



\*Video is best viewed in 1080p.

### *Moderator*

#### **Ms Sun Xueling**

Minister of State, Ministry of Education &  
Ministry of Social and Family Development

### *Profile of Panellists*

#### **Mr Lawrence Wong**

Minister for Education and Second Minister for Finance

#### **A/P Mukhlis Abu Bakar**

Dr Mukhlis Abu Bakar is Associate Professor and Assistant Head/Malay at the Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group of the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. Trained as an applied linguist, he teaches in the area of grammar, linguistics, discourse, bilingualism and literacy. His current research interests lie in the field of childhood bilingualism and biliteracy, and a sociocultural approach to literacy learning in the home, school and faith settings. He is a Co-Editor of an upcoming book "The Bloomsbury Handbook on Cultural Identity from Early Childhood to Early Adulthood" due out in 2021.

**Kamilah Binte Kamis**

Miss Kamilah has been teaching in the preschool sector for 6 years. She was inspired to be a preschool teacher due to her love for young children. She was awarded the Outstanding Pre-school Mother Tongue Language Teacher Award (Outstanding Award) in 2019. She would like to inspire her children to love the Malay Language and is always motivated to design interactive and interesting Malay lessons so that her children will stay positive and engaged towards the learning of the Malay Language. She has also written a bilingual book for children and would like to continue writing books for young children.

**Dr Sukuna S. Vijayadevar**

Dr Sukuna S. Vijayadevar is a Lead Curriculum Specialist with NIEC. She has served for many years training and developing on-going professional development for practitioners in early childhood education. Her areas of interest in early childhood include teaching language and literacy, inclusive education and leadership in ECE. Dr Sukuna has also conducted talks and workshops for teachers about teaching Tamil Language in preschools. Her workshops for both early childhood and primary school teachers on story-telling and creation of big books in Tamil have always been well received.

**Danny Yeo**

Danny Yeo has 30 years of rich experience in various fields. He is a well-established veteran cross-media personality, a prolific theatre director-writer-actor, and remains active and passionate in various areas of involvement: such as events hosting, creative consulting and corporate training. A bilingual extraordinaire and an award-winning lecturer, he has anchored 15 info-entertainment television programmes (2015-2020), written 5 film scripts, authored 4 books in 2 languages and initiated numerous innovative theatrical ideas, particularly for interactive-immersive performances. In recent years, he has presented works on international stages including Shanghai, Macau and New York City. Danny has been a CPCLL committee member since 2008, serving as the vice group leader of the Outreach and Engagement group.

**Ben Yeo**

With years of experience in the television and entertainment industry, Ben Yeo is a renowned Mediacorp actor and host. Having starred in numerous productions and variety programmes, many may also regard Ben as a celebrity chef. Trained in SHATEC, Ben possesses excellent cooking skills and is well loved by many clients'

in the food industry. Over the years, Ben has also published two cookbooks and owned various businesses. A doting father to his sons, Ben divides his time between family, work, and cooking.

### **Synopsis**

The environment can have a large impact on the development of a child's language skills. For children to develop fluency in using their Mother Tongue Language, it is vital they use the language to interact and communicate with others in every environment, be it the home, school or community. This early experience in actively using the language plays a critical role in a child's language development both socially and psychologically.

Language learning is a social process. Numerous research studies have shown that the amount and quality of adult-child engagement are two of the strongest enablers for developing language skills in children. Frequent and regular adult-child engagement during the early years is associated with better language comprehension, the earlier achievement of language milestones and overall faster growth of language skills.

Come join us for the panel discussion with our Guest-of-Honour, Mr Lawrence Wong; Moderator, Ms Sun Xueling; and advocates of MTL learning including academics, educators, community partner and celebrity parent. They will discuss the importance of early language development and share useful tips on how we can provide an immersive environment in which our children learn and use our MTLs as living languages.