



The **Epitome** */i'pitəmi/*

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch

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

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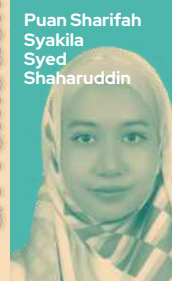


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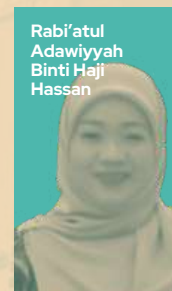
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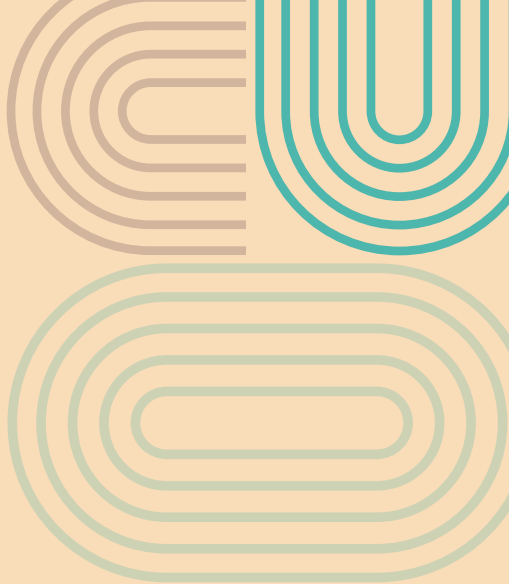
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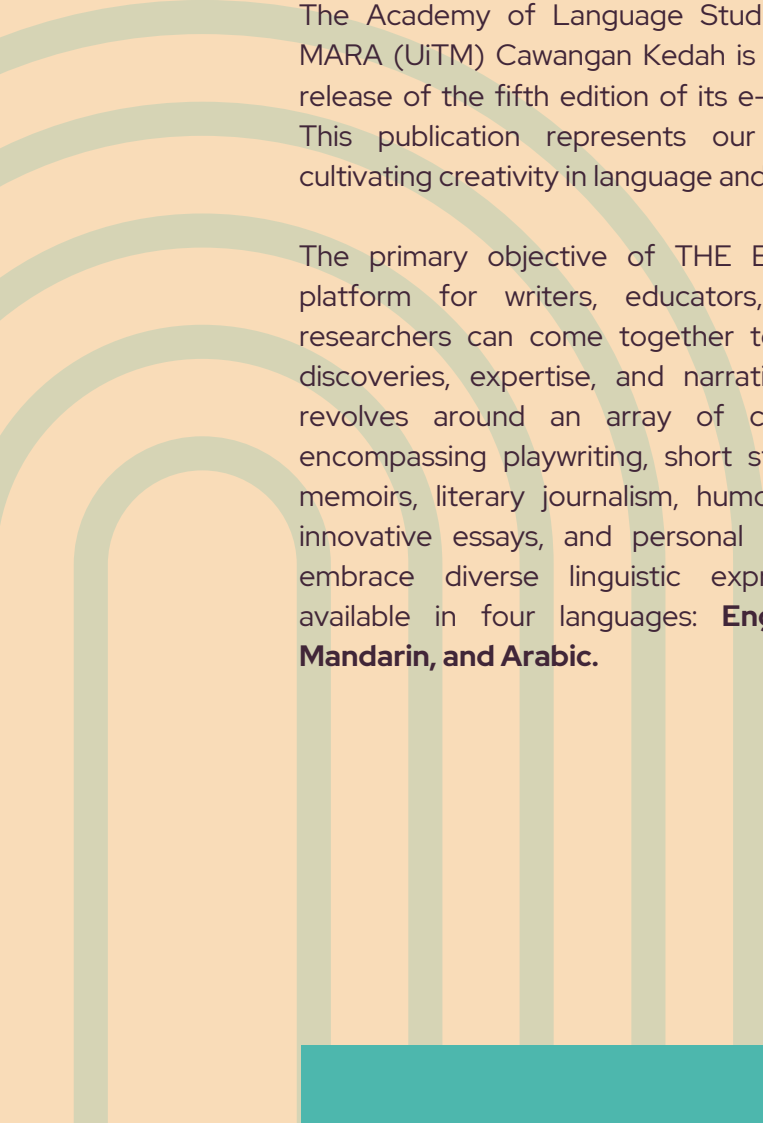
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Synopsis



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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Preface

Mr. Azlan Abdul Rahman

Head of Faculty
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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!



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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





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.





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