addressed the importance of the meeting. He believed the meeting as an avenue toward unification of commitment to strengthening the region, particularly in education. Subsequently, he invited all Governing Board Members to work hand-in-hand and requested their favour to bridge the communication between the Centre and their respective Ministries of Education to widen the Centre’s visibility and programme implementation.

The 8th GBM was concluded with educational and cultural visit. For the education one, the Governing Board Members, Centre Deputies and staff visited SMA Negeri 3 Yogyakarta and SMK Negeri 1 Kasihan Bantul (SMKI Yogyakarta). It was not entirely a conventional visit focusing on school programmes and facilities as they were also entertained by several art performances, particularly from the second school. As for the cultural one, the group visited the Borobudur Temple, the largest Buddhist monument in the world, and Malioboro street, the most popular street featuring Yogyakarta’s traditional as well as modern souvenirs, cuisines and transportation. The visits were meant to both promote and provide a glimpse of Indonesian education and tourism to the Governing Board Members.
The 8th Annual International Symposium of Foreign Language Learning (AISOFOLL) was convened by the Centre at Ciputra Hotel, Jakarta on 18–19 October 2017. The purpose of this year’s symposium is to enlighten language teachers on the importance of critical thinking skills in the process of teaching and learning. As teachers, their obligation is not only to enable students to learn the contents imminently at the classroom, but they should also prepare their students to learn the world outside the classroom. It can be done by integrating critical thinking into activities and tasks in the classroom. Through critical thinking skills, students will be capable in analysing new situations related to facts and concepts, as well as thinking critically and creatively to solve problems by relating one idea to other ideas, criticising, drawing conclusions and creating new ideas. Thus, critical thinking skills are needed to make students become lifelong learners and problem solvers. Based on those reasons, “Supporting the Critical Thinking Skills through Language Teaching” was chosen as the theme of this year’s AISOFOLL.

To provide a current overview of critical thinking in language teaching and its good practices, the 8th AISOFOLL invited four keynote speakers namely, Ms Kamariah Samsuddin from English Language Teaching Centre, Ministry of Education of Malaysia, Dr Tran Huu Phuc from University of Foreign Language Studies, the University of Da Nang, Vietnam, Ms Tan Geok Hoon from Singapore Centre for Chinese Language, Singapore, and Dr Raimond Selke from Goethe Institut, Jakarta. On the first day of the event, Dr Tran Huu Phuc presented “Critical Thinking in English Language Learning – from Curriculum Design to Instructional Practice,” whereas Ms Tan Geok Hoon focused on “Curriculum to Classroom Teaching: Singapore Schools’ Experience on teaching Critical Thinking in Chinese Language Classroom”. On the second day, Dr Raimond Selke shared his insights on his article entitled “Are Foreign Language Students Prepared for the Globalized World - Attitudes towards Internationalisation and Ensuring that Organisations Can Take Advantage of Positive Momentum”. Meanwhile, Ms Kamariah Samsuddin discussed “An Outreach Journey: Creating Opportunities Motivating Learners”.

In addition to the keynote's presentation, there were 28 papers presented in the parallel session. Thirteen papers of them were the research results funded by SEAQIL Research Grants 2016. The presentations of 28 papers had enriched the discussion in the parallel session and raised some recent issues on language teaching and learning. The presenters who contributed in the parallel session came from Aceh, North Sumatera, DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java and Bali Provinces. Last but not east, there were also two presenters from Sabah and Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

As the annual forum for language teachers, lectures, post graduate students and researchers with interests in language teaching and learning, this symposium had attracted 108 participants. Approximately four of the total participants in the symposium were the Centre’s training alumni from Aceh Jaya and Samosir Regencies, Sumatera, Indonesia.
A teaching and learning process that cultivates Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is highly favourable in the 21st century pedagogy. Teachers are expected to foster students’ thinking skills from simply remembering, understanding, and applying to analysing, evaluating, and creating. Even though it is not an easy task, teachers are expected to not discourage and keep improving their teaching strategies.

The Centre, as an organisation in charge of improving the quality of language teachers, strives for assisting teachers to implement this 21st century pedagogy in the classroom through training on language teaching methodology. Therefore, a series of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted in 12 cities in Indonesia and in one SEAMEO Member Country (Myanmar). The FGD was used to gain information from teachers related to teaching strategies applied in their classrooms. Approximately 250 language teachers served as the informants to that needs analysis survey that took place from November to December 2017.

In Indonesia, the survey was assisted by the City and Provincial Offices of Education. The FGD was divided into two groups in each city. The first group, held at the City Office of Education, comprised 10 teachers of 5th and 6th grades of primary school and English and Indonesian language teachers of junior high school level. The second group that took place at the Provincial Office of Education included 10 senior high school language teachers. In Myanmar, the Yangon University of Foreign Languages assisted the Centre by providing 13 language lecturers as their informants to FGD. They included Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Myanmar, Russian and Thai languages.

The questions focused on the FGD sessions covered the dimension of teaching preparation, process and evaluation. The answers provided by the informants would be interpreted as activities, tasks and techniques that they have used to nurture students’ HOTS.

Furthermore, the Centre would analyse and make inferences of the answers and use them as references to design and develop HOTS-based language teaching methodology training. — AD, RG
To implement Memorandum of Understanding between the Centre and Office of Education in Aceh Jaya as well as Samosir Regencies, the Centre held a training for English and Indonesian language teachers as well as a workshop on teachers’ empowerment through language and culture. The programme activities were also one of the Centre’s strategies to strengthen its linkages with other institutions in Indonesia and beyond.

As the first activity, the Centre held a training for English and Indonesian language teachers at junior high school level on 21–25 August 2017 in Aceh Jaya Regency, Aceh Province. To support the implementation of Indonesian 2013 Curriculum in all schools in the regency mentioned, the training focused on teachers’ competence enhancement on the Curriculum concept and its elements as well as learning models which could be applied in their classes.

A total of 65 participants comprising 28 English and 37 Indonesian teachers participated in the training. In the beginning of the training, led by the Centre’s resource persons (Ms E. Nilla Pramowardhanny, Ms Itra Safitri, Ms Susi Fauziah and Ms Rizma Angga Puspita), the participants deepened their knowledge on Indonesian 2013 Curriculum development framework, 21st century competencies and character building. To get more understanding on 2013 Curriculum, they analysed videos of teaching process on English and Indonesian languages which aimed to give new ideas for teaching process, learnt about classroom management techniques and reflected on their own teaching practices.

Furthermore, the participants learnt Core Competencies and Basic Competencies. Then, they identified the characteristics of learning models in 2013 Curriculum, i.e. inquiry, discovery, problem-based, project-based and scientific learning models. After discussing learning models, they practiced to develop assessment for students’ attitude, knowledge and skill. At the end of the training, the participants were assigned to design their lesson plans to be produced as a learning video with 40 minutes duration.

As the second activity, on 10–12 October 2017, the Centre carried out the workshop on teachers’ empowerment through language and culture at Education Office for Samosir, Samosir Regency, North Sumatera Province. Facilitated by the Centre’s resource persons (Dr Bambang Indriyanto, Dr Indrani Dewi Anggraini and Ms Itra Safitri), this activity focused on English teaching to support local culture. There were forty participants of English language teachers consist of teachers at elementary and junior high school level.

The participants were also trained to explore and develop the local culture in order to strengthen the character building. In this session, the resource person explained that promoting tourism should include tradition and/or its natural beauty that represent the Samosir cultural values. The tagline is needed to attract tourists to visit Samosir Island to increase the number of tourists.

The participants also gained knowledge on how to develop the English Day Programme in their schools. To get new ideas on the English Day Programme, they practiced some activities, namely singing the alphabets, arranging
the randomized alphabets, jumble words, word formation, arranging alphabets to form words with similar sound (homophones), sentence building, role play and retelling Toba Lake in sequences using flash cards.

At the end of the workshop, the participants developed an action plan about the English Day that would be implemented in their schools. It is expected that they would implement the English Day as part of their teaching and support the students to speak English bravely in their daily life. Thus, the education will be the main key to develop the Samosir area tourism.

Hopefully, the Centre and Office of Education in Aceh Jaya and Samosir Regencies will collaborate continuously for the next few years. As a result, the competence of language teachers in enhancing their students’ abilities would be improved gradually. ■ SF, IS, MS, DE

SEAMEO SERVICE AWARDS 2017 GOES TO...

Ms Auberta Farica (Division of Partnership and Public Relations)!

Along with 22 other SEAMEO Centres and Secretariat awardees, she received the award from the current SEAMEO Council President, His Excellency Prof. Dr Muhadjir Effendy, during the 49th SEAMEO Council Conference.

This biannual award is given by SEAMEO as a recognition and appreciation to staff members who have demonstrated high level of achievement on their performance, contribution and dedication throughout the year. ■ AF
As an organization comprising many centres with a variety of specialties, SEAMEO needs to keep track and update its sustainability by convening regular meetings. Two of them and held annually are Centre Directors Meeting (CDM) and High Officials Meeting (HOM). Another meeting is a council conference particularly targeted for Ministers of Education of SEAMEO Member Countries.

FY 2017 was marked as the 49th SEAMEO Council Conference and was convened on 24–27 July 2017 at Mulia Hotel Senayan, Jakarta. The event was important to Indonesia due to the role of the Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia who serves as the SEAMEO Council President for FY 2017/2018–2018/2019. The conference which was attended by 11 Ministers of Education and their delegates, was officially opened by His Excellency Prof. Dr Muhadjir Effendy, Minister of Education and Culture, Indonesia and His Excellency Dr Teerakiat Jareonsettasin, Minister of Education, Thailand. One of the important agendas was the inauguration of the establishment of three new SEAMEO Centres in Cambodia, Indonesia, and Lao PDR, they are SEAMEO Regional Centre for Technical Education Development (SEAMEO TED), SEAMEO Regional Centre for Early Childhood Care Education and Parenting (SEAMEO CECCCEP) and SEAMEO Regional Centre for Community Education Development (SEAMEO CED) respectively. It is expected that the establishment of three new Centres can accelerate the progress in providing quality education in Southeast Asia.

Upon the completion of 49th SEAMEC Conference, a Centre Directors’ Meeting 2017 was held on 26–28 July at the Ministry of Education and Culture Indonesia. Directors and deputy directors of 21 SEAMEO Centres and their partners assembled and shared achievements and experiences as well as discussed the possibilities of expanding SEAMEO’s programmes with various organisations in the region and beyond. Among the prospective partners included Australia, China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE) from PR China, University of Tsukuba from Japan, ASEAN Secretariat from Indonesia, Association of China ASEAN Education and Training Centers from PR China, and DVV International South and Southeast Asia from Lao PDR.

The last meeting within SEAMEO for FY 2017 was the 40th High Officials Meeting held in Bangkok at Montien Riverside Hotel on 28–30 November. The Director of SEAMEO QITEP in Language accompanied by Deputy Directors of Programme and Administration attended the meeting in which the Centre had an opportunity to present a working paper entitled “Proposed Programme of the Development of HOT-based Literacy Competence through Language Teaching”. The endorsement obtained from the HOM would prompt the Centre to wisely prepare and plan necessary substances in order to realise the programme. This programme is to enhance awareness and to contribute to the implementation of SEAMEO Priority Area number 7 especially the point of Adopting 21st Century Curriculum.

Finally, the delegates and the other distinguished guests of the 40th HOM were given honored opportunity to visit the venue of the Royal Cremation of King Rama IX, the late Majesty of King Bhumibol Adulyadej who was in throne for 70 years. This Royal Cremation was a very precious legacy to respect the King Rama IX.