

Instilling Empathy as a Teaching and Learning Strategy in Malay Literature

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Abstract

Empathy is a feeling expressed by an individual who possess the capability of understanding and feeling emotions and thoughts of others, as if they are experiencing the situation themselves. The purpose of this study is to investigate the aspect of empathy as a teaching and learning strategy in Malay Literature. The methodology used in this research is a qualitative approach by utilizing library research, document analysis and case study. The instruments used were empathy observation checklist, student reflection as well as interview protocol and the analysis of data was conducted using thematic analysis. Findings of the study showed empathy was applied in the teaching and learning of the participants through active learning, experiential learning, student-centred learning and storytelling in learning. In conclusion, students were open in voicing out their feelings about certain issues, able to use all their senses in identifying certain issues, and were able to appreciate their feelings. Implications of this study showed that empathy is aligned with the aspiration of the Curriculum Standard of Malaysian Secondary Schools built upon the six facets.

Keywords: Empathy, Teachers, Students, Malay Literature, Teaching and Learning Strategy, Reflection

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1. Introduction

Student problems in the current era is a growing concern in the social phenomenon, where students exert misdemeanor, impoliteness and other issues that teachers find worrying and should be treated through change in the education system. Efforts should be made so a synergy of change from teachers could be implemented to contain this issue. Zainudin Sharif & Norazmah Mod Roslan (2011); Ahmad Firdaus Mohd Noor, Kamarul Azmi Jasmi & Khairunnisa A Shukor (2013); Nurzatil Ismahbinti Azizan, Nazneen Ismail, Sahlawati Abu Bakar, Zanariah Dimonand Asma' Wardah Surtahman (2015) express that social issues among teenage students are a growing concern. A comprehensive approach should

be implemented to curb this problem from spreading. For this reason, education plays an integral role in developing a caring community. Teachers as implicit agents of change have an immense role in maneuvering the younger generation to become empathetic beings for the purpose of developing a community that cares for others and appreciates good values. The feeling of empathy is an aspect of experiential learning that is related to the emotions between teachers and students (Cooper, 2011).

Stephen R. Covey (2015) and Ni Made Rahmi Suryawati (2015) state that the process of empathy happens when an individual succeeds to put their own soul into others', which encapsulates sharing of thoughts, feeling of different emotions and sharing of distressing

life events. There are two stages to the concept of empathy; cognitive empathy and affective empathy (Dwi Indera Lestari & Ivan Muhammad Agung, 2016). Cognitive empathy refers to the ability of an individual to understand others while affective empathy relates to the ability to feel what other individuals feel.

With regards to that, several researchers agree on the synonymous meaning of empathy as the emotion felt by others as a result of events that had transpired (Wondra & Ellsworth, 2015). In the following section, literature review highlights the techniques of blending in the aspect of empathy in the Malay Literature subject during the teaching and learning process. The reason for selecting this subject is that Malay Literature is synonymous with the richness of good values. This aspect could potentially become a major source for shaping a caring society. Hence, in the planning of the lesson, teachers should include the aspect of element of empathy to inculcate the spirit of togetherness and sensitivity towards others among their students.

2. Literature Review

Previous literature related to empathy comprise several aspects including definitions of empathy, theories on empathy, teachers' empathy as well as students' empathy. Empathy is defined as an individual's instinctive process of understanding others. This term was first coined by Tichener in 1909, based on the philosophy of Edith Stein (1916) and professionally applied by Rogers in 1951. This concept was further updated by Rudolf Steiner in 1894, 1904, 1910 and 1918.

Hoffman in *Caring Teacher in Developing Empathy in Moral Education* (Ilhavenil Narinasamy & Wan Hasmah Wan Mamat, 2013) posits that empathy is the suitability of one's caring attitude. Hoffman also states that empathy refers to the relationship between empathetic feeling of sadness and care that are directly and clearly expressed. His viewpoint on empathy is the basis of an individual's expression of concern towards another individual. This statement is supported by most scholars by which they agree that empathy is a person's situation to understand other people's feelings. Empathy is the condition of understanding and feeling emotions and thoughts experienced by others, as they are experiencing the condition themselves.

Ilhavenil Narinasamy (2013) in the study *Teacher As A Caring Agent In Developing Empathy Among Moral Education Students* investigated empathy of teachers and students. This study discussed the level of understanding of Moral Education teachers in Form 4 whereby the role of teachers as agents of care and their level of concern to broaden the feeling of empathy among their students were scrutinized. Findings of this study revealed that six main themes were derived based the concept of care and empathy. Apart from that, excellent teachers outshined others in their willingness to listen to students' views and showed encouragement to communicate effectively in

two-communication that lead to the growth of empathy. Teachers applied the approach of inculcating the aspect of empathy within their students. This study made use of a qualitative approach and participants involved in the study were four teachers and 5 students.

Kristina Mikkonen, Helvi Kyngasdan Maria Kaariainen in the study *Nursing students' experiences of the empathy of their teachers: a qualitative study* elaborated on nursing students' experiences with their teachers' empathy that influenced the progression of their learning. Findings showed that empathy does affect the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Teachers should possess empathy as empathetic teachers can affect the learning process of these students. Teachers should possess this trait within themselves as this affects students' learning. Aside that, they should emphasize on the principle of empathy and instill care in teaching these students, particularly when it involves good communication with their students. This research applied the qualitative approach by conducting interview to obtain students' learning experiences. Both studies showed differences in the purpose of the study. Kristina Mikkonen, Helvi Kyngasdan Maria Kaariainen measured students' learning experience with their teachers, (Meyers, Rowell, Wells, & Smith, 2019) while Ilhavenil Narinasamy discussed about teachers' level of understanding in increasing the aspect of empathy.

It is clear from both studies that teachers play an integral role in instilling the element of empathy and reviewing their ability to increase their empathy within themselves so that they could give guidance to their students more effectively. Students themselves feel happy and interested to be engaged with the teaching and learning environment that is smooth and harmonious. Therefore, study on empathy should be reviewed in depth. For this reason, the present study attempts to examine the level of empathy among teachers and students.

Another study by Yiyue Zhang (2016) entitled *Walking a mile in their shoes: Developing pre-service music teachers' empathy for ELL students* varies to the study by Baris (2016) entitled *An evaluation of the empathy levels of pre-service social studies teachers*. The study by Yiyue Zhang discussed about the importance of developing empathy of pre-service Music teachers for ELL students and suggested to develop these teachers' sense of empathy. Meanwhile, Baris stated about factors that affect the level of empathy among pre-service teachers studying in the Department of Social Studies. Both these studies differ not only in their purpose but also in their findings. Yiyue Zhang's study on developing empathy is seen through the music teachers' experience in providing service in understanding the meaning of ELL. On the other hand, findings on Baris' study showed supervision of teachers' scores, particularly on its subdivisions, should possess a reactive state of emotion and varied level of empathy on the part of the teachers.

Another difference between the two studies is in the sampling, where Yiyue Zhang made use of random sampling for teachers' interview on their level of empathy, whereas Baris Kaya's study applied the quantitative method of measuring the level of empathy among pre-service teachers with varied backgrounds such as age, gender and school society member.

Aside that, *Empathy in future teachers of the Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombiaby* Herrera Torres, Buitrago Bonilla, and Ávila Moreno (2016) analyzed cognitive and emotional empathy of students undergoing the teacher practice. Findings revealed that participants achieved a higher result in the cognitive dimension of empathy through the additional score which is equivalent to the scale of emotional understanding conducted for future teachers in evaluating the level of empathy. From the findings of the two studies, there is a major difference in the factors of age, improvement score and the specified program of the students. This study applied the quantitative method for measuring the cognitive and emotional empathy scale (TECA) to determine students' proficiency of the Spanish language. This study involved 317 students registered in the Pre-school Education program, Natural Sciences, Computer Science, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Music, Psycho-pedagogy and Social Science.

In conclusion, studies related to empathy of teachers should be further explored to cultivate the element of empathy among teachers first and foremost prior to instilling empathy in the students. Teachers' capability in inculcating the feeling of empathy within oneself is crucial in the subsequent task of educating their students.

3. Problem Statement

The problem statement pertaining to the teaching of empathy attempts to seek answers to several research questions. The first research question; why is the Malay Literature subject selected? Second; Why is the teaching and learning of empathy pertinent in educating students? How is empathy instilled in these students?

The selection of the Malay Literature subject as a channel for expression of empathy is due to the reason of this particular subject having elements of humanities and good moral values within the subject itself, where students appreciate these values. This subject generally possesses five genres; novels, short stories, drama, traditional prose as well as modern and traditional poetry Nordiana Hamzah, Hasrina Baharum, Azhar Wahid, & Nor Azimah Zakaria, 2018). These genres consist of story plots with the themes of community, humanity, religion, culture and politics. The uniqueness of this subject is that it has been introduced as a compulsory subject in Malay Language since 2000. Hence, teachers act as agents of guidance for students to appreciate the positive elements discussed in this subject. Creative teachers in their teaching and learning help students to instill this element of empathy in class. This element is sought out to help

students in understanding and feeling the distress of others and respond to these events accordingly.

Learning of empathy is crucial in the Malaysian education system today; aligned to the National Education Philosophy that emphasizes on the students' development of physical, spiritual, mental and emotional aspects to increase the desired moral values and to ascertain knowledge (Kesusasteraan Melayu Komunikatif Dokumen Standard Kurikulumdan Pentaksiran, 2018). This aspect is aligned with the Malay Literature Education Philosophy that exists to generate the mind, spirit and emotion, strengthen identity, inculcate the essence of culture and instill competitiveness in developing excellent individuals.

However, empathy is not given much attention in general life, and previous literature discussed that the deficiency of empathy causes moral decay, such as terrorism, sexual violence or murder and abuse (Cooper, 2011). Goleman in Cooper (2011) stated that there is a positive correlation between lack of empathy and violent acts of crime and nervous breakdowns. This notion is supported by Hanina H. Hamsan, Mohamed Dahalan Ibrahim, & Norizan Remli, (2015) where social misconducts is apparent through the expression of frustration and anger. Apart from that, peer pressure can also become a factor for such misbehaviours. This happens due to the feeling of enjoyment with peers without thinking about the needs of others. If a person possesses empathy, there would be people all over the world that would sacrifice their needs in order to serve others. This lack of empathy that we are experiencing nowadays clearly brings a negative impact to the society.

Other than that, the problem that contributes the highest percentage of teenage problems in Malaysia is free sex and sexual acts, whether voluntary or involuntary. This problem greatly affects the dignity of these teenagers as well as their families in facing the society (Kamarul Azmi Jasmi, 2017). This problem can be overcome if teenagers possess the element of empathy within themselves as empathy integrates with education and mental health, promotes good morals, mercy, justice, concern, increases perseverance and civic involvement, helps students to contribute to the learning climate that cares, inclusive, peaceful and have belief (Borba, 2018). All of these elements of empathy can potentially decrease intrusion, bully, racism, violence and hate.

Does empathy help in teenagers' lives? There are a number of researches that study the relationship between empathy and school students, among them *Pendidikan Empati Pada Anak Sekolah Dasar Di Jepang* (Elvi Wahyuni & Diah Madubrangti, 2013), *Pengaruh Storytelling Terhadap Perilaku Empati Anak, Pengaruh Empati Dan Self-Control Terhadap Agresivitas Remaja SMA Negeri 3 Kota Tangerang Selatan* (Lailatul Badriyah, 2013) and *Empathy And Redemption In Theatre For Young People : Towards An Epistemic Theory Of Emphathetic Imagination* (Reuck, 2013).

These studies examined the influence of empathy on school students. They discussed about the methods of how empathy in school could affect students through several activities. A study on Japanese school students revealed that empathy education had been applied since young where students were exposed to the nature of man as social beings. Meanwhile, another study investigated the influence of storytelling on school children's empathy where relevant activities could build a good social relationship and possess moral intelligence. A study on the effect of empathy and self-control on teenagers' aggressive behaviour in school also examined factors on the reason why teenagers experience identity confusion, peer pressure and empathy that helped to overcome this aggressiveness among them. Another study on the development of imagination in teenagers through theatre performance is seen to help their development of empathetic imagination. Through these studies, it is concluded that empathy impacted school children as well as teenagers through activities embedded in school education and this needs to be emphasized by parents and teachers. Schools should also include empathy as a learning element through suitable activities that could increase students' awareness and sensitivity of empathetic behaviours.

There are also studies that discuss the increase of empathy in school students, namely Limarga (2017) in the article entitled *Penerapan Metode Ber cerita Dengan Media Audio Visual Untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Empati Anak Usia Dini dan Bimbingan Klasikal Dengan Teknik Simbolik Model Sebagai Alternatif Solusi Untuk Meningkatkan Empati Pada Anak Usia Dini* (Sutanti & Dahlan, 2017). Both studies explore the increase of students' ability in expressing empathy. Tri Sutanti and Dahlan (2017) stated that the increase in students' empathy initiated as an outcome of effective planning and strategy. This increase should be guided by adults as primary examples. Limarga (2017) agreed with this case, whereby empathy could be gained by providing an overview of the ability of empathy through the application of storytelling and audio-visual methods. Indeed research conducted presented several ways to increase students' empathetic capabilities. It is clear from previous studies that the application of empathy in the relevant subjects is significant. Hence, Malay Literature is proposedly a suitable subject as an alternative to empathetic education.

4. Objective

The objective of this study is to identify and analyse the aspect of empathy as a teaching and learning strategy applied by teachers in the daily lesson of Malay Literature by utilizing steps of empathy adapted from Ashoka Organisation (2015) named *A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools*.

5. Methodology

This study applied the qualitative approach. Creswell (2013) defined qualitative research as a process of enquiry toward understanding data collection methods that is normally applied when observing a social phenomenon. The research method selected for this study is a case study. The source of data to answer the research question is from document analysis from daily lesson plans of teachers who also act as facilitators in the study. Through document analysis, the first research question can be answered by adapting the instrument; steps of empathy, as introduced by Ashoka Organisation (2015), named *A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools*. Refer to Table 1:

Table 1: Adaptation of *A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools* (Ashok, 2015)

Step 1	Preparation
	Create a conducive space to begin the lesson
	Develop emotional competency
Step 2	Lead by example
	Teacher and student engagement
	Group Activity
	Storytelling
Reflection	Immersion with students
	Problem-based learning
	Identify shared values and differences
	Instill courage
	Enable action

Source: Ashok (2015). *A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools*. Retrieved from www.ashoka.org

Three teachers were selected as participants of the study based on purposive sampling. However, the outcome was only discussed based on the feedback given by one participant located in Kelantan. The participants were selected from a group of trained teachers with minimum 10 years of experience teaching the Malay Literature subject. In this context, the teacher was named P1, representing the first participant. Participants of the study also include 10 students named M1, referring to the first student and M10 referring to the tenth student.

In seeking answers to the research question, the teacher participant should conduct the teaching and learning strategy in her Malay Literature class based on the Malay Literature syllabus (SPKM) (2003). The strategy in this syllabus contain four elements; 1. Student-centred approach, 2. Approach, method and technique applied by the teacher in the teaching and learning session, 3. Diversity of resources and 4. Extensive reading. The research instrument was in the form of an observation checklist for all four aspects in the syllabus. This study applied three research methods in the forms of library research, document analysis, and case study

involving observation and interview of teachers and students. For reliability of data, triangulation was conducted through two longitudinal observations in school. The second visit involved both processes of observation and interview. A pilot study was conducted during the first visit to school for the purpose of verification of the interview questions, preparation for the interview and identification of confusing questions.

6. Findings

Aspect of Empathy as a Strategy for Teacher's teaching and learning

The observation checklist in **Step 1 PKG1**, the teacher showed a video of people's suffering in Gaza. The video projected a picture of children experiencing the war in Gaza, where they courageously confronted the armed soldiers with only stones in their hands. They were in the age range between three to six years old. The background sound in the video was presented in the form of a poetry recital and a song by the Palestinian children. The lyrics of the song was about these children's feelings of yearning for freedom in their own land and returning their childhood.

During the showing, the teacher ignited students' emotion by presenting the video in a dark-lit room. The audio-visual effect was also enhanced by utilizing the speakers so that the background sound of war along with the poetry recital could be heard more distinctly. After the poetry recital, a group of young Palestinian children sang a song that signified a deeper interpretation. The choice of poem in the video was a strategy adopted by the teacher to awaken the students' emotional competency. The choice of diction in the poem, war-driven background sound, character of young children are all elements highlighted in the video.

Step 2, the teacher presented storytelling technique and took the role of the storyteller to present the meaning behind the video. Pictures of injuries and death in the war helped the teacher in questioning students about the aspects and reasons of the event that transpired in the video. It was observed that some students became tearful while watching the video and simultaneously listening to the poetry recital and song. Students also shared their experience watching the video of war events that they have watched in television. This video showing and sharing of the experience caused them to feel more saddened during the retelling activity.

In the second step of teaching and learning process, the teacher and students had a good relationship. This aspect was observed when the students were involved with the storytelling activity. The teacher conducted a question and answer session about the war event. Friendliness of the teacher was apparent as students were able to answer with full confidence, courage and with minimal hesitation when delivering their viewpoints. It was also observed that students were cooperative in the

task as all of them showed interest in sharing their viewpoints. Some of their views include:

Saya dapat merasaidanmenyelamiperasaansedih, marahdenganapa yang berlakuterhadapprakyatPalestin (M8)

(I could sense the feeling of sadness, anger with what has happened to the Palestinian people (M8))

Sayarasa amat sedih dengansikapkekejaman zionisterhadapprakyatPalestin.

Saya tidak dapat menggambarkanbetapaperihnyapenderitaan yang dialami olehmerekamelalui tontonan video.(M9)
(I feel extremely sad with the cruelty of the Zionist to the Palestinian people. I could not imagine how they cope with their suffering, as shown through the video (M9))

Saya merasa amat terkilan dengan manusia zaman sekarang kerana berlakubanyakkeganasan.(M10)
(I feel very upset with people nowadays because of the cruelty that happens (M10))

Peristiwa ini menimbulkan perasaan benciterhadap mereka yang melakukan perkaraterkutuk tersebut. Ia memberibayangkan kepada saya jika saya berada dalam kehidupan mereka. Saya berasa bersyukur kerana saya hidup dalam keadaan terkawal dan harmoni. (M1)
(This event provokes the feeling of resentment towards those that do the bad things. This shows to me the kind of life that I could be living in. I feel grateful for living in a controlled and harmonious state (M1))

Melalui peristiwa ini dapatlahirkan perasaan prihatin dalam dirisaya sendiri untuk latih diri bersikap perikemanusiaan. (M3)
(This event gives the feeling of concern within me to train myself to be more humane (M3))

Saya takut negara Malaysia menjadiseperti negara Palestin.
Saya harap negara kita akan sentiasa aman dan harmoni.(M4)
(I fear that Malaysia would become like Palestine. I hope that this country will always be peaceful and harmonious (M4))

Saya rasa melalui mata pelajaran sastera mampu mempengaruhi fikiransayadan orang lain untuk menjadikan rasa simpatik kepada nasib seseorang kepada empati.(M5)
(I feel that this literature subject influences my thoughts and others to turn the feeling of sympathy towards the lives of others to the feeling of empathy (M5))

Saya hanya dapat berdoa supaya negara Palestin akan kembaliamandan peperangan akan tamat.
Berdoa ialah caraterbaik kerana Allah tahu. (M2)

(I pray that Palestine will be peaceful again and the war ends. Prayer is the best method as Allah knows (M2))

(Nordiana Hamzah et al., 2018)

Ceritainitidakantamatselagimanusiasukabergaduhsesa masendiridanpentingkandiri. Memangbaik Cikgu ajar padahariini.(M6)

(This event will not end if human beings fight with each other and are self-indulgent. This is indeed a good lesson from the teacher today (M6))

Saya

dapatmelahirkanperasaansayaterhadapisuinimelaluipenu lisansajak. Saya

mendapatibahawadenganmenulissajaksayadapatmelahirk anperasaansayadanmemahamisituasimereka. (M7)

(I could express my feeling towards this issue through the poetry writing. I found that my poetry writing could express my feelings and understand their situation better (M7))

Students' feedback showed that they were highly impacted by the teacher's lesson. They expressed their feelings through verbal and non-verbal communication. They expressed their emotional competency aroused by the teacher through their facial expressions, body language and eye contact when giving feedback. It was also observed that the teacher attempted to provide appropriate feedback through the students' responses.

In the group activity, students were to write adjectives based on selected words. In example, one group selected the word *peperangan* (war) and elaborated the term in the shape of a Bubble I-Think map. Figure 1 displays an example of their work:

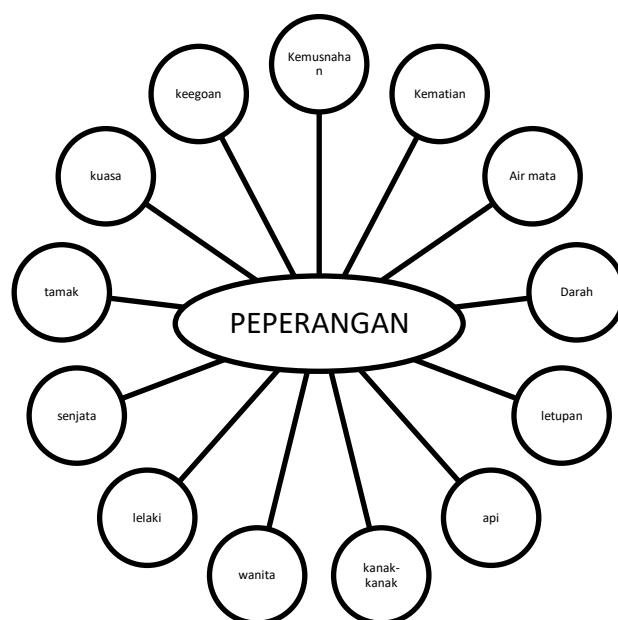


Figure 1: Selection of words from the word *peperangan* (war)

After completing the Bubble I-Think map, students story-tell selected words through group presentation and each student was given roles to play. They also selected the word based on the issues selected prior to the task. They had identified several causes that lead to the problem. During the presentation, other groups gave feedback and suggested additional suitable words related to the word *peperangan* (war).

In the reflection activity, students shared their feelings on the lesson of the day. They showed courage, confidence and empathy. At the end of the activity, they recited poems based on the outcome of the group discussion, guided by their teacher on the selected adjectives chosen.

Table 2 displays the observation checklist for PKG1:

Table 2: Observation checklist PKG1

Steps	Preparation	Teacher Participant 1 (PKG1)
Step One	Create a conducive space to begin the lesson	Video showing of Gaza
	Develop emotional competency	Teacher shares saddening event that happened in Gaza.
	Lead by example	Example of war events.
Step Two	Relationship between teacher and student	Friendly Question and answer Cooperation

		Feedback Body language Lead by example Writing adjectives based on selected themes
	Group activity	
	Storytelling	Participating students story tell the poem produced using the I-Think map.
	Activity with student	Teacher guides students in writing a poem.
	Problem-based learning	Identify problem Find causes of the problem Students present the main causes and presentation could be displayed with the aid of thinking tools
Reflection	Identify shared values and differences	Sharing of feelings
	Instill courage	Communication in the classroom
	Enable action	Poetry recital

7. Findings

Based on the findings of this research, elements of empathy were embedded as a teaching and learning strategy. The aspects identified are as follows:

Empathy in student-centred teaching and learning

Teacher Participant 1 (PKG1) used the student-centred teaching and learning strategy. The teacher opted for this strategy as it requires active students in the teaching and learning process. The role of the teacher is a leader that guides students and allocates more time to conduct the lesson, in individual or group work. A conducive environment encourages students to pay attention and increase their awareness in the process of accepting the learning and eventually increase their understanding (Sidek & Hashim, 2016; Alizah Lambri & Zamri Mahamod, 2014).

Empathy in experiential learning with the aid of video approach

Teacher Participant1 (PKG1) applied the experiential learning approach in the teaching and learning process. This approach is a teaching approach that requires student's appreciation through experience, pondering and analysis. This approach emphasized textual analysis based on the students' immersion of the literary text and relating their experiences and viewpoints. This method can be applied in tandem with the structural analysis approach whereby students understand the gist of the

short story or poem. (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2013).

The students' emotional element could be cultivated when this approach is used alongside video as a teaching aid resource. This is true as videos serve as an element that helps with students' cognitive development, motivation and active learning (Sidek & Hashim, 2016). Yousef, Chatti, & Schroeder (2014), mentioned that students showed increased interest in the video-based learning as a direct result of popular online learning, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as well as classroom learning. Video based learning is a method that could increase the learning outcomes through student satisfaction. Apart from that, video consists of audio, graphic and textual elements that aid students' teaching and learning process. This aspect of video poses as an interactive medium and provides positive outcome for students.

Empathy in Storytelling Technique

During the teaching and learning process, the teacher and students made use of the story telling element in the lesson of empathy. Students showed emotional expressions when the teaching told the story of war. They also shared their experience on war stories that they have previously watched. Stories are contexts that are rich with emotions. Empathy is the art of persuasion in social skills. Through empathy, students are believed to be able to unleash their own potential. Lessons that encourage putting their own selves in other people's shoes can potentially help to broaden the concept of sensitivity within themselves. Students' empathy neuron can be activated not only through other people's experiences, but also through its storytelling method. (Franzese, 2017). Hence, the teacher's lesson will become active and interesting for the students.

Empathy in questioning technique

Teacher Participant1 (PKG1) had posed questions to stimulate students' thinking. Although questions were Higher Order Thinking questions in nature, pictures served as a stimulating aid. This choice of using Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions encourages students in various activities such as asking many questions, investigating student understanding prior to the sharing of own understanding, encouraging sharing of viewpoints, investigating initial response, encouraging student responses to maneuver the teaching and learning process and encouraging discussion and debate in class during the lesson. (Chew Fong Peng, Zul Hazmi Hamad, Chew, & Zul Hazmi Hamad, 2018).

The teacher's questioning technique also included 5W+1 H questions, which are what, why, where, when and how. This type of questioning aids the process of deriving students' pre-existing and newly acquired knowledge.

Empathy in student feedback

Students provided positive feedbacks in the teaching and learning. Findings from the feedback suggest that students were inclined to express empathy towards others who were different from them in a classroom environment that is open to diverse opinions. The teacher made use of a topic that involved all the students to participate in an enjoyable topic to further understand their different perspectives. Students also showed interest in learning about many ideas that were different from their own. This aspect is a crucial component to inculcating empathy (Casale, Thomas, & Simmons, 2018).

This study also received student feedback on open-mindedness in expressing their feelings on certain issues, making use of all the senses to examine an issue and appreciate their feelings in the creative form of poetry. Students also shared positive perceptions in building a good relationship with the teacher, understanding other people's situation, gratitude, good values in life and creativity in self-expression (Nordiana Hamzah et al., 2018.).

Empathy in Thinking Aid I-Think

In teaching and learning, the teacher asked students to produce an I-Think map in groups to write words that portray empathy of the war event. Students produced 13 words that describe their feeling of empathy. Findings showed that nature of text, strength in writing ability and writing response play pertinent roles in explaining empathetic response to the students (Junker & Jacquemin, 2017.).

The teacher consistently encouraged the students to write more words to describe their empathy. Students, in groups, showed effort in eliciting ideas through the I-Think map. Cohen(2019) stated that teachers and students should not be complacent with average or passive empathy. Instead, they should critically investigate the power of written words to educate them about empathy. Cognitive science found that emotion lead by language activates the representation category and increases the processing of information senses that are consistent with the conceptual representation. (Lindquist, Satpute, & Gendron, 2015) .

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, empathy that is systematically planned in the lesson plan could potentially help teachers to maximise the inculcation of empathy within the students. Teachers should be creative in selecting the best and suitable approach, method and technique as well as teaching and learning aids to instill the element of empathy. If the teacher succeeds in doing so, positive feedback can be obtained. The Malay Literature subject should become the platform in realizing empathy in the classroom as the nature of this subject is rich with the storytelling element and good values. Therefore,

embedding empathy within the subject should be aligned with the Standard Curriculum of Malaysian Secondary Schools build upon the six main facets; Communication, Spirituality, Attitude and Value, Humanity, Self-Development, Physical and Aesthetics Development and Science and Technology. These six facets are the main domains in supporting each other and unified with critical, creative and innovative thinking. This unification aims at developing human capital that appreciates good values based on religion, knowledge, self-development as well as critical, creative and innovative thinking.

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