Higher order thinking skills in teaching Malay Language through questions and questioning among the teachers

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ABSTRACT: This study was conducted to investigate the issues related to the level of knowledge acquisition in Higher Level Thinking Skills (HOTS) among the Malay language teachers in national primary schools. This study applied quantitative approach by using Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956, 2001) and Intellectual Enhancement and Upbringing Model (Philips, 1996). Total of 60 teachers from one district in the Negeri Sembilan were selected to answer the HOTS test. In addition, this study also explored whether there were significant differences between the level of knowledge acquisition in HOTS questioning with teachers’ social background. Data was analyzed by using SPSS version 21.0. The findings showed that the level of knowledge acquisition of HOTS questioning in Malay language was at a moderate level. Mann-Whitney and Kruskall-Wallis test showed no significant differences between the level of knowledge acquisition in HOTS questioning based on teachers’ specialization, attendance to relevant courses and teaching experiences. In other words, the social background of teachers did not determined the level of knowledge acquisition in HOTS questioning technique among the Malay language teachers in national primary schools. Therefore, Ministry of Education need to conduct effective HOTS courses in order to ensure that the implementation of HOTS questioning technique in all schools a success.

1 INTRODUCTION

Along with the development of Malaysia civilization and the effort of lifting up the name of the country to the world, education is the most important factor. The transformation in improving the quality of the education system has been designed in long-term by the Ministry of Education, namely the National Education Blueprint (2013-2025). One of transformational shift in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (NEB) is to ‘provide equal chance of access to quality education of international standards, examinations and assessments prior to this will be revamped and devoted to the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills Consortium (AT21CS) organized knowledge, skills and attitude into four categories: ways of thinking, ways of working, tools for working and living in the world (Schleicher, 2012). Similarly, one of the wishes of national education in Malaysia is to educate people to think. However, the education system suffered a blow when Malaysia was ranked 55th in the assessment of reading skills for PISA test with 443 mean score (PISA 2015 Result in Focus, 2016). This directly shows the position of the best students in Malaysia is far behind compared to other countries.

This finding was further strengthened by the report submitted by Kestrel Education (UK) and 21st Century School (USA) in November 2011 stated that higher-order thinking among teachers and students in Malaysia is located at a very low level (Teachers Education Division, 2012) and bound by the examination-oriented method of teaching by teachers based on the report by UNESCO in 2011. Regarding this, Harmi and Mahamod (2013) of the opinion that the dependence of the