

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**INSTRUCTORS' BELIEFS ON CRITICAL
THINKING AND THEIR CLASSROOM
PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY**

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any other academic or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

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ABSTRACT

The ability to think critically is an essential life skill which needs to be developed in order to compete in a global environment. Current literature reveals that explicit critical instruction, and practice of critical thinking (CT) strategies helps to improve learner's performances. Hence, it is vital for instructors to have strong beliefs in critical thinking as it influences their classroom practice. The present study seeks to fill the gap between instructors' beliefs as well as practices which serves to be important in improving the educational process. The aim of this study was to investigate how instructors perceived CT as well as their classroom instruction in teaching the skills among tertiary level learners. Further, it also investigates whether the constructs (beliefs and practices) of the instructors matched with one another. The participants of this study involved instructors from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) located in Sri Iskandar Perak. Data were collected using exploratory qualitative approach and the findings were presented in a qualitative descriptive approach through interviews as well as observations. Findings revealed that both instructors had indicated their own beliefs which reflect general concept of CT that is acceptable and relevant to their field of scope. Also, both instructors' CT instructions reflect higher-order thinking that mostly requires learners to use their thinking. It could be synthesized that what they believed about CT skills seem to match with what they practiced. Overall, instructor of graphic design (GD) had more explicit fostering of CT where learners appeared to be reaping and engaged with the skills more in-depth compared to English writing class. This is due to the nature of the field (GD) which requires CT skills in the course subject. Based on the findings, this study also provides implications for pedagogy and practice as well as recommendation for improvement of practices and future research.

(Keywords: Beliefs, Practices, Classroom Instruction, Critical Thinking)

ABSTRAK

Kemampuan untuk berfikir secara kritis merupakan kemahiran utama yang perlu dalam persaingan secara global. Literatur semasa memperlihatkan bahawa pengajaran pemikiran kritis dengan jelas dan pengamalan strategi pemikiran kritis mambantu dalam penambahbaikan prestasi pengajar. Justeru, pengajar perlu mempunyai kepercayaan yang mantap dalam pemikiran kritis kerana ia akan mempengaruhi pengalaman pengajaran dalam kelas. Kajian ini bertujuan mengisi lompong antara kepercayaan pengajar dan pengamalan yang berperanan dalam mempertingkatkan proses pendidikan. Tujuan kajian ini ialah untuk menyelidik tanggapan pengajar terhadap pemikiran kritis dan juga pembelajaran yang dikendalikan dalam kelas untuk pelajar peringkat pengajian tinggi. Seterusnya, mengkaji sama ada pembentukan (kepercayaan dan amalan) dalam kalangan pengajar adalah bersesuaian antara satu sama lain. Peserta kajian terdiri daripada tenaga pengajar dari Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Sri Iskandar Perak. Data dikumpul menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan kualitatif dan dapatan kajian dibentangkan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif melalui temu bual serta pemerhatian. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua pengajar memperlihatkan kepercayaan mereka yang merupakan cerminan konsep umum pemikiran kritis yang boleh diterima dan relevan dengan bidang masing-masing. Di samping itu, pengajaran di dalam kelas yang disampaikan oleh kedua-dua pengajar mencerminkan pemikiran peringkat tinggi yang kebanyakannya mengehendaki pelajar untuk berfikir. Ini boleh dirangkum bahawa apa yang dipercayai tentang kemahiran pemikiran kritis adalah setara dengan apa yang diamalkan. Secara keseluruhan, pengajar reka bentuk grafik (GD) lebih jelas memupuk pemikiran kritikal dimana pelajar dilihat mempergunakan lebih banyak kemahiran berfikir secara mendalam, berbanding kelas penulisan Bahasa Inggeris disebabkan karakter bidang itu sendiri. Berdasarkan dapatan, kajian ini memberi kesan terhadap pedagogi dan amalan, selain turut memberi cadangan untuk penambahbaikan amalan dan penyelidikan masa depan.

(Kata Kunci: Kepercayaan, Amalan, Pengajaran, Pemikiran Kritis)

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