

ABDUL RAZAQ AHMAD

Determination of Teaching Aids and Methods to Inculcate Thinking Skills in History Subjects

ABSTRACT: This study was aimed to examine how teachers manipulate teaching methods and materials to develop historical thinking process, to make the lesson meaningful for the students, and to increase their awareness of the events studied. This is a survey by using questionnaire as the research instrument to identify knowledge and the implementation of thinking approach for the history lesson through the use of certain methods and teaching aids. The sample consisted of 56 randomly selected teachers from secondary schools in the Kinta Valley, Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia, involving 39 history option teachers (69.6%) and 17 non-option teachers (30.4%). For the aspect of teaching experience, 27 (48.2%) teachers had 1 to 9 years of experience, while 29 (51.8%) teachers have taught more than 10 years. Teachers have knowledge on the elements of historical thinking and commitment to inculcate the thinking elements through questioning methods and techniques, discussion, inquiry, and systematic exploration of the historical information to find cause and effect, chronology of events, and rationalization. Pictures or portraits were also analyzed and interpreted by the history teachers. Findings show that option teachers have better thinking skills and better applications than non-option teachers. In addition, option teachers also have a better and more systematic teaching plan through the use of greater teaching methods and aids.

KEY WORDS: Value and history lesson, historical thinking, teachers of secondary school, methods and teaching aids, and systematic teaching.

INTRODUCTION

History is about the past events, which have significant meanings to individuals, community, and the nation. Thus, studies of historical events would provide information and remind people of their origins, the progress of their community, development of the country, and the past events which have significant impacts on the present situation. Hence, history is a long link between the past and present.

According to J.P. Abbott (2009), the current existence of a unique Malaysian nation, with a diversity of cultures and races, is the spill effects of past political and economic progress. However, understanding how it was formed

and existed can be traced through mature thoughts and reflections.

History classes should be the platform for mind and thinking development, which provide various dimensions of the learning climate. According to M.B. Booth (1987), thinking practices and the process of analyzing lesson would develop students' personality which motivate them to study, and receive meaningful learning experience. In other words, history class is not the place to memorize facts, dates, names of famous people, or receive information without censorship and questions; but, it is a field to collect evidence and facts to form the basis for further analysis and argument, even it can

About the Author: Assoc. Prof. Dato Dr. Haji Abdul Razaq Ahmad is a Lecturer at the Faculty of Education UKM (National University of Malaysia), Campus of UKM Bangi, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia. For academic interests, he can be contacted via his e-mail at: razaq@ukm.edu.my

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be in a matter of discussion to seek different views of an issue.

According to R. Lande (1982), theory of history can be defined as a description of historical journey experienced by people. He stressed that historical facts are trying to give satisfactory answers for two questions: (1) why the event occurred; and (2) how this event occurred in the life of human society? In replying the questions, there must be certain purposes of the course of history, and there are certain patterns or styles of human activities. If there is no particular pattern or style, the course of history would become sudden events with no correlation and there will be no link from one time with the other (*Dewan Masyarakat*, 15/9/1976:47; and Lande, 1982).

Learning history is very meaningful if teachers and students understand the context of the events and the thoughts that emerge from certain events. Hence, understanding and the thoughts would be developed in more detail as the basis for further discussion and structural analysis and such the lessons can be taken as references. Teachers should guide students on how to evaluate historical events through various points of view, before making a generalization and interpretation of the events.

Based on B.A. van Sledright (2004), teachers have a low level of confidence regarding students' ability to understand history lesson and historical facts through higher-order of thinking. Thus, this statement should be reviewed particularly students are now exposed to various information via the internet which has widened and promoted their dimension of thinking. Due to that, teachers should provide wide opportunities for students to think critically and creatively by using appropriate materials for the history lesson. Unfortunately, the alarming problems are teachers' ability to stimulate and promote the thinking process, as these two matters are still poor and even have never been practiced.

Students can obtain many benefits and advantages if they engage their lesson with academic thinking, not only to memorize and to recall but also to be trained to find problems and the answers for any historical

phenomenon. Therefore, learning history involves scientific and intrigue discovery.

K. Barton & L. Levstik (2004) have acknowledged that there are teachers who are not realistic when teaching history. Usually, routine is their primary rather than the process of learning. However, teachers can encourage students to be more imaginative about certain events, to link the effects of past events with the present events, to discuss chronologically, and highlight positive values of the past events. Sadly, the current lesson is just a routine teaching with monotonous voice messages that hardly digested by the students.

According to Aini Hassan (1999), the efforts to improve the history lesson and making teaching history interesting would be worthless if teachers continually depend on the textbooks without having additional reference and thinking practice. Also, according to M.F.B. Ahmad (2010), sustainable historical knowledge would give in-depth impression and perspective to the grass roots and the development of the nation through various epoch and events.

Profound awareness of the fact that a modern Malaysian nation is a continuation of a long history of pride and will create a strong identity. Coupled with an understanding of the various past struggles, this will strengthen the spirit to face all kinds of challenges that may threaten the existence of the country as a place of birth, life, and death (*Balai Muhibbah*, 1987:42).

According to Kamarul Afendey Hamimi & Ishak Saat (2013), the preservation of historical thinking is important in enhancing students' intellect. The ability to sustain historical thinking would allow students to understand the current situation as a result of past events or stories; and, thus, to plan a brighter future history.

Sustaining thinking skills in history lesson involves students to evaluate or to compare facts or information; hence, students can not simply receive information without critical thinking. This does not mean, students have to question all facts delivered by the teachers but it is essential for students to be able to argue with sound opinions or views, particularly on the past struggles for independence by the

Table 1:
Indicators of Alpha Cronbach Values

Indicators	Values of the Alpha Cronbach
Very High	> 0.90
High	0.70 – 0.89
Moderate	0.30 – 0.69
Low	0.30

Source: E. Barbie (1983) and Awang Salleh Awang Wahab (2006).

negative wings or radical groups. Students should be able to ask themselves whether those people can be considered as heroes in fighting for independence. If students are too passive and refuse to think, their thinking would be shallow and mere receptive of what other people have told them on the historical facts, particularly on the old reports recorded by the foreign orientalist.

According to F.K. Chan *et al.* (1997), individuals who are exposed to critical thinking would be able to make the right actions and decisions based on the situation and circumstances. They are also more flexible or at least are not passive in handling various and more challenging situations. Those students would have the ability to accommodate themselves in which ever situation and, thus, they would handle any problems intelligently (*cf* Sidney, 1997).

RESEARCH AIMS, OBJECTIVES, AND METHOD

The study was conducted to examine teachers' methodology and the teaching aids in applying history thinking skills for the students during the learning session. Due to that, the objectives of the research are as follow: (1) to identify teachers' knowledge regarding the application of thinking process in the history lesson/class; (2) to identify steps taken by teachers to inculcate history thinking skills in the history lesson/class; (3) to evaluate and determine the differences of teachers' knowledge regarding the application of thinking process in the history lesson/class based on teaching experience and option; and (4) to examine relationship between pedagogic skills, namely methods and teaching aids, with history thinking skills.

This is a survey using a questionnaire as

an instrument to identify the knowledge and implementation of the thinking approach in the history lesson through determination of instructional methods and teaching aids. The respondents consisted of 56 teachers randomly selected from the national secondary schools in Kinta Valley, Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia.

The questionnaire used in this study involves three sections, namely Section A: demographic information; Section B: teachers' knowledge of thinking approach in teaching history (15 items); and Section C: implementation of thinking approach in the history instructional process which involves teaching methods (13 items) and teaching aids (8 items).

A total of 39 teachers (69.6%) were history option teachers, while a total of 17 teachers (30.4%) were non-option teachers. In terms of teaching experience, a total of 27 (48.2%) have 1 to 9 years teaching experience, while 29 (51.8%) teachers have more than 10 years of teaching experience. The Cronbach Alpha classification values in this study are based on the reliability classification index as stated in the table 1.

THEORETICAL CONCEPT, FRAMEWORK, AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted based on P. Walsh (1993) in relation to thinking approach in the instructional process of history lesson, which involves two approaches, namely: (1) *heuristic source*, which is investigating sources; and (2) *heuristic supports*, which is about comparison of information involving five basics of thinking in the history lesson.

Based on the CSBE (California State Board of Education) in 1988, the five basic thinkings are: (1) chronologic thinking; (2)

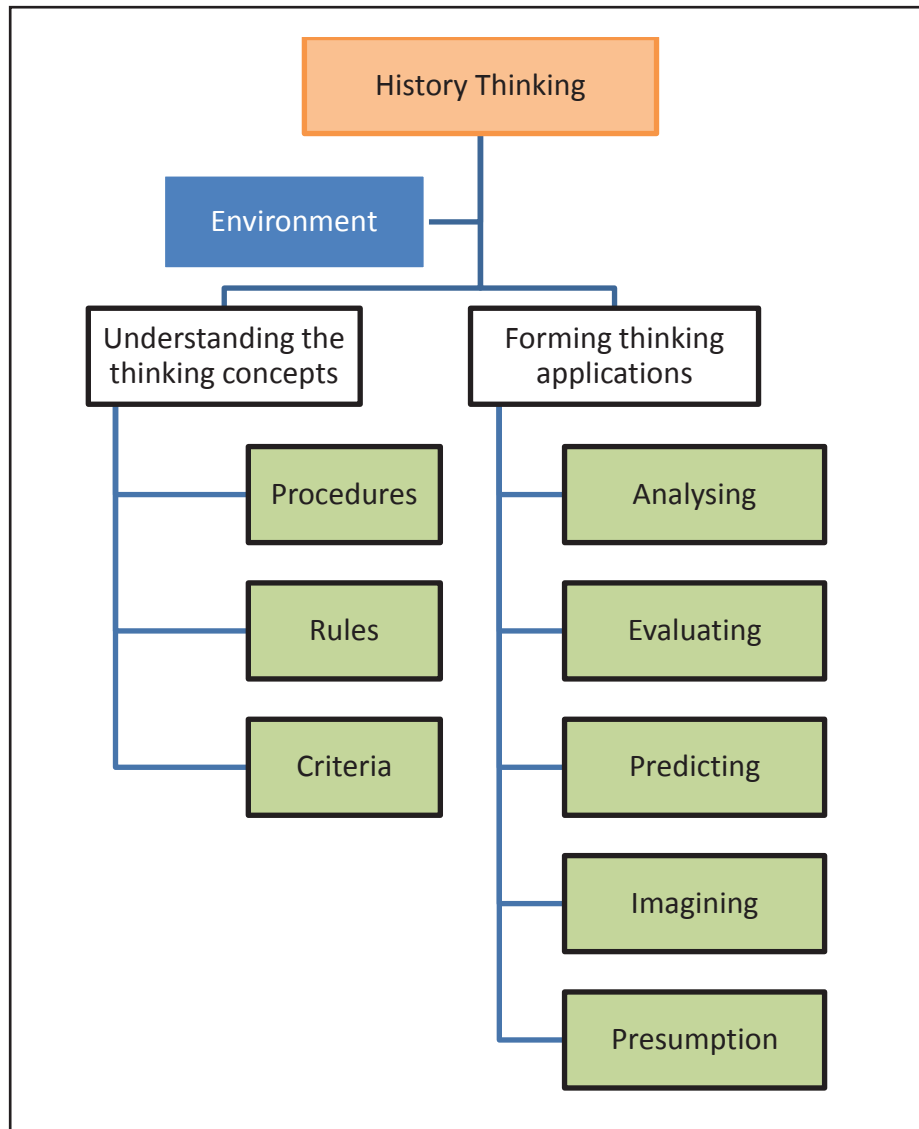


Figure 1:
Research Framework by B.K. Beyer (1987)

understanding history; (3) history analysis and interpretation; (4) the ability to do history research and analysing content; and (5) decision making (CSBE, 1988). While, the Malaysian Ministry of Education, in 2003, has also listed five essential skills to be applied by teachers in the history instructional process. The skills are: chronologic skills, evidence discovery skills, interpretation skills, imagination skills, and rationalisation skills (MoE Malaysia, 2003; and KPM, 2003).

B.K. Beyer (1984) also stated that thinking process is about human's ability to shape certain concepts, to provide reasons, and to

make decisions. In addition, metacognition occurs before and after an individual thinks. Metacognition enables one to do mind planning regarding how to think. J. Barr (2005) stated that the product stage will occur when the mind produces ideas, for example, the ways to solve a problem, several steps of problem solving, or at least the response or feedback of the problem.

Newmann (1990) suggested several characteristics of teaching and learning to encourage thinking. According to him, the typical teaching and learning which encourage thinking should have the following

characteristics: (1) Focus on in-depth contents rather than general lecture; (2) Active classroom discussions which reflect continuous and clear ideas; (3) Encourage active students involvement; (4) Students are required to explain, to justify their responses and opinions; (5) Teachers are the role models for the higher thinking through the problem solving skills; and (6) Students are encouraged to provide new ideas and to improve their understanding on the topics studied rather than merely memorizing or remembering contents of the textbooks (Newmann, 1990).

B.K. Beyer (1987) recommended two main elements. *Firstly*, teachers need to fully understand the thinking skills and concepts. *Secondly*, teachers need to apply the concepts and skills in their activities (in class or out of the classroom). Apart from that, teachers are advised to structure and plan their thinking skills lessons by identifying variables of the thinking skills. The main variables of thinking skills are thinking procedures, rules and criteria, for instance, process which involves analysing, evaluating, predicting, picturing/imagining, and presumption. Teachers can design their lessons and guide students to connect or relate thinking skills with history.

Based on the conceptual framework in figure 1, this study is to determine how understanding of thinking concepts would influence teachers to apply the thinking skills and to identify the steps taken by teachers to inculcate history thinking and to provide various learning climates for different types of students.

This study is to provide clear insight regarding the approaches for history thinking conducted by teachers in their instructional process based on their pedagogical knowledge, particularly on the determination of methods and teaching aids. This would provide information on the level of knowledge and implementation of thinking approaches embedded in the history classes.

Findings of the study would be a great foundation for the improvement process by providing inputs for the teaching training programs for history subject at the Teaching Institutes. The findings would also be used as references by other fellow researchers for

future studies, particularly by considering various new elements with regard to students' ability and their tendency to learn through thinking approaches. This study also provides evidences of genuine perceptions which show teachers' weaknesses in applying thinking approaches in teaching and learning history.

Teachers ability in conducting instructional process maturely and their competency in promoting thinking skills through the use of teaching aids should be encouraged in various manners. The efforts to improve the quality of history teaching should also be conducted through various modes and in-service training programs. Improvement in terms of quality and solutions should be continued in order to attract students' interest and attention towards the process of learning history itself.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

Yusup Hashim (1998) stated that implementation is a process of using or applying teaching aids in teaching and learning. In the context of this study, implementation is referred to teachers' competency in applying thinking approach in the instructional process by selecting appropriate methods and teaching aids. Thinking approach is about the teaching steps or stages which are more to guide and direct students to the mind operation for the purpose of evaluating, analysing, decision making, and problem solving.

This matter was also discussed by A. Missimer (1990), regarding active teaching. History thinking approach trains students to evaluate all events from a researcher's point of view through chronologic analysis, time analogy, interpretation of prominent historians, and current imagination on ancient time. This method of teaching approach would let teachers and students relate the learning or lesson values with the current situation. Learning would be meaningful and students would be more confident and their interest to learn history would be levelled up.

According to P. Seixas (1996), thinking approach takes students to a journey of a new dimension in debating historical events; and, thus, this is a great topic to study. Teachers are

instructional leaders and, thus, they need to be sensitive to students needs and competencies. Students should learn history not only to understand the face content but rather the in-depth meanings of past or ancient epoch, particularly on the background of the society and the progress of certain cultures. Thinking approach encourages students to see history analytically, progressively, and in a broader view. B. Garrey & M. Krug (1987) described this as “thinking skills through history knowledge”.

According to P. Seixas (1996), students should be taught to value history through clear evidences that show series of events as well as the progress that have phenomenal impacts on the whole society. The events are then interpreted based on the impacts on the next society or people. For instance, other significant information and the danger of wars can also be discussed when discussing the conflicts of wars, especially the Second World War (1939-1945) and the impacts on people today. However, this approach requires teacher’s creativity and intelligence to break and investigate certain phenomena of historical events.

R.W. Evans (1996) developed a new pattern of thinking through critical approach. Through this critical approach, historical thinking is implemented through three categories: (1) Current or present issues of the people or society are evaluated from the historical perspectives; (2) Chronological approach is used while focussing on significant events in a chronological list for detailed scrutiny; and (3) Synchronic approach can be used in describing the historical aspects of the phenomenon through interdisciplinary concept of a past event that occurred within a certain period without reference to causes of action or their effect.

According to S. Wood (1995), the concepts of timelines and transformation of time should be encouraged and developed as they bring great benefits to the students. The concept can be developed through a sequence of activities or events of the historical facts based on statements, photographs, and artifacts; and through these activities, students are able to understand the concept of cause and effect.

In the report from the School Council Project 13-16 in the United States of America on history education, titled *A New Look at History*, suggested that it is better if the history education is seen as a study on a collection of relics of the past such as those used by historians as proof of their interpretation and translation of the past rather than merely presenting the facts printed in the textbook with superficial and even shallow understanding (cited in Sarjit Singh, 1985).

Artifacts could turn the past events that is now presumed dead to be alive and relived as specified by C. Husbands, as following here:

One way to start thinking about how we built up understanding of the past in the classroom is to consider the raw materials which are available. These raw material of “relics” are not in themselves “history” or “the past”, but they provide one basis for constructing historical knowledge (Husbands, 1996).

B. Tally & L.B. Goldenberg (2005) conducted a study on the use of digital visual aids in guiding students to have the skills of exploring evidence. The findings showed that students are able to explore historical evidence through online digital visual aids under teachers’ guidance, who are trained to analyze primary sources. Students are actively engaged in interpreting and analysing documents effectively.

S.J. Foxtor & E.A. Yeager (1999) stated that students who rely on text books would make shallow and ill-informed conclusion when compared with students who are exposed to various forms of evidence. The Schools Council History Project, 1972-1978, emphasized that imagination should be controlled based on evidence and students are like historians:

[...] has to be able to enter into the mind and feeling of all the people involved in an event and appreciate their differing attitudes without necessarily approving of their motives if he is to understand why [...] they acted as they did [...] history demands an exercise in imagination or an ability to enter into the past sympathetically (cited in Husbands, 1996).

J. Fines (2002) has divided the imagination process into two stages: static and dynamic.

According to J. Fines, *static imagination* is the initial stage involving paintings/illustration and history is seen as it is. At this state, expression is limited to the image seen by the students. However, *dynamic imagination* is related to expression, interpretation, evaluation, understanding, and reconstructing the past actions (Fines, 2002).

C. White (1996) recognized that teachers' knowledge and understanding of history are higher than the historians, but their achievement for the historical thinking skills, such as the ability to interpret, is still low. He compared historical thinking skills between the history teachers with the history professors; and found that teachers' historical thinking skills, particularly to understand and analyze textbooks, were at the top when compared to primary sources such as documents, whereas the professors regarded textbooks in the last ladder (White, 1996). This study clearly showed that teachers and students alike are depending too much on the text books, which cause them both to have the same thinking without the tendency to refer to the primary sources.

A study conducted by D.L. Trombino (2010) found that some teachers revealed that they were not taught in the university or training college on how to interpret historical sources; however, they do know how to interpret the sources. As a result, history teachers are unable to deliver clear instructions and help students to use thinking skills in the classroom.

Yusuf Iskandar & Khalil Yusuf (1989) acknowledged that history teachers disregard interpretative component in their teaching. This study is similar to the results found by D.L. Trombino (2010), who determined that 64 teachers of the study rarely mentioned about the historical process, but they only asked students to copy notes, to complete diagrams, and to memorise facts and figures; hence, history classes are static and fail to arouse students' interest. What is more frustrating, many history teachers are comfortable with lectures and story telling rather than doing research, discussion, and making interpretations.

Hassan Haris (1993) had studied teaching problems based on the Secondary School

Curriculum Syllabus in four Districts of Perak in Malaysia, encountered that the problems faced by the history teachers were on the teaching techniques, such as historical inquiry, case studies, field or educational trips, and role playing or drama. Those problems are due to lack of knowledge and understanding of the teaching techniques (*cf* Sarjit Singh, 1985).

Questions such as *why* and *how* are often used by historians to "describe" history (Drake & Brown, 2003). Questioning is essential in historical thinking skills. Again, according to F.D. Drake & S.D. Brown (2003), there are some basic questions where the teachers should use to analyze historical sources, such as identifying the author of a source, the date of written sources, types of resources used, the focus of discussion, and the factors that prompted the authors to produce historical pieces.

According to Zahara Aziz, Abdul Razaq Ahmad & Ahmad Razaai Ayudin (2009), teachers should be creative in creating a learning environment. Teaching and learning resources are no longer limited to teachers and textbooks. Instead, ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and diversity of teaching and learning resources can be used by teachers to promote historical thinking approach.

Nik Azleena Nik Ismail (2003) conducted a survey to determine teachers' readiness in implementing historical thinking skills to students. The study examined five aspects of knowledge readiness, namely: procedural knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, knowledge on the use of teaching aids, knowledge of managing learning, and activities and attitude.

J. Arnold (2000) studied the extent of historical thinking skills performed by history teachers in their teaching and learning in the classroom. This study was based on students' perspective on teachers' efforts to foster historical thinking skills among students as well as comparative study on the implementation of history thinking skills between urban and sub-urban schools. The findings showed that teachers implemented thinking skills in their teaching, but the level varies according to the category of thinking.

In terms of thinking skills categories, the most often conducted by teachers was exploration of evidence, while imagination was the least thinking skills implemented by teachers.

His findings demonstrate the level of teachers readiness to teach history based on the five aspects. It was found that there were significant differences between the option history teachers with the non-option and between teachers who had attended courses with those who were not. There was also a significant difference in terms of knowledge to use teaching aids based on teaching experiences (more than ten years and less than ten years). However, there was no significant difference between experience with inexperienced history teachers on the level of knowledge and pedagogical procedural readiness (Arnold, 2000).

Apart from that, history lesson requires emphatic teaching, which can be conducted in five circumstances or situations, namely: (1) focus on the situation of the past; (2) establish the context and chronology; (3) introduction of various resource materials; (4) design a more complex learning; and (5) to rationalize the actions of a leader (Foxter & Yeager, 1999).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First, the level of teachers' knowledge regarding thinking procedures, rules, and criteria. The results show that teachers have higher level of knowledge about the concept of thinking and historical thinking skills in the context of: *describing historical facts chronologically* (3.89); *analyzing historical evidence based on primary and secondary documents* (3.84); *interpreting teaching materials/aids by referring to a variety of historical subjects, views, and thoughts* (3.85); *static and dynamic historical imagination* (3.92); and *rationalizing historical events in a mature way and relevant to the current situation* (3.80).

The most important is teachers' ability to transfer their skills and encourage thinking process among students and stimulate learning activities through brainstorming session, particularly inquiry process and reflecting history. Assignments should be given in advance before the actual lesson to

Table 2:
 Ranking of Methods Based on Priority

Methods
Questioning
Discussion
Inquiry
Multimedia
Project
Brainstorming
Simulation
Modeling
Debating
Story telling
Visit
Analysis of Documents

allow students to obtain information from other sources related to the topic. Students can be instructed to find additional sources such as from books, video viewing, or through verbal resources. For example, students may find the history of the Japanese occupation as featured in television, youtube, or verbal stories from the previous generation about the Japanese soldiers. In the classroom, teachers can ask students to share their experiences of finding the other sources. Teaching and learning strategies such as these are expected to develop students' thinking skills in appreciating the preservation of historical events, as students become more creative in finding additional information.

E.M. Philip (2004) stated that "if we ask ten different educators to define *inquiry*, we would get various definitions". Inquiry approach in learning can be applied in various forms depending on the field of study or subjects. A.A. Carin & R.B. Sund (1971) defined inquiry as indirect learning that involves exploration activities and discovery related to the process of obtaining information. It is based on questioning and problem solving in the teaching and learning activities. Through these activities, students are involved in the process of mental information to understand meaningfully, and be actively involved in their learning process.

Teachers can develop metacognition techniques to provide opportunities for students to reflect and categorize their

Table 3:
Level of History Thinking Approach Based on Teaching Option

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Option teachers	39	4.0	0.555	High
Non-option teachers	17	3.54	0.607	Moderate

opinions. For example, if a student has a specific view of an event or figures which are not aligned with the information as explained by the teacher, friend, or reference materials, so teachers need to assess the basis of the students' views, how they use facts and arguments, and the outcome of their views in the historical aspect.

Second, steps taken by teachers to apply historical thinking. The common methods and techniques used by teachers in encouraging students to think are through questioning, discussion, and inquiry. However, students can be trained to think and explore historical information systematically and critically through other methods, as revealed in the table 2.

In terms of the teaching aids, it was found that teachers often use historic pictures or portraits to be analyzed and interpreted as the ways to apply thinking approach in the classroom. Other materials often used by history teachers are such as potteries, agricultural equipments, and many more. They are used to help students understand the historic materials or remains while observing the fineness of carving produced by the past generation. Maps were also used to identify the location and the influence of the earth for economic activities.

Audio visual is interesting and easily understood, thus teachers also use videos to be watched and debated, such as the story of Rosli Dhobie, the establishment of *Muhammadiyah* (followers Muhammad) movement by *Kiyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan* in Indonesia, the English Revolution, and others. In this way, students can give their comments, reviews, and brainstorming which help to develop their minds and sharpen their critical thinking.

A.E. Lawson (1995) has proposed a model of the learning cycle which involves three main processes, namely: (1) Exploration, (2) Introduction of themes, and (3) Application

of concepts. At the exploration stage, students will discuss a range of issues that can be highlighted based on the subject matter and the students perform activities related to open and unstructured physical objects. Teachers will assist students in making an observation, measuring, and recording of data.

At the stage of introducing the themes, students are introduced to various terms and concepts related to the content of the subject. At this level, teacher helps students to have a clear understanding of the concepts and constructs, as well as encourages students to understand the various methods and approaches to applicate the concepts.

Third, thinking approach and its implementation based on teaching experience and options. Option teachers implemented thinking approach better than the non-option teachers. This is due to the fact that options teachers were trained to teach history and understand the pedagogy more that the non-option teachers.

In overall, from the table 3, history option teachers have high knowledge of thinking skills, with mean 4.0, when compared to non-option history teachers which is at the moderate level (mean 3.54).

According to table 4, the level of thinking approach knowlegde was high among the teachers who have more than 10 years teaching experience. They are more confident in handling the instructional process and able to apply thinking skills through the selection of appropriate methods and teaching materials were accurate and relevant.

Fourth, the implications of teaching practice towards thinking application. The results show that there is no significant relationship between the determination of methods with the implementation of history thinking. Obviously, the choice of methods is very important in achieving the goals for creating a thinking situation in the history

Table 4:
 Level of History Thinking Approach Based on Teaching Experience

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1 -9 years of experience	27	3.65	0.566	Moderate
More than 10 years	29	4.06	0.579	High

Table 5:
 Relationship between Determination of Methods and Teaching Aids with the Implementation of the Thinking Approach in History Class

Relationship	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significant level
Relationship between the determination of methods with the implementation of thinking approach.	0.555	0.00**
Relationship between teaching aids with the implementation of thinking approach.	0.554	

** Significant at the level of 0.05

class. Questioning, brainstorming, simulations, visits, discussions, debates, project work, and others are very meaningful activities to stimulate and encourage students to think actively. With the right methods and smooth instructional process, the history lesson would be fun and meaningful for students.

In terms of teaching aids used in class and its relationship with the implementation of thinking approach, it was found that, in table 5, there was a significant correlation of $r = 0.004 < 0.005$. This is due to the fact that teaching aids stimulate the process of thinking to create ideas, trigger the chain of cause, and effect by observing portraits, maps, posters, currencies, letters of agreement, constitution books, and others. In addition, the lesson would be fun and students would feel a sense of freedom rather than being confined with the sole information found in the textbooks. This new way of teaching history brings new dimension through diversity of thoughts regarding historical materials.

The use of videos, films, and other multimedia materials trigger many questions and spark students' curiosity about many things. Film *Sang Pencerah* (a brightening agent) is an example which can be used by teachers to provide an understanding of the Islamic movement in Indonesia, which can certainly spark a lot of interesting and new ideas about the founder of *Muhammadiyah* organization.

Teaching methods and materials are indeed embedded in the routine tasks of a teacher; and the only difference between one teacher and the other is the relevancy of the methods and the teaching aids they select and how they manage the subject matter. The dynamic of the lesson would be great if teachers select the right methods and teaching aids. The history lesson would be interesting and bring a lot of new knowledge, the quality of the discussion will also be improved, and students' interpretation and imagination would be higher.

Therefore, teachers should use their experience and competency to choose and determine the right methods and select relevant teaching aids to level up the teaching and learning history to be more interesting for an optimal effect on students' thinking. Methods such as educational trips or visits to historical places, with video recording of visited sites would be helpful to be used in the classroom as post activity to get response and views from students about what they have seen and observed.

CONCLUSION

Teaching and learning history should be active and interesting, especially in discussing long past and ancient events. Students often experience concrete thinking rather than abstract thinking; therefore, history teachers need to be creative and innovative in creating

learning situations to make the session fun and active.

The lesson should be managed through various activities which involve analyzing, exploring information, making interpretation, imagination, and rationalization. Therefore, the method chosen should be compatible with students and relevant to the learning objectives. However, the teaching aids selected should not be cliché, but able to motivate students to learn more, to communicate, and to interpret meaningfully.

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