

Academy of Language Studies
UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang

e-Lingua

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*Connecting Cultures
One Word at a Time*

你好

Apa Khabar?

Bonjour

Hello

مرحبًا

Hallo

こんにちは



My PhD Journey

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I began my PhD in early 2019, stepping into my doctoral research with the conviction and enthusiasm of a committed scholar. However, before the first year had passed, my academic path was reshaped by unexpected events. At the end of 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic erupted, sweeping across nations and quickly followed by Malaysia's prolonged Movement Control Order (MCO).

In December 2020, I successfully defended my proposal. I was heavily pregnant, only two weeks away from giving birth, facing intellectual evaluation while carrying the physical weight of impending motherhood. After welcoming my newborn, the academic rigor of doctoral study intertwined with sleepless nights,

infant care, and the return to full-time work once my maternity leave ended. Each day became a juggle of teaching my classes, mothering, researching, and writing. The MCO, which persisted until 2022, disrupted my research processes such as access to participants, face-to-face academic consultation, and the simple freedom to conduct fieldwork.

In February 2022, I was granted a 12-month study leave, which was a huge relief. Just as the world began healing from the pandemic, another major disruption befell me. In November 2022, my main supervisor transferred to another university, leaving my doctoral project in a vulnerable position. Finding a new supervisor proved exceptionally challenging, as it became an emotional and administrative ordeal that dragged on with uncertainty. With limited expertise alignment, securing supervisory support became a strenuous process that tested my determination. Meanwhile, university regulations required that every PhD candidate publish at least one article in a Scopus-indexed journal before graduation.

This requirement added yet another academic mountain to climb, but I managed to publish my research.





However, the trials did not end there. In February 2023, I had to accept the rejection of my study leave extension application, which meant that I had to juggle between teaching my classes and working on my PhD again. Then, in August 2023, I endured one of the most physically and emotionally challenging experiences of my life—a broken leg that required months of medical leave. Immobilized and in pain, I experienced an unexpected separation from my three-year-old child, who had to be cared for by my mother during my

recovery. Movement became difficult; daily tasks required assistance. Yet, I persisted and continued writing my thesis.

My moment of academic triumph came on 16 January 2025, when I faced my Viva Voce and successfully passed with minor corrections. On 27 August 2025, the Senate of Universiti Utara Malaysia conferred upon me the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Communication) under the School of Multimedia Technology and Communication. This honor marked the culmination of a doctoral journey defined not only by scholarly pursuit, but also by resilience, emotional endurance, and an unbreakable spirit.

The Team



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