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INCULCATE HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS IN TEACHING HISTORY

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Abstract

This paper discusses historical thinking skills inculcation in teaching History. The History subject of the Primary School History Curriculum (KSSR) was first introduced as a subject at the primary level in 2013. The History subject of the Primary School History Curriculum (KSSR) was first introduced as a subject at the primary level in 2013 for Level 2 starting Year 4 and is a core subject that must be studied. This aims to foster students' understanding of History subjects at an early stage so that students acquire and master the knowledge and skills of History. The research method is the combination of components or elements to form a connected whole. The findings show that before the New Primary School Curriculum (KBSR) which was introduced in 1983, the History subject formerly known as Chronicles was taught in primary schools to Grade 4, Grade 5, and Grade 6 students. In KBSR, elements of history were included in the subject Local Studies studied at Level 2 for Year 4, Year 5, and Year 6. The Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) outlines that the Primary School Standard Curriculum (KSSR) is formulated based on the principles of Rukun Negara (Pillar of the Nation), the National Philosophy of Education (FPK) and the pillars of KSSR which are i) communication; ii) Physical & Aesthetic Development; iii) Humanity; iv) Personal Skills; v) Science and Technology and vi) Spirituality, attitudes, and values. The KSSR History subject is also formulated on the same principle by emphasizing the cognitive, effective, and psychomotor domains as well as applying added value of the new millennium such as thinking skills, information, and communication technology skills, multi-intelligence skills, future studies, and lifelong learning.

Key words: Historical thinking skills, History Teaching, Critical Thinking

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Introduction

The KSSR curriculum emphasizes the application of moral values, patriotic spirit, elements of citizenship and civic values. This subject was introduced with the aim of educating students to understand the background of the country and its history by looking at the changes that have occurred as well as the continuity that is still maintained especially in the life of society in Malaysia. In addition, it also enables students to understand human behavior, cause and effect, the uniqueness of the country's history and the country's glory in order to produce patriotic citizens who uphold democratic practices in Malaysia (KPM 2013)⁷.

Historical Thinking Skills (HTS) is a part of the thinking skills process that is important and needs to be applied to students, especially in History subjects. HTS is defined as a cognitive process that allows students to explore complex and abstract ideas with teacher guidance (KPM 2013)⁷. Another definition of HTS can be seen from the views of Marzano et al. (1998)⁹, Seixes (1996)¹⁶ and Wineburg (2001)²². Marzona et al. (1998)⁹ stated, HTS is a set of mental operational skills that includes the process of forming concepts, principles, understanding, problem solving, decision making, investigation and integration. According to Seixes (1996)¹⁶, Historical thinking is also a form of investigation based on evidence and the ability to criticize evidence and understand changes over time. Historical thinking is a tendency to think about the past by identifying changes related to basic things such as time, place, and people (Wineburg 2001)²².

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory of historical thinking is “Great Mind Theory”. This theory claimed that great leaders are heroes who are able to overcome their opponents against the odds while inspiring their followers. The concepts of historical thinking skills are historical significance, first-hand evidence, continuity and change, causation, historical perspective, and ethical dimension. Establishing historical significance, theory requires consideration of what events we choose to remember and why. Since history is so vast, it is impossible for us to remember everything. Why are certain events important? Who decides what matters, and how do their views on the issue differ from ours? Use primary source evidence, historians use evidence from sources to support their statements and conclusions. This is an important part of creating a believable and believable narrative (or illustration). Does the author provide references to primary sources? Can someone find primary source evidence to verify their claims? How does the availability of primary sources affect our memory and what we perceive as historically significant? Recognizing continuity and change, we are drawn to change as a sign of historic significance. This is especially true for major upheavals such as wars and revolutions. However, this notion of historical thinking also requires us to consider continuity. The absence of turmoil and continuity is also important in history. Analyze cause

and effect, when discussing historical events, one should understand the cause of the event. why? When considering this question, it is important to be able to explain why an event happened the way it did. Consider historical perspective, make sure someone understand the social, cultural, intellectual and emotional context in which the event took place. In hindsight, it might be easy to see the "correct" course of action, but it might not have been obvious at the time. Understanding the ethical dimensions of historical interpretation, historical figures often do not share our views, values or guiding principles. Historians must understand the ethical framework and expectations within which historical figures operate and resist the application of modern ethical standards to historical events (Clarke, 2020)²⁶.

Through history and an approach to history education inspired by historical thinking, we gain a clear understanding of what it means to know history, what teachers and students are expected to do in schools, and what historians do in college when they do it. their academic work. A key aspect here is to seek out valid and scientifically verifiable accounts, and to train students to be proficient in using established methods and a particular way of thinking about historical accounts, evaluating them against these criteria. Approaching history education through the lens of historical thinking then places the academic discipline and its methods of assessing the validity of narratives at the center of the history education agenda. Knowledge and skills in the discipline of academic history thus become the standard to which every student (and teacher) should strive. In the remainder of this essay, we will argue that this may be an overly narrow understanding of historical thought and historical education (Thorp & Persson, 2020).

KPM (2013)⁷ explained, HTS is given focus in Teaching and Learning (T&L) because it can help students understand how historians combine past events by using historical evidence to determine the significance of an event towards improving critical and creative thinking. Mastery of all elements in this skill allows students to see a historical event with empathy. Noria Munirah and Anuar Ahmad (2015)¹¹ have the same view that HTS is seen to be able to help students think critically, make connections between one event and another, make interpretations, explore evidence, make judgments, predict, and create imagination. The implementation of HTS can also help teachers revive the atmosphere of History learning which can simultaneously increase student interest and make students more critical, creative, and innovative (KPM 2013)⁷. HTS is also found to be suitable to be applied in almost all teaching and learning situations. The application of HTS can help teachers revive the atmosphere of learning History which can simultaneously increase students' interest. This allows students to be more critical, creative, and innovative. In order to achieve this goal, teachers should be knowledgeable about HTS and skilled in applying it in T&L.

The application of HTS among students will face problems if the History teacher lacks knowledge and the teaching does not rely solely on textbooks (Noria Munirah and Anuar Ahmad 2015)¹¹. HTS allows students to gain knowledge from past studies to help make better decisions in the future (Paul & Elder 2006)¹⁴. With HTS, for example, one can

admit that the History of the rise and fall of a kingdom (progress and decline), empathize with the past and its people and examine the causes of events based on cause and effect. History subjects can also stimulate historical thinking through critical and analytical thinking skills (Sokolov 2015)¹⁸. Zahara and Nik Azleena (2007)²³ assert that teachers should be responsible for expanding and cultivating students' thinking skills through various teaching methods and techniques. Zarina (2013)²⁴ also agreed that HTS should be part of the teacher's teaching process in presenting and interpreting History. It should not be separated from knowledge, personality and thinking. However, the effectiveness of History T&L depends on how thinking competence, pedagogy, and wisdom to stimulate student behavior towards past historical stories (Endacott & Brooks 2013)⁵. This study focuses on cultivating historical thinking skills in teaching History.

In the KSSR History subject, the Ministry of Education and Culture sets the foundation of HTS that must be mastered by students at the primary school level, which are the basic elements of history, the concept of time, order of time, time conversion, issues and problems of the past, comparison of the past, imagination, and empathy, finding sources and significant evidence. Summary of HTS elements in the KSSR History curriculum. The HTS element in KSSR History focuses on time, events to build historical empathy and the significance of evidence to the events that happened. According to Ahmad Rafeai (2011)¹, students need to understand the concepts of history first before further discussions about characteristics, causes, comparisons, chronology of events and making historical conclusions. Therefore, the stimulation of History thinking in Teaching and Learning (T&L) plays an important role. Ekecrantz, Parliden and Olsson (2015)⁵ stated that students need to be taught about the concept of HTS to build a new perception and mind that the subject of History is not something static and boring.

In this country, although HTS has long been emphasized in the implementation of the curriculum, but the application in T&L is still not very satisfactory. For example, teachers still do not really emphasize the aspect of guiding students to master some skills that are indeed found in historical thinking skills such as collecting data, exploring evidence, making interpretations, creating imagination, analyzing, formulating, and making evaluations (Baharuddin Jabar 2006)². The study of Noria Munirah and Anuar Ahmad (2015)¹¹ found that the overall HTS of trainee teachers was at a moderate level. Constructs measured at a medium level involve chronological skills, exploring evidence, making interpretations and rationalization skills while imagination skills are at a high level. HTS is still under-applied by History teachers during T&L because teachers consider this skill to be a high-level skill that students have not yet mastered. After all, students are often considered to lack the ability to interpret and analyze past events (Van Sledright, 2004)²⁰. This is because most teachers think that students' knowledge is still superficial in terms of the chronology of events, especially those involving matters related to politics and economics (Van Sledright, 2004)²⁰. In the context of History subjects, HTS is not only about remembering and stating dates,

years, names, and events but also requires someone who has a rich and deep historical knowledge of a historical event (Mohd Mahzan et al. 2016)¹⁰.

In the Primary School History T&L in this country, the HTS element is still new among History teachers because the History subject was only introduced in 2013. The Ministry of Education, through the Teacher Education Institute (IPG) is providing training to prospective primary school History teachers through the Program the Bachelor of Teaching Degree (PISMP) began Intake in January 2013 by offering the Primary School History Option. Through training, born History teachers are expected to master the knowledge and skills to teach History to primary school students. HTS among trainee teachers needs to be studied because it is one of the six important elements in the structure of the History discipline that must be mastered apart from Inquiry into History, Collection of Sources, Explanation of History, Understanding of History and Historical Empathy. The trainee teacher's understanding of HTS is an important one because it will affect the trainee teacher's skill in applying it in their teaching. The study of HTS among primary school History teachers which is still limited encourages the researcher to gain the understanding of trainee teachers regarding the implementation of HTS in P&P History of primary schools.

Methodology

Researcher used comprehensive research design namely research synthesis. Research synthesis is the process of combining the results of a major research aimed at testing the same conceptual hypothesis. It can be used for quantitative or qualitative research. The overall goal is to make the results from various studies more versatile and feasible. The goal is to generate new knowledge by combining and comparing the results of various studies on specific topics. One method is to use a systematic survey method. It requires the historian to simultaneously analyze what is read, evaluate it, and synthesize it into new concepts or a new "history." This step is "thinking" or "reasoning". It may include hypothesizing, questioning, guessing, evaluating, comparing, imagining, and many other techniques.

Findings and Discussion

The understanding of HTS among the study participants is still not comprehensive. Study participants understood HTS as referring to elements such as dates, times, events, places and figures, chronology, issues and causes of past events. Virta and Kouki (2014)²¹, HTS is not only able to express in-depth knowledge of history such as remembering years, names and events but also involves understanding and in-depth analysis of a phenomenon including a series of events or real history that happened. In the KSSR History DSKP also explains apart from the basic elements of history, HTS at the elementary level refers to the concept of time, order of time, conservation of time, issues and problems of the past,

comparison of the past, imagination and empathy, finding sources and obtaining significant evidence. If it is seen from the learning standards set in the History DSKP KSSR, the compilation of learning standards is already in line with HTS which is suitable for the level of students in primary school. The integration of HTS in T&L History also aims to promote creative and innovative thinking skills among students in the teaching phase, which is the preparation phase, the imagination phase, the development phase, and the action phase. This HTS includes the skills of understanding chronology, exploring evidence, making interpretations, making imaginations, making rationalizations, making explanations and historical empathy (DKSP Sejarah KSSR 2013)²⁵.

One of KSSR's wishes is to produce students who have 21st-century skills by focusing on thinking skills as well as life and career skills based on the practice of virtuous values. The concept, main evolution stages of History T&L, main characteristics, and application principles of the adaptive learning system for teacher training are outlined. It needs to be emphasized that the use and development of cloud-based adaptive learning systems is very important to achieve sustainable development of teacher education³. Curriculum change theories dealing with "anxiety stages" suggest that teachers implementing new courses experience a range of predictable anxiety types, and if their initial anxiety is not resolved, teachers slowly move on to more important task-related issues. This has serious implications for both professional development plans and the development of teacher support materials about information about teacher concerns is needed so that those who need support for teachers can do so on an informed basis¹⁵. Furthermore, assessments should emphasize ideas rather than facts. Grading an assignment, quiz, or test should be an intellectual challenge, not rote memorization. Subjective tools such as essay questions and case studies require students to apply their knowledge to new situations and are a better indicator of understanding than standard true/false or multiple-choice objective assessments¹⁹.

The integration of HTS elements in T&L is an important matter because misunderstanding about the concept of HTS that must be applied in P&P affects the effectiveness of a teacher's T&L (Nurhijrah et al. 2016)¹². HTS elements should be part of the teaching of History teachers to make History T&L more effective (Zarina Md. Yassin 2013)²⁴. The effectiveness of teacher teaching also depends on many factors. Teachers who are less successful in attracting students to learn history indirectly have students who cannot follow the teacher's teaching, and this can affect the goal of integrating HTS elements as well as the achievement of the set learning standards. According to Shulman (1987)¹⁷, content pedagogy knowledge can make a teacher teach more effectively because the teacher understands the subject being taught, knows, and understands the goals of the curriculum, appropriate teaching methods, and understands the background of the students being taught. HTS elements that need to be applied during T&L are part of the content pedagogical knowledge that teachers need to master. Ekecrantz, Parliden and Olsson (2015)⁴ stated that students need to be taught about the concept of HTS to build a new perception and mind that

the subject of History is not something static and boring. In T&L History, HTS should be integrated spontaneously by the teacher who teaches (Havekes et al. 2012)⁶.

The integration of HTS in primary school History T&L also has its challenges. One of the challenges faced by the study participants was that insufficient T&L time caused the teacher's planning to integrate HTS in the teaching of History not to be achieved. Classroom management skills that have not been established, especially in terms of student discipline control, also affect the effectiveness of the study participants' teaching. Sometimes teachers' teaching that focuses too much on the delivery of lesson content causes HTS elements to not be applied effectively and comprehensively. The lack of facilities for teaching aids such as LCD projectors, loudspeakers cause the diversity of T&L activities to integrate HTS as planned will not be fully achieved.

The study gives some implications especially for good T&L practices in the classroom for trainee teachers during practicum training (Nurhijrah, Anisah, Rosmani et.al., 2018)¹³. To integrate HTS in History T&L more effectively, trainee teachers need to prepare Daily Lesson Plans more carefully so that they can manage their time more wisely and orderly so that HTS can be integrated into the teaching of History during T&L. They also need to wisely translate and plan learning activities that can improve knowledge, skills, and appreciation of history among primary school students. In addition, classroom control skills need to be improved so that T&L can run well and diversify teaching methods to attract students to learn History. In addition, teachers need to be wise in using the available space and opportunities to adapt T&L activities in a situation where learning support materials are lacking.

In addition, trainee teachers who follow the History Education Program at Teacher Education Institute (Institut Pendidikan Guru-IPG) also need to be strengthened and a guide for the implementation and integration of HTS in T&L can be established. Based on Nurhijrah et al.'s (2016)¹² study on the need analysis for the construction of the Historical Thinking Skills teaching module in KSSR Year 4 History subject found, there are several suggestions to help teachers improve HTS such as providing a general framework of Pedagogical Knowledge of History Content KSSR provides a description of each element of HTS , providing examples of teaching activities that apply each element of HTS in Year 4 KSSR History for each content standard, providing an i-think map to help teachers apply HTS in Year 4 KSSR History, providing examples of a list of teaching resource materials for each Year 4 KSSR History topic, provide thinking skills questions that include Historical Thinking Skills (HTS) and provide relevant and easily accessible reference sources. In addition to this, trainee teachers from the History Education Program also need to be given continuous training and guidance to strengthen their understanding of HTS in the context of primary school History so that they can apply it in T&L more effectively. This requirement is in line with the recommendations of Ling and Wah (2015)⁸ who suggest that an action can

be taken as an intervention step to help teachers understand the curriculum so that teachers are clear and implement it correctly.

Conclusion

The skill of integrating HTS in T&L is an important one and needs to be paid attention to by lecturers who guide trainee teachers of the History Education Option. The integration of HTS in T&L is actually one of the forms of thinking parallel to Bloom's taxonomy which indirectly forms the basis of Higher-Level Thinking Skills (HTS) in History subjects. Concerning higher-level thinking, the trainee teachers of the History Education option should be given practical exposure to the integration of HTS more effectively to improve the student's understanding and appreciation of the country's history since elementary school.

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