



The **Epitome** */i'pitəmi/*

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch

Theme,
**THE POWER OF EXPRESSION",
"REFLECTIONS & REALITIES:**

Volume 1
Issue 5

2025



The
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/I'pitəmi/

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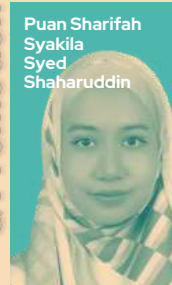


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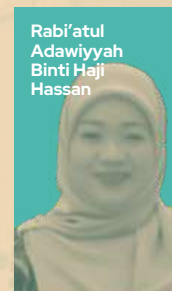
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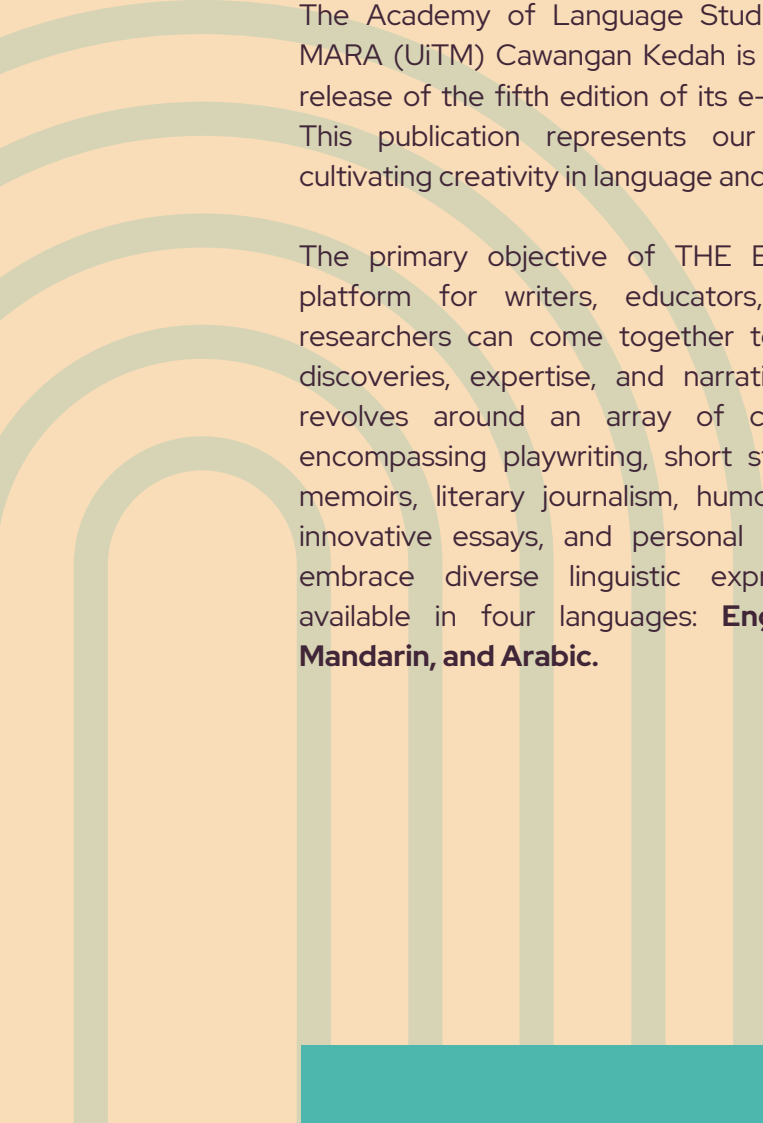
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Synopsis



The Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kedah is thrilled to announce the release of the fifth edition of its e-magazine, The Epitome. This publication represents our steady dedication to cultivating creativity in language and literature.

The primary objective of THE EPITOME is to offer a platform for writers, educators, scholars, poets, and researchers can come together to exchange their ideas, discoveries, expertise, and narratives. Our special focus revolves around an array of creative writing genres, encompassing playwriting, short stories, songs, speeches, memoirs, literary journalism, humour writing, lyric essays, innovative essays, and personal essays, with a goal to embrace diverse linguistic expressions, with content available in four languages: **English, Bahasa Melayu, Mandarin, and Arabic.**





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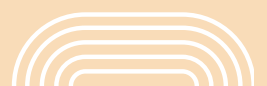
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Preface

Mr. Azlan Abdul Rahman

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Welcome to the 5th issue of Epitome. This time, we step into a world where reflections shape realities, and where the simple act of expression holds incredible power.

Our theme, "Reflections & Realities: The Power of Expression," captures the spirit of this collection. It reminds us that every creative work is more than just an arrangement of words – it is a mirror, a window, and a bridge. Within these pages, you will encounter a rich variety of voices, each offering a unique glimpse into personal journeys, dreams, questions, and truths. Together, they form a tapestry that reflects both the world as it is and the world as we imagine it could be.

At Epitome, we believe that creativity is not just about telling stories; it's about giving shape to experiences that might otherwise remain unspoken. Through story that stirs the heart, stories that spark new ideas, and essays that invite reflection, we celebrate the courage it takes to put thoughts into words and share them with others.

This issue is not just a showcase of talent – it is an invitation. An invitation to pause, to listen, and to engage with the many realities presented here. It asks us to look beyond the surface, to find meaning in unexpected places, and to recognize the universal threads that connect us all through the simple yet profound act of expression.

As you journey through this edition, we hope you find pieces that resonate with you, challenge your perspective, and awaken new ideas. May these reflections inspire you to embrace your own realities – and perhaps even to express them in your own way.

Thank you for allowing Epitome to be part of your reading experience. We are honoured to share these voices with you.

Happy reading!



Editor'snote

Presenting the fifth edition of THE EPITOME, a humble yet heartfelt collection of voices that reflect who we are, what we've experienced, and the truths we dare to express.

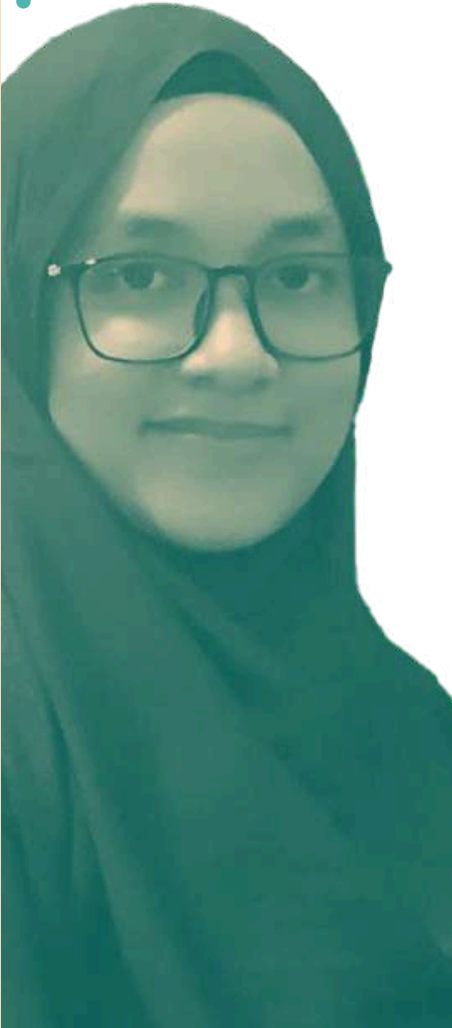
This publication's theme, "Reflections & Realities: The Power of Expression", embraces the essence of storytelling in all its forms—raw, whimsical, honest, and imaginative. Within these pages, our contributors navigate the labyrinth of identity, nostalgia, struggle, resilience, and creativity. Whether through memoirs, fiction, poetry, satire, or cultural musings, each piece represents a unique lens into the human condition, where language becomes both mirror and window—reflecting ourselves and revealing the world.

In a publication that welcomes expression in three languages—English, Bahasa Melayu, and Mandarin—we are reminded of the richness that lies in linguistic diversity. From humorous tales of online shopping to haunting narratives of secrets and self-discovery, from kampung chronicles to cross-cultural encounters, THE EPITOME offers a space for voices that often go unheard to finally be seen, read, and felt.

My deepest appreciation goes to the writers who have entrusted us with their stories, the editorial and design teams whose passion has brought this issue to life, and our readers who continuously support this platform as a space for creative and reflective exploration.

May this edition inspire you to reflect, to connect, and most of all—to express.

Warmly,
Dr. Nur Syazwanie Mansor
Chief Editor
THE EPITOME 2025





A Place Called Home

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When I was a child, people used to ask me where I was from. When you're living in a foreign country, of course, that is understandably, a normal question to ask a kid. It was not the question that bothered me, but the answer. By the age of 10 years old, it became a habit of mine to question back the inquirer, "Do you mean where I was born, where I live now, or where my parents are from?". This, however, typically led to round eyes, awkward silence, and sometimes jaws dropping. People must have thought I was a strange kid, but the truth was, I genuinely didn't know where or which home to call as my own. To me, the mouth-watering taste of Phở at the street-stalls in Ho Chi Minh City felt like home. The sight of pine trees in Ottawa and the cold Washington breeze felt like home. Even the warmth of the Sumatran sun felt like home. Everywhere else felt like home except my own birth country, Malaysia.

For millions of Third Culture Kids (TCKs) like me, the idea of home is as fluid as the borders they've crossed. Home isn't just a place one permanently lives, but an emotional experience or feeling of comfort and belonging. This is because TCKs are individuals raised in cultures other than their passport countries and live in different environments for most parts of their child developmental years (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Due to their transcultural upbringing, TCKs grow up without having a permanent home and would need to quickly adapt in new surroundings in order to effectively blend in and feel protected from the scorn of rejection within a community (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). For that, these unique individuals are also nicknamed as "international chameleons". However, when the time comes for them to move once again, TCKs would find themselves lost in the sense of 'home' which is closely linked with their sense of stability, direction, connection, and belonging (Hoersting, 2010).

As we all know, growing up is already very difficult. Thus, to grow up in multiple environments, with multiple cultures? That is something a child can barely grasp. It's not surprising why many research studies show that TCKs in their youth constantly endure personal identity crisis, cultural confusions, fear of attachments and relationships, social anxiety and isolation, questions of belonging, dealings of grief upon change and problems of social adaptation (Moore & Barker, 2012). All this is simply because they do not know where they actually belong. In fact, research shows that compared to Western and European TCKs, Asian TCKs often face more complex experiences and greater challenges when it comes to social integration. What's worse, studies show that for Asian TCKs, adjusting in their own home countries is even more challenging than adapting to other foreign countries (Long, 2016). The reason for this is because Asian societies put great value upon conformity, especially towards cultural norms, practices, and beliefs (Moore & Barker, 2012). So, basically when you have the features of an Asian but do not sound, behave and think like an Asian, well, people run away from you.



According to Mizutani and Waalkes (2023), even until now, these negative experiences would frequently cause Asian TCKs to feel disconnected, excluded, and left out from social groups of the local community.

Can you imagine feeling confused like a lost alien in your own home country? These studies definitely reflect the true reality of what is happening because in my case, the term 'minah celup' was not an unusual thing to hear. In addition, being sent to a boarding school in Kedah meant I had to survive 5 lengthy years of getting teased, bullied, pushed, laughed at, and belittled, especially because of my 'funny', 'Utara' accent.

Aitken (2008) explains that because of this complicated circumstance of 'homelessness', many Asian TCKs eventually decide to move elsewhere in order to settle down because they feel they adapt better in other foreign countries. Statistics from the United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs (2020) even shows that the population of the Malaysian diaspora currently stands at about 1 million emigrations to other countries such as Singapore, Australia, Brunei, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada.

Unfortunately, this includes Malaysian TCKs who migrate to other countries because of the lack of social acceptance and connection with the Malaysian local community. In my opinion, this is a huge loss and it shouldn't be happening.

Every Malaysian deserves to call this beautiful country their home, including culturally mobile individuals like our Malaysian TCK friends. Thus, my message to you is simple; if, or when you encounter people who experience this way of life, please be kind and make them feel welcomed at home. Rise above your judgements and see them as human beings who have gone through immense pain, just so they could fit in, be accepted, and finally feel belonged. On the other hand, if you happen to be a Malaysian TCK yourself, please know this; you are amazing and you should be proud of yourself for the long years of patience, strength, and perseverance. Remember, you are not alone and the roller-coaster emotions you went through all this time are valid. Be sure to know that home isn't just a place - it's the love and resilience you carry within yourself. Wherever you go, you have the ability to create belonging because it's you who define what home means.

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Black, White And Grey (What Goes Around Comes Around)

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The ringing sound was deafening as Belle was about to enjoy her dinner. With a sigh, she dropped the spoon and slowly walked to the window of her secluded home in the middle of the forest. She could see nothing in the darkness, but the incessant sound was an indication that something was trespassing on her forest. Her magic tingled unpleasantly. Any intruder was going to be bad news when her siblings were away. She did not want to deal with the intruder, whatever the intruder was.

Belle apparated closer to the disturbance, landing softly on the tree branches. She was keeping her mouth shut as the last ray of the sun disappeared an hour ago, rendering the whole land in a blanket of darkness. Her eyes were looking around the floor of the forest to see any oddities before slowly moving to another branch.

And then she heard a low humming sound. It was very low but loud enough in the middle of the eerily quiet forest. Belle landed on another set of branches to see what made those noises. Hum. Hum. Jingle. Jingle. Hum. Hum.

It was a human, or humanoid enough to be walking slowly upright on their two feet. The creature dragged their feet slowly, hands touching the plants and tree as if trying to learn them. The jingling sound also accompanied the creature. Was that a ghoul? Lost spirit? Or ghost? The creature was not aware of Belle.

The humming continued. Belle could sense that the creature was without any magic. But how did this creature cross the magic barrier around the forest? This forest was home to Belle and her siblings for years, and no creatures could trespass the barrier easily without strong magic.

From the branches, Belle could see the creature moved sluggishly further away from her but getting closer to the cottage. "You are trespassing in my forest." Belle gathered her courage and announced her presence. The creature stopped.

And grunted. The humming stopped. "No one can own a forest." A heavy growl answered. "Wrong. This is my forest." Belle gritted her teeth, still not leaving the branches. The creature moved. Heavy steps were heard, and more jiggling sounds. Stomp. Stomp. Stomp.

"You are sitting on the tree, girl!" The creature huffed. "Coward. Come down." The creature moved closer to the tree that Belle was perched on. And Belle could see the creature clearly. The jiggling sounds were from two chains shackling the creature's foot. And the creature. Huge. Hairy.

**With two horns protruding from his head.
And a disfigured face.
It was horrendous.**



"Don't come closer. I can harm you." Belle warned, magic warming up in her palms as she planned her escape if the creature went violent. The creature stopped moving as Belle's magic tingled, getting ready to defend herself. "You have magic. Disgusting!" The creature spat as it growled and dragged himself away.

Belle was flabbergasted by the reaction. She had no idea that the creature could sense her magic. "This place is protected by magic. You are trespassing it." Belle shouted as she landed on the ground, keeping a safe distance from the creature. "No wonder the shackles got heavier." The creature huffed, still dragging himself away from Belle. "Go away, you witch! I'll leave your magical forest on my own!" "You cannot leave on your own!"

"This forest will trap you because you are trespassing!" Belle shouted. And the creature stopped moving. "What did you say?" The creature growled. "You cannot leave without my help." Belle was stunned as the creature moved closer to her. "Why? You want to parade your witchy magic to me?" the creature growled again, And Belle could see the creature's stature much closer compared to when she was on the tree.

The creature was huge, with hair all over his body. He was wearing clothes, but they were all torn and messy. The chains around the creature's feet were heavy as they left marks on the ground. The chains that shackled the creature looked as if it was ripped apart from somewhere. "No. The forest listens to my magic; my family's magic." Belle explained. "I will let you leave if you promise to behave." Belle offered.

"Behave? What am I? Some sort of pets?" The creature snickered. And then lunged forward. Belle gasped. The creature grabbed her and wrapped its hand around her neck, leaving her hanging in the air. "I can snap your dainty neck in one go." The creature whispered sinisterly. "Even if the magic hurt me, killing you will satisfy me." Belle could feel her life flashed through her eyes. Was this the ending? Was this the Fate? A threatening growl rumbled from the creature's chest. And Belle could feel her magic coming alive, trying to help her break free, but the creature tightened its hold. "Let me go!" Belle struggled to break free.

"They called me The Beast. Magic ruined me and my family. They shackled me with magic. They used magic to torture my family. You witches have no mercy on mundanes like us. You think you are above the law." The Beast growled again.

Belle glanced down, and she could see the shackles around the Beast's feet responding to her magic, and she pushed her magic to work. And the Beast screamed. The shackles moved and wrapped tighter around the Beast's ankle, forcing the Beast to drop Belle to the ground. "Witches like you ruined lives!" The Beast screamed as it was struggling on the ground. The shackles moved on their own and wrapped around the Beast, rendering its movement to zero.

Belle could only watch as she was shaking madly. The magic did not listen to her, attacking the Beast without mercy. The magic did not listen to her. The magic did not listen to her. Vines from the forest's ground emerged and wrapped around the struggling Beast. And suddenly it was all quiet. Suddenly it was nothing.

With red eyes, Belle walked slowly around the Beast.

Her white dress fluttered slowly, hinting at a bad omen coming. The vines on the ground moved around. The vines covered the Beast's mouth, covering the whole body, covering everything, and almost making the Beast became one with the forest. Only the two eyes were left blinking as Belle hovered closer to the Beast. "Witches like me do ruin lives." Belle whispered. Tale as old as time, song as old as rhyme.

"But what did you do to get your life ruined by witches like me?"

Biodata of author(s)

Anis Athira is passionate about learning the English language. She graduated with a master's degree in English Language Studies from the University of Malaya and has a special interest in discourse, multimodality, and semiotics. She is new with Universiti Teknologi MARA and is currently navigating life as a lecturer with UiTM.





Firaun Ceritera

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Sejak kecil aku sering mendengar tentang kisah Nabi Musa dan Firaun. Digambarkan bahawa firaun adalah seorang yang amat kejam kerana telah mengarahkan pembunuhan bayi di kalangan Bani Israel. Namun al-quran tidak menyatakan nama firaun tersebut secara jelas. Firaun ialah gelaran raja – raja Mesir yang telah mendirikan Tamadun Mesir sejak lima ribu tahun dahulu. Tamadun ini kukuh berdiri selama tiga ribu tahun. Pada tahun 2015, sewaktu aku sedang mencari – cari buku untuk dibaca di sebuah kedai buku, aku terjumpa sebuah buku bertajuk Misteri Firaun – Musuh Para Nabi karangan Dr. Afareez Abd. Razak Al-Hafiz. Secara fizikalnya buku ini amat menarik dengan ilustrasi serta gambar yang dipaparkan pada kulit luarnya. Paling menarik apabila banyak gambar diselang-selikan dengan teks, menjadikan pembacaan sangat menarik dan tidak bosan.

Aku mulai membacanya sehela demi sehela sehingga habis dan aku akui buku ini telah memberikan aku perspektif yang amat berbeza tentang firaun.

Berdasarkan peninggalan artifak, pemerintah Mesir purba yang pertama ialah Raja Namer. Menerusi buku ini aku dapat mengetahui bahawa terdapat tiga era Tamadun Mesir purba iaitu Kerajaan tua, Kerajaan Pertengahan, Kerajaan Hyksos serta Kerajaan Baru. Piramid yang banyak terdapat di Mesir merupakan tempat pengebumian firaun era Kerajaan tua. Terdapat tiga piramid yang masyhur yang dapat ditemui di Giza, Mesir. Piramid – piramid tersebut adalah kepunyaan Firaun Khufu, Firaun Khafre dan Firaun Menkaure. Kaedah corbelling telah digunakan dalam penyusunan batu – bata piramid.

Nabi Yusof dipercayai hidup di Mesir pada zaman Hyksos iaitu pemerintah – pemerintah dari tanah asing.

Terdapat juga firaun dari golongan wanita iaitu Firaun Hatshepsut serta Firaun Cleopatra.

Tidak semua pemerintah tamadun Mesir adalah terdiri daripada rakyat Mesir sendiri. Tamadun ini juga pernah diperintah oleh kaum Assyria, orang Libya, orang Nubia serta orang Yunani. Firaun yang hidup pada zaman Nabi Musa berkemungkinan adalah Firaun Agung Remses II dan juga Firaun Merenptah iaitu dari dinasti ke-18, kerajaan baru.

Juga ada pendapat menyatakan bahawa Nabi Musa adalah Firaun Akhenaten iaitu anak kepada Firaun Merenptah. Firaun Akhenaten berbeza dengan firaun – firaun lain kerana beliau telah menukar agama bagi seluruh Mesir daripada penyembahan tuhan yang berbilang kepada penyembahan tuhan yang satu. Oleh sebab itu firaun ini tidak disukai oleh rakyat Mesir pada waktu itu. Dikatakan bahawa Firaun yang mengejar Nabi Musa dan pengikutnya semasa peristiwa Exodus ialah Firaun Merenptah kerana didapati firaun ini mati akibat daripada trauma hentakan ganas yang menyeluruh ketika masih hidup.





Paling menarik, terdapat satu makam firaun yang hanya terbongkar setelah 3000 tahun dimakamkan iaitu makam Firaun Tutankhamun. Ia adalah satu – satunya makam firaun yang masih utuh yang tidak terusik sejak mumia dikebumikan tidak seperti makam – makam firaun lain di Lembah Raja – raja yang telah menjadi sasaran perompak kubur. Terdapat banyak barang peribadi milik Firaun Tutankhamun yang masih berada dalam keadaan yang sangat baik. Ianya adalah sangat berguna kepada generasi kini bagi mengetahui tentang cara hidup orang Mesir suatu ketika dahulu.

Kemewahan serta kekayaan Firaun Tutankhamun amat terserlah dengan penemuan makam Firaun Tutankhamun ini. Firaun Tutankhamun telah dikebumikan di dalam beberapa lapis keranda dan keranda terakhirnya adalah diperbuat daripada emas padat berukuran 1.88m panjang seberat 110.4kg. Makam ini telah ditemui pada tahun 1922 oleh Howard Carter. Turut ditemui di dalam makam tersebut ialah kereta kuda serta capal yang diperbuat daripada emas serta banyak lagi peralatan lagi yang dipercayai untuk kegunaan firaun selepas mati. Firaun Tutankhamun merupakan firaun yang meninggal dunia pada usia yang sangat muda.

Dengan bantuan teknologi moden, umur firaun ini sewaktu kemangkatan beliau ialah sekitar 19 tahun iaitu pada tahun 1323 sebelum masehi. Didapati firaun ini menggunakan tongkat kerana beberapa tongkat ditemui di dalam makam kepunyaannya. Juga terdapat banyak biji ketumbar yang ditabur di sekeliling jasad dan kematian firaun ini berkemungkinan disebabkan oleh penyakit malaria yang dideritainya.

Buku ini juga turut menerangkan proses pengawetan firaun. Setelah mangkat, kesemua anggota dalaman firaun kecuali jantung akan dikeluarkan dan setiap satunya diletakkan di dalam canopic jar. Otak akan dikeluarkan menerusi hidung menggunakan alat khas. Mayat firaun kemudiannya diawet dengan direndam di dalam air garam selama 70 hari sebelum dibalut. Mumia – mumia ini kemudiannya dikebumikan di dalam ruangan yang dipenuhi dengan tulisan hieroglyph yang menceritakan kisah peribadi mumia tersebut serta upacara yang telah dilakukan terhadap mayat.

Firaun – firaun ini juga mendirikan obelisk, lambang kehebatan peradaban Mesir Purba. Obelisk merupakan tiang tinggi yang diukir dari batu. Ianya runcing di hujung serta dibina dan didirikan di hadapan ma'bad dan makam secara berpasangan sebagai tanda penyembahan kepada tuhan Amun. Pada tiang ini terdapat tulisan hieroglyph.

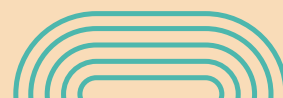
Kod tulisan ini akhirnya dapat dipecahkan oleh seorang Wanita Perancis bernama Jean-Francois Champollion pada tahun 1822. Di dalam buku ini juga turut diceritakan cara kehidupan rakyat Mesir purba. Ditunjukkan gambar tandas yang wujud pada ketika itu, rakyat Mesir yang gemar bersolek serta aktiviti – aktiviti lain yang turut diadakan seperti bermain muzik.

Banyak perkara yang aku belajar dan ketahui daripada buku ini dan ianya menarik minat aku untuk membaca dan terus membaca sehingga ke helaian terakhir. Tamadun Mesir merupakan sebuah tamadun yang sangat utuh yang mampu bertahan sejak beribu tahun lamanya. Sehingga kini masih banyak rahsia tamadun ini yang tidak terungkap. Antaranya ialah bagaimana piramid dibangunkan. Pelbagai teori serta andaian dilakukan sehingga ada yang berkata piramid dibangunkan oleh makhluk asing serta manusia gergasi. Logik akal, amat mustahil jika tenaga manusia biasa digunakan untuk mengangkat serta mengalihkan bongkah – bongkah batu yang beratnya lebih dari satu tan setiap satunya



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Fauziana Bt Fauzi @ Mat Rawi is a dedicated lecturer, researcher, and writer. She holds a Master's Degree in Economics from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and is deeply interested in innovative teaching methods and inclusive learning. She teaches economics to both diploma- and degree-level students. She has taught in UiTM since 2009.



Facility Fatigue: Where Whinning Holds an Honorary Degree

When I hear complaints, yet “again” about the facilities at the university where I teach, it was today that truly sent a shockwave through my nervous system and brain. And gone is the glory or splendour that the structures and the location as a whole once possessed and provided, along with its contributions and services which many have forgotten! I have experienced these concerns numerous times throughout my 18 years of employment with the same organisation and I presume that today would be the perfect time to share my thoughts on this issue and potentially provide insights for the readers.

It may seem a trivial issue to some, but somehow to me, it hurts the pride and dignity or the more accurate word to use to describe this situation is lowly or inappropriate for employees who work in the organisation to fail to recognise the so-called bureaucratic red tape that happens in the organisation. A different lesson unfolds daily, the art of complaining- which overshadow knowledge as a precedent in the great halls of academia.

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The grievances directed at the university's facilities appear to neglect a reality such as punctuality which also requires equal effort. From non-functional projectors to broken air-conditioning units, the faculty seems to have a list of grievances that grows longer than their lecture notes. But, beneath the commotion, there lies a harsh reality even the most basic problems are frequently left unaddressed because no one is to pick up the concerns, or worse, accept responsibility for them. The administrative offices, which are ignorant about the complaints from other employees within the organisation, frequently encounter obstacles such as constrained resources and rigorous approval procedures. These financial and regulatory constraints complicate the fixing of even simple maintenance concerns, turning small problems into major obstacles.

Then again, are the lecturers entirely free from fault? When classes start late without notice, assignments remain unmarked for long periods, and absenteeism becomes common, it raises questions about their own responsibilities and this weakens the position to criticise. Lecturers play a vital role in shaping students' knowledge and character, serving as guides not only in academics but also in fostering positive attitudes towards life.

Students may experience distress in an uncomfortable learning environment; nonetheless, it is the responsibility of lecturers to ease tensions and provide reassurance, rather than intensify frustrations! Lecturers must exemplify the principles they stand for, demonstrating resilience and problem-solving skills under challenging situations.

In today's era, where social media is a primary platform for students to voice grievances, lecturers must lead by example. Instead of allowing negativity to spread, they should encourage constructive dialogue and model positivity. Language lecturers, especially, have a unique opportunity to transform complaints into teachable moments, using kind and motivating words to inspire change and growth. This aligns with subjects taught to students, such as constructive evaluative commentary, which emphasises on skills like effective communication in both verbal and non-verbal situations. Similarly, business correspondence focuses on using appropriate language and vocabulary to deliver messages and opinions clearly and professionally.



Language lecturers, therefore, have a crucial responsibility to model and reinforce these attributes, both in classroom settings and beyond. By demonstrating effective communication, proper word choice, and respectful dialogue, they set an example for students to follow. Whether addressing grievances, leading discussions, or engaging with students in informal settings, language lecturers should consistently promote clarity, empathy, and professionalism. This approach not only enhances students' linguistic skills but also prepares them to navigate real-world situations with confidence and a positive mindset. Back to the point I previously mentioned, why do such grievances appear to annoy all parties involved? I will explain The Complaint Cycle Framework, which examines Helplessness (Seligman, 1972), Blame (Heider, 1958), and Collective Inaction (Latane et al., 1979). This framework may provide insights on the existence issues that remain unacknowledged.

The cycle of complaint in the university settings starts when faculty members repeatedly request maintenance for malfunctioning air conditioning units, functional projectors, and improved parking facilities, issues that raise the most complaints and yet administrative delays discourage future efforts to escalate or resolve these matters. Eventually, lecturers stop all attempts, but resort to other accessible solutions such as utilising their own portable projectors. Hence, whining serves as a channel for frustration although no further action takes place. This helplessness is further compounded when facilities fail to function, and lecturers blame the issue exclusively on administrative inefficiency ("They are oblivious to our needs") instead of seeking practical solutions. On the contrary, when students express dissatisfaction on delayed feedback, lecturers blame it on workload rather than inadequate time management. This fosters an unhealthy attitude to transfer blame, reinforcing lack of accountability on both sides of the dispute.

Finally, even when a faculty meeting acknowledges maintenance issues, faculty members assume someone else will report or resolve them. Likewise, lecturers trust that the administrative personnel would take actions upon the complaints made to their interests, leading to collective inaction that forms the dissatisfaction and grievances ultimately results in greater emotional distress.

The once magnificent structure, operating despite early criticism, now faces the pressure of numerous daily complaints. The university's noble mission and vision which are to impart knowledge and create opportunities for the bumiputra community have been undermined, lost amidst the chorus of grievances. The goals to maintain dignity and excel as a prominent institution for future generations have been predominantly neglected, despite the national anthem and university songs dutifully recited at meetings and gatherings, functioning as mere formalities rather than genuine pledges. It is deeply disappointing that some lecturers, entrusted to the important task of educating and guiding students, have diverted from their true purpose. Instead of demonstrating perseverance and guiding their students with positivity, they have yielded to the challenges they should overcome.

New buildings no matter how splendid they once were, will inevitably show wear and reveal flaws over time, this is the natural course of things. Likewise, the previously youthful and inexperienced lecturers have aged, and with this maturation, one would expect an increase in wisdom, patience, and proficiency in mentoring the forthcoming generation. Just as structures require maintenance to serve their purpose, lecturers must consistently enhance their skills to lead and motivate. It is an undeniable fact that, although facilities in buildings may deteriorate, the human ability to adapt, guide, and preserve the fundamentals of education is important in shaping a more promising future.

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Hidup Ini Suatu Perjuangan

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Di kala usiaku menginjak separuh abad, aku sering termenung memikirkan perjalanan hidup yang telah dan bakal ditempuh. Aku merenung jauh hidup yang semakin mencabar ini. Ibuku yang dulu kuat, boleh bergerak ke sana sini, kini hanya terbaring di katil tempat tidurnya. Ibuku kini bergantung sepenuhnya kepada adik iparku untuk mengurus keperluan hariannya. Hatiku sayu memikirkan keadaan dirinya dan aku yang tidak mampu untuk sentiasa berada di sisinya – walaupun rinduku padanya tidak pernah pudar saban hari. Ibu, maafkan aku kerana tidak mampu menjagamu seperti engkau menatang diriku sewaktu kecil dulu.

Abang sulungku pula, yang selama ini menjadi tempat aku berbicara, berkongsi cerita dan meminta nasihat, kini berhadapan dengan masalah kesihatan usai bersara.

Belumpun sempat menikmati usia persaraan, dia diuji dengan kesakitan. Tahap kesihatan dirinya ketika ini tidak menentu – hospital sudah bagaikan rumah pertama baginya. Sebagai adik, aku ingin selalu berada di sisi abangku.

Namun tanggungjawab terhadap keluargaku sendiri dan kekangan urusan kehidupan harian tidak memungkinkan itu berlaku. Dapat bertemu saban minggu sudah memadai buatku. Mujur ada kakak iparku yang setiap hari menemani tanpa jemu walaupun kesihatan dirinya sendiri tidak sekuat dulu. Doaku, moga Yang Maha Esa memberikan kekuatan dan ketabahan buatnya..

Tambahan pula, jauh di hujung negeri, bapa mertuaku diuji dengan pelbagai jenis sakit kronik – semakin uzur dengan keadaan kesihatan yang semakin merosot saban hari. Ibu mertuaku yang tidak menentu keadaan kesihatannya terpaksa menggalas tugas menjaga suami tercinta. Jarak yang memisahkan sering membuatkan aku merasa tidak berdaya untuk membantu mereka. Sungguh, aku harapkan ipar duai dapat memahami keadaan dan sama-sama menghulurkan bantuan.

Justeru, setiap kali aku menatap wajah isteri dan anak-anakku, aku tahu mereka juga memerlukan aku. Anak-anakku dalam pelbagai peringkat umur – mereka masih belum boleh berdikari. Mereka mengharapkan kehadiranaku sebagai seorang bapa dan ketua keluarga.





Setiap kali aku berasa lemah, aku cuba mengingati kembali akan segala nikmat yang telah dikurniakan Yang Maha Esa. Ibuku, walaupun uzur, masih ada bersama kami. Abangku juga masih ada dan kami masih boleh berbicara, walaupun tidak seceria dulu. Ayah mertuaku, walaupun jauh, masih diberi peluang untuk melihat anak dan cucunya. Dan aku sendiri, walaupun dibebani pelbagai tanggungjawab, masih diberi kekuatan untuk terus melangkah bagi meneruskan perjuangan dalam kehidupan.

Harapan menjadi pelita yang menerangi langkahku. Aku berharap ibuku akan terus mendapat penjagaan terbaik daripada adik iparku. Aku berharap kesihatan abangku juga akan kembali pulih sedikit demi sedikit, walaupun tidak seperti sebelumnya. Aku berdoa agar ibu dan ayah mertuaku sentiasa diberikan kekuatan oleh Yang Maha Esa untuk menghadapi ujian hidup mereka. Manakala, aku berharap agar diriku sendiri mampu untuk terus menjadi seorang suami dan bapa yang boleh diandalkan oleh keluargaku.

Dalam doa yang aku titipkan di kala malam yang hening, aku memohon agar diberikan kekuatan, ketenangan dan kemampuan untuk mengimbangi semua keadaan ini. Aku tahu bahawa aku tidak mampu mengubah semuanya dengan sekelip mata, tetapi aku percaya bahawa usaha dan doa tidak akan pernah menjadi sia-sia.

Sungguh, tanggungjawabku sebagai seorang bapa tidak pernah berkurang. Walaupun aku cuba menjadi pendorong dan pelindung mereka, terkadang rasa bersalah menghempas jiwa kerana batasan masa dan tenaga.

Di saat-saat sukar seperti ini, aku sering bertanya kepada diriku sendiri – adakah aku mampu terus bertahan? Usiaku semakin meningkat, dan tahun-tahun menuju persaraan juga semakin hampir. Hal ini membuat fikiranku kadang kala resah – namun, dalam masa yang sama aku sedar bahawa hidup ini adalah satu amanah yang mesti dihargai dan dimanfaatkan sepenuhnya.

“

Hidup ini bukan sahaja penuh dengan pancaroba, tetapi juga penuh dengan kasih sayang dan peluang. Selagi aku mampu melangkah, aku akan terus berikhtiar mencari jalan untuk memastikan semua orang yang aku sayang merasakan kehadiranku, walaupun dari jauh. Aku percaya, selepas hujan, pasti akan muncul pelangi. Hidup ini suatu perjuangan....

”

Biodata of author(s)

Dr. Mohd Izani Othman ialah seorang pensyarah kanan di Fakulti Farmasi, UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang Kampus Bertam. Beliau mempunyai minat yang mendalam dalam penulisan kreatif. Di samping penulisan akademik, beliau juga telah menerbitkan beberapa artikel penulisan kreatif dalam Bahasa Melayu dan Inggeris termasuk cerita pendek dan puisi. Berpanduan falsafah hidup beliau sentiasa berusaha memberikan yang terbaik, beliau terus-menerus mencari kecemerlangan dalam bidang profesional dan kehidupan peribadinya.

How I Accidentally Became a Tour Guide in Paris

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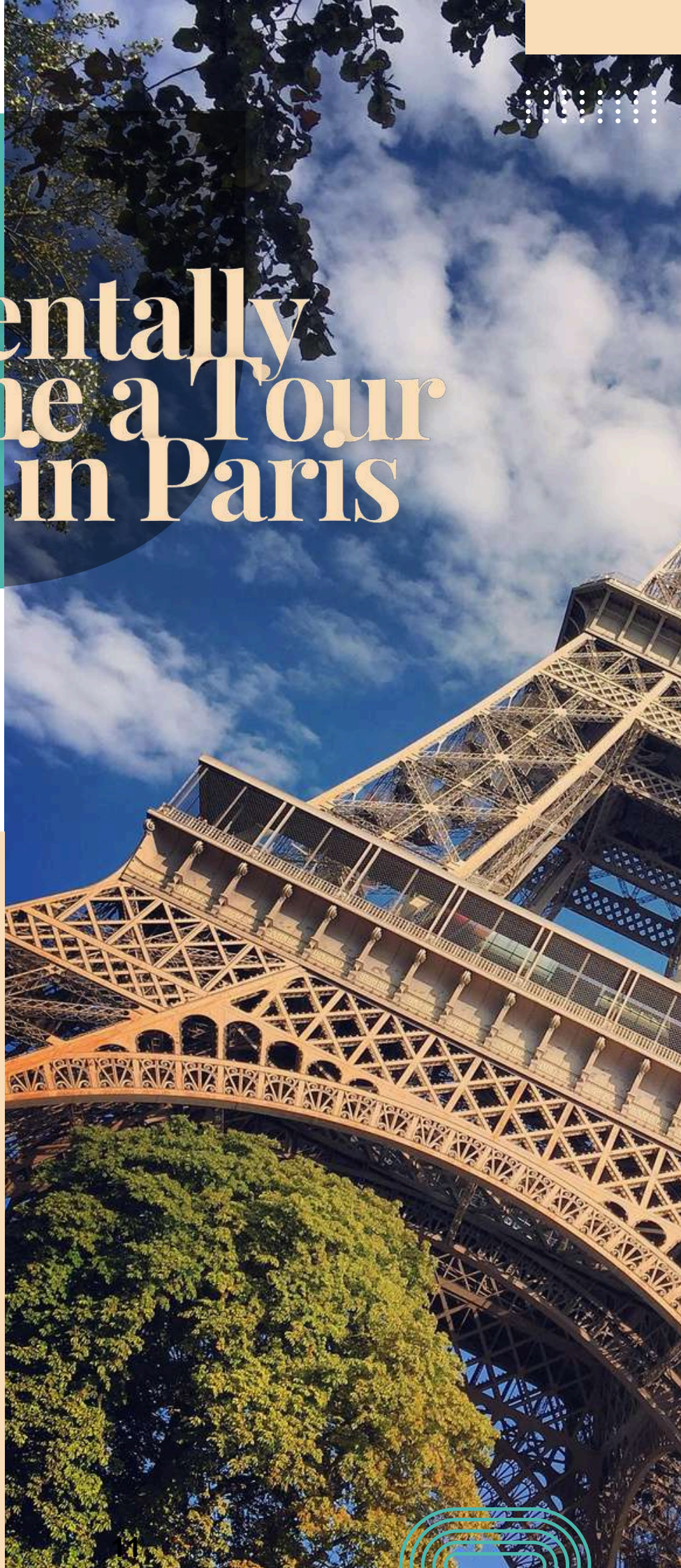
Paris, city of love, lights, and getting lost. When I planned my solo trip, I imagined strolling along the Seine, eating croissants, and blending in with stylish Parisians. What I didn't plan was accidentally becoming a tour guide for other lost tourists.

It all started when I was trying to find the Louvre. My map app told me to "head southeast." Great advice, if I had a compass or any sense of direction. While wandering aimlessly, I ran into a group of American tourists who looked just as lost as me.

Excuse me," one of them asked, "do you know where the Louvre is?"

I should have said, "No clue, I'm lost too." But instead, I smiled confidently and said, "Of course! Follow me."

And just like that, I had a tour group.





"I figured I could secretly Google the directions while walking. Easy, right? Wrong. My phone lost service. But I couldn't admit I was clueless. So, I made things up.

"On your left," I announced, pointing to a random café, "is where Ernest Hemingway wrote his famous stories." Was that true? Probably not. But they snapped photos like it was.

As we walked, I continued making up facts. "This cobblestone street," I said seriously, "is from medieval times. Watch your step, it's historic!" (It was just bumpy.)

By some miracle, we finally found the Louvre. I was ready to say goodbye and sneak off, but one of the tourists said, "You're such a great guide! How long have you been doing this?"

What could I say? "About 30 minutes"? Instead, I smiled and replied, "Oh, a while."

They insisted I join them inside. "You probably know all the good spots," they said. Sure, like the best spot to hide from them. But I went along, and for the next two hours, I led them through the museum, making up "facts" about the art.

"That's the Mona Lisa," I said, pointing to the tiny painting everyone already knew. "She's smiling because she just won a baguette-eating contest."

"Wow," they said, nodding like I'd just shared a deep secret.

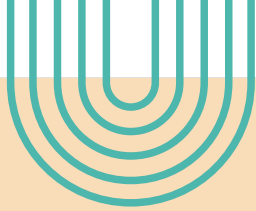
By the end of the day, my "tourists" thanked me and even tipped me! Somehow, I had seen Paris and accidentally became a fake expert in the process.

Next time, though, I'm sticking to Google Maps. Or better yet, I'll let someone else lead the way.

Biodata of author(s)

Dr. Roszi Naszariah Nasni Naseri is a senior lecturer at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Melaka, where she has been teaching since 2010. With a PhD in Technology Management and Technopreneurship, her research focuses on technology acceptance, halal studies, and consumer behavior. Passionate about bridging technology, culture, and market trends, Dr. Roszi's work provides practical insights for businesses and society. She is dedicated to exploring how people interact with technology, make decisions, and embrace cultural values in their choices, while also enjoying opportunities to share her knowledge and write about these evolving topics.





知多一点点 Know a little more

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在玛拉工艺大学的日子，不知不觉已经进入第四年。由于华语并非主科，因此每个学期我们都会遇到不同的学生。虽然与学生相处的时间并不长，但这并不妨碍我们在学习语文的同时，知多一点点中华文化的博大精深。

我的学生作为非华裔群体，对他们来说学习华语并非一件简单的任务，但绝对可以是一件有趣的事情。为了让学生更好体验学习的乐趣，我找出往年留下的红包封，带到课堂上。学生们看到红包十分兴奋，我猜想他们是误会我要给红包了。其实我只是没特地去买剪纸专用的红宣纸罢了。第一次我要学生挑战的字是“囍”字。学生对“喜”字并不陌生，他们知道“我爱你”，也会用“我喜欢你”。两个喜，双倍的欢喜，两个人的喜结连理，所以结婚的时候，便可以看到许多“囍”字剪纸。除了剪纸，我们也挑战了用红包封制作简易的灯笼。学生跟着举一反三，制作了兔子和鱼的造型。

此外，十二生肖对非华裔学生来说，也是十分有趣的知识。华裔家庭对望子成龙的美好祝愿，会体现在龙年特别多人生下龙年宝宝。比起龙的属性，学生更想知道自己的生肖属性。属羊的同学纳闷自己是不是等着被吃掉；属猴的同学，七嘴八舌地讨论自己为什么不会爬树。我说：羊是乖宝宝，可爱惹人疼。至于猴子应该是捣蛋鬼，喜欢爬上爬下，让大人伤脑筋。学生们哈哈大笑，想必是有人被说中了吧！

其实生肖的排法和属性来源于中国古代的天文历法和文化传统，具体与十二地支、天干地支纪年法以及自然现象相关。作为最基础的介绍，只要让学生知道如果他们知晓某人的生肖，便能推算出对方的年龄就可以了。于是，我那可爱的学生便问起了老师的生肖。

老师是不会那么容易上当的！学期结束前，恰巧便是华人农历新年。新的一年是蛇年，商场里将会摆上各种可爱的“蛇”形装饰，学生们也可以品尝象征“苦尽甘来”的年柑，或者试吃让人“年年高升”的年糕。如果有机会，再挑战有难度的剪窗花，肯定能沾一沾佳节的气氛与喜悦。





图1：学生用红包封制作简易的灯笼



图2：学生用红包封体验剪纸的乐趣。



图3：学生用心制作有关“十二生肖”与“十二时辰”的卡片。

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Loh Siaw San is a lecturer, researcher, and writer. She holds a Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese Language and Literature from the University of Malaya. Her research interests include teaching Mandarin as a foreign language, as well as Chinese culture and literature. Loh has authored several novels for children and young adults. Currently, she is actively involved in the teaching, study and development of teaching materials for third-language education.

Labyrinth Of Lies: Confronting Secrets in the Final Semester

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Chapter 1: The Shocking Announcement

It's the last semester for five brilliant students: Amira, the perfectionist leader; Danial, the comedian who hides his insecurities; Farah, the shy genius; Hakim, the charming manipulator; and Nadia, the quiet observer. They all admire their lecturer, Dr. Karim, a mysterious and highly respected figure. One day, Dr. Karim announces, "Your final assignment will be an individual project worth 100% of your grade. But this is not an ordinary project—it's about who you are. You have one month to complete it."

Later that day, they each receive an envelope with a mysterious note: "The truth will free you, but lies will destroy you." Attached is a clue tied to their darkest secrets. Amira's note mentions her betrayal of a best friend, Danial's reveals how his jokes caused harm, Farah's hints at stolen credit for a discovery, Hakim's exposes a broken promise, and Nadia's simply says, "You know." Eyes wide with fear, they realize this is no ordinary project.

Moral: Success built on lies will eventually come back to haunt you.

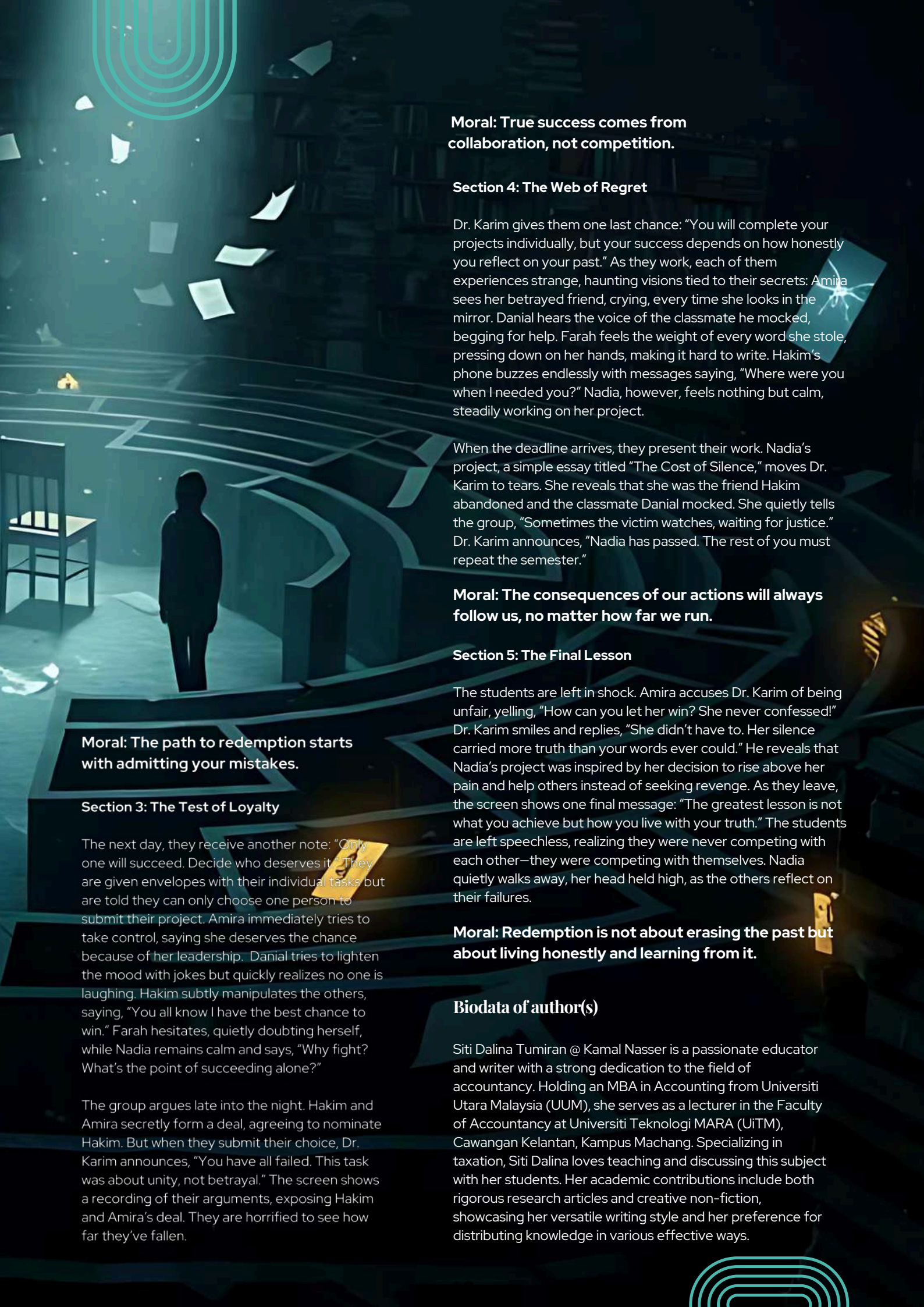
Section 2: The Room of Confessions

A week later, Dr. Karim calls them to his office, but instead of the usual lecture, they find themselves locked in a dark, soundproof room. A voice plays through a speaker: "You will stay here until the truth is revealed. Each lie you tell will cost you." The lights flicker on, revealing five chairs in a circle. A screen in the corner reads:

"CONFESSION TIME: 30 MINUTES."

Amira goes first, claiming she has nothing to hide. Suddenly, the screen flashes, "LIE DETECTED." The room shakes, and Amira's chair tips dangerously, almost throwing her off. Panicked, she admits she spread rumors to ruin her friend's scholarship application. The screen stops flashing.

One by one, they confess: Danial admits to mocking a classmate who dropped out. Farah reveals she published someone else's assignment as her own. Hakim confesses to promising help to a friend but vanishing when it mattered. Nadia says nothing, but the screen shows "TRUTH." The voice ends with, "Lies are only the beginning of destruction." They leave the room, shaken.



Moral: True success comes from collaboration, not competition.

Section 4: The Web of Regret

Dr. Karim gives them one last chance: "You will complete your projects individually, but your success depends on how honestly you reflect on your past." As they work, each of them experiences strange, haunting visions tied to their secrets: Amira sees her betrayed friend, crying, every time she looks in the mirror. Danial hears the voice of the classmate he mocked, begging for help. Farah feels the weight of every word she stole, pressing down on her hands, making it hard to write. Hakim's phone buzzes endlessly with messages saying, "Where were you when I needed you?" Nadia, however, feels nothing but calm, steadily working on her project.

When the deadline arrives, they present their work. Nadia's project, a simple essay titled "The Cost of Silence," moves Dr. Karim to tears. She reveals that she was the friend Hakim abandoned and the classmate Danial mocked. She quietly tells the group, "Sometimes the victim watches, waiting for justice." Dr. Karim announces, "Nadia has passed. The rest of you must repeat the semester."

Moral: The consequences of our actions will always follow us, no matter how far we run.

Section 5: The Final Lesson

The students are left in shock. Amira accuses Dr. Karim of being unfair, yelling, "How can you let her win? She never confessed!" Dr. Karim smiles and replies, "She didn't have to. Her silence carried more truth than your words ever could." He reveals that Nadia's project was inspired by her decision to rise above her pain and help others instead of seeking revenge. As they leave, the screen shows one final message: "The greatest lesson is not what you achieve but how you live with your truth." The students are left speechless, realizing they were never competing with each other—they were competing with themselves. Nadia quietly walks away, her head held high, as the others reflect on their failures.

Moral: Redemption is not about erasing the past but about living honestly and learning from it.

Moral: The path to redemption starts with admitting your mistakes.

Section 3: The Test of Loyalty

The next day, they receive another note: "Only one will succeed. Decide who deserves it." They are given envelopes with their individual tasks but are told they can only choose one person to submit their project. Amira immediately tries to take control, saying she deserves the chance because of her leadership. Danial tries to lighten the mood with jokes but quickly realizes no one is laughing. Hakim subtly manipulates the others, saying, "You all know I have the best chance to win." Farah hesitates, quietly doubting herself, while Nadia remains calm and says, "Why fight? What's the point of succeeding alone?"

The group argues late into the night. Hakim and Amira secretly form a deal, agreeing to nominate Hakim. But when they submit their choice, Dr. Karim announces, "You have all failed. This task was about unity, not betrayal." The screen shows a recording of their arguments, exposing Hakim and Amira's deal. They are horrified to see how far they've fallen.

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Siti Dalina Tumiran @ Kamal Nasser is a passionate educator and writer with a strong dedication to the field of accountancy. Holding an MBA in Accounting from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), she serves as a lecturer in the Faculty of Accountancy at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Cawangan Kelantan, Kampus Machang. Specializing in taxation, Siti Dalina loves teaching and discussing this subject with her students. Her academic contributions include both rigorous research articles and creative non-fiction, showcasing her versatile writing style and her preference for distributing knowledge in various effective ways.

Mak Kata 'Jimat' Lapi Borong Shopee

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"Jimat itu penting," kata ibu saya setiap kali kami berbincang tentang perbelanjaan rumah. Pesannya selalu diiringi dengan petikan klasik, "Sikit-sikit, lama-lama jadi bukit." Namun, siapa sangka di sebalik nasihat berjimat itu, ibu saya adalah pembeli tegar di Shopee.

Segalanya bermula pada suatu pagi yang cerah ketika ibu sedang duduk di ruang tamu dengan telefon di tangan. Saya menyangka dia sedang membaca berita atau berzikir melalui aplikasi. Namun ternyata, dia sedang memeriksa "wishlist" di Shopee. "Mak buat apa?" tanya saya sambil menyuap nasi lemak.

"Cari barang dapur," jawabnya selamba. "Mak jumpa satu set sudu garpu, cantik betul. Ada bunga-bunga di pemegangnya." Saya mengangguk tanpa syak wasangka. "Oh, baguslah kalau murah." "Memang murah," kata ibu dengan mata bersinar. "Cuma RM39.99. Ada diskaun 70%!"

Namun, kebingungan mula timbul apabila beberapa hari kemudian, abang kurier mula datang hampir setiap hari. "Mak, barang apa lagi yang sampai ni?" tanya saya sambil mengangkat kotak besar yang entah apa isinya. "Oh, itu rak kasut," jawab ibu santai. "Mak beli sebab kasut kita berselerak. Jimat tahu beli dalam talian ni, murah pula."

Tapi itu baru permulaan. Seiring minggu berlalu, ruang tamu kami perlahan-lahan berubah menjadi gudang logistik. Kotak besar, kecil, tinggi, rendah – semuanya bertimbun. Ada yang mengandungi bekas makanan, bantal leher, set periuk, hingga pelekat dinding berbentuk kucing.

"Mak, bukankah mak kata nak jimat?" tanya saya suatu hari sambil cuba membuka jalan melalui timbunan kotak. "Memang jimatlah," jawab ibu dengan nada penuh keyakinan. "Kalau beli dekat kedai, mesti lagi mahal. Tengok ni, mak dapat bekas makanan ni cuma RM2!" "Tapi mak beli 20 bekas," balas saya sambil mengangkat satu bekas plastik berwarna biru. "Itu sebab ada promosi 'beli lebih, jimat lebih'," katanya bangga.

Keadaan menjadi semakin serius apabila suatu hari abang kurier datang membawa barang sebesar mesin basuh. "Puan, ini barang besar ya. Nak letak mana?" tanyanya, hampir kehabisan nafas.

Ibu melambai dari dapur. "Letak saja dekat sini, depan TV." Saya mengintip ke dalam kotak besar itu. Rupa-rupanya, ia sebuah kerusi urut yang katanya "portable". "Mak, kita dah ada sofa. Nak buat apa dengan kerusi urut ni?" "Kadang-kadang mak lenguh-lenguh badan," katanya. "Lagipun, mak guna kupon diskaun. Jadi murah sangat!"





Namun, momen kemuncak berlaku ketika ibu memutuskan untuk membeli barang "unik" yang dia rasa sangat penting. Suatu petang, saya pulang ke rumah dan mendapati dua ekor ayam plastik besar berdiri di tengah ruang tamu. Ayam itu berbentuk seperti ayam hidup tetapi bersaiz gergasi.

"Mak, apa ni?" tanya saya terpinga-pinga. "Hiasan taman," jawab ibu dengan senyuman puas. "Mak tengok orang jual dekat Facebook mahal, tapi mak jumpa dekat Shopee cuma RM19.99 satu. Jimat tahu!" "Tapi kita tak ada taman, mak," kata saya sambil mengangkat satu ayam plastik untuk mencari makna tersembunyi di sebalik pembelian itu.

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Ibu hanya menjongketkan bahu. "Tak apa, nanti kita buat taman kecil dekat balkoni."

Minggu berikutnya, situasi bertambah pelik apabila sebuah kotak misteri tiba. Kali ini, ibu sendiri nampak keliru. "Mak lupa mak pesan apa," katanya sambil membuka kotak itu dengan penuh keterujaan. Isinya? Satu set pisau dapur berbentuk samurai. "Mak tak masak sangat pun," tegur saya. "Tapi nampak menarik," jawabnya selamba. "Lagipun, ada diskaun."

Saya dan adik-beradik lain mula membuat teori bahawa ibu sebenarnya sedang menjalani fasa "membeli demi kepuasan jiwa". Kami cuba membantah, tetapi setiap kali kami membuka mulut, ibu akan mengeluarkan hujah kuat tentang "keperluan" dan "penjimatan".

"Mak, apa gunanya mak beli lampu disko ni?" tanya saya ketika lampu berkelip pelbagai warna menyinari ruang tamu. "Kadang-kadang kita nak hiburan," jawab ibu dengan wajah serius. "Lagipun, kan murah. Cuma RM15."

Satu hari, saya memutuskan untuk menyiasat akaun Shopee ibu. Ternyata, dia adalah pengguna tegar yang sudah mencapai tahap "Super Buyer". Dia juga mempunyai lebih 300 item dalam "wishlist". Ketika saya bertanya, ibu hanya ketawa kecil. "Mak tak beli semua," katanya. "Mak cuma suka tengok-tengok."

Namun, kotak-kotak yang terus bertambah berkata sebaliknya. Akhirnya, kami sepakat untuk membuat intervensi. Satu malam, kami duduk bersama ibu di ruang tamu, dikelilingi oleh hasil "penjimatan" beliau.

"Mak, kita kena bincang," kata abang sulung saya. "Rumah kita dah macam gudang." "Mak, cuba tengok sekeliling," tambah adik saya yang paling kecil. "Apa sebenarnya keperluan semua ni?"

Ibu memandang sekeliling, seolah-olah baru menyedari jumlah barang yang sudah menyesakkan rumah. "Alah, tak banyak pun," katanya perlahan. "Mak, ayam plastik tu pandang saya setiap malam," kata saya sambil menunjuk ke arah "hiasan taman" yang kini menjadi penghuni tetap sudut ruang tamu.

Ibu akhirnya mengalah. Dia berjanji untuk mengurangkan pembelian dan hanya membeli barang yang benar-benar perlu. Tapi, seperti kata pepatah, tabiat lama sukar diubah. Seminggu selepas itu, saya ternampak notifikasi di telefon ibu. "Shopee: Tahniah! Anda telah memenangi baucar RM10."

“

Ibu tersenyum lebar. "Rezeki jangan ditolak," katanya. Dan begitulah, walaupun ibu berusaha "berjimat", semangatnya sebagai pemburu tawaran tak pernah padam. Kini, kami hanya mampu ketawa setiap kali abang kurier datang membawa kotak baru. Hidup bersama ibu memang penuh warna-warni dan kotak Shopee!

”





Memoirs of a Disc Jockey

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His passing was so solemn, perhaps, one of those sombre-filled moments in my life, so heart-gripping that tears welled up in my eyes, constantly swollen. Alas the tear-jerking moments of his passing in mid 2021, could only be consoled through the songs that he usually played on the airwaves during his disc jockey midnight runs. As I grew up, it was uncannily inevitable to have forgotten all those songs, tuneful as they were, ones that I grew up along the way, tunes that conjured the streams of consciousness. My humble but loving father was a musical-minded genius, often cranking up the tunes on the radio that had been ingrained in me till this very day.

Through his nurturing and fortunately, at times, unbridled upbringing of me; his idea of my adulthood training, just to be self-sufficient and independent as he always encouraged to be, there were yet, those moments, facts of life that I learned things through his tuneful memories of a song, or in most instances, a rack full of songs, contained in pure vinyl or in cassette tapes, stacked up in the cupboard at home.

Some of the memorable and notable early anthemic chants, contained in pure vinyl or in magnetic cassette tapes, came from Sir Cliff Richard, belting out spiritedly, the motivational "Congratulations",

"Congratulations, I want the world to know I'm happy as can be.."

This very line of the song, though predominantly a love song, ironically embodied the triumph of my primary school years, my 5 straight A's in my Standard 5 academic assessments during the 1970's. Oh how great it felt, my first academic victory, embodied by my father's joy and pride through the words of this very song. More rewardingly, it was a sense of jubilation that marked my maiden academic conquest, through this song that was dedicated to me across the airwaves over Radio Malaysia Kawasan Utara's Rangkaian Biru (subsequently renamed as the Blue Network, and thereafter TraxxFM); broadcast throughout the Northern region of the country from Perlis to Northern Perak.

He was a joy to his adoring listeners, his radio fans, never leaving it to any chance, playing every song request to everyone's delight setting the dimly-lit studio alight. Oh how those melodies, song requests that brought sheer to every radio listener, were never failed to be played, ones that my father, the disc jockey, unresistingly adhered to, which were always met with gratitude; carrying his spirit forward, overcoming all feelings of sadness and solitude, lingering in every musical note that resurfaced throughout the half-hour weekly radio show "Say it with music". that he often played and entertained in every radio show that he hosted for the past 34 years of radio broadcasting. Among the most familiar request cliches that one could almost predict in every song request from his ardent listeners were.....

"Uncle Richard (a.k.a Richard Murthy), could you please play me my favourite song...."

...which was often responded with a...

"Thank you so much for playing my favourite song, you just made my day, Uncle Richard.."

And there's the other radio show that Uncle Richard used to helm behind the microphone, Pick of this Week, a 30-minute musical rollercoaster, on the DJ console, dedicated to all 80's music enthusiasts. It was probably one of the most memorable educational exploits in my life through this fan-fave, close-to-the edit show that featured Top40 chart topping singles. Most of all, the top 6 songs picked for each week were chosen and decided by the radio fans themselves. As I nostalgically reminisced the production process of one of his memorable show preps, my father showed me one of his technical skills, one that involved the manual cutting and joining – splicing as it was called in radio-broadcasting lingo, in which he re-recorded the CD single version of the chart-topper "The Reflex" by the Birmingham-based supergroup, Duran Duran, the version with the remixed intro that was re-mixed by producer extraordinaire Nile Rodgers, the version that wasn't yet played on Malaysian airwaves (at that point of time).

It was exclusively re-mastered, in terms of the 80's era (when digital wizardry wasn't yet invented) and played on Malaysian airwaves several months long before it reached our shores, much to his radio fans' wonder and bewilderment. And to top it all, Uncle Richard pre-recorded on magnetic tape, the Single-version of "The Reflex" that was aired over the British Broadcasting Service (BBC) World Service Multitrack Chart Show (over the shortwave radio broadcast) and then spliced the pre-recorded version onto the Album-version of "the Reflex" onto the magnetic tape. And walla! As exquisite as it was, my father single-handedly crafted the newly-strung record with the remixed intro and played it on his Pick of This Week radio show over at Rangkaian Biru on that lovely November evening. And the fans loved it, and championed it as The Pick of This Week chart topper!!!

And with that, as they say in show business, that's our show for now; in his calming yet baritone voice, never failing to carve a contented smile on every radio fans' faces. These were some of the golden moments of radio broadcasting, all but a noble profession in the infotainment industry. And long to be remembered, in our hearts will remain, an unsung hero of the airwaves, entertaining and relaying information... May you Rest in peace, my DJ dad...

Pap, you may be my father in law but the 'in law' part is just a formality. Thank you for accepting me 'your sayang' and loving me as your own.....'Your Sayang'..

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My Journey: A Story of Life's Journey from Childhood to Adulthood

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My life, like many others, is a journey full of surprises, challenges, and joys. Regardless of childhood imagination to adult life involving serious decision making, every move I made contributed to my present self. In this autobiography, I invite the readers to delve into my journey, from humble beginnings to facing various life challenges that have made me a stronger and more mature individual.

Childhood: A World Full of Imagination and Freedom

My childhood was a time filled with joy and freedom. I was born and raised in a village, close and immersed in nature. Every day after school, my siblings and I would run outside to play in the fields, climb trees, and imagine ourselves as heroes in fairy tales. We didn't need to worry about worldly matters; only play and laughter filled our days.

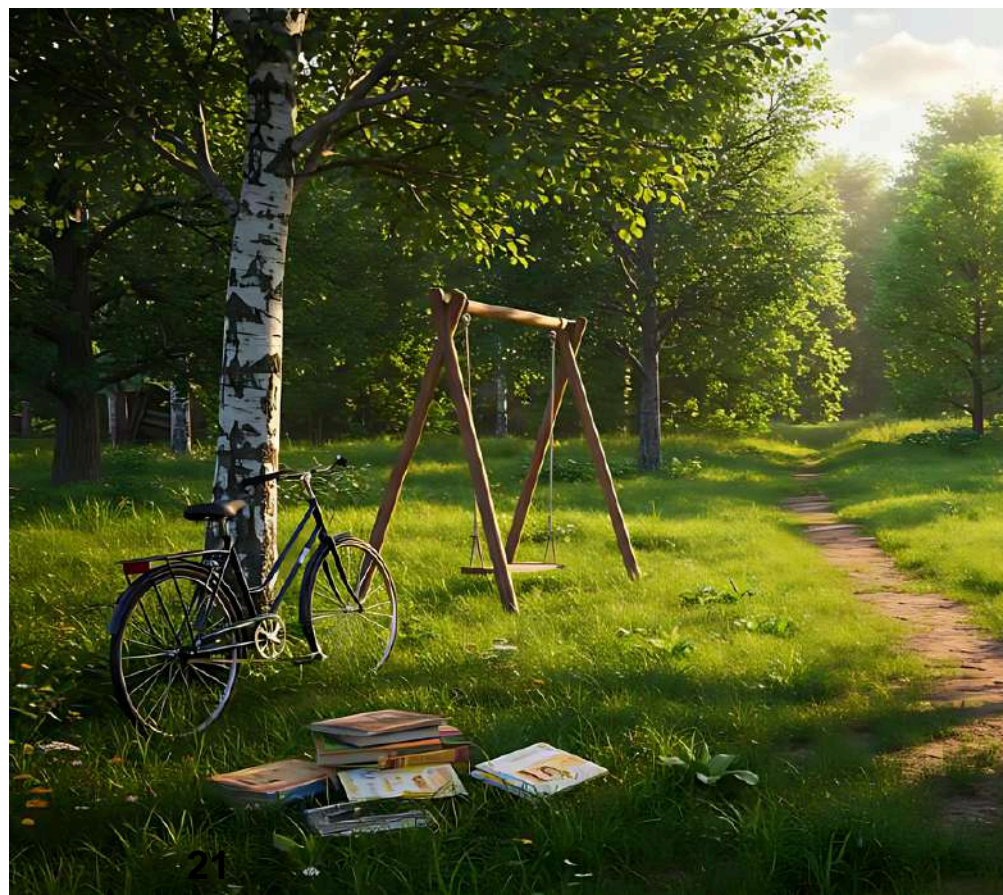
I didn't come from a wealthy family, but my family was rich in love and support. My mother and father were the best role models in my life. My mother, a caring homemaker, always ensured we received a good education. My father, farmer, never got tired of working till we lived well. I learnt value of hard work and that of small joys in life based on them.

A memory that will last forever is when I was a child, my mother was always there to reading aloud with us. She thought that reading was the door to knowledge world. After dinner, we would sit together, and she would read us storybooks. And from that place I started to read for pleasure and eventually fantasize about writing myself one day.

Secondary School: Challenges and Learning

Entering adolescence brought significant changes to my life. I still remember being all keyed up the first time I went to high school. I encountered a larger world, more personnel, and more problems. I started to make new friends and learn how to adapt to a social life of greater complexity.

When I was there, no one really knew me, and as time went on I was not very popular with students and I felt somewhat ostracized. However, I soon realized that school was not just about seeking popularity, but about learning and growing as an individual. I focused more on my studies and extracurricular activities. I continued to be active in the literature club and turned into a writer for the school magazine.



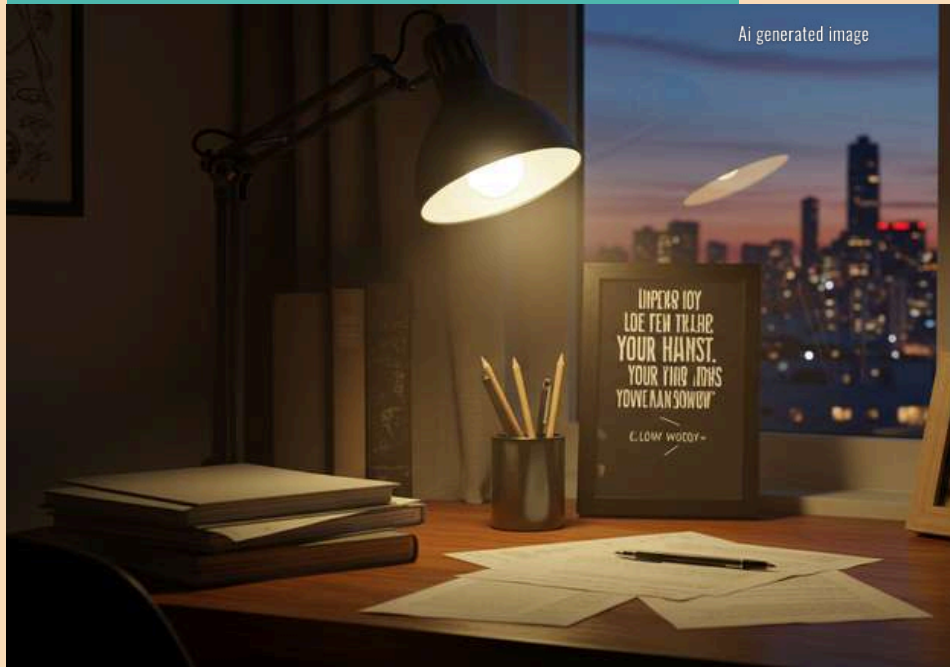
Through these activities, I began to hone my writing skills, which eventually laid the foundation for my interest in writing.

"Don't give up easily. All difficulties have solutions if only we try. Those phrases kept reverberating in my heads and provided me the will to carry on. I learned not to give up when faced with failure, but to keep trying and learning from mistakes.

University: Self-Discovery and Adult Challenges

I completed my studies at university after finishing high school. This was the most challenging phase of my life. Far from my family and home, I had to learn to be independent and make decisions on my own. The University introduced me to people of different heritages and provided me with the chance to look at the world from different points of view.

I chose to major in Arabic language because of my deep interest in Quran and Hadith. Throughout my studies, I met many classmates who inspired and supported me. Life at university was not always straightforward, with hard work and the demand for high grades, but I developed the skills for better time management and planning my life. I also turned myself to writing activity and wrote articles for college journals. This lead to me improving my writing skills and getting to know a wider writing world.



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However, my university years were not just about academics. I had several experiences that opened my eyes to the realities of the outside world. In my second year, I participated in a volunteer project that allowed me to help rural communities. This experience provided me with a new view of life and made me realize that helping society should be cherished.

Adulthood: Becoming a Mature and Responsible Individual

As a graduate, I started working for a university as a lecturer. My career journey was not without obstacles. I actually experienced the stresses of the job but continuing forward I wanted to. I kept telling myself that every problem is a chance to learn and improve. I began writing impactful articles, and little by little, I started to gain recognition in the education industry.

On the other hand, by virtue of professional success, I also discovered the role of balance in life. My personal life also evolved. I developed some better family bonds, and also learned to cherish time spent with family. I also started to think about my mental health and how to cope with the stress imposed by work. Today, when I look back on my entire life experience, I am thankful for all that I have done and seen. Each of my steps, each of my challenges, has yielded to me some of the most valuable lessons. I have also stopped to worry about problems but try to view them as chances for development. I have also understood to get the most out of life and not to forget what I have.



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Perpaduan Dalam Kesenian

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Perpaduan merupakan satu cabaran utama negara dalam memastikan negara terus aman dan stabil. Dengan adanya semangat perpaduan yang kukuh, pelbagai program dan projek dalaman negara dapat dilaksanakan dengan lebih mudah. Kurangnya perpecahan, kurangnya ketidakpercayaan, kurangnya birokrasi dalaman mungkin menjadi antara implikasi apabila perpaduan yang kukuh telah dicapai di dalam negara. Memang tidak dinafikan bahawa kerajaan selama ini sangat komited dalam memastikan perpaduan dapat dijaga dan disemai dalam jiwa masyarakat Malaysia ini. Generasi demi generasi seharusnya dididik dengan acuan perpaduan dalam memastikan kesinambungan perpaduan ini dapat diteruskan selama-lamanya.

Sebenarnya, terdapat banyak aktiviti yang boleh memangkin perpaduan yang telah dijalankan oleh kerajaan selama ini seperti program kemasyarakatan, program berkaitan kesukanan dan tidak lupa program berkaitan hiburan. Jika dilihat dengan lebih dalam, aktiviti kesenian juga sebenarnya menyumbang secara tidak langsung dalam mempromosikan dan memacu perpaduan di negara ini.

Jika dilihat dari sudut sejarah di Malaysia, penubuhan Balai Seni Lukis Negara boleh dianggap sebagai satu idea kepada pemangkin kesenian di dalam negara yang boleh mempromosikan perpaduan.

Masyarakat majmuk di dalam negara akan berkumpul dan menikmati hasil karya seni yang dipamerkan dalam Balai Seni Lukis Negara secara beramai-ramai. Ini secara tidak langsung menjadikan karya seni yang dipamerkan menjadi medium menggalak perpaduan kepada masyarakat. Oleh itu, dengan adanya dan bercambahnya balai atau tempat pameran seni dalam negara sebenarnya dapat membantu negara dalam mencapai tingkat perpaduan yang lebih tinggi. Tidak dilupakan juga, pameran hasil karya seni yang dipamerkan di luar permiss seperti mural dan arca. Sebagai contoh, lukisan mural berteraskan perpaduan yang telah dihoskan oleh Petronas Malaysia. Menurut sumber di laman web, lukisan mural ini telah dicatatkan di pelbagai lokasi dan menampilkan ciri dan elemen berkaitan perpaduan dan diberi nama ##tanahairku campaign.



Seterusnya, kepelbagaian busana yang mempamerkan budaya di Malaysia juga merupakan salah satu cabang seni yang boleh memupuk perpaduan. Ia boleh dicapai dengan penggunaan simbol dan elemen yang mencerminkan etnik tertentu dalam pakaian yang boleh digunakan oleh seluruh masyarakat. Ia juga mampu memberikan rasa bangga kepada pemakainya kerana mempunyai ciri dan elemen Malaysia itu sendiri. Selain itu, simbol universal seperti Bangunan Parlimen, Menara Berkembar Petronas dan Bunga Raya yang merupakan ikon di Malaysia boleh dijadikan corak kepada busana tersebut.

Kesimpulannya, peningkatan tahap perpaduan di kalangan rakyat Malaysia sebenarnya boleh dibantu dengan aktiviti kesenian tempatan. Elemen kesenian wajar diangkat dan digunakan oleh setiap individu atau organisasi yang mahu meningkatkan perpaduan dalam rakyat Malaysia. Ini akan menjadikan Malaysia lebih makmur, berdaya saing dan aman damai.

Biodata of author(s)

Ts. Mohamad Quzami An-Nuur bin Ahmad Radzi merupakan pensyarah dalam bidang seni reka grafik di Kolej Pengajian Seni Kreatif, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Perak. Penulis aktif menulis pelbagai artikel dan terlibat dengan pelbagai pertandingan inovasi di dalam dan diluar university tempatnya berkhidmat. Beliau sangat berminat dan mempunyai pengetahuan berkaitan bidang seni visual berkaitan seni reka grafik. Pada masa ini, beliau dalam proses menghabiskan pengajiannya dalam bidang Doktor Falsafah Seni Lukis dan Seni Reka.

Seterusnya, seni berkaitan dengan muzik mampu memupuk perpaduan di kalangan rakyat Malaysia. Bait-bait lirik yang menjurus kepada perpaduan juga boleh dimasukkan di dalam muzik. Irama-irama tradisional dan alat-alat muzik tradisional masyarakat majmuk di Malaysia dapat digunakan dalam muzik sedia ada demi mengimarahkan kepelbagaian yang mencerminkan perpaduan. Walau bagaimanapun, muzik yang berkaitan perpaduan dalam negara ini selalunya akan mudah di dengar setiap kali menjelang bulan kemerdekaan. Ini membuktikan bahawa muzik bukan sahaja menghiburkan, tetapi sebagai agen kepada mencapai perpaduan yang lebih baik.

Tayangan filem, drama dan animasi juga boleh dijadikan salah satu medium dalam memupuk semangat perpaduan dalam kalangan masyarakat di Malaysia. Filem patriotik seperti Sarjan Hassan merupakan salah satu filem peperangan yang memberi kesedaran kepada penonton akan pentingnya taat setia dan menjaga keamanan dalam negara. Bagi drama dan animasi yang ditayangkan di televisyen pula, elemen perpaduan boleh disuntik dengan penggunaan bahasa kebangsaan, kehadiran pelbagai bangsa, amalan hormat menghormati dan mempamerkan budaya setempat seperti yang diilustrasikan di dalam kartun Upin dan Ipin, dan juga Lat.



Plant Parenthood: Growing Plants, Growing Love

I never thought that a young tree would teach me the art of parenting. Yet here I am, looking outside my window and my eyes are on my small garden, marveling at how this new hobby has transformed not just my yard but also my perspective on life. Growing a plant makes me realize that it is much like raising a child. It demands more than the basics of sunlight and water; it requires attention, love, and above all, discipline.

It all started as a casual venture after I moved into our new house last year. One weekend, while watching a live session on an online shopping platform, I was drawn to the vibrant tiny saplings shown by the seller. A set of *Plectranthus mona* lavender saplings really caught my eyes, the seller's description boasting a promise of vibrant purple flowers and lush foliage. Without much thought, I purchased them, imagining a simple, linear process: plant, water, and growth. Very easy-peasy to care, I soon discovered how naive I had been.

Planting the saplings was easy. I followed the instructions on the tag, carefully placing each one in moist soil and arranging them in a shaded corner of my garden. For the first few days, I monitored my new plants with anticipation, checking for the slightest hint of growth. There was a tiny addition, still fragile and unassuming, but to me, it was such a satisfaction for a beginner.

After a few weeks, my enthusiasm met reality. The mona lavender demanded more than water and sunlight; it needed consistent care and an understanding of its unique needs. One morning, I noticed its leaves drooping slightly. I googled it up, the results showed it was a subtle sign of either overwatering or lack of light. Another day, I spotted the lower branches became darker and the leaves turned yellowish. Not only that, white fungi were easily spotted at the surface of the soil, just near the root. I thought that was because of continuous downpour at my place, and made the soil moist too much – soaked with water. The journey had become more complex, and this reminded me of the nuances of raising a child.

Much like children, plants thrive under a balance of freedom and guidance. Being over-watered, and the roots rot; being under-watered, and they wither. Similarly, excessive leniency or control in parenting can lead to emotional imbalance or a stunted sense of independence.

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Each day, I found myself asking questions. Is the plant getting enough light? Should I prune this stem or let it grow? In those moments of uncertainty, I saw parallels to decisions every parent must face. Should I step in to correct my child's behavior, or should I allow them to learn from their mistakes?

One significant lesson for me, care doesn't mean indulgence. A plant, like a child, needs boundaries. I recall the moment I decided to prune a sprawling stem to allow the plant's energy to focus on the blooms. It was kind of cruel to cut them off, but it was necessary for the mona lavender's long-term health. Similarly, discipline in parenting is not about denying love but about shaping resilience and strength. Allowing a child to have everything they want may seem kind in the short term, but it can lead to an inability to cope with life's inevitable challenges.

Of course, not all my gardening attempts have been successful. Apart from mona lavender, I bought a couple of lemon cypress saplings on another day. These 1.5 feet tall were stunning ones, with the nice smell like lemon grass and I was so excited about its potential to add a vibrant splash of green to my garden. Unfortunately, my enthusiasm led me to over-fertilize it, unknowingly causing fertilizer burn.

The once-bright sapling started to wither, its needles browning at an alarming rate. I was very frustrated, but the experience taught me a valuable lesson: enthusiasm is no substitute for knowledge. Plants, like children, require us to understand their specific needs. As a mother of three, now I understand what works for one may not work for another, and sometimes our good intentions can lead to unintended harm.

As the months passed, my mona lavender began to thrive. The first flower was small, almost unimpressive, but it was a triumph nonetheless.

It symbolized perseverance, care, and the invisible bond between a gardener and their plant. When I saw its vibrant purple bloom, I couldn't help but feel a deep sense of accomplishment. I had nurtured something from a fragile sapling to a thriving plant. Yes! It wasn't just the flower that had grown; I had grown too!

Parenting is much the same. The moments of pride—a child's first steps, their first words, their first achievements—are interwoven with countless days of unseen effort. Behind every milestone is a foundation of care, discipline, and patience. Like my mona lavender, children flourish when nurtured with love and guided with wisdom. I learned to embrace the small milestones—a new leaf here, a budding flower there—and celebrate each step of the journey. As a parent, I've realized that no two challenges are the same. What worked once may not work again, and flexibility is key to nurturing growth. In the end, I understand both gardening and raising a child are acts of faith—investing time and energy into something fragile, trusting that it will grow into something beautiful.



The mona lavender – Purple blossoms in my heart



Withered, dying leaves – leaving me cry!

Biodata of author(s)

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Nur Areena Aqilah Mohd Sapri

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Something felt off that morning. My colleague and I had planned to grab Roti Canai for breakfast at our favourite stall before work, like we always did. But when we got there, it was closed. Just... closed. We glanced at each other, then at the closed door signing us to stop, there was this faint smell of dough and curry that seemed like a tease, it tempted us.

"It's too early, I guess?" my colleague murmured, though the place was usually open by now. We waited for a bit, hoping the door might creak open any minute soon. Nothing. Just the flickering lamp that looked like it had seen better days. We waited, but it was clear our hopes were as shut as that door. Finally, we shrugged, exchanging a quiet laugh over our "failed" mission and headed to our car to leave, already wondering where else to get our breakfast fix.

Funny thing, though... I had this nagging feeling that by the time I'd wake up tomorrow, I'd barely remember why it mattered.

With breakfast plans thwarted, we eventually headed to work, only to find a new surprise waiting for us: our workplace had been transferred to an entirely new location. Boxes were piled everywhere, half-open, and colleagues were busy packing up the last of our things. What was even happening here



Quest For Roti Canai Takes A Surreal Turn

The new building looked modest from the outside, a plain, almost down-to-earth structure tucked between two towering offices. But stepping through the door felt like crossing into another world. The entrance gave way to an extensive, open space that seemed impossible given the building's exterior. High ceilings stretched above us, and room after room unfolded in all directions, each more expansive and high-tech than the last. I kept stepping in and out, rubbing my eyes to be sure. No matter how many times I tried, it was still enormous inside, way bigger than it looked from the outside.

It was like the space itself had stretched. Every corner held sleek, high-tech equipment I'd only seen in catalogues, gleaming with promises, as if the building itself were expanding around us, revealing new spaces we hadn't seen before.

I decided to take the tour, intrigued, though most of my colleagues had already given up and found places to sit, too worn out from hauling boxes. As I wandered from rooms to rooms, I couldn't shake the feeling that everything was just a little too... surreal.





As I wandered through, they introduced me to all sorts of high-tech gadgets, but the TV room was what really caught my attention. It felt like a hotel lounge—too perfect and polished for an office, with plush seating and a giant screen. But what really threw me off was the camera mounted in the ceiling. Just say, “Hey, Camera!” and it would snap a picture, like it was waiting for some grand reveal. The whole setup felt strangely familiar yet utterly bizarre, as if I had stumbled into a scene from a dream.

Just when I thought I was getting used to the new workplace, everything shifted in a way I couldn't quite explain. One moment, I was in a sleek office, and the next, I found myself wandering through a grocery store, picking up random items. I could only recall grabbing a yogurt drink, though I seemed to have a cart full of stuff. And then, out of nowhere, I was chasing someone down the walkway, fuelled by a sudden wave of anger. Clutching a steaming pot of water and a freshly blanched vegetable? I flung it at him. It was craaaaazily hot.

Just when I felt reality slipping away, everything changed again. I became a fugitive, running through what felt like an endless maze of aisles. I was being hunted down by the police; my name plastered on the serial killer list. They found me quickly, guns drawn and aimed right at me.

Biodata of author(s)

Nur Areena Aqilah is a writer at heart who sees writing as her favorite escape from the world. She earned her Master's degree in Library Science from Universiti Teknologi MARA and spent six lively years as a librarian at Sunway JB Library & Learning Commons. Along the way, she juggled roles as a social media manager and library marketer. As a lecturer now, she enjoys sharing these stories with her students, demonstrating that librarianship is far from boring!"



Without warning, they opened fire, and I took off, dodging bullets as they flew past. I had to find a place to hide, my heart's racing as I felt the sharp sting of being hit, but somehow, I was still able to breathe and move. I escaped upstairs, only to find another character waiting there, gun aimed at me.

Trapped, with nowhere left to run, I realized this was turning into something straight out of a nightmare. The last thing I heard was a deafening bang as I fell, my mind racing through a haze of confusion, recounting those fleeting moments as everything faded to black.

It kept getting weirder from there. I wasn't actually dead. My sister had jumped in, saving me from the brink and insisting I undergo plastic surgery to escape the chaos.

As I lay there, the surgeon chiselled at my jaw, and I could feel every agonizing moment. When it was over, I looked completely different—like a stranger staring back at me in the mirror. The surgery had left me so stiff that even moving a muscle on my face was difficult. I couldn't even attempt a smile; the pain was too intense, leaving me trapped in an expressionless mask.

Crying in pain, I caught sight of a hidden room across from me, a dark reminder of my past. My sister rushed over, wrapping her arms around me. “Don't cry, my little Barbie. I'll always be here for you,” she whispered, but in that moment, a chilling realization washed over me—I was nothing more than her trophy, saved only to become her prisoner.

And then, with a sudden jolt, I woke up, drenched in sweat. “Thank goodness it was just a dream!” I chuckled to myself. But as I glanced around my room, I froze. The mirror reflected a face I didn't recognize—my bedhead looked like I'd just fought a tornado-like battle, and I had drool on my pillow. I couldn't help but laugh. “If I'm going to be someone's trophy, I at least need to brush my hair first!”



Rani Oh Rani

Angeline Ranjethamoney Vijayarajoo, Sharina Salmi Azmi, & Afni Anida Adnan

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Rani was a resourceful young woman, not conventionally beautiful but attractive through her cheerful demeanor and radiant smile. She always dressed well and maintained a clean, welcoming home. Like many Indian families, her marriage was arranged by her parents, a custom she accepted without question. After completing her teacher training course, she worked and awaited her parents' decision to marry her off.

Her groom, Jega, came with a traditional village wedding. Though Rani's family had limited resources, the villagers came together to ensure the event went smoothly. Rani even contributed five months of her salary to help with expenses.

Rani and Jega had two children, whom she adored. However, her joy turned to sorrow as she discovered Jega was an alcoholic. He lost his job, demanded money for drinking, and grew violent when she refused. Despite her best efforts to hide this, neighbors noticed, and word reached her parents, who, bound by tradition, urged her to endure.

Determined to improve her life, Rani enrolled in a university program and attended weekend classes. As her children grew more independent, Jega's abuse escalated, extending to the children. Unable to bear it, Rani sought help from a kind colleague, Mrs. Maha, who offered her a small living space. One night, while Jega was out drinking, Rani left with her children, supported by her neighbors, who ultimately drove Jega out of the village.

Rani transferred to another town, completed her degree, and secured a higher teaching position. Though life was hard—balancing a housing loan and a second-hand car—she persevered. Her children thrived, with her daughter excelling in academics and her son completing a diploma with her support.

One memorable birthday, her children surprised her with a vacation to Bangkok, her first holiday and flight in 47 years. During the trip, she met Gabriel, a kind man from Finland. Their mutual attraction grew into a long-distance relationship, despite her initial hesitation. After three years of visits and careful consideration, Rani married Gabriel.

They honeymooned in Paris, and Gabriel, an architect, supported her family generously, even sponsoring her son's further education in London.

Rani retired early and moved to Finland, though she frequently visited Malaysia. Her children married for love, unlike her arranged marriage, and thrived in their own lives. Rani felt content and fulfilled, thinking, "What more do I want?"

However, tragedy struck when Gabriel passed away unexpectedly from a heart attack at 58, leaving Rani devastated. Yet, true to her resilient nature, she found purpose again. Within a month, she began teaching at a local school and soon became the Head Teacher of English and Environmental Studies.

Rani also initiated community projects, including activities for the elderly and after-school programs for children to nurture creativity and resourcefulness. With the local government's support, these programs flourished, bringing joy and purpose to many lives.

Now settled in Finland, Rani continues to visit Malaysia and welcomes friends and family to her new home. Her story is one of courage, perseverance, and inspiration—a testament to overcoming adversity and creating a meaningful life despite immense challenges.

Rani, oh Rani, remains an enduring symbol of strength for women trapped by cultural and traditional constraints.

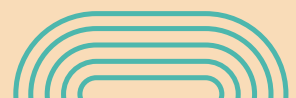


Biodata of author(s)

Angeline Ranjethamoney Vijayarajoo is an Associate Professor at the Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Negeri Sembilan, Seremban Campus. She holds a doctoral degree in education from the University of Malaya. Her interests lie in the teaching and learning of English for Communication purposes. She has written and published more than 25 books for schools and colleges. She has a deep interest in innovative teaching methods and inclusive learning. Angeline has worked on several projects but of late focussing on connecting and collaborating with universities abroad. Her work is driven by a passion for fostering inclusive education and promoting the potential of every learner.

Sharina Salmi Azmi is currently a senior lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Negeri Sembilan, Seremban Campus. She has taught various English proficiency courses such as academic writing, listening, critical reading skills, and oral presentations. She completed her undergraduate studies in English Language and Literature and pursued her graduate studies in Applied Linguistics at Universiti Putra Malaysia. She has more than 17 years of teaching experience. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and discourse analysis.

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Silap-Silap Tersilap Makna!

**Muhammad Luqman Ibnul Hakim bin Mohd Saad,
& Tengku Mohd Farid bin Tengku Abdul Aziz**

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Menulis dalam bahasa Arab memerlukan ketelitian yang tinggi kerana setiap huruf, baris, dan tanda bacaan membawa makna yang berbeza. Kesilapan kecil seperti meletakkan baris di atas (fathah), di bawah (kasrah) atau di depan (dhammah) boleh menukar maksud keseluruhan perkataan. Begitu juga dengan huruf-huruf Arab yang mirip dari segi bentuk seperti "ba", "ta", dan "tha"—tersilap tulis boleh membawa erti yang jauh berbeza daripada maksud asal. Oleh itu, penting bagi sesiapa yang menulis atau menaip dalam bahasa Arab untuk memastikan ejaan dan baris betul agar tidak menyampaikan maklumat yang salah.

"عَلِمَ" Sebagai contoh, perkataan jika tersilap (bermaksud dia telah tahu) akan membawa "عَلِمَ" ditulis sebagai maksud "telah diketahui", iaitu dalam bentuk pasif. Perbezaannya hanya pada baris, namun maknanya berubah sepenuhnya. Kesilapan seperti ini bukan sahaja mengelirukan tetapi juga boleh membawa kepada salah faham dalam konteks agama dan pembelajaran. Oleh itu, sahabat-sahabat yang menggunakan bahasa Arab dinasihatkan agar berhati-hati dan jika perlu, merujuk kepada sumber yang sahih atau pakar bahasa sebelum menyebarkan tulisan dalam bentuk Arab, lebih-lebih lagi dalam platform umum.

Keindahan Bahasa Arab: Teliti Huruf dan Baris, Elak Salah Makna

قَلْب (Qalb): Hati	كَلْب (Kalb): Anjing
صَام (Ṣāma): Berpuasa	صَام (Ḍāma): Bersatu
بَكَ (Bakā): Menangis	بَقِيَ (Baqa): Tetap/Tinggal
نُور (Nūr): Cahaya	نَار (Nār): Api
عَالِم (Ālim): Ulama	عَالَم (Ālam): Dunia
دِين (Dīn): Agama	دَيْن (Dayn): Hutang
خَلَقَ (Khalaqa): Mencipta	خَلَقَ (Ḥalaqa): Mencukur
سَفَرَ (Safara): Mengembara	صَفَر (Ṣafr): Angka kosong
فَجَر (Fajr): Subuh	فَخْر (Fakhr): Kebanggaan
حَب (Ḥabb): Benih	حُب (Ḥubb): Cinta
نَوْم (Nawm): Tidur	يَوْم (Yawm): Hari
نَبَت (Nabata): Tumbuh	ثَبَت (Thabata): Tetap
نَاس (Nās): Manusia	نَفْس (Nafs): Jiwa
قَسَم (Qasam): Sumpah	قِسْم (Qism): Bahagian
جَلَسَ (Jalasa): Duduk	خَلَصَ (Khalasa): Selesai
سَبَب (Sabab): Sebab	سَبَت (Sabt): Sabtu
ضَلَّ (Ḍalla): Sesat	ظَلَّ (Ẓalla): Tinggal
فَرَس (Faras): Kuda	فَرَش (Farash): Tikar
صَحَّ (Ṣaḥḥa): Benar	سَحَّ (Saḥḥa): Mengalir
قَالَ (Qāla): Berkata	كَالَ (Kāla): Menimbang
نَفَذَ (Nafadha): Melaksana	نَفَسَ (Nafasa): Bernafas
عَلِمَ (Alima): Tahu	عَمِلَ (Amila): Bekerja
شَمَسَ (Shams): Matahari	شَمَّ (Shamm): Menghidu
صَادَ (Ṣāda): Memburu	صَادَ (Ḍāda): Bertentangan
دَخَلَ (Dakhala): Masuk	دَجَلَ (Dajala): Menipu
عَظَشَ (Aṭasha): Dahaga	غَطَشَ (Ghaṭasha): Membasahi
عَبَدَ (Abada): Menyembah	عَبَرَ (Abara): Melintas

“

Image by Erni Abdullah from Pixabay

Sebagai kesimpulan, penulisan dalam bahasa Arab memerlukan ketelitian dan pemahaman yang mendalam terhadap setiap huruf dan baris. Kesilapan kecil dalam ejaan atau tanda baris boleh mengubah keseluruhan maksud sesuatu perkataan, bahkan boleh menimbulkan kekeliruan atau kesalahan makna dalam konteks agama dan komunikasi. Oleh itu, amat penting bagi penulis, khususnya pelajar dan pencinta bahasa Arab, untuk sentiasa merujuk sumber yang sahih dan berlatih menulis dengan penuh berhati-hati agar keindahan dan ketepatan bahasa ini terus terpelihara.

”

Biodata of author(s)

Muhammad Luqman Ibnul Hakim bin Mohd Saad is from Kelantan. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Arabic Language and Communication at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) in 2010. In 2007, he also attended an intensive Arabic language course at Al-Albayt University in Jordan. Later, he received a scholarship from USIM under the Bumiputera Academic Training Scheme (SLAB) to further his studies. He earned his Master's degree in Modern Language Studies (Arabic Studies) from the University of Malaya in 2012. In 2024, he completed his Ph.D. in translations and linguistics at Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UNISZA). He has published several journal articles and conference papers both nationally and internationally. Currently, he is a lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kelantan.

Tengku Mohd Farid bin Tengku Abdul Aziz is from Kelantan. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Education (Hons) (Teaching English as a Second Language - TESL) at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in 2008. Later, he pursued his postgraduate studies and earned a Master of Arts (English Language Studies) from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) in 2013. He has published several journal articles and conference papers in the fields of language studies, including research on code-mixing in social media and applied linguistics. Currently, he is a lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kelantan.





Terapi Lukisan Kopi

Rohaizan Mat Nashir @ Mohd Nasir

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Di sebuah kafe kecil, aku duduk seorang diri di meja kayu, memegang secawan kopi panas. Aromanya yang kuat dan menenangkan aku hidu, menyenangkan setiap deria yang ada. Tetapi, pagi itu, aku tidak hanya datang untuk menikmati kopi seperti biasa tetapi aku datang untuk mencari ketenangan, untuk menyembuhkan hati yang terluka.

Aku meletakkan cawan kopi itu di atas meja, dan mataku memandang kosong ke luar tingkap. Pagi yang cerah tidak mampu menghilangkan rasa sepi yang menguasai diri. Sejak peristiwa berlaku beberapa minggu lalu masih menghantui dengan perasaan tidak menentu. Setelah pemergian ayah, aku merasa seolah-olah dunia sekitarnya menjadi kabur. Apa yang dilakukan terasa kosong. Bahkan, hobi melukis yang dulunya amat dinikmati tak lagi mampu memberi kepuasan. Lukisan-lukisan yang dulu penuh warna dan imaginasi kini hanya menyisakan kanvas kosong seperti hidup yang sepi. Hidup ini terasa suram. Setiap langkah terasa berat, dan fikiran dipenuhi dengan kabut keraguan dan kecemasan.

Namun, di meja itu, ada satu perkara yang menarik perhatian, kertas kosong dan sebatang pen marker hitam. Terletak di hadapannya, menunggu untuk dilakar meluahkan perasaan. Pada mulanya, aku hanya melihat dan memandang sepi kertas itu, tanpa niat untuk melukis. Tetapi, kopi di cawan itu, yang kini telah mulai sejuk, memberi sedikit kekuatan padaku. Tangan kanan secara perlahan-lahan bergerak tanpa tujuan, menggambar beberapa bentuk bulat kecil di tengah kertas. Beberapa lingkaran yang aneh, sekadar bentuk yang wujud tanpa makna.

Tetapi, dalam keheningan itu, sebuah pemikiran menyelip masuk ke dalam benak ini. "Kenapa tidak? Aku boleh cuba."

Aku memandang secawan kopi yang kini hampir kosong. "Apa kata jika aku melukis dengan kopi?" bisik hati. Dia bangkit dari kerusi dan berjalan ke kaunter, meminta seorang barista untuk memberinya sedikit lagi kopi yang tinggal. Setelah menerima secawan kopi segar, aku segera membawa kopi itu kembali ke meja.

Aku menundukkan kepala dan mula mencelupkan hujung jari ke dalam kopi yang masih hangat, perlahan-lahan. Tanpa sedar, tangan ini mula melukis garis-garis yang lebih terperinci, yang akhirnya membentuk gambar daun-daun yang kecil dengan akar yang terjalin. Semakin melukis, semakin lancar pergerakan tanganku, dan semakin hidup pula gambaran di atas kertas itu.

Lama-kelamaan, bentuk dilukis itu semakin jelas dengan dedaunan yang berwarna keemasan, seolah-olah diterangi oleh cahaya mentari. Akar pokok itu yang begitu kuat melambangkan keteguhan, sedangkan daun-daunnya melambangkan harapan yang sedang tumbuh. Aku tersenyum kecil tanpa sedar. Setiap garis yang dilukis dengan kopi itu memberi rasa kedamaian yang tidak pernah ku rasa sebelum ini.

Seolah-olah setiap titik kopi yang jatuh di atas kertas menyembuhkan luka-luka, memberi warna kepada hari-hari yang kelabu. Perlahan-lahan, kopi yang digoreskan pada kertas bukan hanya membentuk gambar daun yang cantik, tetapi juga menyembuhkan luka emosi. Lukisan itu bukan sahaja mengisi ruang kosong pada kertas, tetapi juga mengisi kekosongan dalam hati ini.





Ai generated image

Tiba-tiba, seorang wanita tua di meja sebelah yang memerhati dan melihat dengan penuh minat. "Itu lukisan yang cantik," katanya dengan senyuman lembut. "Saya tak pernah tengok orang lukis dengan kopi. Apa maksud lukisan ini?"

Aku merenung lukisan ini sejenak sebelum menjawab, "Ia mewakili saya. Pokok itu menunjukkan perjalanan saya. Akar yang kuat itu melambangkan semua yang saya lalui dalam hidup, masalah, tekanan, dan cabaran. Tetapi lihatlah daun-daunnya, ia tumbuh perlahan-lahan. Ia simbol bahawa saya masih ada harapan. Walaupun sesukar mana hidup ini, saya percaya saya boleh terus bertumbuh."

Wanita tua itu tersenyum dengan penuh penghargaan. "Saya rasa lukisan ini bukan sahaja untuk anda, tetapi untuk siapa saja yang merasa hilang. Kita semua ada akar, kita semua ada harapan." Kata wanita tua itu merentap dalam hatiku yang mengingatkan kepada kekuatan ayah yang mengalir kini dalam diriku.

Biodata of author(s)

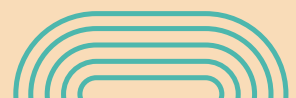
Penulis merupakan Pensyarah Kanan Kolej Pengajian Seni Kreatif (KPSK), UiTM Cawangan Kelantan. Penulis aktif menerbitkan penulisan bidang seni kreatif dan menghasilkan karya kreatif dalam bidang seni reka tekstil dan fesyen. Seni diterjemahkan melalui medium yang tidak terbatas melalui pelbagai sudut dimensi, pemikiran dan sentuhan emosi. Cabang seni yang meluas menjadi inspirasi untuk diterokai. Sebagai pensyarah, penulis berusaha untuk menginspirasi pelajar serta sesiapa sahaja dalam cetusan idea yang kreatif dan kritis dengan konteks yang lebih luas ke arah potensi dunia seni yang global.

Aku hanya mengganggu, merasakan sebuah kelegaan yang belum pernah dirasai. Dengan setiap tegukan kopi dan setiap goresan pensil, dia semakin faham bahawa terkadang, kita perlu berhenti sejenak dan memberi ruang kepada diri sendiri untuk melukis jalan penyembuhan kita. Terapi Lukisan Kopi telah memberikan lebih daripada sekadar karya seni, ia telah memberi harapan yang baru.

Di kafe itu, kopi dan lukisan menjadi cerita penyembuhan yang sederhana, tetapi penuh makna. Kini aku tahu bahawa penyembuhan itu bukanlah destinasi, tetapi perjalanan, dan kadang-kadang, ia bermula dengan secawan kopi dan sebuah lukisan yang ikhlas. Kopi, yang dulunya hanya sekadar minuman hangat waktu pagi, kini menjadi alat untuk menyembuhkan luka-luka dalaman yang tak terlihat. Aku tersenyum sendiri.



Penulis ketika melukis menggunakan kopi





The Pen

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**“Nuun. By the pen and
what everyone writes,”
(Al Qalam:1)**

It begins with a single statement from the initial verse in Surah Al-Qalam, which is a deep declaration. The pen holds immense significance as a fundamental mechanism in the discourse of knowledge. It serves as a divine conduit that holds the endless understanding of its Creator and links knowledge to humans; it is more than simply a tool. The Quran raises the pen beyond its purely physical appearance in these few lines, turning it into a perpetual light of knowledge and an indication of profound responsibility.

Fiction writers such as screenwriters and novelists are among the creative writers who find great resonance in this verse. The pen acts as a medium for ideas that transcend time and maintain the collective intelligence of humanity. Yet, this gift and talent comes with a great deal of responsibility: to utilise it with respect. Maintaining this basic faith in a world full of falsehoods and manipulation. Thus, realities, misleading rhetoric and fleeting tales are both challenging and essential. The notion of pen is anything but ordinary since in the Islamic thought, it is a sacred symbol of illumination. Its importance is emphasised by God's oath. This act of divine recognition emphasises the role that the pen plays in spreading knowledge. Writing creatively transforms the pen into a tool that breathes life into the imagination and feelings. Every written word resonates like a wave of energy, uniting writers and society while overcoming cultural and chronological barriers.

Think about the wide range of artistic creations including novels, movies, short stories and even television dramas. These are cultural archives that record histories, life and society. In this sense, they are more than mere entertainment, they express the author's viewpoint and thought (but sometimes interfered by the directors' or producers') by telling stories that subvert norms, ignite revolutions or uphold cultural identities. The selection of words constructs a meaningful sentence, and these sentences uphold the story told. The written word is a timeless record that preserves knowledge and life lessons for generations to come.





The significant influence of writing systems is demonstrated by history. Pallava, Kawi, Sanskrit, Jawi and Rumi scripts have shaped entire civilisations and advanced empires, religions, and cultures. Additionally, these writing systems were symbols of power, quietly imposing their will on their adopters. For instance, in Korea, Hangul became a new writing system and a linguistic tool for protesting the domination of the Ming Dynasty. Writing systems are, therefore, not just tools but crucial instruments of power and identity resistance.

Narratives become transformative vessels in the field of creative writing. Every story holds the power to change social norms and extend viewpoints. Authors have a big duty to make sure that their writing is truth-based while educating and inspiring. The 'pen' is a sacred knowledge and trust given by the Divine to communicate what was previously unknown; it is more than just an instrument. However, there may be serious consequences if this trust is violated. When a pen is mistreated, it loses its integrity and purpose and turns into a destructive instrument. Despite being inventive, fiction needs to stay grounded. Self-indulgent narratives written purely for one's own enjoyment run the risk of spreading ignorance. The divine soul of the pen is betrayed by such misdirected compositions. A responsible writer understands that every word matters, has the power to mould ideas, and affect people's lives.

Life itself is creative writing. Without life there is no story to tell. Each word that is chosen with care tells a story that adds to a larger meaning. Beyond just the process of narrating stories, a writer's responsibility is to instill profoundly felt beliefs and create connections that cut over time and location. Fundamentally, storytelling serves as a means of imparting knowledge, offering society new perspectives on the world through empathy and comprehension. The pen must become a voice of knowledge and clarity that transcends time in a world where truth and deceit are linked. The honor and duty of chronicling their time while conserving insights and knowledge for future generations comes upon writers. Writing is an act of devotion as much as a craft; it reflects the writer's thought, wisdom and dedication to authenticity, truth and purpose. As we fulfil the sacred task assigned to the pen, may every word we write serve as proof of our commitment to enlighten, inspire and uplift.

Biodata of author(s)

Dr. Ayu Haswida Abu Bakar, a scholar and creative writer, holds a Ph.D. in Film Culture. Her academic research focuses on Southeast Asian and East Asian cinema and television drama. Writing under the name Haswida Abu Bakar, she is an accomplished storyteller with a portfolio that includes novels, short stories and scripts for television and film. Her works reflect a strong connection to cultural heritage, bringing depth and authenticity to her narratives. Her most recent project, a 26-episode TV drama titled *Buang Segala Tentang Dia*, aired on TV1 and a horror film *Bisikan Dosa*, highlighting her ability to create captivating stories for mainstream audiences. She is now working on a mythology-inspired horror novel rooted in local folklore, combining her academic expertise with her passion for exploring cultural myths and the supernatural.



What Is Ageing? Does It Mean The End Of The World? Is 'Ageing Gracefully' Even Possible?

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One evening, as I entered the bedroom after dinner, I saw my husband sitting at the edge of the bed and rubbing his knees gently. He was going to retire at 60 in less than a week. The smell of his massage oil filled our bedroom. I rarely saw him like this. He had been a policeman for almost 35 years. He had always seemed healthy and active. Other than the fact that he was a heavy smoker until 3 years ago and was diagnosed as having chronic obstructive airway disease, he was completely healthy. He had no diabetes or hypertension, and his cholesterol level was within the normal range. But as his retirement approached, I noticed changes. He slept more during the day, watched less television, and woke up early every morning, which was not entirely bad because he could go for Subuh prayer more often. Many people plan to be more pious after retirement. This is probably due to work commitments and household responsibilities. By the time they retire, their children have grown into adults, leaving them with fewer worries and more time for Allah. But is that really the case?

Scientifically, ageing is caused by the accumulation of a wide variety of molecular and cellular damage over time. It is associated with a gradual decline in physical and mental capacity, predisposes to diseases and ultimately death.

People are surviving into old age, most can expect to reach 60 years or longer. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), by 2030, elderly people aged 60 years will reach 1.4 billion.

Old age should be regarded as a blessing, rather than something to be afraid of. It offers more time with family and friends. It allows us to repent and reconnect with our Creator. It is also associated with hearing loss, cataracts and refractive errors, osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia. Additionally, an older person is more likely to have a mixture of these conditions.

Just like the pediatric population or pregnant women, ageing is a physiological process that everybody has to go through if one lives long enough.

Older age is so special that there is an area of medicine dedicated to the care of the elderly, known as geriatric medicine. The age for the elderly or geriatric population has not been specified by the WHO, but it roughly refers to 65 years old and older.

In my husband's case, he has a lot to be thankful for. What is a bit of knee pain compared to someone who is suffering from cancer or autoimmune diseases? He might be experiencing early osteoarthritis which is a part of ageing. If the pain is mild and tolerable, he can take oral analgesics like paracetamol or anti-inflammatory drugs like diclofenac or celecoxib and apply some topical treatment. A more advanced osteoarthritis might render the use of intra-articular steroid or hyaluronic acid injections or for worse cases, a joint replacement may be necessary. As much as ageing and death are unavoidable, we should try to practice a healthy lifestyle. Hopefully, by taking care of one's health, we can live a healthy and fruitful life. The best we can do is try.

Biodata of author(s)

Fatmawati Kamal is a lecturer in haematopathology and an occasional writer. She holds a master's degree in pathology from Universiti Malaya and has a deep interest in haemostasis and transplant immunology. Currently, she is actively teaching pathology at the Faculty of Medicine UiTM. She is a strong believer in knowledgeable patients.



Write Now

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I felt anxious and nervous at the same time when I texted him, an associate professor who is an expert in qualitative research, for a meetup. I was thinking of thanking him for his tips on a successful transfer application. We met at the library, and I recognized him based on his Instagram account. I listened to him, who is also a licensed psychologist, talking about writing.

I will never have time for anything. I will be in class for 18 hours a week, which roughly translates to seeing students for about four hours in a day. I will be dealing with an average of 150 to 180 students for three courses in 14 weeks. I need to process an average of four continuous assessments for one course. I need to update both hard copies and electronic files.

I may want to write at least a page a day. However, I do not know what I want to write. I need to organize my thoughts. There will be drafts after drafts until I feel confident that I convey what I want clearly. I will spend a lot of time getting back on track when there are unexpected events. Without understanding what I don't know, I can't be certain that I'm on the right track.

I need to be with my family, so I must find a space to write. I find it difficult to write at three or four in the morning as I require seven hours of sleep. I will not be fully awake to drive, let alone carry out the daily work routine. I do not welcome the possibility of getting dark circles under my eyes. Moreover, I am prone to making mistakes when I do not have enough sleep.

A lecturer consistently responds to my queries or completes a section of work within a single working day. Despite this, he would post his leisure activities on WhatsApp status, including fishing, bodybuilding, playing electric guitar, and riding a superbike. He was also one of the recipients of the annual Excellent Service Award, which convinces me that he is a genius.

I had always thought about how fortunate someone would be to have full support from their family members, until I learned at a lunch that a senior lecturer was a cancer survivor. She is an expert in language studies and modestly asserted that, given her advanced age, she has published more articles than anyone else. She has three successful children despite her husband passing away. I congratulated her on her annual Excellent Service Award, to which she responded that it was due to her impending retirement.

I was a little surprised when an associate professor, who also serves as an external PhD thesis examiner, volunteered to participate in corporate social responsibility activities at a local vernacular primary school. In my opinion, these activities do not have the same significant impact as writing. Under the roofed school hall, she sat on the cemented floor with her students in a circle, ensuring her voice remained unheard by other nearby student groups. Her students were the only group that managed to recite a two-page English poem fluently after a forty-minute instruction. I am running out of valid excuses for my idleness.

Biodata of author(s)

Ong Elly is currently attached to UiTM Perak Branch.





Empowering Young Minds Through English Language Games via a USR Project

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In a heartwarming display of community spirit, the recent "Wings of Words – English for Empowered Futures" project held on 15 March 2025 brought joy and learning to 30 school-going boys. Organized as part of a University Social Responsibility (USR) initiative, the event was designed to enhance language skills, foster creativity, and promote teamwork in a fun and engaging environment. Held over the course of a half day, the event featured four language-based games that encouraged the children to express themselves, collaborate with others, and develop essential communication skills. This project was made possible with the collaborations of four parties which are the Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch, Pertubuhan Rumah Anak Yatim Kuala Muda, Kedah, Maahad Tahfiz Al Iman Al Qurtubi, Semeling, Kedah and the main sponsor, Poliklinik Dr. Azhar dan Rakan-rakan, Sungai Petani, Kedah.

The initiative aimed to give 20 boys of Pertubuhan Rumah Anak Yatim Kuala Muda, Kedah and 10 boys of Maahad Tahfiz Al Iman Al Qurtubi, Semeling, Kedah, a memorable experience that also supported their educational and emotional growth.

"We wanted to create an experience that was not just fun, but meaningful," said Puan Razanawati Nordin, the first project manager. "By incorporating interactive language games, we hoped to open up new ways for these young minds to explore language, expression, and the world around them," added Puan Syazliyati Ibrahim, the second project manager.

The day kicked off with the students answering a set of ten pre-test questions on learning English using games. After the pre-test answering session, an exciting ice-breaker game focused on grouping the boys into smaller groups was conducted. After grouping the boys into six groups, the boys were then required to complete the language tasks at three stations.

The first station was called the Giant Block. At this energising station, students used giant dice imprinted with letters to form as many words as possible. It was a race against time and a test of vocabulary, as students physically engaged with language in a kinetic, team-based activity.

The second station was named Word Treasure. Here, students channelled their inner wordsmiths by using adjectives to describe people, characters, or classmates. The challenge was to make descriptions vivid, original, and accurate. This station emphasized emotional intelligence, observation, and the power of precise language.



Lastly, the students have to compete at the third and last station called Blockbuster.

A thrilling quiz-style challenge, Blockbuster sees teams compete to answer general knowledge questions and earn points. Language meets logic as students draw on what they know—and how well they can express it under pressure.

After completing all the thrilling games, the students were asked to answer a set of post-test questions. This event wrapped up with a vibrant closing ceremony, where excitement was in the air as students gathered to celebrate their hard work and achievements. Winners from each station were awarded prizes, cheered on by their peers and teachers. During the meaningful closing ceremony, every student was given a complete set of personal care products from toothbrushes, toothpaste, shower gel and other products which would be useful for their day-to-day personal hygiene. Poliklinik Dr. Azhar and Rakan-rakan, represented by the Marketing Manager, Dr. Ku Muhammad Azwan bin Ku Azhar also gave away money packets to every student since the event was conducted just two weeks short of the Aidilfitri celebration.

"The smiles on their faces said it all," said Encik Azlan Abdul Rahman, the Head of Learning Centre of the Academy of Language Studies, Kedah Branch. "Every student gave their best, and it was wonderful to see their efforts recognized." The ceremony served as a joyful ending to a morning of discovery, creativity, and teamwork—leaving students motivated and proud.



The success of the "Wings of Words- English for Empowered Futures" project has sparked discussions about the possibility of future collaborations between Pertubuhan Rumah Anak Yatim Kuala Muda, Maahad Tahfiz Al Iman Al Qurtubi, and also Poliklinik Dr. Azhar and Rakan-rakan. Encik Mohamad Fakiran Mohamad Ridzuan, the Manager at Pertubuhan Rumah Anak Yatim Kuala Muda, Kedah, Ustaz Norhissyam Ismail, the principal of Maahad Tahfiz Al Iman Al Qurtubi and Dr. Ku Muhammad Azwan bin Ku Azhar all have expressed positive aspirations for future collaborations.

The faculty members are also eager to continue making a positive impact on the community by using creative and educational approaches to connect with those in need. As the event ended, the students involved left with not only new skills and knowledge but also a renewed sense of joy and possibility. "Wings of Words- English for Empowered Futures" proved that, with a little creativity and a lot of heart, even a few hours can make a big difference in a young person's life.

Biodata of author(s)

Syazliyyati Ibrahim is a senior lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch. Her research interests are literary analysis, internationalisation, intercultural communication as well as university social responsibility. She loves to observe life and indulge in good books. However, to keep up with the trend, she also makes sure that she is up to date with the latest K-dramas and restaurants that serve great dishes.

Razanawati Nordin is a dynamic language educator, award-winning innovator, and proud mother, currently pursuing her PhD in special needs and language education. Her passion lies in empowering special needs learners, especially through creative verbal communication. With a flair for teaching innovation and storytelling, her research explores autism, resilience, and inclusive language teaching practices.

Azlan Abdul Rahman is a Senior Lecturer at the Akademi Pengajian Bahasa (APB), UiTM Kedah Branch. He has over 15 years of experience in English language teaching and holds strong interests in language, communication, public relations, and leadership. He currently serves as the Head of Centre at the Akademi Pengajian Bahasa (APB), UiTM Kedah Branch.





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