



Department of English and Humanities

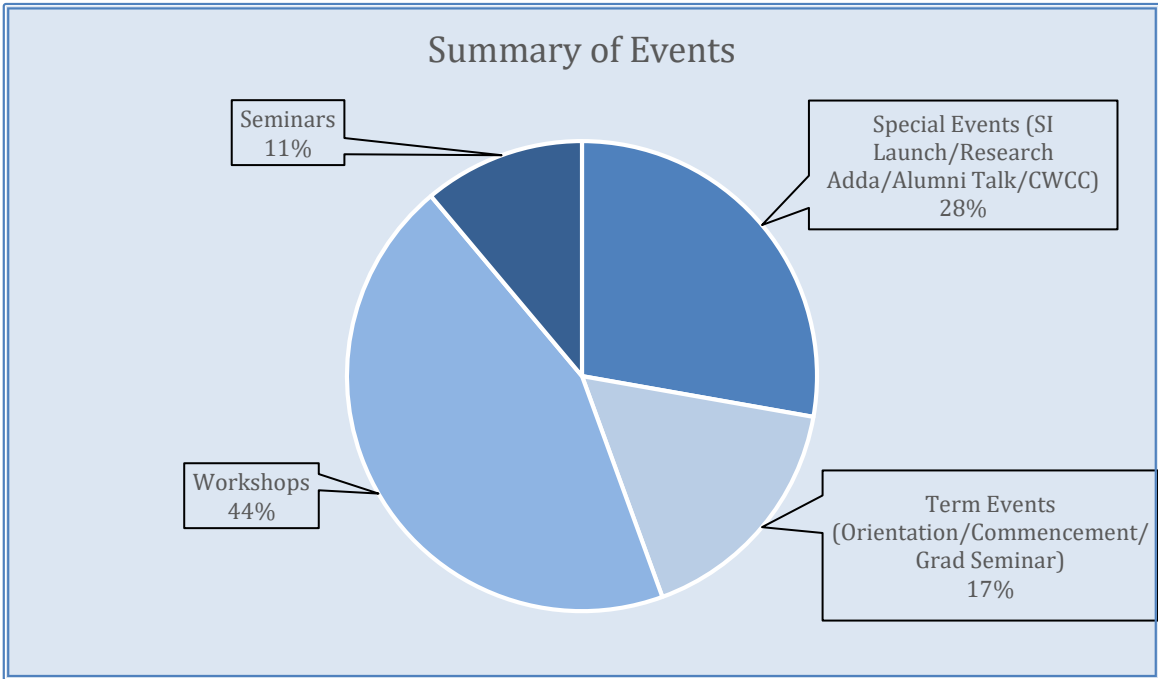
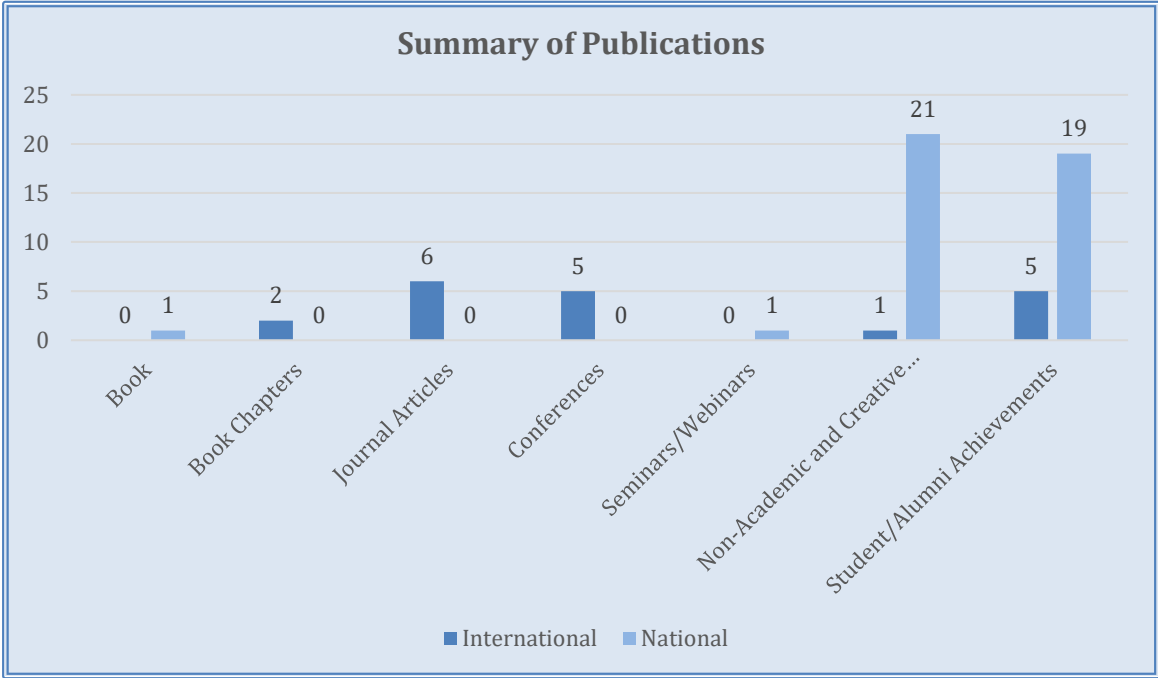
UNIVERSITY OF LIBERAL ARTS
BANGLADESH

Publications and Events Report

Summer 2023
(May 26-September 21, 2023)

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Publications

Book

National

Haque, M. S. and **Mamun, Md. Muntasir**. *Dictionary of Phrases and Idioms* (edited by Jahurul Islam). Friends' Book Corner, August 2023.

Book Chapters

International

Manzoor, S.R., Singh, J.K.N., and **Al Mahmud, Abdullah**. “The Implications of Work-Based Learning Initiatives in Malaysian Universities: Developing International Postgraduate Students’ Employability.” *International Student Employability: Narratives of Strengths, Challenges, and Strategies about Global South Students*, edited by Jasvir K. N. Singh, et al. **Springer**, 2023. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33254-8_6.

Manzoor, Sohana. “Rizia Rahman's *Rokter Okshor*: Politics of Prostitution and the Consciousness of Civic Society in Bangladesh.” *The Gendered Body in South Asia*, edited by Meenakshi Malhotra, et al. **Routledge India**, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003407195>.

Journal Articles

International

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Manzoor, S.R. & **Al Mahmud, Abdullah**. “Redefining a Value Co-creation Behavior Model for Student Satisfaction in HEIs.” *International Journal of Services and Operations Management*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2023, pp. 293-313. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSOM.2023.132466>. [**Scopus indexed – Q3**]

Karim, A., Islam, Md. S., Hamid, M. O., **Rahman, Mohammad Mosiur**, & Amin, E. U. “Language Ideology, Development of English Proficiency, and Performance in Professional Communication: Voices of STEM + Business Graduates of English Medium University.” *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, vol. 8, no. 27, 2023, pp. 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-023-00200-w>. [**Scopus indexed**]

Elyas, Tariq & Atar, Cihat & Curle, Samantha & **Rafi, Abu Saleh Mohammad**. Guest Editors. Editorial: “English Medium Instruction in the Middle East and North Africa. *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 14, 2023, pp. 1-2. 10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1264435. [**Scopus indexed – Q2**]

Rafi, Abu Saleh Mohammad “Creativity, Criticality and Translanguaging in Assessment Design: Perspectives from Bangladeshi Higher Education. *Applied Linguistics Review*, June 2, 2023. De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2023-0086>. [Scopus indexed – Q1]

Tian, Zhongfeng & **Rafi, Abu Saleh Mohammad**. Guest Editors. “Centering Southern Perspectives in Translanguaging Research.” *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2023, pp. 205-213. 10.1080/15427587.2023.2249151. [Scopus indexed – Q1]

Conferences

International

Haq, Kaiser. “Reflections on Hope.” *Citizenship Futures – The Politics of Hope*, University of York, UK. 2023. <https://www.york.ac.uk/politics/research/current-projects/citizenship-futures/talkingaboutthooproject/reflectionsonhopebykaiserhaq/>.

Tahsin, Anika. Presenter. “A Representation of a Utopian Bangladesh Using Plastic for the Underprivileged Children in Zafor Iqbal’s *Schooler Name Potbochar*.” Plastic Turn Conference, Department of English, University of North Bengal, India. August 3-4, 2023.

Tajkia, Nusrat. Presenter. “Translated Literature as Plastic: An Analysis of Four Bangla Translation of *Hamlet*.” Plastic Turn Conference, Department of English, University of North Bengal, India. August 3-4, 2023.

Nahiyan, Sheikh and Mehek Chowdhury. “The Plastic Turn within the Multilingual Turn: The Influence of Field, Habitus, and Practice.” Plastic Turn Conference, Department of English, University of North Bengal, India. August 3-4, 2023.

Rafi, Abu Saleh Mohammad. **Keynote Speaker**. “Promises, Challenges, and the Future of Translanguaging in Higher Education in Bangladesh and Beyond.” *10th International Conference on Language and Literacy Education*. WITS University, South Africa. September 14-16, 2023.

Seminars/Webinars

National

Haq, Kaiser. Discussant. *The Memsahab’s Foot*. Department of English, BRAC University. July 8, 2023.

Non-Academic and Creative Publications

International

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Mortuza, Shamsad. "A Fair Warning against a Foul Conduct." *The Daily Star*, May 27, 2023.

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<https://samakal.com/kaler-kheya/article/2306175865/%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%AB%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BE-%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%AB%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BE%E0%A7%9F%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%95-%E0%A6%93-%E0%A6%86%E0%A6%A7%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%BE>.

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Mortuza, Shamsad. "The Life of Insects." *The Daily Star*, June 9, 2023.

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Mortuza, Shamsad. "Two Sides of the Same Conundrum." *The Daily Star*, June 17, 2023.

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- Mortuza, Shamsad. "Catch Me if You Can." *The Daily Star*, September 16, 2023.
<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/blowin-the-wind/news/catch-me-if-you-can-3420076>.
- Manzoor, Sohana. "The Writer" [Translation of Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay's "Lekhok"]. *The Daily Star*, September 16, 2023.

Student/Alumni Publications, Presentations, and Achievements

International

- Banu, Jainab Tabassum. Presenter. "Audience Awareness: A Tool to Bridge the Gap between Technical Writers and Non-Technical Readers." Effective Communication in the Digital Age: 2nd Technical Rhetoric Symposium, Texas Tech University. June 3, 2023. **[Conference Presentation]**
- Banu, Jainab Tabassum. Presenter. "Resisting Ovid's Narrative of Medusa and Reinterpreting Her-Story from Cixous's Perspective." The Female Experience in Contemporary Feminist Literature: 5th Heidelberg Graduate Students Conference, University of Heidelberg. June 3, 2023. **[Conference Presentation]**

Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "The Tree Shouldn't Be Happy: An Ecofeminist Reading of Shel Silverstein's *A Giving Tree*." (Re)Imagining Tomorrow: Agency and Possibility in Literature and Media for Children and Young Adults: MACL Graduate Conference, University of British Columbia. June 24, 2023. **[Conference Presentation]**

Haque, Marjuque Ul. "The Othering Bollywood: Nobleness and Savagery in *Khuda Gawab* and *Dharmatma*." *Asiatic: IIUM Journal of English Language and Literature*, vol. 17, no. 1, June 26, 2023, pp. 57-71. journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/ajell/article/view/2794. **[Scopus-indexed]**

Rashid, Radia Al. *Under the Willow*. BookRix, August 27, 2023, www.bookrix.com/ebook-radial-rashid-under-the-willow/?fbclid=IwAR3TlqI6iTFyYEi1xATg4n4q16f4jCxgsLb5X-s5QjY94ewLw8Qz2c6IIEo.

National

Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "One Marriage, Many Headaches." *Daily Sun*. May 27, 2023. <https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/691572/One-Marriage-and-Many-Headaches>.

Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "Black Skin and White Brain: Internalized Racism in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*." *Journal of Nazrul University*, vol. 9, no. 1-2, July 2022-June 2023, pp. 133-144. <https://jkkniu.edu.bd/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/8.-Jainab-Tabassum-Banu.pdf>. **[Research Paper]**

Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "The Tree Shouldn't Be Happy: An Ecofeminist Reading of Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree*." *Manababidya Gobeshonapatra*, vol 7, pp. 339-350, July 2023. **[Research Paper]**

Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "Global Day of Parents 2023: Teach Children to Be Appreciative of Both Parents." *Daily Sun*. June 1, 2023. <https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/692365/Teach-Children-to-Be-Appreciative-of-Both-Parents>.

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Chowdhury, Salwah. "Exploring Nostalgia Over Coffee." *The Daily Star*, June 9, 2023, www.thedailystar.net/daily-star-books/news/exploring-nostalgia-over-coffee-3341831.

Mortuza, Arshi. "Never Have I Ever...Seen Such Diverse Casting in Western Media." *The Daily Star*, June 9, 2023. www.thedailystar.net/star-literature/news/never-have-i-everseen-such-diverse-casting-western-media-3341781.

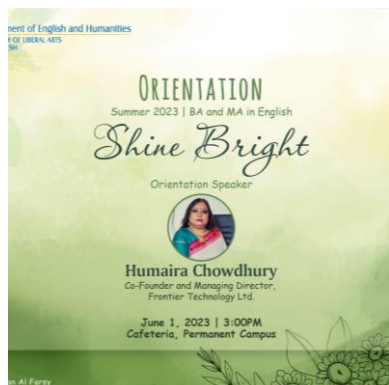
Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "Book Review: Ahmed Toslim's *Mahasamaya*." *Daily Sun*. June 15, 2023. <https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/695006/Ahmed-Toslim%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9CMahasamaya%E2%80%9D>.

Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "My Father—Toufiqul Alam Tipu." *Daily Sun*. June 17, 2023. <https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/695551/My-Father-%E2%80%93-Toufiqul-Alam-Tipu>.

- Chowdhury, Salwah. "I Wanted to Become a Writer. Did I Need to Study Creative Writing?" *The Daily Star*, June 21, 2023, www.thedailystar.net/star-literature/news/i-wanted-become-writer-did-i-need-study-creative-writing-3352226.
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- Banu, Jainab Tabassum. "Amelia is not the Second Sex: Carson McCullers' Rejection of Conventional Femininity in *The Ballad of the Sad Café*". *Green University Review of Social Sciences*, vol. 8, no. 2, August 2023, pp. 22-32. **[Research Paper]**
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Event Reports

1. DEH Orientation Summer 2023



The Summer '23 Orientation Ceremony of the incoming students of the BA and MA programs in the Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, was held on June 1, 2023 at ULAB Permanent Campus premises. The Orientation theme was “Shine Bright,”

keeping in mind the objective of introducing the freshers to the faculty members, the facilities, and the opportunities that can help them make the best use of their university life.

Before the Orientation formally began, Ms. Nusrat Tajkia, Lecturer, DEH and BA Coordinator, provided the students with an overview of the relevant department and university policies and facilities like the English Zone, on-campus work opportunities, as well as the important administrative contacts and Teaching Assistants.

The formal program began with a welcome speech by the Head of the Department, Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, who also introduced the faculty members, the Teaching Assistants, and admin officers.

Following this, Professor Kaiser Haq, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities, showered the students with his words of wisdom and advised students to “be confident.” Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam, then addressed the students with advice to become involved in the many opportunities at the university. Professor Shamsad Mortuza, Special Advisor to the ULAB Board of Trustees, spoke about ULAB, its origin, the Board of Directors, and its liberal arts philosophy.

The Orientation Speaker, Ms. Humaira Chowdhury, Co-Founder and Managing Director, Frontier Technology Ltd., then addressed the students in a warm, interactive session. She shared her personal experiences on how she became an entrepreneur in a field where women are few. She discussed ideas for being proactive and shared numerous life lessons. After her session, a token of appreciation was handed over to her by the Head of the Department.





New MA student, Sadia Mukarrama (Batch 232), and BA student, Aiman Swaad Ahmad, spoke to the audience about their experiences at ULAB and DEH so far. They were very excited to be able to become a part of this prestigious institution. In the cultural segment, Joye Florence Rozario (Batch 222), Shafiullah Quaraisy Sotto (Batch 222), and Marzuk Ahmed Khan Mojlish (Batch 182) with Alen Henry Costa (Batch 211), sang some wonderful songs, and Tabassum Hossain Supti (Batch 222) performed a dance.



A special segment was conducted by MA Coordinator, Ms. Nadia Rahman, to hand over Certificates of Participation to all the students who took part in the Graduate Student Seminar since its inception last year. 21 students received certificates that were handed over by Professor Shamsad Mortuza and Professor Kaiser Haq.

A special segment was conducted by MA Coordinator, Ms. Nadia Rahman, to hand over Certificates of Participation to all the students who took part in the Graduate Student Seminar since its inception last year. 21 students received certificates that were handed over by Professor Shamsad Mortuza and Professor Kaiser Haq.

The Orientation concluded with a vote of thanks by Ms. Nusrat Tajkia. The event was hosted by Adrita Chowdhury (Batch 223).

Report by Kazi Bushra Orpy (203013003)

2. DEH Session on Choosing a Minor



On June 13, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) arranged an informative online session titled "Choosing a Minor" to provide undergraduate students with the necessary insights and guidance to select a minor field of study alongside their primary degree in

English literature and linguistics. The speakers of the session were professors and lecturers from the different departments that currently offer minor courses to DEH students.

The session commenced with a welcome note from Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head of the Department of English and Humanities. The first speaker of the session was Ms. Nandita Tabassum Khan, Senior Lecturer and Undergraduate Program Coordinator of the Department of Media Studies and Journalism (MSJ). Ms. Khan briefly explained the four study concentrations of the MSJ courses offered as minors and highlighted their direct connection to the communication and media industries. She also discussed how pursuing a minor in MSJ would enable English and Humanities undergraduate students to acquire significant skills in digital media, along with enhanced analytical ability, which would likely benefit their future prospects in the corporate world.

Following Ms. Khan's segment, Mr. Sudeep Chakravarti, Associate Professor and Director of the Center for South Asian Studies (C-SAS), spoke about the Minor in South Asian Studies offered by C-SAS and provided a comprehensive discussion on how the courses are interdisciplinary in nature and deal with issues such as Climate Change, Globalization, Sustainable Development Goals. He also mentioned that the principles and philosophy of C-SAS courses align with the principles of both DEH and MSJ curriculum, making the course contents easily accessible and relevant for the students.

Dr. Mohammed Ashikur Rahman, Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Program Coordinator of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), then proceeded to explain the courses specially designed for the Minor in CSE. He informed the audience that these courses include at least one mandatory structured programming course and three ICT-based courses. Furthermore, Dr. Rahman provided a detailed explanation of the contents and objectives of these courses, emphasizing their relevance and importance in today's digital age.

The next speaker of the session was Ms. Rumana Liza Anam, Assistant Professor, ULAB School of Business (USB). Ms. Anam emphasized that pursuing a Minor in Business would greatly expand students' career options. She specifically highlighted the significance of focusing on Finance and Accounting as part of the minor program, noting that it would make students strong candidates during their job search period.

Following this, Md. Emon Rahman, Research Associate of the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), took the floor to discuss the study objectives of the Minor in Sustainable Development offered by CSD. He explained how completing a minor in Sustainable Development would nourish the students' analytical capacity and provide them with a strong foundation in this field. Mr. Rahman emphasized that the Minor in SD would open doors to research opportunities and also lead to career opportunities aligned with the study objectives of Sustainable Development. He highlighted the relevance and importance of this field in addressing global challenges and creating a sustainable future.

Finally, Professor Shahnaj Husne Jahan, Head of the General Education Department, provided insights on how minor courses differ from GED optional courses. She explained the conditions under which a student might consider opting for GED optional courses instead of pursuing a minor in a specific field. Professor Jahan emphasized the importance of students' passion and interest in selecting their courses, encouraging them to choose subjects that genuinely intrigued them. She also addressed several student questions along with Ms. Arifa Rahman.

Towards the end of the session, Ms. Nusrat Tajkia, the BA coordinator and Lecturer of the Department of English and Humanities, expressed her gratitude to the speakers and extended her appreciation to all the participating students for their active involvement. The session was emceed by Isra Tahiya Islam, Teaching Assistant, DEH.

Report by Rafia Sultana (222013076)

3. Student Workshop on Email Etiquette



pursuing her MA in English degree in Literature and Cultural Studies.

Ms. Akhtar began with a brief discussion on what significance the word "Etiquette" holds in both academic and professional settings. Stressing its importance, she then proceeded to explain how to write a formal email.

On June 14, 2023, a workshop on "Email Etiquette" was arranged by the Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, for the students of the department. The facilitator was one of the Teaching Assistants of DEH, Sanjida Akther. At present, she is



She began by showing examples of formal and informal emails, and why the latter should be avoided. Then she shared the basic format of writing a formal email and educated the audience on appropriate language that is to be used in emails. She stated that formal emails should always consist of “third person pronouns” and the writing should have a polite tone with little to no use of colloquial phrases.



Following that, she presented the do's and don'ts of email writing. She advised not to use any nonstandard fonts, emojis, or vague words. Moreover, she stressed that students should be mindful of the tone of the writing as an improper and demanding tone in an email can create a poor impression of the writer. She also suggested that the writer must proofread before sending any email, and send a follow-up email in cases of unresponsive correspondents.

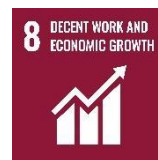
Thereafter, Ms. Akhter handed out a worksheet activity and asked the participants to identify and



correct the errors of the two emails given in the sheet while addressing their queries. Finally, she asked for feedback on the workshop from the audience and concluded the session.

Report by Kazi Zarin Anjum (202013001)

4. Faculty Research Adda at DEH



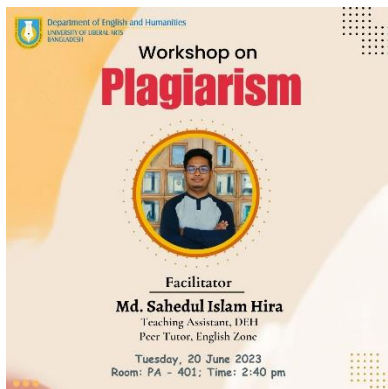
Faculty members at the Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, met on June 15, 2023, to discuss tips and strategies for research and publication. The session was facilitated by two of the department’s prolific researchers, Dr. Rafi Saleh, Assistant Professor, and Mohammad Mosiur Rahman, Senior Lecturer.

Mohammad Mosiur Rahman shared his insights on publishing in high impact journals and their significance while Dr. Rafi Saleh advised his colleagues to focus on developing a specialized area of research. The latter also suggested areas in which collaborative research could be conducted.

Faculty members shared their concerns and queries at the end of the session.



5. Student Workshop on Plagiarism



To tackle the issue of students' tendency to excessively rely on online mediums and AI tools for generating answers for their course assessments, the Department of English and Humanities (DEH) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), conducted a workshop on “Plagiarism” on Tuesday, June 20, 2023. The workshop was conducted by Md. Sahedul Islam Hira (MA, Batch 223), Teaching Assistant, DEH, and Peer Tutor, English Zone, who gave students a general idea about the types of plagiarism and how to avoid them.



Mr. Islam initiated the workshop with an anecdote relating to the consequences of borrowing materials without citing the appropriate sources. Grabbing the audience's attention, he moved on to define plagiarism so that the attending students were familiarized with it. Then he proceeded to explain the different types of plagiarism that students normally encounter: Global Plagiarism, Paraphrasing Plagiarism, Verbatim Plagiarism, Mosaic Plagiarism, Self-Plagiarism, and Accidental Plagiarism.

Mr. Islam then went on to discuss ways to avoid plagiarism by using checkers such as Turnitin. He advised the students not to use AI tools or copy information from online sources since faculty members can detect them through their years of hands-on experience, even if Turnitin cannot. He further suggested using proper citations, using Turnitin to check for accidental plagiarism, and also to record bibliographic information accurately to avoid plagiarism.

To conclude the workshop, Mr. Islam provided a short multiple-choice questionnaire to the participants. The questions aimed to gauge students' knowledge about different types of plagiarism and their understanding.

The workshop was graced by the presence of Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head and Associate Professor of the Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, and ended with a question-and-answer session to clarify any confusions the students might have.



Report by Khondoker Noor Mohammad (202013030)

6. DEH Graduate Student Seminar Summer 2023



On June 21, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at ULAB held the Summer 2023 Graduate Student Seminar where ten students from the MA in English program had an opportunity to present their research papers that they had written as part of their coursework in the previous semester. The presenters were nominated by their course faculty from the following tracks: Literature and Cultural Studies, and Applied Linguistics and TESOL.



The program was initiated by Ms. Nadia Rahman, Assistant Professor, DEH, and Coordinator, MA in English. She invited the first presenter Rashmona Akther Rime (Batch 222) to present her paper on "Gendered Language Features in Advertisements" where she talked about common gendered language features observed in advertisements and discussed their implications on gender roles, stereotypes, and consumer perception. The next speaker was Kaniz Fatema Lamia (Batch 231), who presented her paper on "How Bengali Children Acquire Bangla: Behaviorism or Innatism?" She gave an overview of the theories of language development in children, and discussed the importance of



speaking practices for language acquisition, arguing that the acquisition of Bangla can be attributed to Innatism.

The third presenter, Rownok Jahan Akhi (Batch 223), in her paper, “Cultural Construction of Madness in Bangladesh: An Analysis of the Movie Molla Barir Bou,” discussed the perception that madness can be influenced by religious beliefs, traditional practices, and that societal norms and mental health issues have historically been stigmatized, especially for women, in many societies including Bangladesh, often preventing individuals from seeking

appropriate help and support. Following this, Sumaiya Nawshin (Batch 231), in her paper, “Redesigning a Syllabus for Contextual Sustainability: A Strength-Based Approach,” explored different syllabuses and how schools pressurize students to memorize grammatical rules. She additionally suggested effective learning strategies for ESL to Bangladeshi students.



The next presenter, S.M. Imrul Hasan (Batch 222) presented on “The Cultural Construction of S.M. Sultan in the 21st Century” where he called attention to how Sultan’s artworks, depicting the marginalized Bangladeshi agrarian society, can be associated with different literary theories such as Marxism and Feminism. Jannatul Ferdous (Batch 222), in her presentation, “From Theory to Practice: Material Evaluation and Design in ELT,” presented the importance of developing materials for effective ELT by interweaving language and culture.



Next, Sayma Afsana (Batch 223) presented her paper titled “From a Modern Woman to a Sex Objectification: A Journey of Tagore’s 'Binodini' through Media's Interpretation.” She discussed how Tagore’s Binodini from Chokher Bali, who was portrayed as the rebel of the then society has now been turned into a mere sex object as observed in the recent adaptations of this character by the contemporary media. Anika Binte Nazrul (Batch 231) came forward

next to present, “Beyond Words: Exploring Theories of First and Second Language Acquisition to Enhance Our Understanding of Language Learning,” where she talked about how understanding the differences between first and second language acquisition can help address challenges faced by second language learners and tailor language learning approaches accordingly.

Sanjida Akter (Batch 222) then presented on “Analyzing the Cinematic Trend in Selected American Superhero Films” where she explored the cinematic trends within the genre, focusing on selected American superhero films that promote neocolonialism. Following her, Md. Sahedul Islam Hira (Batch 223), in his paper, “Practices of Translanguaging and Its Impact on English Language Teaching



and Learning at the Tertiary Level,” displayed the significance of translanguaging practices for English Language teaching and learning, and the development of policies and practices that promote effective language learning at the tertiary level.

The Graduate Student Seminar articulated interdisciplinary discussion and knowledge exchange among the students. The graduate students were complimented by Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head and Associate Professor, DEH, for their excellent performances, and were also provided with advice regarding their research papers that would be beneficial to them in the future. Finally, Professor Kaiser Haq, Dean, School of Arts and Humanities, felicitated the presenters and commented on their growth and confidence.

At the end of the program, Certificates of Participation were handed over to the presenters by the Dean and the Head of Department.



Report by Fatema Tuz Zannat (221013035)

7. A Conversation about Storytelling in the AR/VR and the Metaverse



On July 5, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at ULAB organized “A Conversation about Storytelling in AR/VR and the Metaverse” at its permanent campus premises. The facilitators were Dr. Joseph Jerome, a Privacy and Technology Lawyer and Expert in AR/VR Policy based in Washington, DC, and Dr. Sohana Nasrin, a faculty member in the Department of Communication at the University of Tampa, Florida.



Joseph Jerome initiated the session and elaborated on the term “Metaverse” in his presentation. He emphasized that the Metaverse encompasses not only social media or virtual reality but also comprises numerous buzzwords that signify the magnitude of its concepts.

Dr. Jerome then provided explanations of the terms “Augmented Reality” (AR) and “Virtual Reality” (VR). He focused on how AR conceptualizes the real world by layering virtual content on top of it. He further showcased instances of the advancements in AR and VR, which foster nearly realistic communication among people. His discussion aimed to introduce the various uses of AR and VR, while elaborating on their future implications in everyday life. For example, he highlighted how these immersive technologies might help generate empathy in people and emphasized the research possibilities in this field for students from underdeveloped countries.

The conversation then shifted towards the investments of companies in this sector. It was asserted that this is one of the fastest-growing business sectors, as these advanced technologies can provide personalized and immersive experiences to everyone. The discussion further delved into how VR can be utilized for training purposes and how companies are leveraging its benefits. At this point, Dr. Sohana Nasrin inquired about the utilization of AR and VR technologies in creating a new platform for storytelling on various issues like the climate crisis.



During the question-and-answer session at the end of the conversation, the facilitators addressed queries regarding the emergence of AI, the accessibility of AR/VR technologies for all people, the utilization of the Metaverse, and their adaptation and importance in people's lives, particularly in developing countries like Bangladesh. Dr. Sohana Nasrin made a concluding remark, emphasizing the importance of continuous innovation and experimentation. She highlighted that

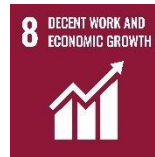
people should never stop innovating or experimenting, as it can help them stay ahead of the game and pass on knowledge to others.

The session ended with concluding remarks from the facilitators and a presentation of a token of appreciation to the guests by the Head of Department, Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman. Prof. Kaiser Haq, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities, attended the session along with other ULAB faculty members and students. The session was of special interest to students of English and Media Studies.



Report by Nabila Faizra Islam (201013115)

8. DEH Student Workshop: Recommendation Letters: Ground Rules



The Department of English and Humanities (DEH) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) organized a workshop on July 13, 2023 titled "Recommendation Letter: Ground Rules" at the institution's permanent campus. The workshop was held as a partial requirement for the students of ENG 413, ENG 498, and ENG 499 courses, and facilitated by Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head and Associate Professor, DEH.

Ms. Rahman began the session by explaining the distinct features and purposes of a recommendation letter. As the session progressed, she elaborated on its importance in job applications and higher education pursuits. Ms. Rahman also provided valuable insights into the dos and don'ts when requesting a recommendation letter, emphasizing the significance of receiving a proper letter from a faculty member, club advisor, or similar sources.

The facilitator also talked about the importance of extracurricular activities in a student's life, and how it can contribute to enrich their Curriculum Vitae (CV) impacting their professional pursuits positively. Ms. Rahman also provided suggestions for students who seldom participate in such activities stressing on how interpersonal skills outside the classroom can help define a person's abilities. She also advised the students to develop soft skills, time management skills and utilize available resources alongside other activities as they can immensely contribute to their overall growth.



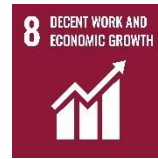
The participants were then asked by Ms. Rahman to write a sample letter to their faculty members, asking for their recommendation. As a general feedback, the facilitator put special emphasis on the information that students should provide a faculty member with, and the etiquettes and attitude they should maintain when asking for the letter. Afterwards, Ms. Rahman discussed her personal experiences of receiving recommendation letters from her teachers, as well as her experience of writing recommendation letters for her students.

The students were later given the floor to the participants to extend their queries which Ms. Rahman addressed with insightful replies. This interactive session was then brought to an end with an exchange of thanks between the students and the facilitator.



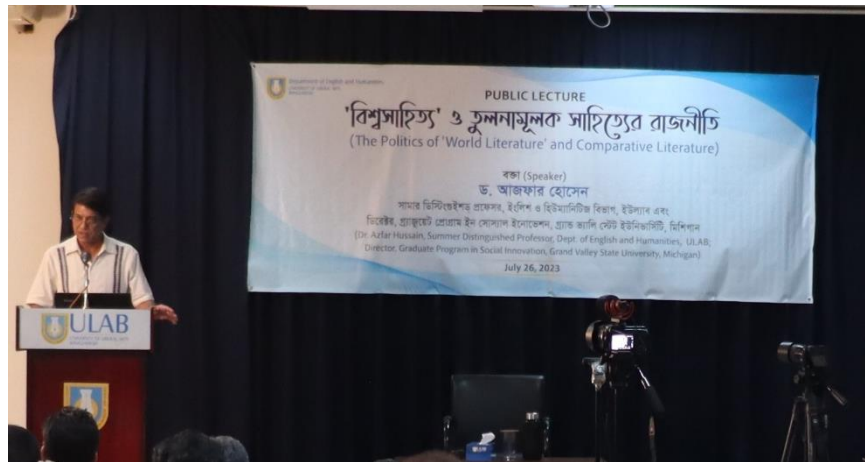
Report by Sumaiya Swati Udita (193013047)

9. Public Talk: The Politics of ‘World Literature’ and Comparative Literature



On July 26, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities (DEH) at ULAB hosted a public lecture by Dr. Azfar Hussain, Summer Distinguished Professor at DEH, ULAB, and the Director of the Graduate Program in Social Innovation at Grand Valley State University, Michigan. The lecture, titled “The Politics of ‘World Literature’ and Comparative Literature,” focused on two distinct areas of literature and people's perceptions of the multifaceted aspects of literature.

Following the introduction, Dr. Azfar Hussain commenced the lecture by dividing his discussion into two parts. The first part was about the politics of ‘world literature’ and its origin. He started with two epigraphs that inspired him to understand the politics of the world and comparative literature, one by Bharatchandra Ray and the other by Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o. He mentioned that, in Western philosophy, there is a practice of creating connections in various literatures around the world, and questioned the medium upon which the connections are established.



He discussed how Europeans are at the forefront of creating these connections by referencing the German poet and playwright, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and his perception of literary works beyond Europe through a Eurocentric lens. One of the significant aspects of the lecture was the mention of a letter written by Goethe to his student, Johann Peter Eckermann, where the term “World Literature” was mentioned, leading to the Westernization of the world’s literature, from where the norm became to compare literature all around the world with that of the Europeans.

Furthermore, to help understand the world of comparative literature, Dr. Hussain gave an example of Rabindranath Tagore, using him to show that there is an entire world of literary works outside the voices of Europe. He argued that although “world literature” is often compared to European literature, the comparison should rather be done amongst literary works outside of Europe, like Asian or African literature. The speaker also added that comparative literature can be seen as an interdisciplinary discourse where other works are seen or substituted, and that colonialism and

Eurocentrism play a huge role in creating the discipline of comparative literature. In his lecture, Dr. Hussain also mentioned Kazi Nazrul Islam who claimed that Europe should be respected but not solely relied upon.



To conclude his public lecture, Dr. Hussain provided the insight that, even though the “Politics of ‘World Literature’ and Comparative Literature” has thus far been Eurocentric, the literature students of the new generation can help bring change in this aspect in the field of “World Literature” and Comparative Literature by synthesizing their native literature with the literature of the rest of the world, especially with African and Asian literature, rather than only the literature of the west.

session.

The lecture ended with a question and answer

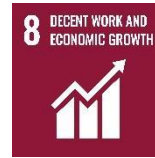
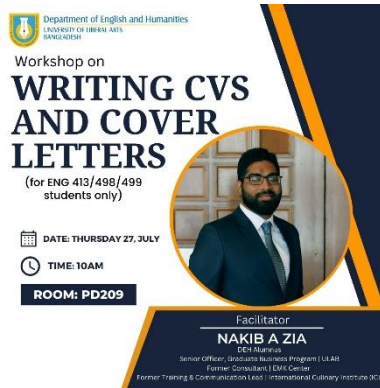
At the event, Professor Imran Rahman, Vice-Chancellor, ULAB, gave the welcome speech while Special Advisor to the ULAB Board of Trustees, Professor Shamsad Mortuza introduced the speaker. The event was attended by a large and varied audience amongst whom were Professor Kaiser Haq, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities, ULAB, and Professor Claire Chambers from the University of York, UK, along with ULAB faculty members, students, and alumni, as well as distinguished scholars from different universities, artists, and practitioners of different disciplines. The event was moderated by Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head, Department of English and Humanities, ULAB.



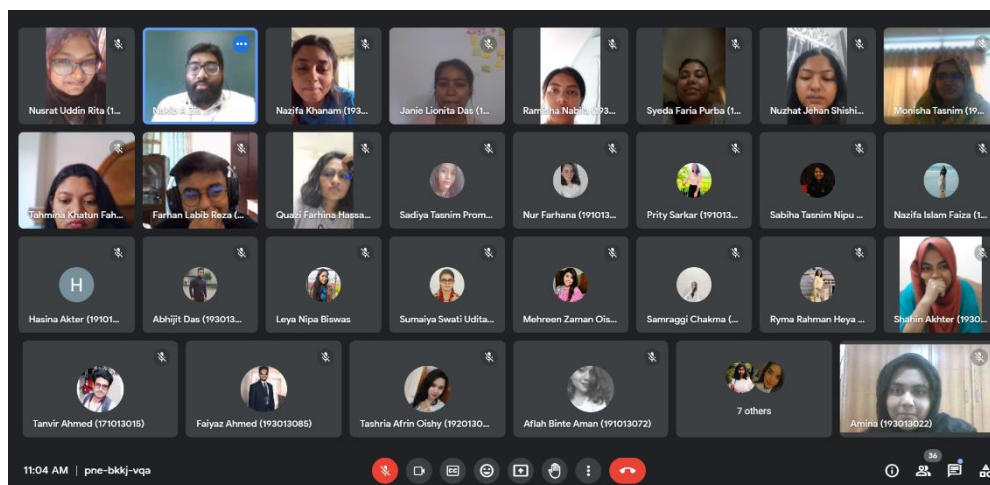
The event was livecast from Facebook and the recording of the lecture is available on the [DEH YouTube Channel](#).

Report by Khondoker Noor Mohammad (202013030)

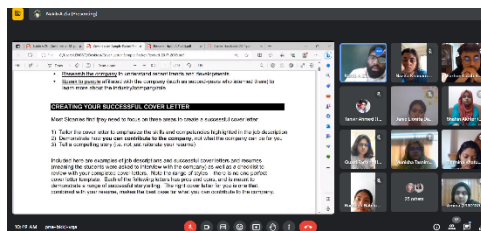
10. DEH Student Workshop: Writing CVs and Cover Letters



On July 27, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh hosted a virtual workshop titled "Writing CVs and Cover Letters." The workshop catered to students completing their finals in courses ENG 498, ENG 499, and ENG 413, aimed at equipping them for future endeavors. Conducted by ULAB alumnus, Nakib A. Zia, currently serving as a Senior Officer at the Graduate Program Office at ULAB, the session's primary objective was to assist students in crafting effective CVs and cover letters - crucial materials for pursuing further studies or job opportunities.



Participants were enlightened about the significance of tailored CVs and cover letters during the workshop's commencement. Mr. Zia emphasized that different areas demand distinct CVs, highlighting specific skills relevant to the chosen path. The workshop sought to ensure that students left with a draft of their CVs and cover letters.



To guide students, Mr. Zia emphasized the importance of conciseness in CV writing. Rather than including an excessive amount of information, he advised focusing on relevant experiences and skills essential for the next career step. He shared his own resume as an example and provided do's and don'ts to enhance CV quality. Key sections such as the profile, education, experiences, and contact details were also discussed.

Moving on to cover letters, Mr. Zia compared them to business proposals and offered multiple pointers for crafting successful ones. Encouraging creativity, he suggested that applicants go beyond

summarizing their CV content when applying for jobs requiring both documents. Cover letters, according to him, should highlight unique attributes not mentioned in the CV and be customized for each application. Students were shown Mr. Zia's own cover letter, emphasizing its vital role.

The workshop concluded with an interactive question and answer session, during which students had the opportunity to share their CVs for review by Mr. Zia. The event proved to be a success, empowering participants with valuable insights to shape their professional journeys.

Report written by Amina (193013022)

11. DEH Student Workshop: Job Hunting and Networking



On August 3, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh organized a highly informative workshop titled “Job Hunting and Networking” for the outgoing students of ENG 413/498/499. The workshop was facilitated by Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head and Associate Professor at the Department of English and Humanities (DEH). Its primary objectives were to equip students with insights into the effective job market approaches and to develop powerful networking skills.

To begin with, Ms. Rahman emphasized the importance of becoming self-aware before selecting a field within the large job market. Following this, she stressed that being open-minded and wisely utilizing available opportunities may lead one to better prospects. Additionally, she discussed the importance of considering one's own interests, the required skill set, and their ultimate career goals when searching for such opportunities.



Ms. Rahman next suggested that, in the step of job hunting, students should explore their strengths and weaknesses first. Furthermore, she emphasized on the importance of having an updated CV with a professional email account and a formal passport-size photo in order to develop networking and connect with like-minded individuals in their field of interest or professional industry through different sites such as LinkedIn, BDjobs, etc. Moreover, she provided tips on how to build a professional profile,

highlighting accomplishments and customizing it to capture a person's personality. As for practical experience and portable skills, Ms. Rahman advised the students to look for volunteering opportunities in their community to enhance their chances of future employment.



Besides this, Ms. Rahman provided more insights for applying for the job and interview. She recommended doing background research about the organization, checking email regularly, and doing market research to understand the salary range. Furthermore, she gave importance to creating a good impression and retaining liaisons with former employers or faculty members. Lastly, she mentioned the necessity of maintaining ethics and responding to job offers with polite emails even if the student is unable to accept it.

Ms. Rahman concluded the workshop with a question-answer session, and a reminder to the students to not underestimate the importance of experience that they might have gained through their different volunteering and extracurricular activities during their university life.

This workshop is part of a series of workshops held specifically for students in their final semester to assist them with finding employment.

Report by Sabrina Ahmed (193013088)

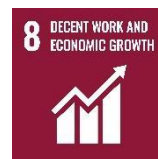
12. DEH Student Workshop: Writing Statements of Purpose

Department of English and Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF LIBERAL ARTS
BANGLADESH

Workshop on
Writing Statements of Purpose
For ENG413/499/498/599 students only

August 10, 2023
10 AM
PD 209

Facilitator
Dr. Sohana Manzoor
Associate Professor
Department of English & Humanities



The Department of English and Humanities (DEH) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh organized a workshop on “Writing Statements of Purpose” at its permanent campus on August 8, 2023. The workshop was attended by the students of the following courses, ENG 413, ENG 498, and ENG 499, and the students of the Masters program. The session was facilitated by Dr. Sohana Manzoor, Associate Professor, DEH, ULAB.

Ms. Nadia Rahman, Assistant Professor, DEH, ULAB, inaugurated the workshop. She then handed the floor over to Ms. Manzoor, who started the session by addressing the type of attitude students should maintain to pursue their higher education abroad and the purpose of the Statements of Purpose (SOP), stressing on its impact on a student’s chances of success in entering their desired institutions.

As the session progressed, Dr. Manzoor informed the participants about the required documents besides the SOP needed for applications for higher studies, such as transcripts, results of standardized tests like IELTS, TOEFL, GRE, and GMAT, CVs, writing samples, recommendation letters, etc. She then elaborated on the importance of these documents in creating a positive impression on the Graduate Admissions Board.

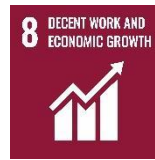
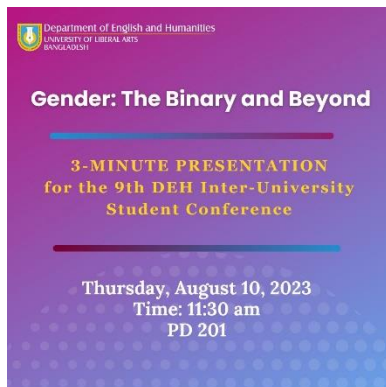
Afterwards, the facilitator discussed her own experiences before and after going through the process, and addressed the myths that often arise as an individual prepares for this new overseas journey. Dr. Manzoor placed special focus on students' concerns about their academic results, emphasizing that a person's academic performance cannot influence the potential of the SOP. She commented that the quality of an SOP determines an applicant's likelihood of being accepted by the Graduate Board. Dr. Manzoor also noted that when writing their SOPs, individuals can choose between an "academic" or a "creative" structure. However, regardless of the style chosen, they should be attentive to the quality and quantity of information provided in the SOPs. This factor further defines the approach a candidate should take when composing it.



At the end of the session, Dr. Manzoor suggested creating and maintaining connections with their faculty members, as well as creating contacts with the directors of the concerned institutions. She suggested the latter so that students can inquire about any information related to the institution that may help them develop their SOPs. She also advised students to select their destinations before proceeding to choose the universities, and gain an understanding of the program they are interested in, as prior knowledge would help the students plan and structure the content in their SOPs accordingly. Dr. Manzoor emphasized handling their confidential documents discreetly in order to avoid possible mishaps. The session ended with a round of questions-and-answers, and some affirmations from Dr. Manzoor.

Report by Sumaiya Swati Udit (193013047)

13. 3-Minute Presentation for Student Conference



On August 10, 2023, students from both BA and MA in English programs of the Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, presented their research proposals for the upcoming 9th Inter-University Student Conference. The 3-minute presentations were

held as part of the selection process to find the student who would represent DEH and ULAB at the Conference. The conference is organized annually by the Department of English and Humanities and only one paper is selected. The students were given the opportunity to present their research topics focusing on the finalized theme of this year's conference, "Gender: The Binary and Beyond."

The first presenter, Ritobina Ria Dey, a BA student, presented her topic titled "The Language of Gender: Shaping Attitudes and Promoting Acceptance for Non-Binary Identities in the Mainstream Media." She claimed that not much research has been conducted on how language in popular culture affects non-binary people as previous studies have largely concentrated on how language influences gender. Hence, she intended to address the influence of mainstream media and how inclusive language might benefit the media industry to foster more welcoming workplaces for all people.

The next presenter, Amreeta Lethe Chowdhury, another BA student, presented her proposal "Against Assimilations: Literature as a Tool of Retaining and Reclaiming Trans and Gender Diverse Identity in Bangladesh." She argued that literature is history, especially for marginalized communities. Her presentation emphasized how sexually marginalized people are often met with the threat of violence and erasure, and for them, oral lore and written documentation become the primary, if not the only, means of holding on to history that would otherwise be long lost, and thus forgotten. She further explained how her paper would take an anti-assimilationist approach to examining and analyzing examples of queer Bangladeshi literature as a mode of dissidence and resistance against nationalist, corporate, and cis-heteronormative hegemonies and their agendas which are rife with respectability politics and conceptions of "model minorities."

The next topic "Deconstruction of Normalizing Abuse in *Promising Young Woman*" was presented by Md. Naimul Islam, an MA student. His presentation reflected on Emerald Fannell's *Promising Young Woman* (2020), a shrewd response against the male narrative and the tropes constructed by the media. He argued that by subverting the conventional revenge thriller genre of a tortured woman going on a violent spree of murders, this film instead portrays the honest experience of a woman, Cassie, who is traumatized and scarred by an event that took her friend's life. The primary focus of Naimul's presentation was to examine how Cassie and her actions counter the male narrative tropes in the film. In doing so, he contended that *Promising Young Woman* deconstructs the normalizing of abuse as a necessary vehicle for character growth and strength.

The next presenter Ereti Rhidil Rahman, a BA student, presented her topic “Representation of Gender and Sexuality in English Language Teaching Textbooks of Secondary Schools in Bangladesh.” She brought out the issue of misrepresentation of gender in secondary school textbooks in Bangladesh. She mentioned that the purpose of her study is to observe the ELT textbooks taught in secondary schools in Bangladesh, *English for Today* and *Secondary English*, for Grade 6 and Grade 7, and analyze the way they present female and male characters in their text, images, and illustrations; examine if they only portray cis-heteronormativity or whether they are inclusive of diverse gender identities as well; what their average degree of heteronormativity is; and whether the representation varies between Bangla and English medium textbooks.

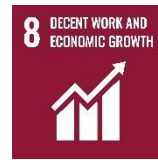
Next, Tarin Ahmad Diba, a BA student, presented the topic “Language Expression, Safe Space, and Suppression: Perspectives from Bangladeshi Queer People.” The main argument of her presentation was that queer communities in Bangladesh suppress their identity through the use of sign languages. For instance, she mentioned that trans-linguistic suppression is visible among the Hijra community as they use the language “Uti” so that people outside of their community cannot understand them as it contains sexual connotations, and represents their customs which may go against the social norms. She also added that transgenders and homosexuals often go through trans-semiotic suppression as they have to act like cisgender people, and sometimes homophobic, in order to hide their queer identity, and live a dual life (straight in public and queer in safe spaces). She proposed that through personal observation, semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis, her paper will bring out the issues related to language expression, suppression of queer identities, and the concept of safe space.

The final presenter, Abrar Farhan Zaman, a BA student, focused on the topic “Transcending Boundaries: Ursula K. Le Guin's Trailblazing Journey through the Gender Binary and Beyond.” His presentation reflected on Le Guin’s seminal works *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *The Dispossessed* by discussing how these science fiction novels transport the readers to worlds where gender defies traditional norms. He further exemplified how her narratives construct societies where individuals possess fluid gender identities or none at all. His proposition was that Le Guin’s visionary narrative depicted in the novels demonstrate how her exploration of the gender binary and beyond remains profoundly relevant in our evolving understanding of gender and its role in shaping the human experience. By concentrating on Le Guin’s literary legacy, the presenter aspired to ignite meaningful argumentation and foster a more enlightened perspective on gender through his research paper.

At the end of the presentations, each participant answered questions, received feedback for further improvement, and gained new insights regarding their research topics from the faculty members as well as from the audience. The event was attended by the Head of the Department and Associate Professor, Arifa Ghani Rahman, MA Coordinator and Assistant Professor, Nadia Rahman, BA Coordinator and Lecturer, Nusrat Tajkia, and other faculty members and students.

Report by Sanjida Akter (222055008)

14. DEH Alumni Talk on Impactful Youth Leadership



On August 17, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at ULAB organized a talk by DEH alumnus Md. Talebur Islam (Rupom) who shared his experiences of being a youth leader and how it opened up numerous opportunities for him in higher studies. Mr. Islam is simultaneously a researcher, columnist, commentator, development and communications professional, and advocate for international development, international relations, politics, economics, and foreign policies.

Mr. Islam began his talk by expressing his gratitude to his institution. He stated that he believes it is his responsibility to give back to ULAB as it has given to him by sharing his experiences. He gave his insight into the opportunities he took advantage of while he was at ULAB. He then talked about how he was unsure of a lot of things while he was a student. However, what intrigued him the most was the GED courses because they provided him with so many options for study. As he became involved with club activities, he started to develop his hard and soft skills.



During his third year at ULAB, Mr. Islam participated in a conference in Nepal. Within the next couple of months, he attended another conference in India. Gradually, over time, he came to represent Bangladesh more than forty times on international platforms. Building on his experiences, he then provided the insight that the more an individual accesses global opportunities, the more their experience will be enriched. Mr. Islam highlighted the importance of staying committed and moving forward when coming across such opportunities. Through this, he wanted the audience to know that anyone can make the most out of available resources found at universities. He also focused on the importance of networking to create more opportunities.

Mr. Islam strongly encouraged students to always explore things beyond their comfort zone because that is when they will be able to unleash their true potential. Among a variety of opportunities, it is important that students always choose the right option, and there is always help around. Since these decisions leave a track mark, figuring out what one really wants to do is important.

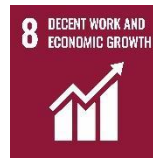


The session ended successfully as students took the opportunity to ask questions to Mr. Islam who responded enthusiastically. He also welcomed the session participants to keep in touch with him if they had further questions or needed more information.



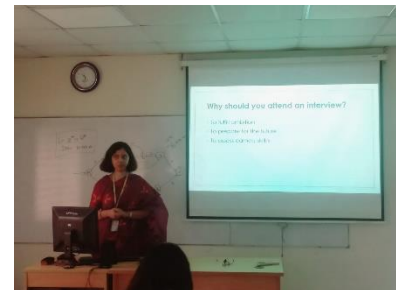
Report by Amina (193013022)

15. DEH Student Workshop: Interview Skills



On August 17, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh organized a workshop titled “Interview Skills” to help students feel confident and make the right preparations to face interviews. Nadia Rahman, Assistant Professor of DEH, conducted the workshop and spoke about her experience with interviews.

Ms. Rahman started the workshop by asking students to deliver their idea of what interview skills are and why they are necessary. From there, she underlined the importance of going for an interview with confidence and preparedness because the interview is to evaluate what the applicants have to offer and prove themselves. Ms. Rahman emphasized instant action to show enthusiasm, proactiveness and smartness to impress the interviewer. She advised students to be prepared after applying in places, such as receiving calls from unknown numbers and checking emails frequently. Ms. Rahman asked further questions to the students, after which they were provided with pointers on how they can precisely and successfully handle the situation.



Ms. Rahman next mentioned that one of the key points to take note of is doing a thorough background study of the institution or company. Following that, making the right preparations based on their requirements, which might differ from company to company. The facilitator provided pointers on how to prepare for the important day,

such as ensuring timely arrival, relaxing their nerves and preparing to tackle the interview. She also provided tips on presenting themselves in front of the interviewers, such as being mindful of their body language, knowing the appropriate formal wear and carrying very little items so as not to appear clumsy. Since the interview is taken to learn more about the applicant, they must generate interest among the interviewers by passionately talking about their acquired skills, their aspiration and goals, leaving their personal stories and information out unless they are asked. Ms. Rahman warned the students to be careful about mentioning information that might give away their weaknesses.

Another piece of advice the workshop addressed was the knowledge of culture when preparing for interviews. Ms. Rahman provided tips for engaging in Cultural Exchange Programs and participating in cultural events because doing so demonstrates awareness of one's own culture as well as that of others.

The workshop continued to discuss areas of common mistakes and provided additional tips to deal with unfamiliar questions. It concluded with a lively discussion where Ms. Rahman motivated the students to be confident and offered further advice in response to their questions and concerns.



Report by Amina (193013022)

16. Creative Writing Certificate Course


COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, participants will:

- write essays using a clear and focused, and yet, creative, and logical writing
- provide their feedback on peers' essays and receive their feedback to improve their own work, and the reviewer's feedback
- identify different techniques used by authors to make their characters, settings and other elements of their stories more interesting
- identify different types of genres, such as short stories, novels, plays, drama and poetry, and make full use of the language of the story to create a rich story
- identify and use the metaphorical or symbolic and other techniques of the creative writing to enhance their own writing in the genre of their choice

Benefits of the course include:

- Improve your writing skills
- Gain a certificate of completion
- Develop your confidence
- Gain a new perspective
- Develop your critical thinking skills



Creative Writing Certificate Course 2023

Creative Nonfiction



The Department of English and Humanities at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) concluded its six-week long Creative Writing Certificate Course on August 26, 2023 at a grand ceremony on its premises. The event's highlight was the participants' readings of their writings after which they received their Certificates of Completion. The focus of this iteration of the course was creative nonfiction.



The Chief Guest of the event, Mr. Sudeep Chakravarti, writer, historian, and currently Director, Center for South Asian Studies, ULAB, encouraged the participants to use different techniques to tell their stories. He also pointed out that writers must be able to accept feedback and willing to revise their writings repeatedly.

ULAB's Vice Chancellor, Professor Imran Rahman, spoke about the importance of storytelling to appeal to a wider audience and hence, the necessity for good writing skills. He also spoke about ULAB's unique initiatives such as the MA in Literature and Creative Writing program as well as the Dhaka Translation Center that support the student- and research-centric activities of the university.



ULAB's Special Advisor to the Board of Trustees, Prof. Shamsad Mortuza, expressed his appreciation for the writings produced during the course and encouraged the participants to incorporate humor, if they could. He also reminisced about the early days of the certificate course and his session for this iteration.

Prof. Syed Manzoorul Islam, another facilitator of the course, spoke about the importance of truth in writing. He emphasized the need to be honest and authentic, especially in this time of fragmented post-truths.

Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head of the Department, mentioned how this course helped to discover some unique talents who later became full time students of ULAB's MA in English program. One of them, a BUET engineer by training, not only became ULAB's gold medalist, he is now pursuing his PhD in Literature in the US. Another student, with a background in finance, completed her MA in Creative Writing at ULAB and published her first collection of short stories at last year's Ekushe Boi Mela. This, according to Ms. Rahman, shows that successful creative writers can come from any background.

As a special treat, Joyee Chakma, one of the participants of the course, sang a multilingual rendition of "Jamaica Farewell" in Bangla and Chakma. The song had been co-translated by Joyee and her friends.

ULAB's Department of English and Humanities launched the Creative Writing Certificate Course in 2016, one year after the launch of its MA in English program which offered as one of its three Tracks, a degree in Literature and Creative Writing – a unique offering in Bangladesh. Many wished to explore the program before making a commitment, and hence the idea of a certificate course was born. Since then, the course has been offered every year, focusing on specific genres and catering to diverse groups of participants. The current cohort was composed of university teachers, development agency professionals, graduate and undergraduate students, and PR professionals. While most had a

background in English, some did not. And yet, what brought them together was their great desire to write.

The course was designed by Maisha Hossain, pursuing her PhD in Creative Writing at Florida State University. She also conducted the practical sessions of the course. The facilitators of the course were Prof. Shamsad Mortuza, Prof. Kaiser Haq, Prof. Syed Manzoorul Islam, Prof. Azfar Hussain, and Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, who all delivered high impact lectures on aspects of creative nonfiction and editing.



The participants were Abrar Farhan Zaman, Afroza Khan, Dola Saha, Joyee Chakma, Kifayat Jahan Zerin, KM Arefin, Mahadir Omer Fahad, Md. Shahrear Talukder, Md. Abul Hashem Rony, Sonika Islam, Tanzina Tabassum Nova, Tasnim Naz, and Tazim Sikder Arna.

UAB looks forward to conducting the certificate course on translation next.

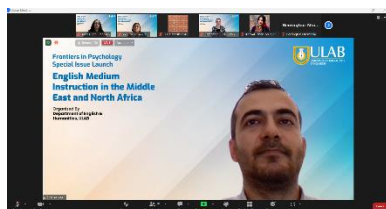


17. ULAB Launches Special Issue of *Frontiers in Psychology* Journal



On August 29, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities (DEH), ULAB, organized a virtual launching ceremony for a Special Issue of *Frontiers in Psychology*, a SCOPUS-indexed journal with an impact factor of 3.8. Titled “English Medium Instruction in the Middle East and North Africa,” this Special Issue addresses the issues and opportunities related to research on English Medium Instruction (EMI). Hosted by Dr. Abu Saleh Mohammad Rafi, Assistant Professor, DEH, ULAB, one of the editors of this Special Issue, the program was joined in by his co-editors Dr. Cihat Atar, Associate Professor, Sakarya University, Turkey; and Dr. Samantha Curle, Reader, University of Bath, UK. The lead editor is Professor Tariq Elyas, King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. Authors of three of the eight articles in the journal also joined the program. Professor Yasemin Bayyurt, Boaziçi University, Turkey, a specialist in Applied Linguistics, was present as the Panel Discussant.

In his welcome address, Professor Imran Rahman, Vice Chancellor, ULAB, stated that, as a marker of internationalization and quality education, English medium instruction (EMI) has become widespread in higher education institutions in countries where English is not the native tongue. Almost every university appears compelled to offer programs in English, whether at the postgraduate or undergraduate levels. Private universities in Bangladesh are not an exception to this trend. Economic, social, and political forces, as well as educational factors, drive the expansion of English medium instruction here. However, implementing EMI comes with a plethora of challenges, including students’ and teachers’ lack of English proficiency to benefit from EMI, lack of appropriate classroom materials, and teacher education programs. Prof. Rahman felicitated the editors of the journal for their research initiative in this area and expressed his delight that ULAB has been a part of it.



Dr. Cihat Atar then spoke about the rationale for the Special Issue. Speaking primarily from the perspective of Turkey and the Middle East, Dr. Atar emphasized how there is a lack of research on the nature of EMI, despite the challenges and concerns that have arisen with its globalization. He mentioned how studying at higher institutions that used EMI has become a prestige issue and is associated with better jobs.

Dr. Samantha Curle provided the audience with the aims of the Special Issue and the process by which it was conceptualized and developed. She stated that the Special Issue seeks to generate new insights for practical recommendations for educators, policy makers, and academic institutions. It provides a comprehensive scholarly examination of the impacts and challenges of EMI within the Middle Eastern and North African regions that have pedagogic and sociolinguistic implications for the stakeholders.



The authors of three of the articles then presented the highlights of their contributions. Dr. Iman Oraif gave an overview of her paper that had focused on the context of Saudi Arabia. Her paper was titled “Using English Medium Instruction to Teach a General Course in a College of Business and Management.” Dr. Mahboubeh Rakhshandehroo discussed her co-authored paper on “The Attitude of Iranian Students and Instructors toward Implementing EMI through Virtual Exchange.” Following this, Dr. Berrington Ntombela introduced his paper on “The Sociolinguistic Problems of English Medium Instruction in the Middle East and North Africa: Implications for Epistemic Access” and discussed his experiences of the issues concerning EMI, particularly in the context of South Africa.

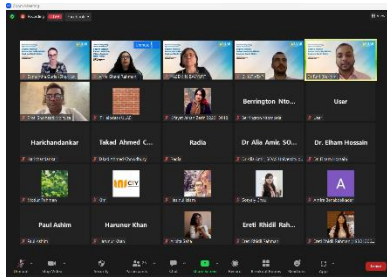


Following the insightful discussions by the authors, Professor Yasemin Bayyurt acknowledged the importance of research on EMI. She emphasized the necessity of contextualized research, deeming it the best starting point for understanding various perspectives from students and teachers, and encouraged initiatives that promote such research. She spoke of taking into account the history of a language to guide research, which is also essential to be done by non-native speaking countries like those who contributed to the journal under discussion.

A lively question and answer session ensued after the discussions and the editors of the Special Issue provided responses to the points of concern raised by the audience.

Professor Shamsad Mortuza, Professor, DEH, and Special Advisor, ULAB Board of Trustees, gave the closing remarks by firstly congratulating the editors and authors of the journal on their initiative. He shared his experiences, as Director of the International Office, DU, with the international students whose faculty members often resorted to Bangla only, whereas at universities like ULAB, English is the medium of instruction. So two systems run parallel in the same country. He also suggested that English should be localized to add value to it as a language and to aid better understanding because, without this, we cannot have a sustainable future.





The program, attended by over fifty scholars from home and abroad, ended with a vote of thanks from Associate Professor Arifa Ghani Rahman, Head of the Department of English and Humanities.

The full video of the launching ceremony is available at the **Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, YouTube channel.**

Report by Ereti Rbidil Rahman (193013068)

18. DEH Commencement Summer 2023



On September 2, 2023, the Department of English and Humanities, ULAB, hosted the Summer 2023 Commencement Ceremony for the outgoing students of the BA and MA programs at the auditorium of the ULAB Research Building in Dhanmondi. The theme for the event was “Chasing Rainbows, Seizing Dreams,” where the Commencement Speaker was DEH alumna, Sirajum Munira Joti, Fellow, 2022 Cohort, Teach for Bangladesh.



Head and Associate Professor of the Department, Ms. Arifa Ghani Rahman, and Professor Shamsad Mortuza, Professor and Special Advisor (BoT), respectively, congratulated the graduates and



shared their inspirational words, urging the graduates to inspire others as they move on to different paths. The graduates were encouraged to remember to give back to others and contribute to society just as they have received many opportunities.

The Commencement Speaker, Sirajum Munira Joti, shared anecdotes of her journey to success from DEH and offered motivational words for the students, asking them to embrace change and continue pursuing knowledge through hard work and perseverance.

Following their speeches, Mustafa Zahir Sheikh (Batch 192) presented a song accompanied by Gazi Md. Mostafa Al Wakil (Batch 192), the beatboxing wizard. Then, graduating students Janie Lionita Das

(BA, Batch 193) and Md. Sahedul Islam Hira (MA, Batch 223) gave speeches on their journeys with ULAB and DEH. Next, Marzuk Khan Mojlish (Batch 182) and Allen Henry Costa (Batch 211) performed songs for the graduates. For a moment of fun and memory sharing, the graduates played and an engaging word game, following which a video of the keepsake brochure was displayed.

The event, hosted by Tasmin Bahsira Binth Arman (Batch 201), was organized by Batch 201 under the supervision of Mr. Sheikh Nahiyen, Lecturer, DEH.






Report By: Sajia Afroza Khan (201013057)

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