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JUDUL: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES OF
HISTORY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

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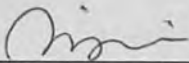
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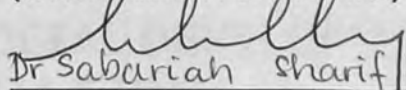


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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TEACHING AND
LEARNING PRACTICES OF HISTORY IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY**

ROSY BINTI TALIN

PERPUSTAKAAN
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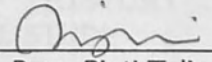


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DECLARATION

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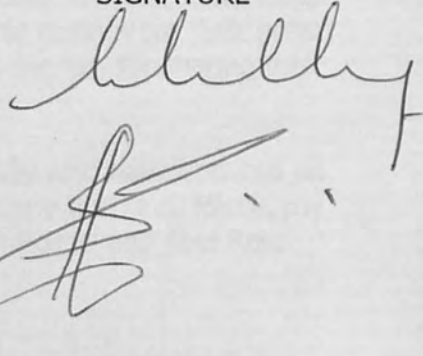
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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICE OF HISTORY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

The case of this study is to investigate in-depth the teaching and learning practice of history in secondary schools. To attain the purpose, the issues to be studied are the history teachers' teaching practice in the classroom, the students' learning practice in response to the teaching practice, the inculcation of historical thinking skills, the teachers' views, and the students' voices about the teaching practice. A qualitative case study is seen as the relevant methodology to be adopted to allow an in-depth investigation of the issues concerned. Four experience history teachers from secondary schools and a group of four students from each teacher are the participants of this study. The data is collected from the real setting, the secondary schools, and from the real actors, the teachers and the students, through classroom observations, interviews and review of documents related to the teaching and learning practice in order to portray the data as authentic as possible. Field notes, video recordings, audio recordings and related documents are the forms of data sources in this study. These various data collection sources and the involvement of both teachers and students are meant for data triangulation. Besides triangulation, member checking and prolonged engagement with the setting and the audit trail techniques are used to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. All data are analyzed in two phases, within-case analysis and cross-case analysis. In the within-case analysis the data go through the process of coding and subcategorizing. Codings that share similar features are grouped and given their subcategory. Each of these subcategories is described according to the group participants. The cross-case analysis is done after the within-case analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to discover similarities and differences between each group participants. The process of merging the subcategories to become categories and themes are done in this analysis. The finding of this study reveals the Direct Instruction of teaching dominates the practice of these teachers. Consequently, the students learn history passively, thus, the historical thinking skills incorporated in the teaching are at the basic level, understanding the chronology and exploring evidence found in the textbook. The teachers' views show the concern toward self, task and impact are the main reason underpinning the practice. From the students' voices it is identified that they learn through seeing, listening and feeling. As such, they are mixture of learners, the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners, which prefer their teachers to use eclectic and blended approaches in delivering the lesson. Based on these findings, mismatch has seen occurred between the implementation of the teaching and the learning preferences of the students. To successfully improve the teaching and learning of history, teachers need to plan their lesson thoughtfully and comprehensively. With these findings, information from the literature review, and research findings elsewhere I suggest the '*upside down*' instructional approach to allow the integration of teaching the content and incorporating historical thinking skills in the practice and to allow for more research in the future.

ABSTRAK

Kes kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti dengan mendalam amalan pengajaran dan pembelajaran sejarah di sekolah menengah. Oleh itu, isu-isu yang menjadi fokus kajian termasuklah amalan pengajaran guru, amalan pembelajaran pelajar kesan daripada amalan pengajaran guru, penerapan kemahiran pemikiran sejarah, pandangan guru terhadap amalan pengajaran mereka, dan pandangan pelajar terhadap amalan pengajaran guru. Kajian kes kualitatif dilaksanakan dalam kajian ini untuk membolehkan penelitian terhadap isu-isu yang menjadi fokus kajian dilakukan dengan mendalam di tempat kejadian dan pelaku yang sebenarnya bagi menampakkan data yang telus. Empat orang guru sejarah yang berpengalaman dan satu kumpulan yang terdiri daripada empat orang pelajar bagi setiap guru menjadi peserta kajian ini. Data kajian diperoleh melalui pemerhatian, temubual dengan guru dan pelajar yang telah dipilih, serta tinjauan dokumen yang berkaitan dengan amalan pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Ini menjadikan nota lapangan, rakaman video, rakaman suara dan dokumen yang berkaitan sebagai sumber data kajian ini. Kepelbagaian sumber data dan keterlibatan kedua-dua guru dan pelajar bertujuan untuk mengtrangulasikan data. Selain trangulasi, penelitian rakan, berada di tempat kajian dalam masa yang agak panjang dan 'audit trail' juga dilaksanakan untuk tujuan kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan data. Data dianalisis dalam dua tahap, analisis dalaman kes dan analisis antara kes. Analisis dalaman kes menggunakan proses mengekodkan data dan menyatukan data yang mempunyai sifat yang sama di bawah satu subkategori yang sesuai. Analisis antara kes pula membandingkan semua subkategori yang telah ditemui di setiap kes. Subkategori yang didapati mempunyai sifat yang sama digabungkan menjadi kategori. Akhirnya kategori-kategori yang berkaitan ditempatkan di bawah tema yang sesuai. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan pengajaran secara langsung mendominasi amalan pengajaran guru di bilik darjah. Akibatnya pelajar belajar sejarah secara pasif dan kemahiran pemikiran sejarah yang diterapkan hanya pada tahap asas iaitu memahami kronologi dan meneroka bukti yang terdapat dalam buku teks. Berdasarkan pandangan guru-guru yang terlibat, pengajaran seumpama disebabkan oleh keprihatinan mereka terhadap kemampuan diri, tugas yang diberi dan kesan pengajaran mereka terhadap pihak yang terlibat. Pandangan para pelajar pula mendedahkan mereka mempelajari satu-satu pengetahuan melalui penglihatan, pendengaran dan pengalaman perlakuan. Ini menggalak mereka mengharap guru-guru menggunakan pendekatan eklektik dalam pengajaran mereka di samping memberi penekanan kepada penggunaan teknologi. Dapatan ini juga menunjukkan wujudnya percanggahan antara amalan pengajaran guru dengan apa yang diharapkan oleh pelajar. Untuk membolehkan pengajaran berkesan dicapai, perancangan persediaan yang teliti disertai dengan pemikiran yang mendalam daripada guru-guru amat diperlukan. Oleh itu berdasarkan dapatan kajian ini, tinjauan literatur, dan dapatan daripada kajian-kajian lepas, saya mencadangkan pendekatan "pengajaran songsang" bagi mengintegrasikan pengajaran kandungan topik dan penerapan kemahiran pemikiran sejarah secara berkesan untuk kajian lanjut pada masa hadapan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HTS	Historical Thinking Skills
PPK	Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum
CCTS	Creative and Critical Thinking Skills
UMNO	United Malays National Organization
ICSS	Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools
ICT	Integrated Computer Teaching
RQ	Research Questions
KPS	Kemahiran Pemikiran Sejarah
PMR	Penilaian Menengah Rendah
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
STPM	Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

History is one of the subjects being taught in schools around the world, including Malaysia. This subject has a special feature as compared to other subjects in the curriculum. It is the only subject that deals with facts about the past. The past is important for today's life because it serves as a source of experience, evidence and analogy to explain events happening around; sharpens intuitions and insights in dealing with those events; and prepares people for future events. It becomes the 'mahaguru' to lead the present to the future. Therefore, if someone said history has nothing to do with him or her, he or she is making a profound error (Lowenthal, 2000). It is the history that creates who we are today.

During his presidency in UMNO, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, once acknowledged that without knowing its history the nation will not be persistent but will only be in history. George Santayana, one of the West's idealists, had been quoted saying 'those who did not learn history will be punished by doing the same mistake over and over again' (cited in Nik Anuar Nik Mahmud, 2001). The statements of these two prominent figures show the importance of history in one's life, thus, history needs to be studied in order to avoid previous mistakes and to gain a better understanding of the events happening around and in the future. This brings history as the connector between the past, the present and the future. In the word of Fines (2002), history is a "mélange of past, present and future, not just the past".

The importance of history in one's life has motivated this study to take off. To nurture someone to like history it should start from the way how history is exposed to the individual. Therefore, it begins from school where each individual first comes into contact with history.

This chapter is the introductory chapter which provides the background of this study, the problem of the study, the aim and objectives of the study, the research framework, the significance of the study, the limitation of the study, and the operational definition of the terms used in the study. The structure of this study is presented later in this chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

The awareness of the importance of history in one's life has brought the Ministry of Education to make history as a core subject in the education curriculum. Such move has been materialized with the implementation of the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools (ICSS) in 1989. Within this curriculum, it is compulsory for every student in secondary schools to learn history. The purpose is to produce historically knowledgeable and emphathetic students. Since then, the history syllabus has gone through improvements to ensure the content is reliable to create knowledgeable and empathetic students.

There are two levels of learning history in secondary school. The first level is learnt in lower secondary school. This involves students in form one to form three. For this level, there are two components to be learned. The first component is the study of local history (Kajian Sejarah Tempatan). The purpose of studying local history is to provide students with the experience of doing research. As such, each student is required to do outside classroom research based on the themes given in the syllabus. In performing this task the students will experience the skills of searching, collecting, categorizing, interpreting, and reporting the historical facts they found from their research. This experience may increase the students' interest in learning history.

The second component is learning history in the classroom. The themes to be learned are presented in the textbook. Learning these themes provides students with the opportunity to gain the knowledge in the discipline of history. In this component students are exposed to the pre-history era and the existence of the first Malay civilization, the sultanate of Melaka. Then, students are brought to

understand the existence of other Malay civilizations such as the Johor Malay government. The syllabus also covers the glory and downturn of the civilization, the coming of the colonial era, the reaction of the locals, the awareness leading to independence and the making of Malaysia.

Obviously, the content of history for lower secondary students emphasizes more on understanding of the nation's history. It is in the form of events chronology, which discusses the development of the society and the nation in terms of the political, economic and social aspects. Such an arrangement is meant to help students understand the process of the nation and community development. The history of other countries related to the history of Malaysia is also taught to give students knowledge of their historical relationships. Through the acquisition of this knowledge it is hoped to create awareness amongst students on the country's prosperousness and struggle to achieve her independence. Thus, students become more appreciative to their country.

For upper secondary level which involves students in Forms Four and Five, history is only learned in the classroom. Students are exposed to a wider historical perspective such as the development of the early human civilizations and the early civilization in Southeast Asia, religions and teachings, the Islamic civilization, its development and its influence on the latter society, the rise and development of the West and its implication to our economy, the rise of nationalism in the Southeast Asia region, the building of the nation towards becoming a developed country, and the important events where Malaysia is involved with international affairs. The aim is to provide opportunity for students to compare the development of this country with the development of other countries (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 2003). This deliberately gives students knowledge about the past time of the country and its position in the world's civilization. Table 1.1 shows the summary of the history syllabus in both levels.

Table 1.1 Summary of the History Syllabus

No	Form	Content
A	Lower Secondary: Form 1 Form 2 Form 3	<i>Local History Study (coursework done outside the class)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self and family history• School's history<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. School's surrounding historyii. Residential history
B	Lower Secondary: Form 1 Form 2 Form 3	<i>Our History (topics to be learned in class)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The prehistoric era and the sovereignty of the Melaka sultanate• The sultanate of Melaka became today's government foundation.• The prosperousness of our country attracts British colonialism• Local reaction to the British colonialism• People struggles to achieve independence• Nation building
C	Upper Secondary Form 4 Form 5	<i>Topics to be learned in class</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Human civilization• Islam civilization and its development• European development and its implication to the country economic.• The rise and the development of nationalism until World War II.• Malaysia and its cooperation with the international society.

Source: Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, (2003)

To teach history effectively, Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum has determined six compulsory elements to be embedded in the teaching. These elements are historical inquiry, material collection, Historical Thinking Skills (HTS), historical explanation, historical understanding, and empathy. The explanation about these elements will be done in Chapter Two, section 2.2.1 while detail explanation of the HTS elements will be done in section 2.5.

In sum, the history curriculum emphasizes both the teaching of the content and the incorporation of skills, especially the HTS, in the teaching. If teachers are able to teach both the content and the HTS, students are expected to be historically knowledgeable and empathetic. Such hope has rise the need to study how history is taught in the classroom. This has encouraged me to present the purpose of study as the following.

1.3 Statement of Problem

The importance of history has been acknowledged by George Santayana and Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed. Therefore, the subject has been made as a core subject in the education curriculum. However, students admitted that they felt bored with the subject and they perceived the subject as having no economic value (Michelle Ting Mei Ling and Noor Hafizah Mohd Rodi, 2005; Azwan Ahmad, Abdul Ghani Abdullah, Mohamad Zohir Ahmad and Abd. Rahman Abd Aziz, 2005). This issue has encouraged this study to be carried out to understand why students became bored with the subject. According to Wiersma (2008) the way teachers are teaching history influences students' interest on the subject. As such, this study investigates the way history is taught in the classroom.

Literature on the teaching and learning practice of history in the classroom from abroad are abundant. From the review of these literatures, two major approaches of teaching and learning of history being used were identified. The first approach was identified as teaching with the motives of transferring the body of knowledge from the text book to the students, encouraging students to memorize the body of knowledge, and, requiring students to recall the body of knowledge in the examinations (Larson, Matthews, and Booth, 2004; Doreen Tan, 2004; Demircioglu, 2001; Borries, 2000). Other equivalent terms for such teaching were the conventional way (Borries, 2000); and the traditional and didactic teaching (Smerdon, Burkam, and Lee, 1999). This approach of teaching resulted in students' ability to master the factual knowledge, memorized, and recalled the facts during the examination. This means students' skills on memorizing and recalling facts were essentially improved. However, Pattiz (2004) argued this approach did not

encourage students to utilize their thinking skills because they just accepted the facts prepared in the textbook and memorized them.

The second identified approach was teaching history with the concern of investigating historical sources and their evidence (Barton, 2001; Vella, 2001; Larson et al., 2004) through the use of drama and questioning (Capita, Cooper and Mogos, 2000; Fertig, 2005) and the use of narratives (Dilek and Yacipi, 2005). For Mayer (1998) these activities were more appropriately called the research based approach. The equivalent term for this approach is the discipline inquiry (Fertig, 2005). In this approach, students were constantly learn history using materials, discussing the materials, debating the key issues with friends and the teacher, and frequently asking questions. These students had the opportunity to inquire like historians did and to experience the immediacy of events through primary documents as well as given the opportunities to acquire the skills to construct meaningful interpretations of the past (Fertig, 2005; Mayer, 1998). This approach provided an opportunity for students to explore historical sources and to interpret the facts they have found through discussion, debate and questioning. Akinoglu and Saribayrakdar (2007) and Cooper and Dilek (2004) commented these activities as having made children reach the higher level of understanding and developing their thinking skill. However, according to Larson et al. (2004) the acquisition of content for these students was less encouraging because they spent a lot of time searching for the evidence and discussing it.

Local literatures about the teaching and learning of history were more related to the issues of improving the teaching and learning of history using techniques such as self-learning (Tor Geok Hwa, 2004), mind mapping (Michele Ting Mei Ling and Noor Hafizah Mohd Rodi, 2005), Needham's five phases of teaching (Subadrah Nair and Malar a/p Muthiah, 2005), metacognition and problem solving (Rajagopal Ponnusamy, 2006); issues related to patriotic values (Abd. Rahim Abd Rashid, 2001; Maharom Binti Mahmood, 2001; Anuar Bin Ahmad, 2001); issues related to the use of ICT in teaching history (Azwan Ahmad et al, 2005), issues related to teachers' roles (Aini Binti Hassan, 1998), and issues related to critical thinking skills (Kartini bt Baharun, 1998). These studies indicated briefly

that history was taught statically with techniques used more to explanation and storytelling. Such teaching techniques were blamed as one of the factors that led students lost interest in the subject, felt bored and sleepy in the classroom (Michelle Ting Mei Ling and Noor Hafizah Mohd Rodi, 2005), perceived history as having no economic value (Azwan Ahmad et al. 2005) and promoted low scoring by students in the examination (Rajagopal Ponnusamy, 2006). Discussion on how exactly the teaching of history was done was absent in these studies as the concern was more on improving the practice.

Another important issue related to the teaching and learning practice of history was the inculcation of HTS. This issue had become important as it was stated in the history curriculum and required to be inculcated in the teaching and learning of history. A study by Zahara Aziz and Nik Azleena Nik Ismail (2007) revealed that history teachers have a moderate readiness to inculcate HTS in their teaching. This moderate readiness was found in aspects such as planning the lesson, knowledge about the HTS, pedagogy to be implemented in order to inculcate HTS, and teachers' attitude towards the HTS requirement. The main reason given for such readiness was teachers were not exposed to the skills to inculcate HTS in the teaching. This finding indicates the possibility of the absence of HTS inculcation in the teaching and learning practice of history in schools presently.

Based on the literatures available, I am encouraged to know in-depth the teaching and learning practice of history in secondary schools. In order to get deeper information, an investigation of the teaching and learning practice of history is necessary. In the investigation I would like to understand the teacher's teaching practice and the students' learning practice, the level of the HTS incorporated in the practice, and the views of the teachers and students involved in the practice. Such information will enhance the existing knowledge about the teaching and learning practice of history in our secondary schools. It also provides an empirical study to offer ideas of how to integrate both the content and the incorporation of HTS in the teaching. As Biddulph and Adey (2003) had commented that in teaching history, thinking skills and content knowledge should not be treated as two separate

entities. These two have to be integrated in teaching. Such knowledge will also provide the foundation for the implementation of any future research into improving the teaching and learning practice of this subject, as such, to erase prolong boredom in learning the subject among the students.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study intends to identify the approach used in the teaching and learning practice of history, the incorporation of HTS, and the views of the teacher and the students about the teaching and learning practice. As such, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate the teaching and learning practice of history in secondary schools classroom.
2. To discover the HTS incorporated in the teaching of history in the classroom.
3. To explore the reasons underpinning the teacher's teaching practice of history in the classroom.
4. To reveal students' voices about the teaching of history in the classroom.

Therefore, the research questions of this study are as the following;

1. How has content of history been taught to the students and how students learn history? (RQ1)
2. Are HTS incorporated in the teaching of history in the classroom? (RQ2)
3. What are the reasons underpinning teachers' teaching practice of history in the classroom? (RQ3)
4. What are the students' learning styles and how they prefer their teachers to teach history? (RQ4)

Table 1.2 shows the relationship between the research questions and the research objectives.

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