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Conference Grant Recipient
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With support from the Irene Tan Liang Kheng (ITLK) Conference Grant, Mr Ow Yeong Wai Kit, a PhD student from the English Language & Literature (ELL) Department, participated in the ARLE SIG-ROLE 2025 Seminar that took place between 25 and 27 June 2025 at the Radboud University, Nijmegen.

Hi Wai Kit, can you share with us more about the conference?



Centred on the theme “Legitimising Literature in an Evolving Media Landscape”, this global conference brought together a vibrant network of scholars and practitioners to explore the evolving role of literature in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

What was your presentation about?

The topic of my presentation, “Learning by Heart: Legitimising Poetry Memorisation in Secondary School Literature Classrooms — The Case Study of Singapore”, revolved around the practice of poetry memorisation and its potential to enrich students’ learning experiences in secondary school literature classrooms. In my study, I explored how poetry memorisation could be legitimised as a pedagogical tool, particularly in Singapore’s context. My findings demonstrated that, with adequate guidance, poetry memorisation can prompt deeper reflection, enhance critical thinking, and boost students’ confidence in their abilities. Ultimately, the study highlighted how learning by heart could be revitalised as a meaningful and inclusive practice in the contemporary literature classroom.

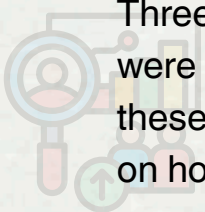


Very interesting! What were your key takeaways from this experience?



One, the sheer diversity of practices and perspectives represented in the presentations and discussions. It was fascinating to learn how poetry memorisation is perceived and implemented in different cultural contexts.

Two, the conference also illuminated the adaptability of literature education in responding to societal and technological changes. Many presentations explored how literature can be taught in ways that address contemporary challenges in a digital and AI-driven age.



Three, deep conversations and academic discussions with experts in the field were particularly eye-opening. For example, it inspired me to think about how these ideas could be applied in classrooms and broadened my perspective on how quantitative methods could complement my work in future.

Finally, the overarching takeaway from the conference was the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing the complex challenges facing literature education today.



What advice will you give to students who are preparing to present at international conferences for the first time?

Embrace the experience with an open mind and a positive attitude. Conferences are valuable opportunities to share your work, seek feedback from experts, and connect with like-minded scholars. Don't be afraid to ask questions or engage in discussions because it is through these exchanges that you will gain new insights and refine your ideas. Most importantly, approach all feedback with optimism and a willingness to learn.

