



# *The* **Epitome** */I'pitəmi/*

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Cawangan Kedah

*We are back!  
Welcoming the epitome of artistic ideas &  
astonishing writers!*

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## **SYNOPSIS**

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

The primary objective of THE EPITOME is to offer a platform where 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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*Every day is learning curves...*

Dear Readers,

We are back! We are thrilled to present a collection of articles that we believe capture the essence of the writers. Our team has worked diligently to curate content that we hope will both engage and resonate with you.

In these pages, you will find a diverse range of perspectives on life, from joy to sorrow. We hope these pieces inspire reflection and spark meaningful conversations.

We want to express our deepest gratitude to our talented contributors for their time and expertise. Their dedication is what makes the second issue of Epitome possible.

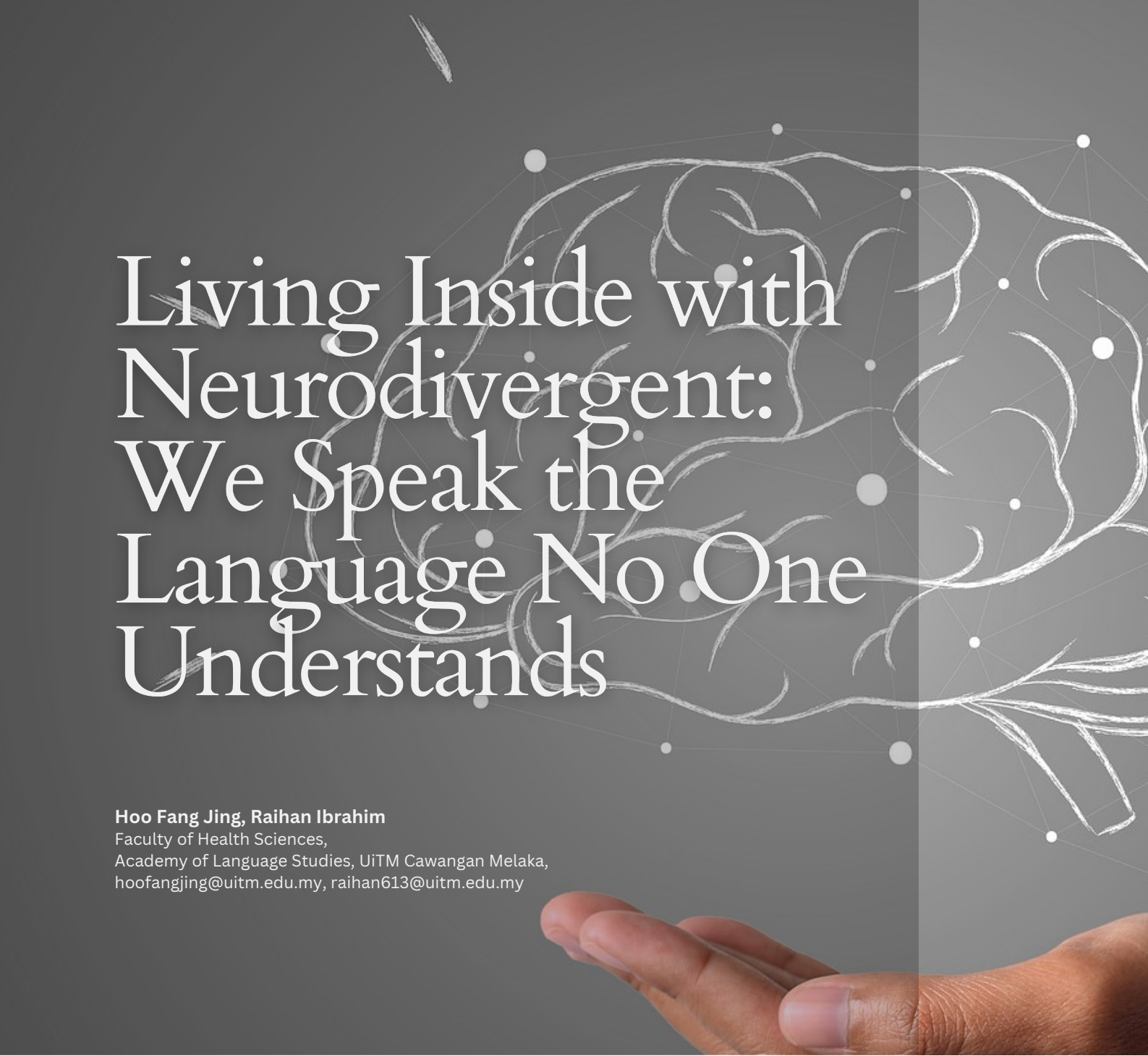
As always, we value your feedback. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your thoughts and suggestions.

Thank you for being a part of our Epitome community.

Warm regards,

**Razanawati Nordin**  
**Editor-in-Chief,**  
**The Epitome**

EDITOR'S NOTE



# Living Inside with Neurodivergent: We Speak the Language No One Understands

**Hoo Fang Jing, Raihan Ibrahim**

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Special needs are used to describe people who need support with disabilities that may be physical, mental, or psychological in clinical diagnosis and functional development. The words we use to describe one thing have stayed persistently behind as society has become more considerate of the needs of people with disabilities.

The push for people first language is on. The first step in eliminating minor biases that could be projected onto people with disabilities is becoming aware of our own beliefs, assumptions, and discomforts surrounding particular disabilities.

These phrases may not mean much to those of us without physical or cognitive disabilities; we could think that folks with special needs should simply ignore disparaging remarks. Even worse, some people might feel that calling for kinder language violates their first amendment rights to free expression, or that political correctness has gone too far. Some claim that words may only cause harm if you allow them to.

Fortunately, most persons who use the term "disabled person" do so with good intent. The fact that such a statement is a label simply doesn't occur to many of us very often.

It equates to categorising someone based solely on their physical state without taking into account their personality, emotions, or goals. Most people usually don't mean to do that.

People's first language always recognises that a person with a disability is a person, first and foremost, which is a type of linguistic prescriptivism. It promotes the idea that a person's health should not define them unless it is pertinent to the topic at hand. Let's look more closely at people who have children at home who have special needs. Being "outside" the perspectives on what life is actually all about will serve less of a purpose than a tour inside their home and lives. If most people weren't put in that situation at all, they would not be able to comprehend the path that has more difficulties and vivid memories than anyone has.

Therefore, it is imperative to encourage consciousness among people regarding the necessity for altering the terminology and linguistic expressions associated with those with disabilities. The utilisation of terminology and linguistic constructs pertaining to neurodiversity has an apparent impact on individuals' lifestyles. Individuals who identify as neurodivergent and come to understand that this label signifies an exception from the norm rather than an indication of illness or impairment, tend to exhibit higher levels of well-being and exhibit greater ambition in their professional pursuits.

**The word "neurodivergent" is a nonclinical descriptor used to characterise individuals whose brain development or functioning deviates from the norm due to various factors. This implies that individuals with exceptional brain development or functioning possess distinct sets of strengths and challenges compared to those with conventional brain development or functioning.**

The current amount of research pertaining to the utilisation of the term "neurodivergent" indicates that individuals who possess an understanding of the concept of neurodiversity do not necessarily disregard or oppose the presence of challenges associated with their neurodivergent condition. However, empirical evidence indicates that individuals who possess awareness of the concept of neurodivergence employ this information to effectively adjust and enhance their abilities, hence facilitating their achievements.

However, there is an audience of individuals who express opposition against the concept of neurodiversity, arguing that it emphasises differences rather than shortcomings. Those who adopt this perspective argue that their opposition derives from the recognition that certain individuals who are neurodivergent present genuine medical issues that necessitate intervention.

Nevertheless, I believe that employing the term "neurodivergent" in a linguistically appropriate manner exhibits favourable implications within society. It is important to comprehend that the linguistic choices we use possess the potential to reinforce unfavourable assumptions, or conversely, to confront and challenge them. On certain occasions, although mistakenly and accidentally, we could cause offence and perpetuate preconceptions, thereby contributing to the persistence of discriminatory practises in the society.

Let us consider a shift in cognitive orientation and viewpoint. It is imperative to exhibit sensitivity towards those with disabilities by adopting alternative, positive and socially acceptable identities for them. By employing appropriate language terminology, discrimination can be prevented, whether it occurs intentionally or unintentionally.





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