Underrated Malay Language: An Autoethnography of a Language Instructor

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Abstract

This is a narrative article that documents my journey of being a Malay language instructor to expatriates in Malaysia. Living in a new social-cultural environment in Malaysia requires expatriates to improve or adjust their intercultural communication skills. To facilitate their intercultural and professional accommodation, some expatriates choose to learn the Malay language. Unfortunately, there has been little development in teaching Malay as a foreign language. Hence, the effort to introduce Malay as a foreign language is important since generally there are a growing number of learners who are aware of the benefits. Other than traveler's guide and basic Malay phrasebooks, not many materials are found for the teaching of Malay as a foreign language. Based on the lack of resources, educators must incorporate techniques to be used in class to teach the Malay language course. It is hoped that other foreign language teachers will find the information useful, especially in teaching the Malay Language as a foreign language.

Keywords: Autoethnography, Foreign Language, Underrated, Malay Language, Teaching Styles, Expatriates

Introduction

I am a lecturer with a PhD in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and began teaching in English language at a university in Malaysia one year ago. Previously, I held a job as an English Speech and Drama trainer and Malay language instructor at private sectors prior becoming a lecturer. I have always manifested my passion in teaching as I get to share the knowledge that I possess and at the same time learn something new from my students. I believe in sayings, "When you teach, you learn".

Qualified as an English educator enabled me to meet people around the globe and my passion in teaching grows increasingly each day. Therefore, when I was given the opportunity to teach my own mother tongue to expatriates, I did not hesitate. Being a Malay language native has instilled in me the feeling of being overly confident to teach the language as a foreign language without even having any qualifications in teaching the said language. With my nose in the air, I started making my way to factories and companies in Penang conducting corporate classes back in 2015. Due to having zero knowledge in teaching Malay, the lessons were all mediocre. Since Malay language is an underrated language, limited resources and references on teaching techniques aggravate the situation. However, my Xenophile characteristic helped me to continue teaching and learning at the same time. By taking notes

and being more attentive to the needs of my expatriates' students, I attempted to improve on my teaching styles, methods, and course materials. Things progressively improved over time. As for method, I documented my experiences through note takings, videos, students' homework, and feedback given by students. The notes and materials utilized were helpful in writing this article. Through this autoethnography study, the Malay language teaching styles and the beauty of this underrated language emerged. It is hoped that others who teach their underrated mother tongue as a foreign language are inspired to soon share their teaching journey. Future research can address the validity and appropriateness of the teaching styles shared and encourage other approaches.

Methodology

Autoethnography is a qualitative research method. According to Adams et al (2017), it is composed of the words "auto" defined as personal experience, "ethno" which means practice and "graphy" which means text, experience and beliefs. The authors who write autoethnography rigorously explain and describe their ingrained cultural norms and personal experiences of social expectations to comprehend the connection between self and social life. This behavior is called reflexivity and it is intended to allow others to understand the meaning of struggles, experiences, thoughts, and feelings of self-reported ethnographers in present environment.   The two elements of autoethnography are storytelling and providing alternatives to others (Adams et al., 2017). Hence, this article was written as a narrative, in which I record my experiences, shared the challenges that I encountered when teaching my mother tongue as a foreign language and the teaching styles I practiced. I genuinely feel that the journey I went through was a serviceable journey as it served the purpose of exploring useful teaching styles which I believe might be beneficial for other language teachers and students out there. In short, the remainder of this paper reflects data collection methods. It provides an overview of participants and data collection methods, presenting my experiences using various teaching techniques and strategies based on students' feedback. The analysis of extracts of students' journals, focusing on information obtained by the researcher are outlined. Throughout, the aim is to demonstrate the challenges faced when teaching a foreign language and techniques used to overcome them. As for the ethical aspect, to respect the autonomy of individuals who voluntarily decide to feature in autoethnographic research projects, I have obtained consent from all the participants whom I displayed their journalsand dialogues.

Data Collection
Teaching Experiences

It all began in 2015 when the language centre I was teaching at, offered me to teach Malay Culture and Short Language Course to expatriates in Penang. I was given a textbook as guidance for me to conduct the lessons. Even though without any trainings, I was confident to start teaching. Little did I know, it was more arduous than I anticipated. My students for the first batch of the course were a group of 5 German engineers attached to one of the factories in Penang. The duration of the course was 3 months, conducted two hours weekly. Upon completion of three lessons, I received feedback from the Human Resource officer. I took note of the feedback given and endeavored my very best to improve my lessons accordingly.
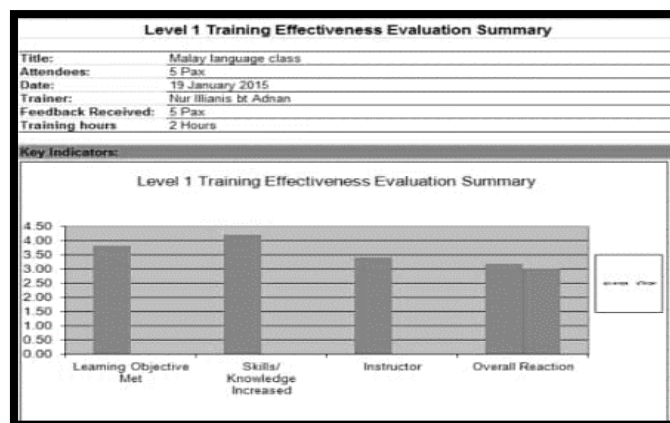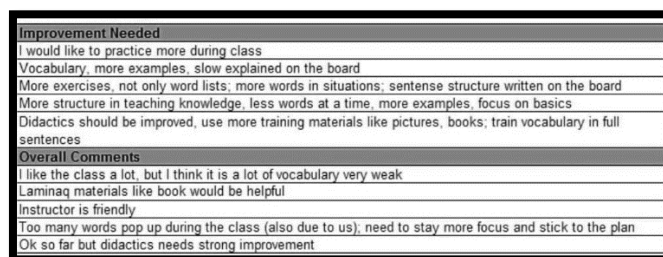
Fig. 1. Training Evaluation Summary

Fig. 2. Close-up Details

At the time of writing, I have been teaching Malay language to expatriates for approximately seven years. During the first year of my teaching, I was provided a textbook as guidance. However, my lessons did not flow as smooth as I assumed they would be. Due to my lack of experience and a few other factors, my students had difficulties in understanding the lessons and the atmosphere of the classes which was supposed to be fun and lively turned out to be stressful. Eventually, I discovered that the teaching materials used strongly influenced the effectiveness of language class. In my case, the Malay language found in the textbook is 'book language', in other words the formal language which the locals do not practice in daily conversation. Therefore, I felt that it was irrelevant for my students to learn things which are not commonly used. Words like 'ialah' and 'adalah' can often be seen in books but not adopted in conversational language. Hence, after giving a deep thought about this, I decided not to refer to any textbook in my lessons. Instead, I designed my own course outline based on the experiences and the feedback given by the students. The first level of my Malay for Expatriates course consists of an 18-hour lessons. In this level, the expatriates were taught basic things about Malay language such as introduction to Malay language, the sounds of alphabets in Malay, self-introduction, WH-questions, and many more. I deliberately arranged the topics from easy to difficult. Thus, it is important for the expatriate students to follow closely and not to miss any lesson. Below are the methods which I have been using when teaching Malay language as a foreign language to the expatriates in Malaysia.

Journal Writing

Being a language learner myself, it is an advantage for me to explore the best way of teaching and learning a language especially an underrated foreign language like Malay. In my case, I prefer to learn words and sentences which are related to my life. When I first began learning Tagalog and German languages, I started off by writing a simple daily journal. I strongly believe that when we learn something closely related to ourselves and practice

them often, we can remember them better.   For that reason, I introduced this method of learning to all my expatriates' students after teaching them vocabulary of daily routines.   In this way, they will be able to practice using the relevant and useful vocabulary in the appropriate manner. Based on my observation, after writing weekly journal and reading them out loud in class consistently for 4-5 weeks, my students were able to share their daily routines verbally without having to refer to their notes. This method also seems to stimulate the students' confidence and fluency in sharing their routines verbally. According to Ilianis et al (2020), the level of confidence in oneself is directly influenced by the quantity of the interaction.   A person is more confident to converse in English if he or she frequently practices communicating. This was also supported by Clements' linguistic confidence theory (1980). It was found in Hashemi and Mirzaei (2015), diary writing is a way of self-expression. It has been adopted in many subjects such as psychology, sociology, education and even mathematics. It is still a valuable teaching/learning tool in many classrooms as it not only teaches students to write but also encourage them to share their experiences and ideas. Garmon (1998) believes that diary writing helps teachers to better understand their students and to customize teaching to meet their specific needs. In addition, it gives students the opportunity to deal with the ideas raised in class as well as promote student learning.
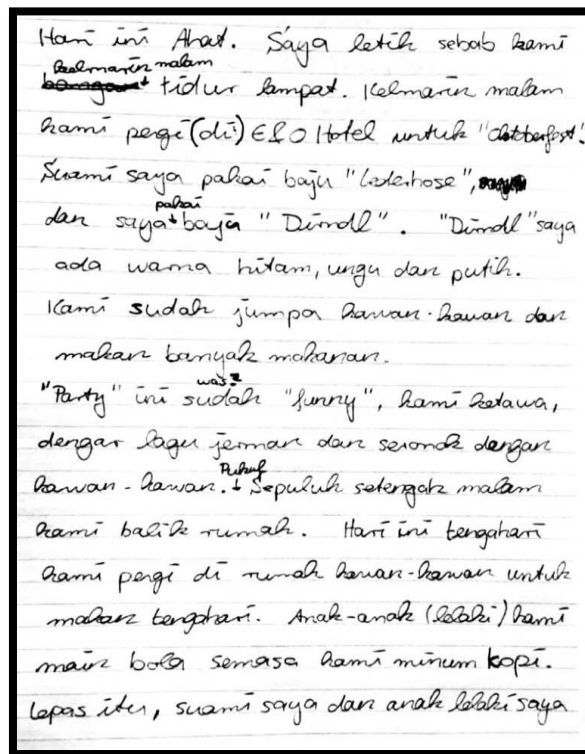
Fig.3. Student's Journal

Real Objects

When teaching them adjectives and prepositions, I noticed that using pictures as a teaching tool is very effective. Students can correlate the meaning of the words with the pictures immediately after looking at the pictures.   From Fig. 4., I constructed simple sentences using prepositions and adjectives. For example, "Botol biru di tepi fail hitam = The blue bottle is next to the black file", "Buku putih di atas fail hitam = The white book is on the black file" dan "Pen merah di tepi fail hitam = The red pen is next to the black file".

The adoption of this method includes the application of reality, visual aids, and presentations. These can help students remember vocabulary better, because our memory of objects and pictures is very reliable, and making use of visual technology to remember words is also a good idea (Takac, 2008). Futhermore, Gairns and Redman (1986) pointed out that real object method is suitable for beginners or young learners, also when presenting specific vocabulary. When the vocabulary is composed of specific nouns, the object can be utilized to express the meaning. Introducing a new word by exhibiting actual objects often helps students remember the word through visualization. Teachers and students may use the things they find in the classroom or alternatively bring items into the classroom just like conducting 'show and tell' session (Alqahtani, 2015)
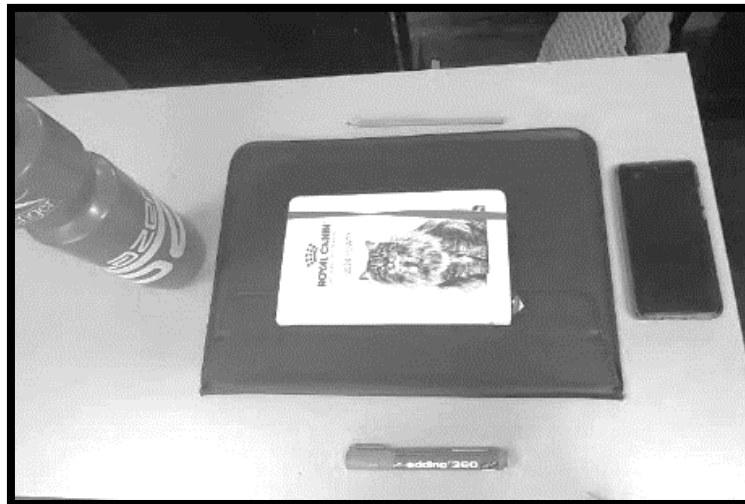

Fig. 4. Pictures when teaching adjectives and prepositions

Games

According to Pho and Dinscore (2015), gaming has made exciting inroads in education. Many educators and researchers consider that educational games may change teaching and learning in ways that we could never imagine before. The recently coined term "edutainment" focuses on the emergence that unites both aspects of education and entertainment (Purdy, 2007). Game-based learning has made considerable progresses in classroom adoptions. Game-based learning is defined as the incorporation of gaming elements in education to achieve defined academic outcomes (Kirriemuir & McFarlane, 2004; McGonigal, 2011). Simply put, game-based learning is learning via games, either digital or non-digital. Even though the values of game-based learning have not yet been fully examined and established, the preliminary findings in literature seem to suggest that effectively integrated game-based learning may have a positive impact on students' learning effectiveness and motivation (Kirikkaya et al., 2010). Hence, in my Malay class, I employ games when teaching. One of the games I usually play is Scavenger hunts. I operate this game when teaching adjectives. Scavenger hunts are another example of a playful, game-based learning activity which can be played by students. I strongly believe this game brings excitement especially when teaching and learning involve objects. My students were very excited to go around the place or house to look for the objects stated on the scavenger hunts list. When I incorporate this game when teaching nouns and adjectives, my students can remember better because not only they have to search for the objects, but they must also construct sentences. For example, from the figure below, when they bring 'Duit = money', they have to say something related to money.

Fig. 5. Scavenger Hunt List

Picture Description

Once they were more comfortable describing objects around them in the classroom, I displayed a picture and encouraged them to construct as many sentences as possible using vocabulary related to actions, adjectives, prepositions, and many others. Using the picture in Fig. 6., I further encouraged the students to make complex sentences such as, "Budak lelaki yang memakai baju merah sedang bermain bola warna-warni dengan datuknya di depan rumah besar mereka = The boy who is wearing the red shirt is playing a colorful ball with his grandfather in front of their big house" and "Seekor kucing Kelabu sedang tidur di atas lantai kuning di dalam bilik mandi = A grey cat is sleeping on the yellow floor in the bathroom". The picture connects the students' previous knowledge with the new story and helps them discover new words in the process. There are many vocabularies that can be introduced using illustrations or drawings. They are the excellent approach to clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words and should be practiced as much as possible. The image list includes posters, flashcards, flip charts, magazine images, board images, stick figures and photos. There are also many sources of images for teaching vocabulary. Apart from those drawn by teachers or students, there are sets of colored drawings for school usage. Newspapers and magazines cutout images are also very fruitful. Today, many readers, vocabulary books, and textbooks contain many attractive images that exhibit the meaning of basic words. Teachers may use the learning materials provided by the school. They can also prepare their own visual aids or takepictures from magazines. Visual support can assist students to understand their meaning and make words easier to remember (Alqahtani, 2015).
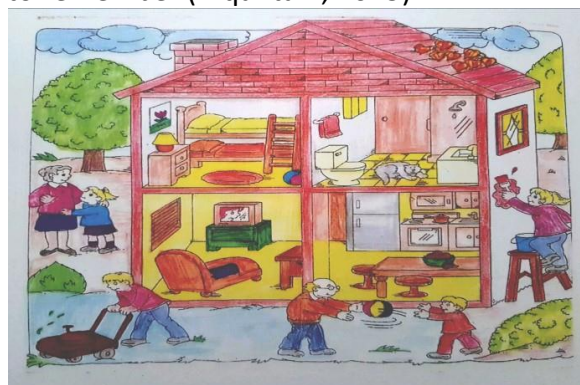

Fig. 6. Pictures to expand vocabulary

Children's storybook

Besides using images, I also employ children's storybook in my lessons as it will be easier for the expatriates to understand and at the same time, able to relate to the sequence of events in their daily lives. In recent years, many researchers have suggested authentic children's literature as an alternative to the traditional bottom-up method of English as a foreign language. For example, Ghosn (2002) provides the following good reasons for using authentic children's literature: firstly, children's literature provides a stimulating environment for language learning, for the reason that students are naturally drawn to stories; secondly, literature can advocate language learning because it presents a natural language and the language is the best language, thus it can boost vocabulary development in context; thirdly, literature can act as an agent of change; Good literary works involve some aspects of the human condition, so it can stimulate emotional development and foster positive interpersonal relationships and cross-cultural attitudes (Kochiyama, 2016). Likewise, Ellis and Brewster (2002) suggest that using children's literature can assist in developing positive attitudes towards the foreign language, culture, and language learning; using stories enables the teachers to introduce or revise the vocabulary and sentence structures by showing the variety of language styles to the children, memorable, and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech. They also emphasize the importance of reading aloud by highlighting that listening to stories assists learners to become aware of the rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation of language. In my classroom, I think, it is an utmost importance to select storybooks with simple and straightforward storylines. Educators are responsible in choosing stories which students can relate to as this will help them to remember better. For instance, the books I selected should consist of routines, food, family members and few other relatable topics. This is to ensure that my students could benefit from the storybook.

Fig. 7. Children storybook

Figure 7 shows one of the pages from a selected children storybook. This book emphasises on ways to make fruit salad and words like '*potong* = to cut', '*tuang* = to pour', '*campur* = to mix' are repeated several times throughout the book accompanied by big pictures.   The repetition will help reader to learn and remember new vocabulary easily. Many studies state that students learn better from courses that provide information in a visual format (Raiyn, 2016).

Children's songs

According to Vishnevskaia and Zhou (2019), music and songs are part of everyone's life. Eken (1996) provides eight reasons for the use of song in a language classroom including to present

a topic, new vocabulary, or a language point, to practice lexis, as a material for extensive and intensive listening, to focus on frequent learner errors in a more indirect way for stimulating discussions about feelings and attitudes, provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere, to bring variety and fun to learning and last but not least, to encourage the use of imagination and creativity during foreign language lessons. Some educators are reluctant to incorporate music in the classroom. They fear that it might hinder the learning environment and that the lyrics may be too complex for learners to grasp. However, as an educator who has tried the to integrate music into classroom when teaching adults, I strongly believe that music has strong impact in helping learners to remember better and my view is supported by Fassbender, Richards, Bilgin, Thompson, and Heiden (2012) who state that music was found to have a positive effect on adult working memory performance. Among the children's songs I often used are, 'kalau rasa gembira'= 'if you're happy' and 'kereta kecil warna merah' = 'little red car'.

The song 'kalau rasa gembira' is like the English song 'If you're happy' and due to this, many of my adults' learners enjoy listening to it. I always use this song when teaching body parts because there are words like, 'tangan=hand', 'kaki=feet' and 'mata=eyes'. Killing two birds with one stone, I was also able to teach verbs like, 'rasa=feel', 'tepuk=clap', 'hentak=stamp' and 'sebut=to say/pronounce'. The song 'little red car'is a very popular song in Malaysia. Almost everyone knows this song as we were exposed to ever since we were in pre-schools. When teaching about family members, I always incorporate this song at the end of the lesson as the learners can learn words like, 'papa=father', 'adik=younger brother/sister', 'nenek=grandmother'. Besides family members, learners get the chance to also learn some adjectives like, 'kecil=small' and 'merah=red'.

Translate English dialogues and create own dialogues.
After growing more complacent in constructing complex sentences and possessing better knowledge on common phrases, I requested my students to translate sets of English dialogues to Malay. I genuinely feel that this activity is advantageous for students as they become aware of the sentences used in daily conversation. They were not permitted to apply direct translation methods. The examples are as follows:

> Ali: Abu, will you help me get the door? I am working on something.
> *Ali: Abu, boleh kamu tolong buka pintu? Saya tengah buat kerja sekarang.*
> Abu: Sure, I will get it.
> *Abu: Ya, boleh.*

After a few times of translating dialogues, I suggested the expatriates to write their own dialogues in conversation according to the situation given to them.

Fig. 9. Student's dialogues

How to use translation to promote multilingualism? What do we understand by language translation in the classroom? In a globalized world, what are the strategies and activities that can be adopted to develop and improve students' multilingual skills? The translation-based activities proposed in this article place translation at the centre of the language classroom and highlight its potential to develop (intercultural) and linguistic skills. By demonstrating the specific didactic value of translation in language classrooms, we emphasize the importance of challenging students' negative attitudes towards using their mother tongue in foreign language teaching. Moreover, when we employ translation in language classes through specific examples (see Sections 3 and 4), we shift the focus of target language acquisition through a rigorous monolingual model to a language broader than multiple languages. The multilingual nature of the translation is particularly relevant to our discussion. The translation process is not limited to the relationship between the source language and the target language, but may also include multi-language practices, including code conversion, code mixing, and crossover, for cross-exchange (Otheguy et al., 2015). Our discussion will show how translation, as a communication behaviour between languages and cultures, can be an effective teaching tool and should play a key role in contemporary foreign language classrooms (Panzarella & Sinibaldi, 2018).

Comic Books
Reading comic books can be seen as 'pleasure reading' (Karap, 2017; Krashen, 1993). Pleasure reading can be defined as an activity which is done for its own sake and is emotionally self-rewarding. The combinations of images and the written word make these

works have a strong visual aspect, which helps readers' imagination and helps anchor the expressions used by not only putting them in context but making the medium multimodal (Eisner, 1985). Tarabuzan (2015) states that, when teaching French through comic book, it was found that regular exposure to comics for 2 months significantly reduced students' test anxiety compared to that of a control group (n=29 overall), as measured by the Motivation Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (Pintrich, 1990). Another finding conducted by Cimermanova (2015), in a case study, four Slovak students were exposed to English comic book material for two months (approximately 8-12 lessons). The four students experienced higher motivation and improved attitudes to reading in English by the end of the programme. In Malay language classroom, it is very important for students to learn the real-life speech because the locals would speak colloquial language on daily basis, and it would be good for the expatriates to blend in using the same pattern of language. However, speaking standard Bahasa would not actually make you sound awkward, as Malaysians would always commend on your efforts to learn the language.

Other Important Details
Pay attention and focus on your students
Given the opportunity to teach my native language as a foreign language is an advantage. I get to meet people from other parts of the world. Therefore, it helps me to understand people's different ways of thinking. For example, from my many years of experience dealing with Germans, I observe that they are very meticulous. When I teach them certain topics such as timing, I need to be very precise. Frequently asked questions by them would be, when does morning start? What time does morning end? Hence, my usual explanation is as follows:
Morning (pagi) ends at 11.59am and midday (tengahari) starts at 12.00-1.59pm. Afternoon (petang) starts at 2.00-6.59pm and night (malam) starts at 7pm-11.59pm.
When I explain the above to people from other countries, they laughed at me. Some even asked if Malaysians are that precise. I answered with a big smile, 'No, but the Germans are'.

Ways of explaining.
Numbers
When I give lessons on numbers, I constantly associate the Malay numbering system with the English numbering system in every aspect. This is because, in other languages like Deutsch and French, the numbering systems are complicated. The patterns change as the numbers escalate (different order of the place/digit value). However, in Malay, the numbers and the patterns remain the same.

Table. 1
Place value in three languages

Place value in English	Place value in Malay	Place value in Deutsch
teen	belas	Zehn (number 10)
Tenth (ty)	puluh	zig
hundred	ratus	hundert
thousand	Ribu	tausend

Table. 2
Digit value in three languages

Digit value in English	Digit value in Malay	Digit value in Deutsch
thirteen	tiga belas	Dreizen (three ten)
thirty	tiga puluh	dreizig
three hundred	tiga ratus	dreihundert
three thousand	tiga ribu	dreitausend

Table.3
Examples of numbers in three languages

English	Malay	Deutsch
Twenty-one	Dua puluh satu	Ein und zwanzig (one and twenty)
Four hundred and fifteen	Empat ratus lima belas	Vier hundert and funfzehn (four hundred and five ten)
Seven thousand and ten	Tujuh ribu sepuluh	Sieben tausend and sehn (seven thousand and ten)
Eighteen thousand	Lapan belas ribu	achtssehn tausend (eight ten thousand)

As the number zero is '*kosong*'in Malay, I always included other relevant information for the reason that '*kosong*' also refers to empty or plain. For example, air *kosong* (plain water) and rumah *kosong* (empty house).

Compound Nouns
As the saying goes, 'All Greek to me' referring to an expression that is difficult to understand which. I often hear from my expatriates' students. Trying to comprehend them as much as I could, I attempt my level best to explain to them in a manner they could understand and remember better. For instance, when teaching on compound nouns, I usually start by defining the nouns separately and next I shall try to make sense of the combination.
Matahari = the sun. The words 'mata' means the eyes and 'hari' means the days. To enable them to summon into mind, I said, the sun is like the eye of the day. It gives the light and makes it possible for us to see things clearly during the day.
Kakitangan = staff. The words 'kaki' means leg and 'tangan' means hands. I connected this to the part of our bodies. The staff are very much alike the hands and legs of the company. They help the company to operate just like our hands and legs that help our body to move around and do a lot of things.
Tengahari = midday. This word is also quite simple and direct. The words 'tengah' means middle and 'hari' means day.

Getting to know your students' background. Know what are relevant to be taught
Apart from the techniques of explaining, I personally feel that it would be decent for the educators to get to know their students. For example, it is good to share with students from the western countries about our cultures as Asian cultures are different from that of Western. In Asia, we do not address the elders by their names to show respect. I normally explain this whenever I teach about family members. This is because, we use the same titles as 'kakak' (sister), 'abang' (older brother), 'adik' (younger brother/sister), 'pakcik' (uncle) and 'makcik'

(aunty) even with strangers. This is a total opposite of the western culture. In the west, they only use these titles amongst the family members. Hence, it would be nice if they learn this and start practicing this in Asia.

Challenges in Learning a Foreign Language
Besides sharing my experience and methods of teaching Malay language as a foreign language, I feel obligated to understand the challenges students encounter when learning. This is because, knowing and understanding the challenges faced by students would enable the educators to provide a conducive and supportive environment to students besides preparing effective lessons to ease the learning process. Learning a second or foreign language is typically challenging, as it requires learners to use greater effort to learn linguistic structures and functions, including social-cultural and motivational aspects of a new language (Wang & Zhan, 2020). The most common language learning challenges include negative transfer, diversity of culture, and accent, slang or colloquialism (Mohamed, 2018).

First, negative transfer can be defined as using the same structure of one's source language (for example, native language) for learning the target (second or foreign) language (Budiharto, 2019). Even though it is inevitable for most learners to depend on the linguistic structures and functions of their mother tongue, to use an unsuitable or wrong structure usually produces negative transfer and ambiguity in the learning a second or foreign language. Nevertheless, having a structurally dissimilar language as their native, learners of a second or foreign language are less affected by the negative transfer issue. For example, for native speakers of English who learn Arabic language, they are very likely to be less affected by the negative transfer.

Next, diversity of cultures concerns the sense of belonging and feeling to fit into a specific community with its own history, language, beliefs (religious or non-religious), heritage, and myths (Mohamed, 2018). According to Brown's optimal distance model, when a language learner fails to master a target language in a target culture, they are likely to fail synchronizing linguistic and cultural development. The role of culture in learning a new language is certain. For instance, the lack of understanding or knowledge about culture of a target language often leads to misinterpreting of certain sentences or expressions, even though the language learner recognizes the vocabulary. In Malay language, there are few ways to greet and ask, 'How are you?' like 'Sudah makan? which literally means 'Have you eaten?' or 'Sihat?' which literally means 'Healthy?' (Othman, 2012). For those who are familiar with the vocabulary 'sudah = already' and 'makan = to eat' but are not familiar to the Malaysian culture might feel puzzled or strange when they are suddenly asked whether they have eaten.

Lastly, pertaining the accent, slang, or colloquialism, Malay language has variety of accents such as Northern and Southern ones. Accent varieties might be a challenge for learners because they cause confusion and interfere the learners' understanding (Derwing & Munro, 2015). Besides accents, colloquial language and slang are those expressions used in informal language. There are considerable differences between the standard and colloquial Malay language, which can be seen as a challenge. The term 'colloquial' can be regarded as intimidating as there are various dialects of spoken Malay throughout Malaysia, namely, Kelantan, Terengganu, Negeri Sembilan, Perak, and Penang. In other words, Malay language consists of many different slangs and colloquial expressions that are often challenging for the learners. Nonetheless, the colloquial language is much simpler as people tend to shorten words and sentences without having to follow the correct grammar rules. Grammatical

functions are not focused as long as the meaning of the sentence can get across and well understood by the receivers. Hence, it is easier for expatriates in Malaysia to learn speaking the colloquial language instead of the standard language. Furthermore, it would be advantageous for non-Malaysians to know how to differentiate the two forms of Malay language so they could blend in well with the society without feelings awkward when using Malay language with the locals.

As a result, learning a foreign language comes with challenges peculiar to (a) the unique circumstance/context, and (b) the subject (Mohammed, 2018). There are many ways on how to deal with or overcome these challenges. One of them is the style of learning. Therefore, it is essential for students and educators to understand the challenges so that they can take suitable actions in the process of language learning.

Conclusion

The present research aimed to explore the struggle faced by an educator when teaching Malay language as a foreign language to expatriates. The struggle mainly arose due to the lack of knowledge in teaching the language and limited resources available for reference. However, as more experience gained, feedback from students and adopting trial and error method, improved techniques in teaching Malay language to expatriates have been discovered and among them are, journal writing, using real objects, games, picture description, children's storybook, children's songs, translate English dialogues and create own dialogues and using comic books. Challenges faced during their preparation appeared to be a mix of negative transfer, diversity of cultures concerns the sense of belonging and feeling to fit into a specific community with its own history, language, beliefs (religious or non-religious), heritage and the accent, slang, or colloquialism.

All in all, being alert can modify various factors especially when it comes to styles of teaching. It has been mentioned that by taking notes and being more attentive to the needs of expatriates' students, teaching styles, methods, and course materials can be improvised. Eventually, things progressively got better. I had documented my lesson plans, feedback from students, videos, and teaching materials. At that point, little did I knew that those materials could serve as new approaches although I was certain that they could also function as sources of reference. Sketching this autoethnographic study has made me realised how meaningful one's experience can be. Nevertheless, it is the role of the writer cum auto ethnographer that allows me to further understand that the struggle is normal and encountered by many educators around the globe. Accepting one's underdeveloped skills and having the passion to learn how to teach a language, modifying lesson plans and experimenting new teaching styles could be the course of actions that language teachers or instructors may employ in their teaching. This autoethnography is a clear manifestation of struggle acknowledged and curbed.

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