

**Towards the Islamisation of Critical
Pedagogy: A Malaysian
Case Study**

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CHAPTER SEVEN

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA.

7.1 Introduction.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a critical analysis of Malaysian education in order to expose how Malaysian education undermines the aims and purpose of Islamic education. The question to be addressed in this chapter is whether the aims and values of Islamic education, the pedagogy it requires, and the kind of knowledge that it teaches can be pursued within the schooling system of contemporary Malaysian education. The question, therefore, concerns whether there is an incompatibility between the aims and aspiration of Islamic philosophy of education as described and analysed in the previous chapter, and the current Malaysian educational system. In order to achieve this, the chapter focuses on various views of curriculum and the different concepts of education they incorporate. To this end, the first section provides a conceptual framework for critically examining the curriculum, which draws on Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests (KCI), and, in particular, the way this is employed by Grundy (1987) to examine different kinds of curriculum policy, practice and pedagogy. In the second section, I employ the Habermasian idea of ideology-critique to examine the Malaysian curriculum and the view of education it sustains. The next section examines the question of whether the Malaysian curriculum undermines the aim and values of Islamic education. In this section, I will also

argue that the most appropriate way to realise the ideals and values of Islamic education is by adopting the aims and method of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective.

7.2 A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of Curriculum and Pedagogy: Ideals, Realities and Ideologies.

7.2.1 Defining the 'Curriculum'.

The way curriculum is understood and theorised has changed over the years, which has inevitably led to considerable disputation regarding its meaning. A general definition of curriculum is succinctly described by Kerr as 'all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school' (cited in Kelly, 1999: p. 6). This definition treats curriculum as a programme of activities which teachers may not be involved in planning, but are responsible for what students learn. It also includes the formal and informal curriculum where the former concerns learning activities that take place during the school timetable whilst the latter involves activities that go on out of school hours such as extracurricular activities.

However, this definition does not capture the 'unintended' learning that students acquire through the 'hidden curriculum'. The 'hidden curriculum' implies that sometimes students learn things which are not intended by teachers. In a sense, what is taught may not necessarily match what students learn. Here, there is a

distinction between the 'planned' and the 'received' curriculum. Any of these definitions of curriculum should consider more than just the content of what is to be taught. More importantly, the development of a curriculum needs to consider the purpose and effects of such knowledge on its recipients. The relationship between intention and reality of curriculum should be examined if curriculum theory and practice is to be linked.

It would be clearer and more meaningful if curriculum is defined and understood in relation to society. This could be achieved with the help of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests (KCI) of how fundamental human interests influence how knowledge is 'constituted' or constructed (see Chapter Three, p. 57). Here I intend to show how Habermas' three KCI give rise to three different views of education, each of which leads to a different definition of curriculum. 'Habermas' knowledge-constitutive interests shape what human beings consider as knowledge and determine the categories by which human beings organise that knowledge' (Grundy, 1987: p. 10). As we have seen in Chapter Three, Habermas' three basic interests, which are, the 'technical', 'practical' and 'emancipatory' or 'critical' interests constitute the three types of knowledge generated and organised in society: the empirical-analytic, historical-hermeneutic and critical sciences.

Grundy's matching Habermas' theory of KCI with Aristotle's dispositions of *techne*, *phronesis* and *praxis* will be helpful in understanding different views of

curriculum. Aristotle views these dispositions as forms of reasoning that inform different types of action. Grundy argues that these dispositions also correspond to different forms of knowledge which then give rise to three different forms of curriculum: 'technical', 'practical' and 'critical'. These three curricula differ in terms of the forms of knowledge, aims of education, what education, schooling, knowledge and curriculum mean, theory and practice relationship, teaching and learning, the teacher's role, the teacher-student relationship and evaluation.

7.2.2 Curriculum as 'Technical'.

Aristotle identified the disposition of *techne* or skill with the action of the artisan (craftsperson). An artisan engages in 'making' or 'creating' something where this form of action depends upon the exercising of his/her skills (*techne*) and is based on the idea or pattern that the artisan intends to make. Thus the artisan's skilled actions are restricted by the 'idea' of what is to be created. This 'idea' or image is referred to as *eidos* by Grundy (1987); or, in the educational context, it can also be considered as the plan or programme consisting of some long term objectives. Meanwhile, the outcome of the artisan's skilled actions of making or creating is known as the *product*. If this technical reasoning became the basis of education, curriculum would then mean planned activities or experiences consisting of a certain set of goals and objectives which teachers use their skills to produce. For example, a student is considered as 'being literate' when s/he is able to produce a well written essay. In this particular example, the essay is considered as a material product or the evaluated outcome where,

based on this outcome, teachers can determine whether the student is literate or not. In a sense the lesson plan and the learning objectives can be considered as the eidos that determine students' learning. Education then becomes instrumental and technical, while the teaching-learning process becomes instructional and procedural because teachers 'follow known rules, use given materials and means to achieve the already determined ends' (Carr, 1995: p. 11).

When importance is placed on the outcome or material product of education, curriculum is seen as the means of achieving a product. But although curriculum becomes a 'product', it is not a productive view of the curriculum, rather it is a reproductive view of the curriculum because curriculum as product suggests that 'the purpose of a teacher's work is to reproduce in the students the various ideas, goals or objectives that guide the work' (Grundy, 1987: p. 25). A reproductive view of the curriculum involves the objectification of reality when it regards the environment (including the learners) as an object, and 'as objects their behaviour and learning are managed by the teachers' (ibid: p. 30). In another sense, besides the manipulation of the environment, the 'technical' interest also implies that people who formulate educational objectives are in power because it is the idea that determines the ends. Although teachers may be in control of the environment, they do so because they are compelled to make sure that the desired learning occurs. Hence teachers become mere implementers rather than important decision makers.

The curriculum issues implied by this 'technical' curriculum include: what are the specific objectives that the curriculum has been designed to achieve? What kind of content can best achieve these objectives? How will these objectives be evaluated? How would teachers manage their classes? What are the teaching skills that teachers need to have in order to be effective in achieving these objectives? And what exactly is the teacher's role? As the reproductive curriculum is more concerned with transmitting the traditions of a society so that established social structures are maintained, this is made achievable through three essential constituents: the ideas that are translated into specific objectives; the process (teaching and learning process where teachers' skills and effectiveness, and teaching aids or given materials become useful); and the outcome or product (measured against the fulfilment of the specified objectives). In this view of curriculum and education, educational theory is divorced from its practice in the sense that there exists a gap between the two. Apple (1990) labelled this view of education and curriculum as a mechanical function of schooling because, when schooling strictly becomes a site for social reproduction, it does not allow space for social improvement and change.

7.2.3 Curriculum as 'Practical'.

The second view of education perceives curriculum as 'practice' and emerges from Habermas' second fundamental human interest, namely 'practical' interest. Drawing upon Aristotle's second disposition, that is, *phronesis*, translated as

‘practical judgment’, it is a disposition towards morally responsible or ‘good’ action rather than ‘correct’ or instrumentally effective actions (Grundy, 1987: p. 63). The tendency of ‘practical’ reasoning to do good, rather than correct actions distinguishes *phronesis* from *techne* as the former deals with ‘doing’ actions while the latter with ‘making’ actions regardless of their values. Furthermore, the ‘practical’ interest involves ‘action between subjects, not action upon objects’ (ibid: p. 65). To exercise practical judgment one has to deliberate, which incorporates processes of interpretation, meaning-making and reflection of a situation so that appropriate action can be decided upon and taken. When a ‘practical’ interest is informing curriculum practices, the emphasis is placed on practice rather than the outcome or product.

A curriculum based on the ‘practical’ interest would not be a syllabus to be implemented but be a proposal that could inform teachers’ judgments of what action they ought (morally) to take in particular educational situations. More importantly, it is an act of meaning-making in the sense that it involves teachers’ interpretations of curriculum policies and proposals. In doing so, teachers create their own meanings as they make their own judgments about what, morally, they ought to do when dealing with their students as learning subjects rather than objects. Meaning-making also becomes a form of learning for the students and teachers as they interact with each other in their attempt to understand. Learning and not teaching becomes the central focus of teachers because the ‘idea’ takes a

different position in curriculum as practice. In this 'practical' view of education, the product no longer becomes the focus of education as students are not objectified. The 'idea' becomes more general and implied in the 'notion of the 'good' that depends upon teachers' judgment as to how the idea is interpreted and translated into action' (Grundy, 1987: p. 74). In this 'practical' view of curriculum, teachers are not mere implementers of a planned programme but act as decision makers themselves when they exercise their own practical judgment in their students' learning. In this view of curriculum as practice, curriculum is perceived as an 'idea' that is determined by the considerations of the 'good'. The relationship of theory and practice is dialectical as both inform each other and are guided by values and criteria that concern the 'good' rather than the 'correct'. The product or outcome is not the focus in this particular view but the 'good' action or practice is.

Similarly, pedagogy would involve making judgments that would further the 'good' of all participants. Stenhouse advocates that curriculum itself is 'a particular form of specification about the practice of teaching and not as a package of materials or a syllabus of ground to be covered' (Grundy, 1987: p. 71). If this is the case for curriculum as practice then each school would be responsible and accountable for the development and evaluation of their own educational policies and practices. There would be neither a centralised curriculum nor a centralised examination system because the power resides with the schools and not the policymakers. In fact, the teachers' role would also involve all aspects of curriculum development.

curriculum development. When a 'practical' interest informs curriculum practices, they may be facilitated by the teachers' pedagogical skills, but they depend more on the exercising of teachers' judgment. Thus it is essential to understand the distinction between judgment and skill. Judgment is not a skill because it is not developed through technical training but through processes of reflection. So two teachers may teach the same subject and they may face a similar practical problem but how they proceed to solve the problem would be different because each would depend on their practical judgment and not their technical skills in overcoming the problem. This is the value of the 'practical' interest and curriculum as practice which is absent in the 'technical' interest and curriculum as product.

7.2.4 Curriculum as 'Critical'.

Habermas' third interest, which is the emancipatory interest, when matched with Aristotle's disposition of *praxis* (morally informed and committed action) gives rise to the view of curriculum as *praxis*. This interest is also compatible with the 'practical' interest and, according to Grundy (1987), the emancipatory interest is the development of the 'practical' interest although is neither a necessary nor a natural development. Curriculum as *praxis* accepts the claim that knowledge is socially constructed and therefore not only involves critical interpretation, reflection and practical judgment, but also actively involves the construction and reconstruction of meanings. *Praxis* is a dynamic interaction of action and reflection and its relationship to the emancipatory interest is made clear in its emphasis on

questioning the interest that is being served by certain kinds of knowledge. It is by critically questioning the social and ideological purpose of knowledge that *praxis* enlightens what is problematic within that socially constructed knowledge. By doing so, curriculum as *praxis* makes participants aware of the origins of that knowledge and enlightens them as to how that knowledge has become embedded in the dominant ideology and thereby functions to suppress participants' right to construct and reconstruct their own meanings. The relationship between theory and practice in this view of curriculum and education is dialectical and dynamic where theory and practice transform each other through critical reflection.

The guiding 'idea' of the emancipatory interest is neither as specific as the 'technical' interest nor as general as the idea of 'good' of the 'practical' interest. The 'idea' of the emancipatory interest falls in between both ideas, which is the 'idea' of 'emancipation' as a specific educational good (Grundy, 1987). Curriculum *praxis* that is informed by an emancipatory interest will constantly ask the question of whether curriculum practice emancipates participants from the dictates of ideology through the process of learning. The selection of curriculum content is based on a 'negotiated' curriculum that promotes critical consciousness. Negotiation of the curriculum means that teacher and student together negotiate its content. The selection of curriculum content goes through critical investigation as what is being counted as curriculum knowledge itself becomes a legitimate part of curriculum content. The content of curriculum as *praxis* allows students to be

involved in the knowledge construction process. Knowledge is not learned in the cognitive sense alone, but it also involves the beliefs of the participants to the extent that it is students who will determine whether to change or refuse to change. In this sense there is no coercion in learning and teachers do not have any control of the students, which explicitly contradicts the curriculum based on the 'technical' interest.

Just like curriculum content, pedagogy is also perceived differently by curriculum as *praxis*. Pedagogy that is informed by an emancipatory interest itself becomes part of the rigorous meaning-making activity of a group of participants who are able to participate in a critical discourse through undistorted communication, where truth is established through consensual agreement. More importantly, 'the teacher-student' contradiction prevalent in the 'technical' curriculum is resolved. Teachers do not only teach but are also taught through their dialogues with their students. Similarly, students not only learn but also teach themselves as they have equal opportunities to be involved in making meanings. However, before a true consensus can be achieved, it is important that an undistorted communication is first established. Therefore, it is important to explain how ideology works to distort communication, and hence, the method of ideology-critique is emphasised by Habermas.

7.2.5 Ideology and Ideology-Critique.

Emancipation is the 'act of finding one's voice, which can only exist in conditions of justice and equality' (Grundy, 1987: p. 107). According to Habermas, communication can be easily and systematically distorted by ideology, unrecognised interests and domination by those in power (cited in Grundy, 1987: pp. 107-8). The distorting power of ideology that works within the structure of meaning and construction of knowledge paralyses the ability of individuals to distinguish between what is naturally given and what is culturally constructed, thus presenting the cultural world as being, like the natural world, incapable of being reinterpreted and transformed. But what does ideology mean? 'Ideology means the dominant ideas or opinions of a group or culture' (ibid: p. 108). Ideology involves the ideas that have the power to determine the way members of a society see the world. For Marx, the ideas of a ruling class are the ruling ideas because this set of ideas assist in the construction and maintenance of power of the ruling class. Ideology is strongly contested but ideology that works through 'hegemony' in civil society imposes its ideas on other members of the society unconsciously. The ideology that is being sustained through hegemony is accepted as our 'commonsense' views of the world. The way to escape from the hegemonic operation of ideology is to develop a process of critical reflection, which Habermas labels 'ideology-critique'.

Ideology-critique is not a reflective exercise to evaluate the ‘correctness’ of meanings. Rather, it is a process of critical reflection aimed at examining the origin of ideas and beliefs that have been accepted as ‘facts’ of nature. More importantly, in this critical reflection, individuals will recognise how ideology becomes dominant through the hegemonic meaning structures that mask the real relationships of power. If ‘skill’ is the central disposition for the ‘technical’ interest and ‘practical’ judgment for the ‘practical’ interest, then in the ‘critical’ view of education where the emancipatory interest informs the curriculum as *praxis*, ‘critical consciousness’ becomes the central disposition. For this reason, it is important that teachers develop critical reflection and consciousness among the participants as an important part of the learning process. In order to do this, it is important that teachers try to establish Habermas’ ‘ideal speech situation’ where undistorted communication can be made possible and ideology-critique can take place. The four validity-claims - that what is said is ‘meaningful’, ‘true’, ‘justified’ and ‘sincere’ - are defended in discourse and ‘truth’ is achieved when an agreement has been reached through critical discussions and rational consensus.

Table 7.0: Three Forms of Knowledge and Their Views of Education (Source: Derived from Kemmis *et. al.*, 1983; Freire, 1978; Grundy, 1987; and Darder *et. al.*, 2003).

Curriculum as	‘Technical’	‘Practical’	‘Critical’
<i>Aims of education</i>	To produce individuals who are rational and skilful to fulfil established roles in	An understanding to develop individuals who are able to make meanings and practical	To develop individuals to become critical and active meaning-makers, able to transform society, and

	society.	judgments according to the 'good' rather than the 'correct'.	establish social justice.
<i>Education</i>	Instrument of social reproduction.	Instrument of social reconstruction.	Instrument of social transformation.
<i>Schooling</i>	A site for transmitting an established body of knowledge.	A site for making meanings and practical judgments.	A site for the discourse of cultural politics
<i>Knowledge</i>	Objective and corresponding to facts, guided by 'technical' interests. For example, Freire's concept of 'banking education' indicates how knowledge is regarded as a commodity.	Subjective and interpretive according to individuals' experiences, guided by 'practical' interests.	Knowledge is consensual and based on reflection and self-interpretations; guided by 'emancipatory' or Freire's 'critical' interests in his 'conscientization'.
<i>Curriculum</i>	Structured syllabus, subject specialisation, instructional application of theory. Transmission of knowledge and skills.	'Practical' activity of the process of interaction between teachers and students.	<i>Praxis</i> ; all human activity is understood as emerging from ongoing interaction of reflection, dialogue and action through critical pedagogy (Darder <i>et. al.</i> 2003, p. 15).
<i>Theory and Practice Relationship</i>	Linear between theory and practice where theory inform practice.	Interdependent; theory informs practice and practice informs theory where both are guided in shared understanding.	Dialectical relationship: theory transforms practice and practice transforms theory.
<i>Pedagogy</i>	Instructional and directive pedagogy: Teachers transmit knowledge and students are mere recipients	Deliberation and negotiation of the meaning of text between teachers and students. Students become active constructor of meaning and knowledge.	Through dialogue or discourse students become teachers and teachers become students as they reflect and participate in critical pedagogy.
<i>Role of Teacher</i>	Authoritative and mere implementer.	Facilitating students to make their own meanings and construct their own learning experiences. Developer and initiator of curriculum change.	Project organiser, moderator or coordinator with an emancipatory aim. Participatory decision maker with students, administrator and even community.
<i>Teacher-Student Relationship</i>	Teacher is in authority, directive and controls students' progress.	Teacher is a participant just like students in meaning making and	Dialogical relationship which dissolves the contradiction of teacher-student; teacher teaches

		encourages morally informed actions.	yet becomes a student him/herself when s/he is taught by his/her students.
<i>Evaluation</i>	To assess how close the product matches the 'idea' or <i>techne</i> in the form of 'tests' of acquisition of what is known and skills mastered.	To judge whether the learning processes and practices are able to further the 'good' of all participants.	Evaluation itself becomes part of the rigorous meaning-making activity where guided by the 'emancipatory' interest, participants themselves evaluate the extent of enlightenment and emancipation that they experienced in the learning process.

7.3 Curriculum and Pedagogy in Malaysia: An Ideology-Critique from an Islamic Perspective.

7.3.1 The 'End' of Education in Malaysia: National Integration, National Identity, and Good Citizens

In Malaysia, the curriculum has been formulated and reformulated to achieve certain aspirations held by the state. For instance, 'national integration and identity' have always been a primary purpose of education as the government has felt that it is important to maintain peace and harmony amongst the different ethnic groups. For this reason too, the Malay language has replaced the English language as the medium of instruction. The proposal to develop one common national identity was implemented through Malaysian education by introducing a universal and centralised curriculum and examination system in schools. The state believed that a universal and centralised curriculum and examination would further ensure that Malaysians were taught what they needed to know such as their history and geography. Adopting

this curriculum would also allow the state to develop citizenship and monitor the spirit of nationalism and patriotism towards Malaysia.

The state's attempt to develop a national identity was not very successful because of several reasons that need to be reviewed. For example, until today there has been no specific discussion on the meaning of a national identity. This may be due to the unclear aspiration itself or the unsuccessful curriculum that implements this aspiration. Today, however, there is a new emphasis on English being used as the medium of instruction for certain subjects like mathematics and sciences. This new policy was drawn up when there was an increasing fear of the low standard of English in schools based on the poor achievement and level of proficiency of English particularly in rural schools. The question of the appropriateness of this policy was neither questioned nor the ways of implementation of this policy opened to the public (Musa, 2003).

7.3.2 'Technical' Curriculum in Malaysian Education.

Many issues in Malaysian education revolve around the identification of problems and resolutions of these problems according to an instrumental view of education. An instrumental view of education assumes that educational problems are similar to technical problems; hence ways of solving them would be like fixing technical problems. The examples that have been highlighted signified the nature of the 'technical' curriculum that Malaysia adopted where the 'end' of education was not

thoroughly discussed. The focus was given more to the 'means' rather than the 'end', which contribute to the change of policies and attempts at educational reform. Policies in this concept of education refer to the 'means' alone and disregard the equal importance of the 'end' in education. This understanding of 'policy' is based on the instrumental view of policies that appear in the form of '*techne*' ('technical knowledge or expertise) (Carr, 1995: p. 68).

The problem with the 'means-end' curriculum is that it is based on the instrumental view of education, which works to control and manipulate the participants to maintain their support for the group that is in power. This support comes in different ways such as an uncritical acceptance of the reality that is created by this group through the 'means-end' curriculum and instrumental view of education. This is because the 'technical' curriculum and view of education promote scientific and technical knowledge. It is through this particular type of knowledge that reality is viewed as 'given' and not constructed by this group. Thus the dominant ideology of the group in power is created and recreated in the society. Although there may be injustice or unequal distribution of rights, the *status quo* would still remain as attempts at liberation are being suppressed. Hegemony works almost efficiently in a civil and technological society, and a good case in point is Malaysian society.

The 'technical' curriculum of education involves politics and economics in education to the extent that these two sectors determine the direction of education. Both sectors

have such a strong influence on Malaysian society that society is unable to see how ideology has dictated their reality. The political sector is driven by the capitalistic economy and has geared Malaysian education and society towards a modern education and a technological society. The economic sector in Malaysia has created a state that is concerned with developing a scientific and technological nation which is achieved through modern education. Knowledge and education have become commodities where only knowledge that has value in the market economy is regarded as worth learning, hence the effect of the 'commodification of knowledge' (Kazmi, 1999: p. 223). The vicious cycle is completed with Malaysian education at the centre as it acts as an agent of control to reproduce a society according to the benefits of the political and economic sectors. Consequently, the victims are members of the society who are not aware of the ideological and hegemonic forces that exist within the social, economic and political systems.

The instrumental nature of Malaysian education has also meant that the policymakers are in charge of the 'design' of the curriculum from the content that is to be taught in schools to the teaching methods that teachers have to use. For example, the Ministry of Education is divided into several divisions to ensure that the division of labour in administering education in Malaysia is done systematically, efficiently and effectively. Each division is in charge of an area. For instance, the Curriculum Development Centre was set up to develop the curriculum such as the content, teaching methods, teaching materials and evaluation, and also policies that are

related to the implementation of the curriculum. Though the policies are being implemented in schools by teachers, the teachers are not involved in the process of curriculum development. This example shows how specific roles are being distributed according to the relevant departments, divisions and centres. The problem with this division of responsibility and labour is that there is always a linear relationship between theory and practice or policy and implementation. When this is the case, evaluating the extent of the appropriateness of the policy never comes into the discussion. Moreover the implementation, too, may not be informed by the policy because the policymakers and the implementers are not the same people. All the implementers have to do is to follow the design and if they did not achieve the pre-determined purposes, they would be regarded as inefficient as the blame would be put on the implementers' skills rather than the design or the 'idea' itself.

7.3.3 'Technical' Pedagogy in Malaysian Education.

The 'technical' curriculum also views teaching as a skill and when the teaching and learning process runs according to the pre-planned design, it is difficult to encourage students to become 'active' critical thinkers because students are only allowed to think within the set boundaries of the lesson plan. There is a difference between teaching students to think critically in the sense of acquiring a skill and teaching students to think critically so that they can be enlightened, empowered and emancipated. The latter is important because not all problems that students face can be solved in the same way as solving a technical problem. Thinking critically is also

essential in assisting students to understand practical problems even of sciences, mathematics and technology. Although sciences, mathematics and technology based subjects are grounded in the 'technical' interest of human beings to control and manipulate, the ability to understand these subjects requires more than just the 'technical' interest. The ability to understand of successful mathematicians, scientists and technologists is fully dependent on their critical ability. Learning that is based on the 'technical' curriculum will not be able to enhance the critical ability of its participants. But the 'critical' view of curriculum would, as it allows participants to become active and critical meaning-makers. For this reason too, great scientists have always been self-taught and not a product of a system because the system will always limit and restrict their critical and creative capacity to interpret and interact intellectually with the world. On the contrary, learning in the Malaysian classroom is guided from the teachers' presentations, textbooks, and additional teaching aids to classroom evaluation. The teaching and learning process is rigid and limited, hence students' participation is minimal as teachers are pressured to complete syllabuses for examination purposes.

A good case in point is the 'Critical and Creative Thinking Skills' (CCTS) course that every student-teacher needs to take before they can start teaching. The CCTS is included in the national curriculum and introduced in schools as early as in the primary phase. Students are taught to think critically and creatively through the infusion and indirect approaches. Teachers infuse the teaching of thinking by

planning their lessons in such a way that the thinking skills are taught simultaneously with the subject matter, whereas in the indirect approach teachers focussed on the questioning techniques to develop students thinking, for example, by using 'Bloom's Taxonomy'. Today teachers in Malaysia are using other techniques of teaching thinking in their classrooms such as using stories to teach logical thinking skills in Lipman's 'Philosophy For Children Programme' (Hashim and Hussien, 2003). All of these approaches, methods and techniques are aimed at promoting critical and creative thinking skills so that students would be able to 'solve problems and make decisions effectively'. The aim of this course by itself indicates the 'technical' curriculum and instrumental view of education that supports this understanding of 'teaching thinking'. More importantly the lesson plan that teachers use to plan the teaching of thinking to students signifies how thinking is reduced into a 'technical' skill that students could simply acquire when they respond to the 'step by step' lesson plan. For teachers, the acquisition of thinking skills is considered successful when students have fulfilled the objectives of their lesson plan. In other words, the evaluation of the whole learning experiences would measure whether students have achieved the thinking goals that teachers set for them.

In this form of learning, thinking like a skill is restricted by the boundaries set by teachers. How can a thinking skill be considered critical or creative at all when it is planned, restricted and limited? There should be no restrictions to thinking because the potential of critical thinking is boundless. These thinking skills only focussed on

the form of reasoning that is guided by '*techne*', hence 'reifying' (making human beings into things) human beings. The problem with this kind of reasoning is that instead of liberating human minds, it would suppress them because of the restrictions that it imposes on the critical potential of human minds. This restriction of the '*techne*' form of reasoning, which is oppressing, would eventually become an ideology that dominates and controls the way we think and act according to what has been defined as 'good' by this form of reasoning.

The danger of this 'technical' form of reasoning, knowledge, curriculum and view of education is the hegemonic ideological structure that frames the mind of Malaysian society including those who are supposed to be critical of the group in power. For instance, the opposition is the group of people who are supposed to provide a critical tension between the people who are in power and the rest of the society. Tension here does not necessarily mean revolution or physical conflict, but it can be in the form of intellectual conflict that helps to exercise the society's mind to become critical. Yet the opposition has failed to create any awareness of the hegemonic forces that exist within the structure of Malaysian society, education, politics and economics. The opposition such as the Democratic Action Party (DAP) that is affiliated with the Socialist International is a party that supports the movement of Malaysian society towards 'Knowledge Society' as a response to the challenge of Information Technology (Lim Kit Siang). Here 'knowledge' for the DAP is defined from the instrumental view of education. On the other hand, another opposition

group, namely the *Parti Islam Malaysia* (PAS or Malaysian Islamic Party) is more concerned with introducing *Hudud* (punishment) into the Islamic Law without placing an equal importance on a better understanding if not a reinterpretation of Islamic Law. This particular issue raised by the PAS represents the fundamentalist Muslim scholars' mindset. These are some of the issues raised in Malaysian society which indicate how uncritical and unreflexive they have become, whether the group who is in power or those who oppose them. The rest of Malaysian society becomes followers of these two groups, which have failed to enlighten, empower, or emancipate themselves. It is this form of reasoning amongst Malaysians that I argue is the result of 'an effective instrumental' Malaysian education system.

Another equally important point that I would like to raise about the Malaysian education system is its evaluation system. Evaluation is actually the central focus of the 'technical' curriculum because it determines the 'product' of the curriculum. This is the reason that academic achievement takes the central focus in Malaysian education. The problem with evaluation in Malaysian education is in the nature of the evaluation itself. Students' achievements are evaluated objectively and empirically where all students, regardless of many differences such as their background, race, gender, classes and schools that they attend whether national, national type, religious Islamic schools, vocational or technical schools and schools in the rural or urban areas, have to sit for the same universal and centralised examinations. Imagine that these students may have different learning experiences

due to their differences, but they are expected to perform well in the centralised examinations because the 'technical' curriculum and education view that students would still be able to learn and think in a universal manner. This view of reasoning reflects Kant's view of 'pure reasoning', which undermines the important role of the students' social, historical and cultural background in developing their way of thinking. Consequently, students, regardless of their differences, are actually 'forced' to accept and be receptive of what they learn in order to do well in the centralised examinations.

This view of curriculum and education is only successful if the learning objectives are achieved and students when evaluated in the centralised examinations receive high scores. It is no wonder that the emphasis on students' achievement has turned the national examinations into the only criterion to measure students' abilities and future (Musa 2003). Consequently, students, parents, teachers, principals, schools, state education departments and even the Ministry of Education focus on students' achievement in the national examinations rather than students' real capabilities. Because of students' achievement, students learn to pass, parents put pressure on passing exams, teachers teach to complete syllabuses and prepare students for exams, principals insist on good results, schools aim at maintaining a high percentage of students' passes, state education departments pay attention to 'good' schools and the Ministry is set to prove that students' achievements increase every year as a sign that

the education system is 'effective'. As a result, students' true potential, particularly their critical ability, is overlooked.

All the attention that is being put on students' achievement is also influenced by the political and economic sectors in Malaysia. This is because entering universities requires good results as education has become more expensive and getting into courses or disciplines that promise lucrative jobs is highly competitive in Malaysia. The market demands more experts and graduates in the areas that are profitable hence courses that are social sciences or arts-based do not have much employment prospects. Yet the national and Islamic education system and universities produce more graduates in these areas because students' achievements in the national examinations merely qualify them to be in these areas. Students' achievements and the areas that they qualified for are due to the uncritical teaching and learning process of an instrumental education. The effects of the 'technical' curriculum and view of education becomes more problematic when Islamic education in the Malaysian education system is moulded in a similar view of curriculum and education. It is in the following section that I will provide another ideology-critique, but this time of Islamic education in the Malaysian education system.

7.4 Islamic Education in Malaysian Curriculum.

7.4.1 Islamic Education and 'Technical' Curriculum.

Islamic education in the Malaysian curriculum can be understood in two ways. The first is when Islamic education means 'taught subjects' in the national schools, and the second is when Islamic education means the 'curriculum' of the Islamic religious schools. I argue that Islamic education in the Malaysian curriculum, whether treated as subjects or as curriculum, is still based on a 'technical' view of education. When Islamic education is taught as a subject in the national school curriculum, Islamic education then becomes a mere content that needs to be transmitted to the Muslim students. Meanwhile, when Islamic education means the curriculum of Islamic religious schools, the term 'curriculum' in this context connotes curriculum as 'product'. Although the curriculum of Islamic education is a religious curriculum, it is situated in the Malaysian education system, which inevitably directs it towards becoming a 'technical' curriculum. Moreover, Muslim scholars who were responsible for developing the curriculum of Islamic religious schools, have moved from being 'traditional' (in the sense of being outdated, too theoretical, and unable to prepare Muslims for the challenges of a modern and post modern eras) to becoming 'traditional' in the positivistic sense (Husain and Ashraf, 1979; Al Faruqi, 1982; Hashim, 1996, 1999; Kazmi, 2003; Sardar 2003). This change has led to the development of a 'technical' Islamic curriculum (Hashim, 1999). Muslim scholars aspired to rejuvenate Islamic education by subscribing to the methodology of Western modernity and scientific rationality. However, this attempt ignored the

philosophical assumptions underlying the effect of scientific rationality on society, hence objectifying and technologising Islamic education with the aim of making it more practical in the modern world yet retaining the characteristics of 'revealed' knowledge that is 'objective', 'certain' and 'indubitable'.

The problem with an objective and 'technical' Islamic curriculum lies in the contradiction that is inherent in the Islamic curriculum regarding the 'means' and the 'end' of Islamic education. The 'end' for which Islamic education is undertaken can neither be specified in advance as an outcome, nor can it be specified by instrumental means. The reason is the 'end' can only be realised through the 'means'. The point is to teach the process and not the product because if the end of Islamic education is to develop 'good' Muslims who will establish social justice, adopting a 'technical' view of the Islamic curriculum implies that the 'end' product would be Muslims who fulfil the economic, political and social demands of a modern and technological world. This is because the aim of a 'technical' curriculum is defined and dictated by economic and political forces. When this is the case, it is not a surprise that the initial aim of Islamic education to develop 'good' Muslims is easily undermined. An Islamic curriculum that is 'technical' can only produce a 'product' that is measurable, but 'good' Muslims can never be measured because the Islamic education understanding of 'good' involves action and judgments that are made based on this faith. So how can Muslims' actions and judgments be empirically measured to ensure that they are made based on their faith? The inability of the

‘technical’ Islamic curriculum in fulfilling the aim of Islamic education shows the weakness of this kind of curriculum.

What is more alarming about this weakness is that it has the ability to mask its weakness by distorting reality. The ‘technical’ curriculum advances objective and scientific knowledge as the only knowledge that is considered as rational, thus worth learning. Its denial of other forms of reasoning and knowledge signifies its hegemonic tendency, which promotes its ideology through the nexus of the power-knowledge relationship. This ideological domination distorts reality by presenting the social world like the natural world as ‘given’ rather than socially, politically, and culturally constructed. It is this dominant ideology that perpetuates the advancement and pervasion of science and technology and projects a distorted reality of the social world of human beings.

7.4.2 Islamic Education as ‘Personalised’ Knowledge.

The preceding ideology-critique of Islamic education and its curriculum based on the ‘technical’ view of education explains the failure of Islamic education in fulfilling its noble aim. At this juncture it is important that an alternative view of Islamic education and its curriculum is suggested. Another understanding of the kinds of knowledge that could be used to explain what Islamic education is all about and how its aim could be achieved is presented in Kazmi’s division of two kinds of knowledge: ‘theoretical’ and ‘personalised’ knowledge. Although Kazmi’s idea of

‘theoretical’ and ‘personalised’ knowledge has been discussed in Chapter Five, I visit his idea again at this point to argue that Kazmi’s idea of ‘personalised’ knowledge is constitutive of the ‘practical’ and ‘critical’ knowledge propounded by Habermas. But what exactly is this ‘personalised’ knowledge and why is it considered as important in the advancement of Islamic knowledge and education?

Kazmi (1999) categorised knowledge into two kinds: theoretical and ‘personalised’ knowledge. Theoretical knowledge is associated with the ‘abstract, formal, universal and deals with experiences that are repeatable’ (Kazmi, 1999: p. 213). Theoretical knowledge may be distinct from ‘personalised’ knowledge but they actually complement each other. ‘Personalised’ knowledge deals with ‘non repeatable and specific experiences that are peculiar to a human being or humans in a given situation’ (ibid). Theoretical and ‘personalised’ knowledge are dependent upon each other and one is meaningless without the other. For instance, one can read about the game of chess in a book but to really understand the game of chess, one needs to at least watch how it is being played, if not play it him/herself. Understanding the game of chess involves making judgments about the game and it is the example of game that shows how ‘understanding is a function of making judgments’ (Kazmi, 1999: p. 216). The personal encounter with the game of chess enables one to have ‘personalised’ knowledge of the game of chess. So ‘personalised’ knowledge is learnt not from the transmission of facts or information from one to another rather it is learnt by encountering, understanding and making judgments about a certain thing.

For example, parents do not teach their children through theoretical discourse but through their spoken words, actions, way of thinking and living that leave a profound mark on their children's lives. In this sense 'personalised' knowledge is constitutive of Habermas' 'practical knowledge'.

A child may be taught that it is a virtue to speak the truth but s/he may not be able to grasp an understanding of the value of being honest if s/he does not learn why it is important to speak the truth. The theoretical knowledge that s/he has of honesty becomes meaningful when s/he has a personal encounter with it, through observing people when they speak the truth or lie, listening, understanding, reflecting and practising it. S/he can be considered as being able to grasp the meaning of being honest when s/he realises its importance by practising it him/herself. Kazmi contends that the primary role of a *murabbi* is not so much to create theoretical knowledge, but rather to 'personalise' knowledge. Before a *murabbi* creates 'personalised' knowledge, s/he needs to have the ability to interpret, understand and judge their own experiences so that s/he would know what is s/he is trying to personalise is true or not. 'For a *murabbi* the only way to understand knowledge is to live it and experience the difference that knowledge makes to his/her life as a Muslim' (Kazmi, 1999: p. 218). What a *murabbi* teaches is not an impersonal theoretical body of knowledge that s/he has accepted as truth by verifying it against some objective principles but rather 'teaches knowledge that s/he has lived and having lived found it to be true or false' (ibid). It is in the life of a *murabbi* that the distinction between

theory and practice, and knowing and acting disappears. The relationship between theory and practice is no longer linear like in technical knowledge but becomes dialectical where theory informs practice and practice informs theory. This is the main point of my argument where Kazmi's idea of 'personalised' knowledge coincides with Habermas' 'practical' and 'critical' knowledge.

The *murabbi's* act of knowing and acting corresponds to Habermas' 'practical' knowledge but it is the *murabbi's* continuous effort of personalisation of knowledge that points to Habermas' 'critical' knowledge. Kazmi explained that 'a body of knowledge does not only allow one 'personalised' knowledge' (1999: p. 219). Personalisation of knowledge is based on the interpretation of experiences where different kinds of experiences determine the form of 'personalised' knowledge. A truth can be 'personalised' in a variety of ways where each personalisation is valid as long as it does not violate the truth. This entails that there is a need for continuous personalisation of knowledge as it may differ in terms of time and places, which prevents its truth from becoming jaded. It is this understanding of 'personalised' knowledge that points to the conditions of a *murabbi*, which are, to be critical, and pursue critical knowledge. In order for Muslims to understand what Islamic education is, and how to be a good Muslim, a *murabbi* needs to be able to demonstrate the ability to understand, think critically, reflect and make good judgments (*phronesis*). As has been defined in Chapter Five, pp. 145-59 (see section 5.3 and Table 5.4), it is through such pedagogy, based on the 'practical' and 'critical'

curriculum (see Table 7.0), that would enable Muslim learners to learn and understand Islamic education and consequently practise Islam as a way of life. This is because, if Islamic education is serious in realising its aims, then ‘practical’ and ‘critical knowledge’, which are inherent in ‘personalised’ knowledge, could offer an alternative view of education that may assist in realising the aims, ideals and values of Islamic education.

Islamic education should not be taught as a subject or based on a ‘technical’ curriculum, but rather as a way of living through a ‘practical’ and ‘critical’ curriculum. The current trend of teaching Islamic education and the nature of its curriculum in the Malaysian education system cannot accommodate the teaching of ‘personalised’ knowledge because of the incommensurability of the ‘technical’ Islamic curriculum and the curriculum of ‘personalised’ knowledge. This has eventually led to the inability of the current view of curriculum and education in Malaysia to achieve the aim, ideals and values of Islamic education. It is on the basis of this argument that I turn to critical pedagogy because, in practice, it enables students’ critical consciousness to be developed through critical teaching and critical literacy (see Chapter Three, pp. 92-6 for discussion on ‘critical teaching’ and ‘critical literacy’).

7.4.3 Critical Pedagogy--Critical Teaching and Critical Literacy: Resistance vs. Possibilities.

I argue that Kazmi's notion of 'personalised knowledge', which corresponds to Habermas' 'practical' and 'critical' knowledge when implemented in practice, become the practice of critical pedagogy, which could be in the form of critical teaching and critical literacy. According to Luke, Comber and O'Brien, 'a critical pedagogy that involves critical reading and writing, is far more powerful and efficacious than teaching critical thinking as problem solving' in the classroom such as the Critical and Creative Thinking Skills (CCTS) programme (cited in Koh, 2002: p. 260). Koh argues that 'critical pedagogy is more purposeful in promoting a thinking culture because students will become active learners when they engage in critical reading and writing of texts' (ibid). I also argue that such pedagogy could also encourage students' critical consciousness, which is important in Islamic education if the Muslim crisis is to be resolved.

A study by Robertson and Martin (2000) illustrated their attempts to introduce critical pedagogy in Malaysia and Singapore. Robertson compared her experience of teaching in an American programme in Malaysia with Martin's in a Singaporean university. Robertson taught literature and writing in a programme that prepare Malay students to matriculate to U.S. universities. In the literature and writing classes that she taught, Robertson claimed that

by employing critical pedagogy, she encouraged students to challenge their reading, to be willing to speak intensely and personally in their writing, and to be willing to

use writing as a way of exploring meaning and coming to understanding. She found that they both did and did not engage themselves in this way (Robertson and Martin, 2000: p. 497).

The students were critical only in the classrooms but not outside. Robertson also claimed that the students were critical of the 'other' or a 'different' meaning and culture, but not of their own. In this sense, Robertson argued that the Malaysian culture was a catalyst and also a constraint to her pedagogy. In one of her teaching narratives, Robertson explained that her students interpreted her pedagogy of 'rigorous, intellectual questioning' as an 'American style' and that she was imposing her 'American culture' on them (ibid: p. 498). Martin's teaching experience in Singapore was similar to the Malaysian students in terms of his students' reception towards his pedagogy. Robertson and Martin concluded that the Malaysian and Singaporean students, like the American students, read the texts according to their own purposes, and by viewing them as the 'other'.

I am citing two studies that were conducted by Kramer-Dahl in a Singaporean university because of the similarity that the Malaysian and Singaporean education system share, which is its instrumental nature. Kramer-Dahl's study in 1997 involved students in a teacher-training programme, while the study in 2001 involved students who were the products of a 'school-system that is based on an instrumental view of education' (Koh, 2002: p. 260; Kramer-Dahl, 2001: p. 15). Kramer-Dahl's study in 1997 investigates the possibility of introducing critical pedagogy classroom practices

in a teacher-training programme in the National Institute of Education, Singapore.

Kramer-Dahl discovered that

teaching students to read and write in this way was not an easy task due to students' resistance. Their resistance was caused by their mindset that has been indoctrinated by a syllabus that trained them to merely pass examination' (cited in Koh, 2002: p. 260).

Kramer-Dahl argued that 'despite this constraint, it is still possible to create a space for critical pedagogy if the mindset among educators, teachers, students and curriculum-makers is changed, and also the assessment practices' (ibid). Kramer-Dahl's study in 2001 described and evaluated an undergraduate course in reading and writing-across-the curriculum. Kramer-Dahl describes the

agenda of the study was shaped by discourses on critical pedagogy and critical language awareness, and the course sought to invite them to interrogate the textual practices of these communities and to construct alternative texts. This was to be achieved through some principles of critical literacy instruction (Kramer-Dahl, 2001: p. 14).

The findings of the study suggested that there was resistance from the students' but eventually they viewed the course as 'something useful, a challenge worth accepting' (ibid: p. 29). Kramer-Dahl reported that,

her students began to publicly question the policy of some departments not to return assignments to students and thus to withhold potentially vital feedback, while others appreciated the course because they could learn to participate with some element of choice and possibility in their process of learning academic literacy (ibid: p. 30).

In this study, Kramer-Dahl also highlighted,

the possibilities, as well as the difficulties, of using critical language awareness-raising in the teaching of academic literacy at university. This study also questioned the accounts or forecasts provided by those dismissive of the potential of such pedagogies, particularly by Talib (1995) (Kramer-Dahl, 2001: p. 30).

Talib, who is a Singaporean linguist and a university teacher,

argues that the critical literacy agenda, apart from being downright ostracised in totalitarian societies, may falter in other non-western countries because of people's belief, justified or not, that it is not really necessary for economic growth or the general well-being of the country, and that it may bring more harm than good. Talib views that due to the western origins and situatedness, academics and teachers with a critical agenda may, despite their best intentions, fail to see a problem within the complex networks of contexts which its analysis demands, and often be perceived as 'trouble-makers'. On the basis of this argument, Talib claims that it is impossible to offer a critical literacy course in a non-western university context. Instead, he asserts that the students need a firm grounding in the more basic aspects of linguistic and discursal analysis before they are able to move on, if indeed they ever can, to raising the far more complex questions of critique (cited in Kramer-Dahl, 2001: p. 16).

I agree with Talib's argument that the critical literacy agenda in non-western countries is inappropriate. On the basis of the resistance that all critical pedagogues faced in the three studies (Martin and Robertson, 2000; Kramer-Dahl, 1997, 2001), and Talib's argument, I argue that there is a need to reconstruct western critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in order to introduce it in the Malaysian classroom. On the other hand, I disagree with Talib's claim that engaging in critique is secondary to raising the students' ability in linguistic and discursal analysis. I argue that critique is difficult to be achieved due to the students' mindset, and not because of the student's incapability in linguistic and discourse analysis. For this reason too, I argue that critical pedagogy in practice, whether critical teaching or critical literacy should be introduced despite any constraints, because these constraints eventually can be overcome. I further argue that critical pedagogy can also create the conditions for the development of *murabbis* in Malaysian classroom, provide an alternative view of curriculum and education, and assist in realising the aims, ideals and values of Islamic education.

7.5 Conclusion.

This chapter explores the question of the incompatibility between the Malaysian education system and the aims and aspiration of Islamic philosophy of education. The main problem with Islamic education in the Malaysian education system is that it is based on the 'technical' curriculum and view of education. This particular 'means-end' view of education only promotes knowledge as a 'product', rather than 'personalised' knowledge, which is how knowledge should be viewed in Islamic education. This has meant that the main concern of Malaysian education has been the means that can effectively produce the desirable educational outcomes (Carr, 1995), rather than promote the ideals and values of the Islamic way of life. Moreover, the structure of the national education system does not provide the conditions for the development of *murabbis* that is essential in helping to achieve the ideals and values of Islamic education. *Murabbis* are the only kind of teachers that can teach 'personalised' knowledge, hence there is a need for an alternative view of curriculum and education that would provide space, develop and support *murabbis*.

I argue that this could be achieved in a critical view of curriculum and pedagogy. If Islamic education is based on a critical view of curriculum and education where the kind of knowledge that is taught takes the form of 'personalised' knowledge and the teachers emulate the pedagogy of *murabbis*, then it is possible to achieve the aims and aspirations of Islamic education. In other words, I am suggesting that a way to overcome the problem that is facing Islamic education is to adopt an Islamised

approach to critical pedagogy in the Malaysian classroom. It is undeniable that more fundamental changes in the educational system, such as the structure of education need to be changed, but this kind of change first requires the participants in the system to be conscious of the power structure inherent within the system itself. Hence, critical pedagogy's task is to enlighten the participants of the need for a structural change, empower them to transform and emancipate themselves. Two studies in Singapore have been cited to show the possible resistance and potentials of the practice of critical pedagogy in an education system that is similar to Malaysia. Thus, I suggest that the change in the structure of the education system and the mindset of those involved in the system, can be achieved through the development of *murabbis* who would practise critical pedagogy in their classrooms. The next chapter is an attempt to test this argument by presenting a case study in a Malaysian classroom where a *murabbi* is identified and brought into the classroom to practise critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective.

CHAPTER EIGHT
CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN A MALAYSIAN CLASSROOM: METHODS
AND METHODOLOGY.

8.1 Introduction.

The purpose of the empirical study of this thesis is to evaluate whether a reconstructed critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can be introduced and practised in one of the classrooms of the Teacher Education Programme, in the International Islamic University in Malaysia. Therefore, this chapter discusses the research methodology that is employed to conduct the empirical study of this thesis. The research paradigm to be used, like critical pedagogy, is based on critical theory. This chapter will argue why the empirical study of this thesis is considered critical research. It will also explain that a particular case in Malaysia has been selected as the case study of this thesis. This chapter will explore critical methodology and the methods of the case study, particularly those used in the collection and analysis of the data. Issues on the value orientations of the research, my positionality and ethical considerations in this case study are also discussed. The research questions that are addressed in this case study are *whether critical pedagogy from the Islamic perspective can be practised in the Malaysian classroom and whether it can assist in achieving the values and ideals of Islamic education*. These research questions will be further specified according to the role and ability of each method's attempt in seeking the answer to these questions.

8.2 Case Study Research.

A case study is a form of qualitative descriptive research that focuses on an individual or a group of participants. It is important to understand, as Stake has noted, that 'case study is not a methodological choice, i.e. critical methodology, but a choice of what is to be studied, i.e. a case' (2000: p. 435). Case study research focuses, explores and describes an individual or a group of participants then draw conclusions only about that individual or group in that specific context (Bassey, 1999). Since the objective of the study of this thesis is to see whether critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can be practised in a Malaysian classroom, it is appropriate that the case study approach be used in this study so that the practical problems involved in trying to introduce critical pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom can be identified and their possible causes discussed.

8.3 Critical Research.

There may be various definitions of research but, generally, research is considered either qualitative or quantitative because of the underlying epistemological assumptions. What qualitative social research does is that it allows us to examine and understand human phenomena in a way that quantitative research cannot (Carspecken, 1996). The nature of quantitative research adheres to certain rigid criteria such as objectivity, replicability, validity and reliability where these criteria treat human being and human phenomena like objects that can be quantified, thus ignoring the subjectivity of human beings' social, historical and cultural dimensions.

For this reason, critical researchers have always claimed that critical research usually falls under qualitative research simply because critical research is 'one of several genres of inquiry into nonquantifiable features of social life' (Carspecken, 1996: p. 3). What makes qualitative research critical is its value orientation (ibid). According to Carspecken, (1996) most criticalists are concerned with issues concerning social inequalities and issues in social theory such as the nature of social structure, power and human agency. It is these issues that direct their research toward positive social change. According to Dryzek,

the tasks of critical research are to understand the ideologically distorted subjective situation of some individual or group; to explore the forces that have caused that situation; and to show that these forces can be overcome through awareness of them on the part of the oppressed individual or group in question (cited in Sumner 2003: p.4).

Following this view, in particular the third task of critical research, this thesis can be considered critical research because the aim of the empirical study of this thesis is to examine whether critical pedagogy from the Islamic perspective can be practised in the Malaysian classroom. As I have discussed in Chapter Seven, the curriculum and pedagogy of Islamic education in the Malaysian education system are unsuccessful in achieving the ideals and values of Islamic education. This is due to the nature of the Malaysian education system that is based on a 'technical' view of education. Thus I argue that there is a need to introduce critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective into Malaysian classroom so that teachers who are oppressed by the hegemonic forces of the Malaysian 'technical' education system can be enlightened and empowered.

Dryzek's three tasks of critical research also denote the general aim of critical research in education as transforming education towards educational change and reformation, which distinguishes critical research from other kinds of research in education. According to Carr, 'positivism views educational research as a 'technical' practice; interpretive research views it as a 'practical' practice'. On the contrary, critical research in education views educational research as 'critical analysis directed at the transformation of educational practices' (1986: p. 156). Comstock also argues that, 'the aim of critical research is a self-conscious practice which liberates humans from ideologically frozen conceptions of the actual and possible' (1982: p. 371). Hence, the method of research that could help in achieving the aim of critical research cannot be adopted from the positivist.

The positivist method of research is based on the assumption that 'society is a neutral datum for a systematic observation' (Comstock, 1982: p.371). Such method treats humans as objects, and their behaviours as quantifiable variables or 'raw data which is external to the scientific enterprise' (ibid). Comstock further argues that in consequence of this assumption, 'the positive research method 'reifies' social processes by naturalising social phenomena, addressing them as external to our understandings, and denying their socio-historical constructed-ness' (ibid).

Table 8.0: Types of Human Interest, Views of Knowledge, Educational Research and Research Methods (Source: Derived from MacIsaac, 1996; Carr, 1985: p. 94; and Giddens, 1985)

Types of Human Interest	Views of Knowledge and Educational Research	Research Methods
<i>Technical interest to predict and control</i>	<i>Instrumental; causal explanation-Positive or quantitative research</i>	<i>Positivist sciences-empirical-analytic sciences</i>
<i>Practical interest to interpret and understand</i>	<i>Practical; understanding-Interpretive research</i>	<i>Interpretive research-hermeneutic methods</i>
<i>Critical interest to emancipate and liberate</i>	<i>Critical and emancipatory; reflection- critical and emancipatory research</i>	<i>Critical research-critical methods e.g. critical hermeneutics and ideology- critique</i>

8.4 Value orientations of critical researchers.

Critical research like critical pedagogy finds contemporary society to be unequal and oppressive for many people and seeks to change it through research. This value orientation must not be confused with the validity claims of the truth that critical researchers make in their study. It is important to posit the precise nature of oppression as an empirical question rather than a given belief. Carspecken (1996) argues that value orientations should not be allowed to determine research findings. It is important that critical researchers be acutely aware of their positionality in their research, because critical researchers are usually driven to do a research when they feel that it would be a way of bettering the oppressed. Often critical researchers begin their research with some preconceived ideas of the subject and tend to search for 'facts' that would match what they want to find.

In this sense, when value orientations intrude and determine research findings, Carspecken (1996) claims that it leaves a potentially good critical research to be biased. The positionality of the critical researchers, if allowed to interfere with their research, can endanger the true purpose of critical theory, and undermine researchers' attempt to empower and emancipate the suppressed. This is because critical research could become the 'authority' that helps to prove the preconceived ideas of the critical researchers. This would consequently strengthen the consciousness of critical researchers who consider themselves as the 'more righteous' and 'superior' group who are aware of the oppression, liberated from the oppressors, and who have thought to emancipate the oppressed. When this consciousness is strengthened, it has the tendency to develop into an 'emancipatory authority', where the critical researchers may not be the 'best authority' to make any claims based on their research finding because they may not be free from their own learned and internalised oppressions.

8.5 Critical Methodology.

The other issue that I would like to delineate is the issue of methodology generally, and the critical methodology of this case study specifically. Critical research unlike other research does not have a shared methodological theory. What a methodological theory does is provide principles and criteria that direct the research project, and justify methods for the interpretation of data. 'Though efforts have been made to describe what a critical methodology is, critical researchers do not completely agree

with each other' (Carspecken, 1996). However, in this case study, I have used various methods for understanding and examining the case. Using these methods is unavoidable because these methods help me to seek the response to the questions of the empirical study, hence fulfilling its aim. Moreover, the use of various methods helps to 'triangulate' the data. The term 'triangulation' that is being used in this context means to understand the data from different perspectives. Basically, these various methods can be put into two categories which are methods for the collection of data and methods for the analysis of data. Methods for collection of data in this case study are observation, interview and journal documentation while methods for the analysis of data are critical discourse analysis and narrative inquiry.

8.6 Methods of Data Collection.

8.6.1 Observation.

There were several methods used for the collection of the data in this study and the first to be discussed is the method of observation. In this case study, observation is used as it provides a view of the classroom, and the visual aspect of the process of learning and most importantly the discourse in the classroom. Observation is also employed as it supports critical discourse analysis in capturing the body language of the participants of the discourse. According to Fairclough, 'semiosis is meaning making through language, body language (gestures, facial expressions, etc.), visual images, or any other way of signifying that is an irreducible part of material social processes' (2001: p. 234). He stresses that 'language (verbal and physical) is

involved in social relations of power and domination, and in ideology' (ibid, p. 229). Hence by using the method of observation, a researcher is able to record and document the actual going-on in the classroom, particularly the subtle ways of the participants' meaning-making.

The observation method that has been employed in this study is that of 'participant observation' because my presence was felt by the students although there was no interaction between me and them. Even though I did not participate like the students in the classroom, I was still considered as part of the class because of my physical presence in the classroom. In order to make the students feel more receptive to my role as a participant observer, I approached and explained to the students the reason of my presence before the first class began. I also informed them that I would be selecting some of them to be interviewed as participants in my study. This explanation helped to develop the rapport that I needed as the students were no longer apprehensive of my presence and were able to accept me as part of the classroom.

The observation method that has been employed is open ended or unstructured. However the focus of the observation is on the 'discursive practices' inherent in the classroom discourse. Discursive practices are practices that are inherent in a 'discourse', but the term 'discourse' in this context means more than just a conversation. It actually involves 'ways of being in the world that signify specific

and recognizable social identities' (Alvermann *et. al*, 1997: p. 74). Discursive practices refer to the 'spoken and unspoken rules and conventions that govern how one learns to think, act, and speak in all the social positions s/he occupies in life'(ibid). For example, I have learned to think, act, and speak like a teacher; I have also learned how to be identified as a graduate student; woman; mother and daughter. According to Foucault, 'discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it' (cited in Alvermann *et. al*, 1997: p. 74). Hence by observing the classroom discourse, the discursive practices could be identified and analysed.

The observation of the class began on 21st June 2004 and ended on 23rd August 2004 using various techniques such as field-note taking, video and audio recording. The purpose of using these three techniques of observation is important as each supplements the other. In observation studies the researcher is considered as the key instrument in collecting the data so using different techniques of observation can help to some extent overcome the weaknesses of this method. More importantly, using different techniques can also help to distinguish between description and interpretation. For example, both field note taking and audio recording were the techniques used in the first class because I wanted to get a detailed recording of the students' responses. Since this was the first class, I felt that I needed to get into the 'rhythm' of observing and field note taking.

Observation using video recording is useful because it gives visual access to the classroom discourse. For instance, I used this technique in the second class because I wanted to get a visual picture of the classroom arrangement, particularly the seating of the students that were involved in my interviews. By placing the video camera at a strategic location I was able to capture the movement of the *murabbi* in the class. It is interesting because this technique can show the visual aspect of the discourse such as the physical movement and expression of the *murabbi* and the students. Although video recording may not provide a clear recording of the discourse compared to an audio recording, video recording is able to provide the discursive practices of the individuals in the classroom particularly their physical movements. Due to the efficiency of audio and video recording in the observation of the class, I always paired my field-note taking with either one of the two techniques. However, the field-note taking exercise is equally important as it allowed me to have a first hand and a closer experience in observing the classroom. Even though I incorporated three different techniques in my method of observation, the focus of all observations was still the classroom discourse, which is the objective of this particular method.

The observation ran for ten weeks from 21st June until 23rd August, but only seven classes were observed. Two classes had been purposely missed out because of the mid semester examination and the review of the mid semester examination that were conducted on both days. Meanwhile the other class did not take place because it fell

during the mid semester break. There were instances where either audio recording or video recording was used as the only method of observation when I was not able to attend the class due to several reasons such as attending conferences or visiting the library of the Ministry of Education. In such instances the technician of the Centre of Education was present to monitor the recording. Table 8.1 (appendix 2) shows the schedule of observation and the techniques of observation that have been used throughout this study.

8.6.2 Interview.

Another method that is used in this study is interview. Interview is a useful method as it can get behind a participant's story. Cohen, Manion and Morrison agree that interviews allow subjects 'to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and express how they regard situations from their own point of view' (2000: p. 267). The type of interview that is used in this study is a semi-structured and unguided interview. It is 'semi-structured' because there were several general questions that had been outlined to be asked to the interviewees. But the interviews were 'unguided', because the researcher remained as open and adaptable as possible to the interviewees' responses. The researcher tended to pursue or probe for more detailed information based on the interviewees' own responses. The interviews were done face to face with each participant at a time. The interview method was used to get the stories from the *murabbi* and the students who had taken EDF 6050 under the *murabbi*. The stories would be able to tell the *murabbi*'s experiences in his effort to

introduce critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in a Malaysian classroom. Meanwhile, stories of the students would enable them to share their perceptions and experiences of their encounter with critical pedagogy introduced by the *murabbi* in class EDF 6050.

Since the interviews with the students were unguided and semi-structured, there was a need for a pilot interview. The pilot interview would assist me in ensuring that the questions were clear and relevant to the objective of the study. It was also to help me in assessing the difficulty level of the questions and the duration of the interview. I did a pilot interview with one of the *murabbi*'s former students from class EDF 6050. Fortunately, the pilot interview showed that the questions were clear and appropriate for this study (appendix 4).

The interview questions can be divided into two categories. The first category concerns questions on the experiences of the students while the second category deals with the students' perceptions of the practice of critical pedagogy. Based on the pilot interview, I found that each category actually took about half an hour so whenever it was possible I tried to break the interview into two sessions where each session lasted about 30 minutes. The reason for this decision was that I wanted the interviews to be conducted in a relaxed atmosphere so that the interviewees would be able to answer my questions freely and not rushed. This decision also helped because

usually the interviewees could only spend about 30 minutes for the interviews as they also had other commitments to attend to.

Although the interview with the *murabbi* was also an unstructured and semi-guided interview, I did not conduct any pilot interview because questions that were asked were developed based on the observation of the classroom discourse. In this matter, the classroom discourse provided some guide for the interview. There were four interviews altogether where each interview lasted about 30 minutes. Basically, the questions that were asked in the interviews with the *murabbi* revolved around his practice of critical pedagogy, why he practised it, how he found practising it in the Malaysian classrooms, the problems he encountered and ways of overcoming them (refer to appendix 7 for interview questions). Table 8.2 (appendix 3) shows the interview schedule of this study. The names of the interviewees have been changed for confidentiality purposes.

8.6.3 Journal Documentation.

The third method of data collection used in this study was journal documentation. This method was chosen because I wanted the students to express their feelings about their experiences in class EDF 6050 in a way which they felt that they were unable to express face to face in the interviews. However, only one of the students who attended EDF 6050 section was willing to document her feelings in the journal. As an alternative, I also made another attempt to learn more about their experiences

by inviting them to chat with me on the internet and also through email writing. This attempt provides the students with a space to communicate. According to Kellner 'the internet has produced new public spheres and spaces for information, debate, and participation that contain the potential to invigorate democracy and to increase the dissemination of critical and progressive ideas' (cited in Dahlberg, 2001: p. 2). Katz also asserts that many conversations are taking place in cyberspace through Usenet groups, e-mails, chat rooms and web pages (ibid). Such communications are considered as online or 'cyber discourse' (ibid: pp. 2-5). It was interesting to find that the students who were unable to write in the journal were more willing to share their experiences through this method. This is because 'cyber discourse' is similar to journal writing in terms of it being a non face to face communication. Furthermore 'cyber discourse' is immediate and required no extra effort on the part of the interviewees compared to journal writing.

Some of the interviewees confessed that they were not very good in writing without any guidelines so cyber discourse differs in the sense that it became more of a spontaneous conversation. On the other hand, 'cyber discourse' could be considered more similar to journal documentation because the students were able to express their feelings about their experiences more freely and more in depth. It is based on this similarity with that compelled me to categorise 'cyber discourse' as part of journal documentation, that is, a 'cyber journal'.

8.7 Methods of Data Analysis.

In this section, I discuss the methods of analysis that I used in this study. There are two methods, which are critical discourse analysis and narrative inquiry.

8.7.1 Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical discourse analysis 'describes discursive practices and is able to show how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies' (Fairclough, 1992: p. 12). According to Fairclough (1992), discourse analysis can take two approaches, one of which is critical and the other non-critical. In the light of this case study, only the critical approaches will be discussed in general. Basically the three critical approaches are, the 'critical linguistics of Fowler *et. al.* (1979); the French approach that is based on Althusser's theory of ideology (cited in Pêcheux, 1982); and finally Fairclough's own analysis of textually and linguistically oriented discourse analysis (TODA)' (Fairclough, 1992: pp. 12-37). The method of critical discourse analysis in this case study is drawn from the latter approach. Fairclough also views 'discourse as a form of social practice' (1992: p. 63), so TODA would be able to examine how discourse could actually play a role in the '(re)production and challenge of dominance' (van Dijk, 1993: p. 300).

Based on this view, the TODA in this case study is divided into two stages. In the first stage, TODA is used to examine whether the *murabbi's* pedagogy can be considered as critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective. The *murabbi's*

pedagogy would be considered as critical pedagogy if he is able to establish 'undistorted communication through the four-validity claims of meaningful, true, justified and sincere'(Kellner, 2003a), and whether he is able to teach the students how to make a 'critique'. TODA also intends to examine the extent of the *murabbi's* practice of critical pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom that is based on a 'technical' view of education.

The second stage of TODA is also based on its role as a tool of ideological critique as it makes visible the opaque aspects of discourse particularly its ideological roots. Treating discourses in the classroom, the interviews and the journal documentations as 'text', Fairclough's version of TODA can be used to analyse these texts, unearth and make apparent the not so apparent issues that may exist in a society. In this attempt, critical discourse analysis tries to empower the general public by enlightening them with the knowledge of what they originally did not know (Haque, 2004). More importantly, TODA views discourse as a social practice that not only 'represents' the world, but also 'signifies' the world. This point shows Fairclough's view of how discourse not only reproduces society, but also contributes to the transformation of society. Based on this point, I intend to use TODA to examine the origin of the *murabbi's* and the students' practices, views and beliefs of education and learning before and after their encounter with critical pedagogy. In doing so, TODA will also examine whether the origin of these practices, views and beliefs of education inhibit or promote the *murabbi's* practice of critical pedagogy. In other

words, it will also analyse whether there is any difficulty in practising critical pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom.

8.7.2 Narrative Inquiry.

The other method of data analysis is narrative inquiry, which provides a way of presenting the 'voices' of the *murabbi* and the interviewed students who are teachers. Goodson states that 'voice is a term increasingly used by those concerned with teacher empowerment' (cited in Cortazzi, 1993: p. 10). Critical research in education is concerned with teacher empowerment because the teacher is considered as the key participant in the attempt to understand the current practice in education and in transforming education. Since one of the research questions of this thesis is to examine whether critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective helps in empowering and emancipating the students, narrative inquiry can assist in understanding the *murabbi*'s and the students' perceptions and experiences toward the practice of critical pedagogy. How well the *murabbi* practises critical pedagogy cannot be known if there is no attempt to understand how teachers themselves 'see the practice, what their experience is like, what they believe and how they think about it' (ibid: p. 5). As Louden advocates, 'teachers do not merely deliver, but they also develop, define and reinterpret what is to be taught. What teachers think, believe and do in the classroom ultimately shapes the kind of learning that their learners get' (cited in Cortazzi, 1993: p. 5).

A limitation of narrative inquiry is that it deals with a small number of teachers. However, I argue that the focus of this type of inquiry is not in the information gathered from a large sample, but its emphasis is on the depth of the study. For this reason, observation, interview and journal documentation are used in this inquiry. Thus narrative inquiry necessarily centres on one or two persons, so that it can be richly presented (Cortazzi, 1993). Another weakness of this method is the question of authenticity: does the narrative belong to the researcher or the subject of study? Narrative inquiry is a collaborative effort between the researcher and the research participant. As Clandinin and Connelly argue,

narrative inquiry is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in this same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social' (2000: p. 20).

Based on this argument, it follows that the research participant as 'the teller is not the only person telling the story. The researcher as the listener also shapes the story, for instance questions asked in interviews also determine the direction and emphasis of the narrative' (Cortazzi, 1993: p. 21).

The analysis in this case study focuses on the students' views and experiences of encountering with the murabbi's practice, and how they reflect upon their own views and attempts to introduce it in their classrooms. In this process, narrative inquiry will become reflexive as I intend to understand how the teachers relate to their own experience of teaching in their classroom with particular reference to their

experience of encountering the *murabbi*'s critical pedagogy. The analysis will be based on several themes that can be depicted from the participants' narratives.

8.8 Ethical Considerations in the Case Study.

This section raises three ethical considerations that I have given attention to, which are informed consent, confidentiality and ownership of data. It is essential that the researcher remain transparent and honest by considering ethical issues pertaining to his/her research and more importantly, his/her informants. This is to ensure that informants are not coerced into participating in the research. In order to avoid falling into this situation, I give due consideration to the consent of the participants, maintain their confidentiality in order to ensure the safety of their professionalism, and am transparent about the ownership of data.

8.8.1 Informed Consent.

It is in the regulations of the Institute of education (INSTED) of the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) that any research to be conducted in the INSTED requires the permission of the authorities. Therefore, I first sought organisational consent by submitting a research proposal of the case study, delineating the aim, significance, site, participants and duration of the case study. By doing so, I was given access to conduct the case study and full cooperation from the participants. I approached the class and explained how I intended to conduct my case study, and their involvement in it. I also personally approached the students that I

had identified to be interviewed and requested their permission to be participants in my study. I explained my intention to interview them and distributed to each of them a journal to document their inner feelings, views, perceptions and experiences of learning in class EDF 6050 and how these affect their own teaching. All of the students gave their consent to my requests and I arranged the meetings for the interview according to their schedule. Informed consent has also been sought in the writing of the narratives. Since narrative inquiry is used in this case study, the participants' consent is important in the collaborative effort of constructing the stories.

8.8.2 Confidentiality.

Confidentiality is an important rule that ensures the data is not published in a way that could disclose the participant's identity. In this case study, it is important that confidentiality is maintained because the participants were willing to participate in this case study on condition that their anonymity was protected. All the participants' names including the *murabbi's* were changed to pseudonyms. Since this case study involves narrative inquiry, I cannot avoid providing specific descriptions. However, such descriptions were shared with the participants and their consent sought before they were included as part of the analysis.

8.8.3 Ownership of Data.

Ownership of data concerns the access, use and control of data. I have explained clearly to the participants the purpose of the case study including its purpose so that they are aware of how I would use the data in my study. It is also fair that the participants have ultimate control over how far they would allow the whole study to become public (Burgess, 1989). Again, it is important to understand what entails from narrative inquiry is collaboration with the participants; hence the participants have as much right as the researcher in the access, use and control of data.

8.9 Conclusion.

This case study of this thesis seeks to address the research questions on *whether critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can be practised in the Malaysian classroom and whether it can assist in achieving the values and ideals of Islamic education*. In seeking the responses to these questions, this case study uses critical methodology and various methods of data collection such as observation, interview and journal documentation, while critical discourse analysis and narrative inquiry are used for data analysis. This case study with these selected methods intends to provide answers to the research questions. For this reason too, the observation method will help to examine the attempt to introduce critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in a Malaysian classroom, particularly in one of the classes of the Teacher Education Programme in a Malaysian public university. The interviews with the *murabbi* will try to understand his own experiences of practising critical

pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom; investigate whether there are any problems that he faces in his practices and possible ways of overcoming them.

Meanwhile, the interviews with the students will share some information on the students' own personal experiences and perceptions of whether the practice of critical pedagogy will benefit Malaysian learners, particularly in the aspect of encouraging critical thinking and critical reflection. It will be interesting to know the students' views of critical pedagogy and other instructional pedagogies that they were used to in their other learning experiences in a 'typical' Malaysian classroom (technical view of education). Finally, the method of journal documentation will help in providing other useful insights into the students' experiences and perceptions that they may not have mentioned in the face to face interviews. It can also act as a 'triangulation' though the insights provided may give similar information or they may also give a different picture. If the former happens then, the various methods used have assisted the study in confirming the interpretations of the study, and if the latter happens then, this final method helps in providing a different picture, which when pieced together would become clearer though it would still remain a partial picture.

In the attempt to answer the research questions, the potential, possibilities and challenges of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective practised in a Malaysian classroom will be explored. It is important to examine the extent of critical pedagogy

in empowering students in a Malaysian classroom. The nature of a technical view of education and curriculum in Malaysia has inhibited the potential of Malaysian students to explore and encourage critical reflection. Instead this 'modernised' education of Malaysia has produced 'efficient human resources' for the benefits of Malaysian economics. Undeniably, this is a process of 'reification', which eventually would deny the rights and potentials of human beings to be critical and reflexive.

In previous chapters in my thesis, I have argued that introducing critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective into the Malaysian classroom would enlighten, empower, and emancipate Malaysian students from the inhibitions of an instrumental view of Malaysian curriculum and education. Based on this theoretical argument, it is clear that the value orientation of this case study cannot be examined through generalisable quantifiable methods because of its opposition to an instrumental view of research. Thus this case study is based on critical research and is directed by critical methodology in order to fulfil its task of showing how critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can enlighten, empower, and emancipate students. Whether critical pedagogy can, in practice, achieve this aim will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER NINE

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN A MALAYSIAN CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY.

9.1 Introduction.

The aim of this chapter is to present the analysis and findings of the case study. The case study attempts to answer the questions of *whether critical pedagogy from the Islamic perspective can be practised in the Malaysian classroom and whether its practice can assist in achieving the values and ideals of Islamic education*. In seeking the response to these questions the analysis of the case study is organised into three parts. The first two parts are the analyses from critical discourse analysis and narrative inquiry, and the third part examines the criticisms of western critical pedagogy in practice within the context of the reconstructed critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective, and the problems and resistance that the *murabbi* faced in his practice.

9.2 The Background of the Case Study.

Before going into the analysis of the Case Study, it is essential that I provide the background of the Case Study, particularly the five main elements, which are (1) the context, (2) the site or classroom, (3) the *murabbi*, (4) the course and (5) the students.

9.2.1 The Context.

The context or the environment for the case study is the Institute of Education (INSTED) which is one of the faculties of one of the public universities of Malaysia, namely the International Islamic University (IIUM). IIUM was built in 1983 with the aspiration of becoming a leader in the Muslim community's quest for knowledge. IIUM is considered as an Islamic university because of its philosophy, which is built upon the belief that knowledge must be pursued and propagated in the spirit of *tawhid*, as an act of worship, in full recognition that it is a trust which God has placed upon mankind. Hence IIUM's vision is to become an international centre of educational excellence, which integrates Islamic revealed knowledge and values in all disciplines, and aspires to restore the *Ummah's* leading role in developing all branches of knowledge. In the attempt to achieve this vision, IIUM has remained committed to a unified teaching and learning process along with the inculcation of moral and spiritual values through its mission which is focussed on the *Integration, Islamisation, Internationalisation and Comprehensive Excellence (IIICE)* (see appendix 9 for details).

INSTED, as one of the faculties in IIUM, also strives to achieve IIUM's mission through its own mission which is to develop and refine the Islamic concept and system of education, with the hope of producing Muslims who will submit to God's Will, are committed to following God's guidance in all aspects of their life, and are also knowledgeable and skillful in specific areas of life so that they will benefit and safeguard themselves, mankind and the environment. Clearly INSTED is committed

to IIUM's promotion of Islamisation when in July 1998, INSTED held a national seminar on Islamisation of Education as it realised the importance of a continuous effort in reforming the national education of Malaysia to meet the demands of the National Philosophy of Education and Islamic teachings and, more importantly, to raise the awareness of the importance of Islamisation of Education in other institutions of educations in Malaysia.

Although IIUM claims to be the only university in Malaysia that is based on an Islamic epistemology, it is still monitored by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia. In other words, the administration system and the curriculum structure of IIUM are bounded by the rules and regulations of the MOE. It is based on this point that IIUM, though considers itself to be an International university, is still considering as a public university (supported and funded by Malaysian government). As a public university in Malaysia, IIUM provides continuous education for Malaysian students who have completed either their SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia or Malaysian Certificate of Education) or STPM (Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia or Malaysian Higher Certificate of Education). IIUM also admits international students with recognised qualifications such as A' level. Since the majority of students who are studying in IIUM are Malaysian students, these Malaysian students tend to bring with them their previous learning experience from Malaysian schools into IIUM.

9.2.2 The Classroom/ Site.

In the programme of study offered by INSTED, one of the core courses that is compulsory to all Masters and PhD students is EDF 6050, titled *Advanced Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Islamic Education* (appendix 2). For the academic session of 2004/2005 semester I, two sections of EDF 6050 were offered and section two was selected to be the site for the observations of the case study, while certain students who attended EDF 6050 taught by the identified *murabbi* were selected for the interviews in this study. The selection of EDF 6050 as the site or location of the case study was made because of three criteria: the *murabbi*, the course and the students.

9.2.3 The *Murabbi*

The important criteria that made EDF 6050 an appropriate site for the case study is the lecturer who taught EDF 6050 section two. The lecturer, Abdullah (a pseudonym), has been identified as the *murabbi* based on my own experience as a Masters student. In fact, he is responsible for introducing critical pedagogy to Malaysian students in INSTED including myself, who are more familiar with the instrumental methods of teaching. Abdullah has been teaching in the Institute of Education (INSTED), International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) since 1997. Since teaching in INSTED, Abdullah has taught several courses but EDF 6050 was the first of the many courses that was assigned to him.

Since Abdullah first taught EDF 6050, a lot of changes have been made to the content of the course based on his own views of what current issues in education are worth discussing. Moreover, Abdullah's 'controversial' pedagogy invites different responses from the students, some positive, others negative. Yet he has survived the negative comments and complaints that have been made against him mainly because they were outweighed by the positive appraisals of most of his students. More importantly, his influence and ability to 'excite' his students' minds can be seen from the students' directed research that he has supervised. This is also proven when he was nominated for the 'Best Teacher Award' in 2002. This award is annually organised by the university. To date, he has supervised students on several issues such as "The Role of Critical Thinking from the Perspectives of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*", "Critical Pedagogy in ICT Education", and "Critical Pedagogy and the Issue of Gender Stereotyping". In INSTEAD of IIUM, this can be considered quite an achievement because Abdullah is the only lecturer who has supervised students' directed research that is non-positivistic.

Abdullah's innovative teaching is an attempt to practise critical pedagogy in his classroom from both the western and Islamic perspectives. This attempt arises out of his own interest in western critical pedagogy and his own understanding of what an Islamic perspective of critical pedagogy is. More importantly, Abdullah tries to reiterate critical thinking and critical reflection from an Islamic perspective.

9.2.4 The Course

The other element considered in the selection of EDF 6050 section two is the course itself, which is aimed at developing students' abilities to question what they assume as 'given'. The course, which is *Advanced Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Islamic Education* (appendix 1), focuses on the role of philosophy, history and sociology in education. This course exposes its students to the various philosophies as 'traditions' that are responsible for the development of different views of education in the west and also in the Muslim world. The course also explores the history of Muslim education by examining the development of Muslim scholars' philosophies and their impact on the development of Islamic education. One of the primary objectives of the course is to encourage students' critical reflection on their well-formed beliefs and views about education, culture and Islam: ideas and beliefs that that have been developed over previous years as students in schools that are based on an instrumental view of education. Assessment of the course is categorised into three tasks, the assignment, the mid semester and the final semester examinations.

9.2.5 The Students

The final element of the case study is the students. Since EDF 6050 is a core course and all Masters and PhD students in INSTED, particularly Malaysian students who are used to the instrumental method of teaching are required to take this course. Since this particular critical study intends to examine the responses (experiences and

perceptions) of these 'typical' Malaysian students, EDF 6050 taught by the *murabbi* became a relevant and suitable site for this case study. There are about thirty two students who attended EDF 6050 section two: twenty three female students and nine male students. Seven of the male students are Indonesian students, one is from Oman and the other is from the Maldives. Meanwhile, out of the thirty two female students, one student is from Indonesia, one from China, and another from Trinidad and Tobago, while the rest are Malaysians. All of the students are Muslims and only four of them (female students) are teaching in Malaysian schools. All of the Malaysian students in EDF 6050 section two are recent graduates who have just completed their undergraduate degrees in IIUM except for the four female teachers. However, only three of these female teachers were selected for the interviews based on their consent and commitment to the case study.

The observations of the case only involve class EDF 6050 section two, but the interviews also involve a former student of the *murabbi* who attended EDF 6050 in the previous semester. The purpose of selecting the former student is to get an insight into the former student's story on the practice of critical pedagogy that was introduced by the *murabbi*, and also to find out whether the practice had an impact on the former student's teaching after she had attended the *murabbi's* class. Basically, the selection of the interviewees is based on the fulfilment of two requirements, which are their teaching experience in Malaysian classrooms, and their attendance in class EDF 6050 taught by Abdullah. All of these five elements,

namely, the context, site, *murabbi*, course, and students made EDF 6050 inevitably relevant as the site for this case study.

PART I

9.3 Critical pedagogy in a Malaysian Classroom

Part I provides the critical discourse analysis and focussed on the first question, that is, can critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can be practised in a Malaysian classroom?

The First Research Question: In answering the first research question, I have divided it into two more specific questions: (1) *Can critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective be brought into the Malaysian classroom?* And (2) *Can critical pedagogy from the Islamic perspective assist in emancipating Malaysian students to become critical thinkers?* TODA investigates the answers to these questions in two stages. The first stage of TODA examines whether the *murabbi's* pedagogy can be considered as critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective by exploring whether the *murrabi* is able to establish undistorted communication through Habermas' four validity claims, which are meaningful, true, justified and sincere, and whether he is able to teach his students how to make an 'Islamic critique'.

Habermas' undistorted communication occurs when speakers can defend all four validity-claims, 'where what is said can be shown to be meaningful, true, justified and sincere' (Giddens, 1985: p. 129). In the following narrative of the fourth observation, I attempt to analyse its discourse in the light of Habermas' four validity claims.

Abdullah (A) walked to the back of the room, his hands in his pockets. He always walks up and down the classroom, then he would face his students and look at them before asking a question. Then he walked back to the front of the room and leaned against the table. Pulling out his right hand, he gestured to the female students, while looking at the students and asked them, *"You still don't understand what commodification of knowledge means?"* A hand at the front row on his right shot up. A looked at the student and raised an eyebrow. The student said, *"yes, I am still not very clear about it. Please, can you give me an example?"*. A said, *"well what it means is simply that knowledge is being treated like a commodity and has lost its intrinsic value. Let's take you lot, for example. Tell me why are here? Why are you in this programme? Yes, you sister, the one with the blue scarf. What is your specialisation?"* The girl with the blue scarf answered, *"I'm doing IT and I'm here because I'm hoping that it could help me get a job as an IT instructor."* A clapped his hands and boomed *"EXACTLY! I thought so, see, nowadays, many people study for qualification and they also choose to study or specialise in areas that are demanded by the market economy...Those who specialise in areas like me, philosophy would have a tough time getting a job. I have to cross thousands of mile, across great seas and land, leaving my poor wife all alone in the States, and stay in a different country by myself, all ALONE, for what? Just to get a job...in this university. Bear in mind that it is for this reason too, that the Department of Philosophy in this university had to be closed down and merged with another department. Today, in this university, philosophy is taught as electives of other areas. One guess why that's happening now?"* A male student who is sitting alone at the back of the class said, *"commodification of knowledge!"* A pursed his lips, nodded his head and said, *"exactly. Do you understand then?"*. All of the students answered, *"yes."* A girl at the back said, *"but that is not necessarily true, I mean, I have a degree in Finance and used to work in a bank, but look at me. I am in this programme because I want to. I think I can make a difference in school... teaching."* A nodded his head again, *"I agree with you Sister, you're from Trinidad right?"* The girl nodded. *"Well, that's you. You're an example of what we should be today...creating tension against the demand of the market...What the market demands is not necessarily good or true. As members of society, we should be aware of this, be critical....changes in society start with us, the members of society."* A male student who is sitting in the front row, nearest to the wall asked A, *"so what you're saying is that we have a choice to actually change what is happening in the world? And change starts from changing what or how we understand what's*

happening in the world right?" A vigorously nodded his head and said, "Yes, that's what making critique is all about..."

(Observation IV).

From this narrative, the four validity claims, which are meaningful, true, justified and sincere can be shown in the discourse. The discourse is considered as *meaningful* because the issue that is being discussed, which is the 'commodification of knowledge' is being brought up again. This indicates that there is an attempt to make the issue meaningful, which is eventually achieved when one of the male students was able to relate Abdullah's explanation to the issue being discussed. The second and third validity claims of *truth* and *justification* are clearly exemplified in the discourse when A gives some examples of commodification of knowledge based on his student's own experience. Although the fourth validity claim of whether he is *sincere* is difficult to prove from the discourse, the fact that he was explicit about his own experience when relating to the issue may be used as an indication of his sincerity. The point that he is trying to establish an undistorted communication leading to an 'ideal speech situation' is clear because of the equal opportunity that each of his students has in participating in the discourse. More importantly, he accepted his student's (from Trinidad) argument and provided a space for her argument by using it as a point of reference. Indirectly, he tried to show the way of being critical by using her experience as an example of a critique that could transform society. Hence this narrative shows that Abdullah's pedagogy can be considered as critical pedagogy. But whether his critical pedagogy is based from the Islamic perspective also need to be examined.

This second narrative would show whether Abdullah's practice can be considered as critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective if he teaches his students to make Islamic critique. So what exactly is Islamic critique? As discussed in Chapter Five (p. 150), Kazmi (2000a) asserts that the first verse in the *Qur'an*, "Read, in the name of God..." (96:1) is an invitation to be critical. Reading in God's name implies that it is a critical and active meaning making activity because Muslims have to continuously understand the *Qur'an* by reflecting upon it according to their historical-situatedness in a particular social and cultural context. The act of reading in God's name also applies when Muslims understand their daily world experiences and react upon these experiences on the basis of their reading and understanding of the *Qur'an*. In this sense, Islamic critique is the result of a critical and hermeneutical understanding of God's signs (the *Qur'an* and the world). So the question that needs to be answered is whether Abdullah teaches his students to read the signs of God critically and hermeneutically.

Scratching his head, Abdullah (A) asked the students, "*have you ever wondered why the first verse revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) was Read in the name of God? God could ask the Prophet to do anything, like bow to Me or prostrate to Me, but instead the first verse was READ! So what does it mean then?*" A took a chair that was nearest to him, pulled it towards him and sat on it. "*God I'm tired. This is really a long class, isn't it...well then, can anyone give a shot to answering my question?*" Sue (S), a female student who always sits in the front row said, "*I think God asks us to read because God values knowledge..and God wants us to learn. So basically Read could mean learn.*" A answered, "*yes, that's true, but how and what kind of knowledge? Remember that God said Read in the name of God. Does that mean we only read God's name and how do we read God's name?*" Farhan (F), a male Indonesian student who was sitting in the second row spoke, "*When God said read in God's name, it means that all knowledge should be based on the belief in God. That way, any knowledge would be according to Islamic values.*" A replied, "*that's a good reflection.*" Nirwan (N) another male student who was sitting next to F said, "*what about the verse that means God of all the worlds...before this we understand 'the worlds' as the physical world and the transcendental world. But*

now I think we would understand 'the worlds' as the universes." A nodded and said, "yes that is a good example of reading in the name of God. You just show how a Muslim could relate the Qur'an to today's knowledge. What you just said shows that reading in the name of God is to read and understand the ayah (verse) beyond the literal meaning of the ayah. This type of reading is a critical and dialectical way of reading the Qur'an because we can also relate our experiences in the world with the ayah. Remember that to be critical is to discover the beyond, that which has not come to be, the possibility..."

(Observation III)

This second narrative of the third observation illustrates how Abdullah's critical pedagogy teaches his students to make Islamic critique by showing them what it means to read the signs of God critically and hermeneutically. Both narratives indicate that Abdullah's pedagogy is a critical pedagogy because it is based on an undistorted communication and attempts to establish the 'ideal speech situation'. More importantly, Abdullah's pedagogy can be considered critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective because he was able to teach his students to make an Islamic critique by understanding the signs of God critically and hermeneutically. In this sense, Abdullah was successful in introducing critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in a Malaysian classroom.

The second stage of TODA examines the second specific question of whether Abdullah's critical pedagogy can emancipate students in a Malaysian classroom. In this second stage, TODA tries to examine the origin of the students' practices, views and beliefs of education and learning before and after their encounter with critical pedagogy. By understanding the origin of their practices and beliefs, their ideological roots can be revealed. Apart from that, TODA will also examine whether the origin

of these practices, views and beliefs of education inhibit or promote the *murabbi's* practice of critical pedagogy. In other words, TODA will investigate whether there is any difficulty in practising critical pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom. In this stage, TODA will first analyse the classroom discourses and conduct an ideology-critique of them, then support the findings from the interviews and journal documentation of Abdullah and his students.

Based on TODA analysis of the interviews and journal documentation, I was able to glean that there are three types of phases, which are enlightenment, empowerment and emancipation that the students have experienced. Basically, there are four female students who participated in the case study. All of them have some experience in teaching at different levels. Before I explore these three phases, it is relevant to provide a brief description of each of the student's background in education.

Deja

Deja is Abdullah's former student. Deja was educated in an Islamic religious school. She continued her higher education in the International Islamic University, Malaysia (IIUM) specialising in psychology in her undergraduate degree, and educational psychology in her Master of Education (MEd). Deja is hardworking and still keeps in touch with Abdullah although she is no longer attending any of Abdullah's courses. Sometimes Deja visits Abdullah in his office to have discussions. They often share

articles and books. Abdullah also buys for Deja books that are not available in Malaysia whenever he goes back to the States for his holiday.

Sheena

Sheena went to a national school and received a bachelor degree in psychology in IIUM. After receiving her degree, she completed her Diploma in Education in IIUM and taught in secondary schools for more than five years. Currently, she is pursuing her MEd. and specialising in educational psychology.

Zetty

Zetty is a mature student who received her higher education in the States. She started teaching after completing her bachelor degree in Business Studies. After five years of teaching in the primary and secondary national schools, she decided to teach in a private school. After more than eight years teaching in a private school, she then decided to pursue her Master degree in IIUM, specialising in educational administration.

Sue

Sue is also a mature student who was educated in the States. Like Zetty, Sue also has taught in both the public and private sectors in different levels of education. Sue loves learning and just a few years after she started teaching, she wanted to learn about Islamic studies so she took a Diploma in Islamic Studies in one of the public

universities in Malaysia. Currently she is doing her MEd in educational administration. By using TODA to analyse the interviews and journal documentations of these students, I have discovered that all of the students have been through the first phase, which I termed as the Enlightenment phase.

The Enlightenment Phase.

I termed this phase as the Enlightenment phase because this is the first phase that the students experienced. This phase indicates the experiences of the students when they were first introduced to Abdullah's pedagogy. The following narratives are used to explore their experiences.

Abdullah (A) closed the attendance book, walked to the front of his table and leaned against it. He said, *"so can anyone tell me why are we in this class? Why do we need to know about the foundations of education?"* There was a momentary silence. A took off his glasses, rubbed his eyes and put them back again before he spoke again, *"Let me rephrase the question, what is foundation?"* Again, no one answered. A sighed and said, *"Please bear in mind that this is a different class than your other classes because in this class, I expect you to do as much talking as I do. So can someone please try and answer my question. Why are you so afraid to speak up? I am not going to eat you up if you give me a wrong answer, because there is no such thing as a wrong answer. Ok, you sister, the one with the red scarf at the back there. Perhaps you can tell me what does foundation mean and why do we need to learn about foundations of education."* The red scarf girl answered hesitantly, *"Foundation means the bases of something, like you need a foundation before you can build a house..."* A exclaimed, *"Good!"*

(Observation 1)

In this first class, Abdullah had to point to a student to make the student answer his questions. This is because none of the students were willing to answer it voluntarily. This lack of participation was common in the earlier classes. Sheena who had the experience of being educated in the Malaysian education system and later was

trained in a training teacher programme explained this 'phenomenon' as a result of the Malaysian education system in her first interview.

.....everyone wants potential achievement...the product of Malaysian education is like...ayam daging (chicken meat)..leave them in their hen house and they ended up staying like that for the rest of their life...jadi macam ayam mati (like dead chicken)....like the fresh graduates...digest, digest and accept, accept and answer....according to given questions and answers...the total concept of 'banking education'. Exactly like that. That's why they're dependent and not independent... (Source: Appendix 5. Sheena's Interview I, p. 339, para . 1, ln. 4.)

It was expected that there was some resistance from the students in accepting Abdullah's pedagogy because they were more familiar with the 'technical' way of teaching, which was uncritical. Students were not excited by Abdullah's critical pedagogy because the concept of 'banking education' has turned then into 'receptive cans'. Moreover, Sheena who was trained in a Malaysian teacher training programme also views education 'technically'. This is illustrated also in her first interview.

That's why I guess sometimes, I wish Abdullah has gone into the Diploma in Education programme so that he can learn how to be a good teacher, so that he can learn about individual differences, inductive or deductive teaching methods, set induction, planning and carrying out his lesson plans, so that his lessons are more structured and easy to understand. He was not trained like in Diploma Education, that's why he is knowledgeable but he didn't know how to approach...his technique was not appropriate because he did not learn about teaching techniques...he is brilliant, he has lots of ideas but he didn't know how to approach the students that's why students cannot follow. A lot of knowledge but his approach was unsuitable and his technique wasn't good...not like other Malaysian lecturers who have been trained and have Diploma in Education...they have lesson plans....they know what their objectives are for that day, we know what we have to do on that day, so it is easy. But Abdullah like....he doesn't have any lesson plan y'know, he just jumps into it... (Source: Appendix 5. Sheena's Interview I, p. 340, para. 3, ln. 3).

In this interview, Sheena criticised Abdullah's pedagogy because she views it as *inefficient*, hence *inappropriate*. Terms that Sheena used in the interview such as

teaching techniques, lesson plans, teaching objectives represent the ‘technical’ view of the curriculum and education. According to the ‘technical’ view of education, its curriculum is considered as a product. Sheena argued that Abdullah’s lack of knowledge about the correct way of teaching such as planning the lesson for the day with specific targeted goals and appropriate teaching techniques that would help to achieve the set goals, has caused Abdullah to be unsuccessful in his teaching. Sheena viewed Abdullah’s lack of success was due to his students’ failure to comprehend what he was teaching when students couldn’t answer his questions. The curriculum as product views the teacher’s act of ‘asking questions’ as a way to bring students’ attention to what is to be taught on that day like ‘set induction’ or as an evaluation. In Sheena’s journal, she commented on the absence of Abdullah’s ‘set induction’.

Abdullah teaches by jumping into things without any set induction or introduction. We really need to concentrate to follow his content. If distracted even just for a while, you'll be lost and can never understand what he's saying. (Source: Appendix 6. Sheena's Journal, Para. 1).

However, Sheena’s views changed after she attended more classes and realised that Abdullah’s pedagogy is a different pedagogy to what she was used to.

He is forever asking questions but I don't know what it is that he wants us to say. Sometimes we tried answering his questions but they all don't satisfy him and seemed to only lead to more questions. But now I know that's the way he teaches. He is only trying to make us thinkthere is no right or wrong answer to his questions, y'know....we used to have...I mean I especially used to think that teachers ask a question because they want to know whether we understand what they're saying or want to test our knowledge about what they taught us. But Abdullah's questions were for our own benefit rather than to serve his purpose of teaching. His questions developed our minds; our critical reflection and interpretation. I realised now that this is something that you cannot find in other teachers' practices, this makes Abdullah's teaching unique....(Source: Appendix 5. Sheena's Interview II, p. 340, para. 2, ln. 2).

When Sheena realised that the purpose of asking questions could go beyond what has been defined by the curriculum as product, Sheena realised that there are other ways of teaching that are different from what she had been trained to do. This realisation enabled her to become conscious of her ability to think critically, and to view things from a different perspective. To learn that something could be ‘different’ such as Abdullah’s critical pedagogy does not necessarily mean that it is inappropriate or unsuitable. Something that is different could be good and even better than the things that they were used to. So this realisation also made students aware that their ability to think critically is actually humans’ responsibility. This awareness connotes that the students are being enlightened. Hence, after the first few classes, things started to change in Abdullah’s classes when his students did not only answer him voluntarily, but also began to ask him questions. For example, in the third observation,

As Abdullah (A) walked towards his table to put his marker pen down, Sheena asked him, “*why didn’t Muslims scholars emphasise on history then?*” A, “*Good question, I wish I knew the answer...*” A paused, then continued after clearing his throat, “*let me answer...(cleared his throat again)...see lots of people.. ehem (cough)... in the course of Islam there are two categories, the traditionalists and the modernists, and the traditionalists are not interested in history. For modernists the history is very important, the argument that traditionalists make is that if you talk about history then you relativise the Qur’an. If you talk about history and the importance of history then you say the truth is relative to history...*”

(Observation III)

This indicates that the students were beginning to ask questions. They also have started to answer to Abdullah’s questions voluntarily as the following narrative illustrates.

A began the class by asking the students, “*Why is history important to us?*” Maria (M) raised her right hand and when A nodded, M answered, “*because we need to learn about the past to understand about the present and connect it to our future...*”

(Observation III)

This signifies a change in the students' participation because they began to participate willingly. This voluntary participation in answering and asking questions also signifies that they are exercising their criticality which was hidden before. Their voluntary participation became an active participation, which is the second phase that I termed as the 'Empowerment phase'.

The Empowerment Phase.

In this phase, students in Abdullah's class not only exercised their criticality, but they also developed this hidden potential through active participation. There was a significant change in the kind of question that they asked, and the kind of answer that they gave, which in a way reflected their growing criticality such as in the fourth observation.

Rubbing his palms together, Abdullah (A) went to his chair and pulled it back. He opened his brown leather bag, which he placed earlier on the chair, and pulled out a marker pen. He then wrote on the whiteboard, 'HISTORY'. Then A faced the class and said, *"I know we have already discussed about history in our first class, but I'd like to know what you think of it now. You'll understand the connection that I intend to make with the main point of what we're going to discuss today. But first, who can tell me about history and why we need to learn them?"* Maria (M), a girl who sat at the back of the class raised her right and answered, *"history is what happens in the past but it is not just about the stories in the past. What we can learn from history is how we come to be what we are today, in the present..."* A clapped his hands and said "Good". A placed both of his palms on the table, one apart the other and continued to ask, *"what is its significance in education, then?"* There was a momentary silence as students pondered to think. Some were looking ahead while others were looking down. A few moments later Zana (Z), a student who was sitting against the wall said slowly, *"I think history becomes important in education when we are thinking about what...I mean, how our education should look like."* A replied, *"would you care to explain your point?"* Z continued, *"well, if we understand history, we can know what our problem is and how to solve it. Like let me give an example, uhmm like the thirteenth of May, remember that event...the big racial fight? Well I think after that thing happened there was an emphasis in our education on 'national integration' and that was also when Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language) became the national language and the medium of instruction in schools."*

This example shows that history can change education... ” Suddenly M asked, “Dr is it possible that we understand history wrongly and made wrong decisions about our education.” A said, “Of course it’s possible..” Before A could continue, Z interrupted, “but if we look at the history then we shouldn’t be making any mistakes right?” Then Sheena suddenly spoke, “sometime we can like now for instance, we always think that the west is good so whatever they do in education, it must be good and so we also must have it in our education like IT or ICT, but I don’t think it’s..” Again, Z interrupted, “well we have to if we want to stay ahead or we’ll be left behind!” A asked S to continue what she was saying so S continued, “yes but I think we need to be practical because we have to understand our social context, how can you expect students to pass IT subject if they don’t have access to internet and can’t even afford a computer? How can you have an IT community when basic necessities like a good library, good access of transportation, computer labs cannot be provided. Imagine in rural villages where students sometimes cannot even afford to eat are expected to learn IT?”

(Observation IV)

This discourse shows the critical and reflective questions and answers that students provided. Students were becoming more interested in making their voices heard. They also learned to argue and defend their views. Students who participated in the case study attested this point when they admitted the change in their class participation and their ability to think, argue and debate. Sheena in her journal admitted that Abdullah’s pedagogy had taught her to think critically, argue and debate.

But a good thing that I must admit about Abdullah is he can make me think. I began to think critically and creatively, ‘use my minds’. Another thing is- I learn how to debate in defending and justifying my arguments and views. I am not afraid to debate anymore! (Source: Appendix 6. Sheena’s Journal, p. 349, Para. 1, ln. 3).

Apart from debating with each other, students were also becoming more interested in engaging in a discourse and debating with Abdullah. In the ‘technical’ Malaysian education system that students were used to, teachers act as instructors and students often do what teachers ask them to do. But from the discourse in the fourth

observation, students no longer viewed Abdullah as an ‘instructor’. This indicates that students were slowly breaking away from the restraints of the ‘technical’ view of education. In the following narrative, it is shown how a student tried to defend her belief, hence debating with Abdullah.

A explained, *“Islamic education is Islamic across time and place in the sense that it draws from the same source... but that does not mean that it has to be identical”* Suc (S) suddenly asked, *“But as Muslims we are the same because we believe in One God...so shouldn’t our education be the same too, I mean be about the same thing?”* A replied while shuffling his feet, *“Of course like I said, there is a necessary definition of Muslims that is the persons that believe in La ilahailaLlah, (There is no God but Allah), but that is not sufficient... see every Muslim has to believe in that so obviously every education has to conform to that view but that is the minimum. I’m not saying that for the last hundred of years Muslims have believed in God so now they shouldn’t believe in God, no I’m not saying that....tell me why are there so many biographies of the prophet?”* S answered, *“In education, we need to know the life of the prophet so that we know how he lived his life as a perfect Muslim.”* A continued, *“You can make people understand the significance of the life of the prophet in so many different ways...I have given one way of understanding the significance of the life of the prophet, that is, I talk about how he was the last prophet because with him the last message had come, why, because human beings have matured and did not need any more messages. This is a very modern understanding of the prophet because the way I’m giving the significance is in the context of the modern day experience...”* S argued, *“But still the prophet is the model for Muslims.”* A said, *“I am not denying the significance of the prophet to us but how I understand his significance to the world that I live. I cannot be a Muslim and deny the significance of the Prophet and the Qur’an.... The point is that I’m asking you to ask certain types of questions that you normally don’t ask because you tend to believe that the ‘basics’ are enough to help you face the challenges in education...”* S argued again, *“I mean when you read something then, like the Qur’an if you read it according to your experience, then that means you’d change the Qur’an.”* A, *“No, because I am not denying what the Qur’an is saying but I am only understanding the significance of what the Qur’an says...as relevant to my experience? You cannot understand the Qur’an by accepting the commentaries alone because you won’t be able to relate to them. These commentaries are not your experiences, but others’..”* S continued to argue, *“But these commentaries are written by Muslim scholars who are experts so they know what they are saying.”* A explained again, *“ That is true but what I’m saying is that you don’t have to only believe these commentaries because you as a Muslim also has the responsibility to understand the Qur’an and relate it to your experience, otherwise Islam will become a religion of rituals and blind following...”*

(Observation III)

This narrative is a good example of how a student attempted to defend her view on an issue. However, by using TODA, it is clear that at this point (Observation III), the student's view is still based on the traditional understanding that Muslim scholars' commentaries of the *Qur'an* are true, and that common Muslims cannot interpret the *Qur'an* according to their own experience because this would change the authenticity of the *Qur'an*. In this sense, students were considered empowered because they were able to argue and defend their views with Abdullah. This is not a common 'phenomenon' in the 'technical' Malaysian education system because a 'technical' education system does not give students any 'voice'. But in another sense, students who are in the Empowerment phase have not been emancipated yet because they did not reflect upon the origins of their own views, beliefs and practices. However, Abdullah's students gradually learned to make critique of their own accepted beliefs when they become emancipated. Thus the final phase of emancipation marks the change of views, practices and beliefs of the students in this case study.

The Emancipation Phase.

In this phase, what students used to believe as given or a fact is contested by their own criticality. A good case in point is in the fifth observation.

Razimah (RH) shook her head and raised her right hand as soon as Raihan (RN) finished his answer. *"I'm sorry but I have to disagree with you. The way that verse on polygamy is interpreted is discriminating against women. I think that verse clearly said that it is impossible to be fair so polygamy is discouraged and not the other way round."* RN quickly interrupted, *"but polygamy is a sunnah!"* RH argued heatedly, *"No it is not and there are some scholars who even denied polygamy is a Sunnah like Prof. Harun Din. The case of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in terms of his polygamy is not a Sunnah and should not be followed because that is concerned with the wisdom of God's revelation. The Prophet did it because he is*

obedient to God. Remember that the Prophet (peace be upon him) admitted that he couldn't be fair and just although he tried his very best. This shows that it is NOT a Sunnah." Zetty (Z) suddenly spoke, "I think it's the same thing about slavery in the Qur'an, y'know. It has never been stated in the Qur'an that slavery should be abolished because its unjust and discriminatory because of several reasons. For one thing slavery was a common practice and if God were to abolish it that would be difficult for the early Muslims who were so set in their ways. However we know very clearly that God doesn't like that practice because in the Qur'an God has mentioned a lot of times that whoever frees their slaves, they will receive many rewards. But today, slavery is no longer a practice because of the change in our history. So why couldn't we treat polygamy the same way then?" Finally Abdullah (A) raised both of his hands and said, "that's true and this is actually something that we have always taken as facts which could not be changed. But it actually can be changed, don't you agree. The same is with shari'ah because shari'ah is an interpretation of Muslim scholars. One thing that we need to remember is that scholars' interpretation is not authentic, that's why even scholars differ amongst themselves in many issues."

(Observation V)

This is an interesting narrative because it shows that the female students are aware of issues that concern their rights in Islam. It is considered as surprising because Razimah was able to argue with Raihan, a male student on the sensitive issue of polygamy, which many Muslims have accepted as a *Sunnah*. The change in the degree of students' criticality distinguishes the Emancipation phase from the Empowerment phase. In the first phase of Enlightenment, students were learning to be critical, while in the second phase of Empowerment, students began to exercise their criticality by engaging and debating in critical discourses. However, in the Emancipation phase, students began to be critical of their own accepted views, beliefs and practices. This change also occurs amongst Malaysian students who were educated in the 'technical' Malaysian education. For instance, Sheena who in the beginning of the class viewed Abdullah as an 'inefficient instructor' changed her views as she had mentioned in her second interview.

Abdullah's questions can make his students feel uncomfortable because he questions our accepted beliefs, positions and 'taken for granted notions'. There are things that we often take for granted without asking the question 'why' just because we were taught to accept and believe it as it is...and here is this teacher, Abdullah, who unravel this accepted idea that we cannot question authority especially teachers, and who keeps on hammering it into our head that we cannot 'survive' in his class if we don't think. And it's not just any kind of thinking that he demands. It's this 'highly abstract' thinking, which is not something that you can do in a few seconds. In fact, Abdullah has the talent to 'confuse' me with his questions and ideas that I have to sort out what I have always thought as something that are right because they are widely accepted, which can even take days for me to sort them out! (Source: Appendix 5. Sheena's Interview II, p. 341, Para. 2, ln. 16).

As the students get used to Abdullah's pedagogy they also developed critical consciousness. Gradually, they began to think critically about issues that they used to accept as facts, and they also began to question how these issues came to be considered as facts, which connotes that they were learning to examine the origin of these issues. For instance in Zetty's second interview, she talked about her views of Abdullah's critical pedagogy.

Well...Abdullah's pedagogy...keeps me awake and thinking all the time. You know, in the class, I may be looking at him, but my mind is always thinking of what he is saying....debating with it. And it's not just his method, but the content and his views also keep you on your feet. His pedagogy is practical in the sense that it teaches Muslims to think for themselves, and not merely follow what the scholars say...I mean that is not bad...to listen to the scholars, but we also need to read the Qur'an critically too, to strengthen our faith. (Source: Appendix 5. Zetty's Interview II, p. 344, Para. 2, ln. 2).

Abdullah's pedagogy changed his students' way of thinking. It made them more critical and also emancipated them. This is supported by the students' interviews and journal documentation. Zetty admitted that Abdullah's critical pedagogy has made her think about how she understands Islam. Sue also shared her views of Abdullah's pedagogy in her second interview.

But actually with Abdullah's class you cannot know where you are, you cannot predict where you are....he makes you think on your feet and uhmm he makes you be aware of things all the time and y'know suddenly he can justPOP suddenly BURST your balloon of certainty (laughs). (Source: Appendix 5. Sue's Interview II, p. 345, para. 3, ln. 8).

Abdullah's former student, Deja also commented on his pedagogy in her second interview. I consider Deja as being in the Emancipation phase because her interest in critical pedagogy did not waver even after she completed Abdullah's course. In fact she chose Abdullah to supervise her directed research project. Directed research is small scale research that MEd. students have to fulfil if they do not choose to write a dissertation. Interestingly, although Deja is specialising in educational psychology, the title of her research was on critical pedagogy and gender stereotyping in classroom. In her second interview Deja explained how critical pedagogy has taught her to think critically.

After being in Abdullah's classes, I think I am a better thinker now, in a way, because when I read books, I don't take what is written for granted and I questioned back like is it this way or could it be otherwise..but then y'know... (laughs) reading that way takes a lot of time...and uhmm when you exercise..when you start thinking maybe it's like working ok, therefore sometimes I feel tired just reading one book...(giggles)...but then I think it's just a matter of adjusting myself ...to think and at the same time reading....(Source: Appendix 5. Deja's Interview II, p. 348, para. 1, ln. 2).

But more importantly, Abdullah's students were becoming more critical as they learned to read the signs of God critically and hermeneutically. This is indicated in the following narrative of the sixth observation.

Umar (U) seemed unsatisfied with the answer provided by Abdullah (A). This was shown when U frowned and shook his head slightly. But he quickly asked A again, *"well I was thinking if Kazmi's notion of 'the otherness of history' is something that challenges us, then in one sense, the 'otherness of history' is something that is bad or negative, otherwise Muslims do not have to 'so called overcome' it if they want to*

be 'in' history." Before A could say anything, Farhan (F) who was sitting in front of U turned to U slightly and interrupted, *"well that's not necessarily true. From what I understand of Kazmi's notion of 'the otherness of history' is like what I understand from the Qur'an about the concept of balaa', which some view the meaning to be 'misfortunes'. But I understand balaa' as something that God has given us to test us...so the test could be a good fortune or a misfortune. Because in the Qur'an, there is such thing as balaa' ul khair (good fortune) and balaa' un-naar (misfortune). So I think 'the otherness of history' is similar to balaa'...like an example...let's say uhhh, our beloved Dr. here is promoted as the Head of the Department. The promotion is a test actually, and can be good balaa' if he becomes a good Head, but it could also be bad balaa' if he doesn't carry his duties well, what do you think Dr...?"* A answered, *"yes, Bro. F that's a good way of reading the signs of God actually..."*

(Observation VI)

This narrative indicates that the students were able to relate what they learned with their knowledge of the *Qur'an*. This particular way of reading the *Qur'an* in relation to their experiences in the world points to the students' ability to read God's signs (in the *Qur'an* and in the world) critically and hermeneutically. This also indicates that students were beginning to learn to make an 'Islamic critique'.

Based on the narratives and students' admissions in the interviews and journal documentation, Abdullah's critical pedagogy can be considered as emancipating students into becoming critical thinkers. However, in the first few classes, students were not very receptive of Abdullah's pedagogy. This is due to the students' previous experiences in the Malaysian 'technical' education system, which in a way inhibited their active participation in the classroom discourses. The difficulty that Abdullah faced in practising his critical pedagogy was the lack of participation from his students. In addition to the students' lack of participation the origin of the students' views, beliefs, and practices also inhibited Abdullah's critical pedagogy.

However, when Abdullah's students learned to become more critical of their own views, they began to participate actively in the classroom discourses. This promoted Abdullah's critical pedagogy, which also enabled students to make Islamic critique. The textually and linguistically oriented discourse analysis (TODA) of the classroom discourses, interviews and journal documentation reveals that Abdullah's critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can be practised in Malaysian classroom, and it could also emancipate Malaysian students into becoming critical thinkers. Whether his practice could assist in achieving the ideals and values in Islamic education is the task of the second part of this case study.

PART II

9.4 Critical Pedagogy and Islamic Values.

In Part II, I used narrative inquiry to examine the second question of whether the practice of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can assist in achieving the ideals and values of Islamic education. Chapter Six examined the ideals and values of Islamic education and these were summed up as the development of Muslims who are able to fulfil their responsibility as God's vicegerents. As God's vicegerents, Muslims are active meaning-makers of God's signs who aim to transform the *Ummah*. Part II of the Case Study attempts to conduct a narrative inquiry into the experiences of the students and Abdullah, in order to uncover whether Abdullah's practice of critical pedagogy has changed the students' own experiences of teaching. In a way, whether Abdullah as a *murabbi* could develop Malaysian teachers to

become *murabbis* could also be found out. In other words, the response to the second question could be sought by exploring and understanding teachers' own experiences.

In order to achieve this, the narrative inquiry is based on two themes derived from the teachers' interviews and journal documentation. Although the teachers came from different backgrounds and their teaching experiences varied, these themes tie the teachers' together. The first theme concerns the teachers' previous educational background and how it has influenced their own teaching. The second theme explores the teachers' experiences of Abdullah's critical pedagogy and their reflection on how they practised critical pedagogy in their own teaching.

Theme One: Malaysian student and Malaysian teacher.

Sheena has been teaching in secondary schools for more than five years. She started her teaching career immediately after she completed her Diploma in Education programme. Since she has a bachelor degree and was trained in a Malaysian teacher training programme, she was assigned to teach only secondary schools. In her first interview she spoke about her teaching experience before she attended Abdullah's class.

I teach different levels in the secondary schools. There is a slight difference in the way I teach the lower secondary and the higher secondary classes. Students in the lower level secondary are more dependent than students in the higher level. I don't assign them any group work or general issues to be discussed because otherwise I can't finish the syllabus and prepare them for the exams. These students need to be pushed or you won't get what you want from them. Like in a class, I had to teach them about how Parameswara discovered Malacca. So I gave them a few questions that they need to answer, but I have to tell them where they can find these answers first or they can't finish the tasks. Y' know these students they are not matured yet, I

always tell them that they are really like...katak bawah tempurung ('frogs trapped under a coconut shell', a famous Malay proverb that means being protected and unexposed to the external world). Even students in the higher level need to be instructed on what they are supposed to do in their groups. And these students just don't care about the current issues that are going around them...not that they're stupid but they just don't read the newspaper, they don't listen to the news and maybe even feel that it is not important to listen to the news. They're like...not bothered y'know..They're so confined to their school life, to the four walls of their classroom, the awareness and consciousness of what goes around them or what it is needed to be aware of is absent within them. All they think that they need to know is how to answer their exam questions. (Source: Appendix 5: Sheena's Interview I, p. 338, para. 2, ln. 3).

Sheena also compared her other classes in the Masters programme to Abdullah's class in her journal.

With other lecturers or teachers, they always have a lesson plan that makes it easier for me to follow their lessons. But it's totally different with Abdullah; he makes me grope early in the morning when I attended his class, another way of keeping me wide awake. I think Abdullah's class has really rubbed on me because I started asking a lot of questions in other classes too but some lecturers didn't like it. Once I asked my IT lecturer, why we have to use the same design that he used to develop our website, but he really didn't like my question and insisted that I follow exactly what he does! So now I really have to be careful not to question too much with some lecturers. It's like I have to contain myself! (Source: Appendix 6. Sheena's Journal, p. 349, para. 2).

The second narrative is a story from Zetty on her experience of teaching in Malaysian public and private schools. Zetty was educated in the United States and she began teaching in the primary schools then moved to the secondary schools. After that, she decided to set up her own private school because she was unhappy teaching in public schools, and also because she wanted to make some changes in students' learning. This narrative, which is based on in her first interview focuses more on the curriculum of the Malaysian national school.

I never like to teach in a public school. I've taught in different levels, from the primary to the secondary levels. The problem with teaching in the public schools is

that I had to do a lot of paperwork that has got nothing to do with my classes as well. Like every teacher belongs to a panitia group (subject of specialisation) where each is responsible in planning and developing the activities for their subjects. I belong to the mathematics panitia group because I taught Mathematics. So we have a panitia week and we were in charge of the Mathematics Society. We have to prepare students for the inter-school mathematics quiz....and then each teacher also has to be in charge of a sport club and be a member of one of the school teams. Imagine teaching in a public school is just like being a student ourselves...not to mention that we have to answer to the headmaster if the result of our subject did not meet the headmaster's expectations. Teaching is a different matter...we have to submit our lesson plans for the whole week to the headmaster to be signed before the week starts. We also have to make sure that we cover the syllabus as planned so that students can be prepared for their exams. This is difficult because it means that we have to make them learn using the materials that have been specified. I don't have much liberty in doing what I want to do in a public school. But in a private school, it's much flexible because I can use my own material as long as students learn what they need to know before the exams. One thing you have to remember is that students in a private school are different from those in a public school. They are different based on their commitment and willingness to study. You don't get many bad apples in a private school y'know. We also teach additional subjects that we think are suitable like there are other languages that they can choose to learn and also problem solving skills classes....(Source: Appendix 5. Zetty's Interview I, p. 343, para. 2, ln. 4).

On the other hand, Sue admitted that she tried to teach her students to be more active and to participate in class because of her previous education in the States. Since she did not have a Diploma in Education, she began her teaching career in primary schools before teaching in secondary schools. Apart from teaching in schools, she has also taught in private colleges. She has more than ten years of teaching experience. In one of her internet chats she explained about her teaching experience prior to attending Abdullah's class.

I don't like to spoon-feed my students because I had a tough time adjusting to the different way of teaching when I was in the States. Back then, like other Malaysian students, I was quiet, passive and unresponsive. But I was asked to answer the lecturer's questions. Now when I am a student, I try not to be passive in class, I try to liven things up by being active in all my classes. Similarly, when I teach, I expect my students to be active too. I try to make them participate, whether they like it or not. I don't usually have a lesson plan on how to teach my students. I only know what I am going to teach for the day, and once in the class I will go about teaching the topic of

the day as I wish to do it. Maybe its' because the subject I'm teaching is my area of specialisation. So I know what the students need to know...(Source: Appendix 6. Sue's Cyber Journal, p. 349, para. 4).

Deja was Abdullah's former student who was emancipated by his critical pedagogy. She started teaching after she attended Abdullah's class, so the first theme does not include her teaching experience. However, in her first interview, she talked about her previous learning experience and expressed her views of Abdullah's class.

I attended religious school and have taught to listen and not to question. It's a traditional way of learning but when I was in my undergraduate years, I don't see much difference in the education that I received in school and in the University. It was more like a continuation of my 'education'. Even in my Masters programme, I had the same experience of 'traditional education', except for Abdullah's class. His class was definitely an exception. Abdullah's pedagogy is enlightening because he makes me aware of things that are hidden and not even realised to be existing. He also makes me realised that to be free is to question our long standing beliefs not because to nullify them but to deconstruct and reconstruct it again so that we realised its importance...." (Source: Appendix 5. Deja's Interview I, p. 346, para. 3, ln. 3).

All of these narratives tell about the teachers' experiences of their previous education and also of their own teaching. Each teacher differs in their way of teaching because of their background. In a way, the teachers' previous educational background has influenced their own teaching to a certain extent. Their stories also reveal different aspects of teaching, such as what other responsibilities teachers have in schools apart from teaching. Basically, these stories tell us about the Malaysian education system, particularly how rigid and structured its curriculum is, and the kind of students that this system produces. However, the second theme would tell a different story than this first theme has.

Theme Two: Being Enlightened and Enlightening Students.

The second theme concerns the teachers' experiences in Abdullah's class and how his pedagogy has changed the way they think and teach their classes. Sheena shared her views on Abdullah's critical pedagogy in her journal.

I have to admit to myself that I don't get butterflies in my stomach now when I attend Abdullah's class because I am getting used to his way of teaching, never ending questions and 'highly abstract philosophical' views. I am beginning to enjoy his class because he has been able to raise this consciousness in me the need to think and the importance of critical thinking in my life. Not just as a teacher but also as a Muslim who needs to 'exercise her intellectual and spiritual muscles'. (Source: Appendix 6. Sheena's Journal, p. 349, para. 3).

Sheena reflected upon the possibility of practising Abdullah's critical pedagogy and admitted that it would be difficult to practise it like Abdullah did. In her second interview she said,

At this point in time, I don't think I can practise Abdullah's pedagogy in my classroom because I know very well the Malaysian students in school. They are so used to being spoon-fed that it would be difficult to practise Abdullah's pedagogy. Maybe his pedagogy can be practised in the higher secondary level because most students at this level are taught to work independently. No doubt that Abdullah's pedagogy would be a challenging task because of many factors such as the crowded curriculum, emphasis on the completion of syllabus, examination and achievement, blah, blah, blah...yet Abdullah's pedagogy is important and significant in the sense that it has the potential to raise the consciousness of the students in many things. Like the real purpose of education, the importance of critical thinking in human life and particularly as a Muslim. Y'know, there is a difference between Abdullah's pedagogy and the method of 'Critical and Creative Thinking Skills' (CCTS) in teaching critical thinking. It's true that I use CCTS in my daily lesson when I teach my students because CCTS can be used as part of the material, but I don't think students gain much out of it. I know for a fact that they won't be able to think critically like I did when I attended Abdullah's class. Abdullah's teaching of thinking is different y'know. It's not the problem-solving skill kind of thinking. His is more than that. God! It is so difficult for me to explain in words...But whatever it is, I do have to admit that it IS important to teach our students to think that way because otherwise, Malaysian students will become dead chicken meat y'know! (laughs) But I am trying...I'm testing it on my higher secondary level students first...by asking them questions on a specific issue...like, I used the recent bombing of the World Trade Centre in the US as my starting point and asked what they think about it. It's amazing to hear their answers, it shows how shallow they are, not being able to weigh what is wrong or right...it is no wonder so many young and DAFT Muslims got carried away in this

terrorist thing. It's because they can't think for themselves...they have become too fundamentalist!" (Source: Appendix 5. Sheena's Interview II, p. 342, para. 2, ln. 2).

In this narrative, Sheena agreed that it is important that Malaysian students be enlightened but it would be difficult. She also claimed that critical pedagogy can teach students to become critical thinkers compared to other methods of teaching thinking skills such as CCTS. Apart from Sheena, Sue and Zetty also admitted that Abdullah's critical pedagogy can help to teach students to become critical. For instance, in the second interview, Sue said that she has already tried teaching like Abdullah in her class. It is difficult because of the way her students used to be taught, but she thinks it is possible based on her own observations of the way her classmates' thinking have changed.

I believe I am already teaching my students quite critically because I try to have a discourse in my class whenever it is possible. Though I have to admit that it is difficult because of the mindset of the students who were so used to being 'spoon-fed. So now instead of telling the students everything, I ask them instead. And sometimes, I question their answer just to make them think. Even if I said something earlier, I will ask them about it later at the end of the class and question what I've said earlier. I never give up trying because I see the impact of Abdullah's pedagogy on his students. His pedagogy is slowly changing the way his students' think. And what about Sheena, she used to be quite afraid of Abdullah but now, just look at her. She is always asking questions about this and that, which shows that she is starting to follow Abdullah's class. I found myself becoming more like Abdullah in terms of his pedagogy. I keep on asking the students questions so that they are always on their feet. Now, I am not afraid or ashamed to admit that I don't know the answer to some of their questions and I also try not to impose my ideas or views on them. I would like them to have a mind of their own so I always ask their opinions about certain topics. So even if I have to teach a certain topic because it is in the syllabus, but I don't believe that the students are to just accept what I have to say about that certain topic. Now, I preferred them to form their own opinions about it so that my students and I can have a discussion and discourse about it. This way, learning that takes place does not only involve my students but it also involves me because I also learn from my students. (Source: Appendix 5. Sue's Interview II, p. 346, para. 2, ln. 2).

It is interesting that the way Sue views teaching has changed from her encounter with Abdullah's critical pedagogy. Meanwhile, Zetty too admitted in her second interview, that she is trying to do the same. Even though she recognised the difficult mind set of the students, she said that it is not impossible based on what Abdullah has done in his classes.

my experience of Abdullah's pedagogy has made me realise that it is possible to teach my students to think critically. There is no such thing as 'impossible' because I know that my students are just like Abdullah's Malaysian students who are passive and not used to thinking in the classroom. But I can see that Abdullah's pedagogy is slowly turning around these students. It will take sometime but I can see that some of Abdullah's students are starting to have the consciousness to think critically and they feel the need to think critically. Abdullah's class made me more aware of the need to be critical in my classroom so that my students can learn from me as how I have learned from Abdullah. Now I always try to make my students participate in my class because I want them to be more critical of issues that are relevant to them and to the subject that I am teaching. I want them to understand why it is important that they know about certain things even things beyond what they are supposed to learn. I think Abdullah's pedagogy can really change Muslim's mind. I think ...imagine if Muslims stop thinking especially about their religion, then this can lead to Muslims not understanding why she or he is a Muslim...then they might leave Islam. Because she or he views Islam as painted or practised by Muslim scholars and majority others...and find she or he unable to live Islam like others lived Islam...So yes, I think it is important that Muslim students learn to think critically. (Source: Appendix 5. Zetty's Interview II, p. 345, para. 2, ln. 4).

In her interview, Zetty emphasised the importance of Abdullah's critical pedagogy in raising the consciousness of Muslims because she believes it is important that Muslim students learn to make Islamic critiques rather than embrace Islam blindly.

On the other hand, in Deja's second interview, she expressed her delight when she was able to think freely and to develop the potential of her critical mind.

Nobody can teach like Abdullah. His teaching is unique because he teaches what he believes in, which is not common in other lecturers. I find Abdullah's class exciting

because I feel free in his class. Free to think, free to voice out my views and opinions, free to question him and well, just free to think in anyway. Isn't that wonderful? I have never felt that way in any of my other class before. It's like I can realise my true potentials in Abdullah's class, by being myself and not pretending to be like others. I don't have to agree with what he said because that's not what he wants. All Abdullah wants is for us to think beyond what we usually think. And believe me, we don't usually think much anyway! (Source: Appendix 5. Deja's Interview II, p. 348, para. 2, ln. 3).

In her first interview, she reflected on how Abdullah's pedagogy has influenced her teaching. Since she began teaching after she attended Abdullah's class, she has never taught in a 'technical' way because she has never been trained in any teacher training programme before.

sometimes we are so used to look at something in a way that we do not realise that it is possible to look at it from a different angle. For instance, when I was teaching pre-schoolers, I found that there were a number of children that have difficulties colouring in the common shapes that had been prepared in their worksheet like square, triangle and circle. So what I did was to break away from the work sheet and create my own. I asked these children to draw the outline of their hands and then colour them. To my surprise these children were not just able to do it, but they also had a lot of fun. It was great to see them breaking from the norms that they were so used to. Indirectly, my way of doing things encouraged the children to be more creative as they realised that they are freer to do things that they like. If their task for the day was to colour scenery on their worksheet, I encouraged them to choose what they like to draw. After that drawing and colouring became enjoyable activities because they have the freedom to draw and colour the things that they enjoy. I believe I did not break any rules when I chose not to use the given materials that had been set for me because ultimately, I was able to teach them what I think is more important and that is to discover their own potential to make their own choices and to be creative. To me those things are more important than the set target of the lesson of the day. (Source: Appendix 5. Deja's Interview I, p. 347, para. 1, ln. 4).

It is interesting that Deja is confident to teach her students the way she wants to. In fact, in her opinion children should be taught to think critically at an early age. The point is that to make this work depends on the teachers and not on whether students are prepared or not to learn to think critically. In her second interview, she shared her view on this matter.

I mean, I think Abdullah's pedagogy can be practised even in the pre-schools as long as the teachers know how to practise it. What is important is that teachers need to understand Abdullah's pedagogy so that it is not something that they have to do because it is a set method for teaching. Abdullah's pedagogy is not dependent on the curriculum, rather it is dependent on the teacher. Abdullah's pedagogy can only be practised if the teacher who practises it truly understands and embraces the purpose of Abdullah's pedagogy. For a start, the teacher needs to be able to think critically themselves so that their students will learn to think critically when they see their teacher practises the act of critical reflection. Even though I know very well the mentality of Malaysian students because I used to be one of them, I still believe that they can be taught to think critically based on my own experience as a passive Malaysian student who has become critical when I encountered Abdullah's pedagogy. Sure it may take some time because Malaysian students are not used to critical pedagogy, but they will eventually learn to be critical. That is why I believe that Malaysian students should be exposed to critical pedagogy from an early age because it is easier to raise the consciousness of a developing child rather than an already developed one. (Source: Appendix 5. Deja's Interview I, p. 347, para. 2, ln. 3).

Deja also believes that it is important to start at an earlier age because then it is easier to make them get used to practise thinking critically. Deja shares a similar view with Sue and Zetty that it is possible to practise critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in Malaysian classroom although it could be a slow process before the result can be seen. This view is supported by their own experiences of encountering critical pedagogy and also their observations of the changes in their classmates' thinking. This was also admitted by Sheena although she was less confident that she could practise it in her classroom.

Basically the narrative inquiry in this second part has uncovered two themes that help to answer the second research question in this case study. Based on teachers' experiences of their encounter with critical pedagogy, it is clear that this pedagogy can assist in realising the ideals and values of Islamic education. This is because of

the emancipatory aim of this pedagogy that allows Muslims to learn to think critically, read the signs of God critically and hermeneutically, make Islamic critique and, hence fulfil their responsibility as God's vicegerents. Moreover, Abdullah's critical pedagogy has developed potential *murabbis* amongst these four teachers because they all believe that Abdullah's pedagogy is important because it can emancipate their students to become better Muslims, and Abdullah's pedagogy has also changed their own teaching in Malaysian classrooms. However, there is a need to examine whether the criticisms of western critical pedagogy stand against Abdullah's critical pedagogy. This is undertaken in the subsequent section.

PART III

9.5 Islamic Critical Pedagogy: Resistance

This section reviews the extent to which Islamic critical pedagogy can be practised in a Malaysian classroom, in particular its theoretical weaknesses, practical problems and resistance. The first theoretical weakness of the reconstructed critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective is its emphasis on ideology-critique, and the critical and hermeneutical understanding of the signs of God. This emphasis implies that the practice of an Islamic critical pedagogy is dependent on the *murabbi's* attempt to promote emancipatory knowledge. However, in practice, the success of realising the aim of critical pedagogy, that is, being emancipated and promoting emancipatory knowledge, also lies in the *murabbi's* own beliefs and practices of critical pedagogy. To illustrate this point, Sue's and Sheena's beliefs and practices of critical pedagogy

are compared. Although both Sue and Sheena believe that critical pedagogy is important, they differ in their practice. Sue thinks that she can practise critical pedagogy in her classroom without any problem, but Sheena practises critical pedagogy in a limited manner, and only in higher secondary levels. In other words, the success of the practice of critical pedagogy also depends on a *murabbi's* beliefs and views, apart from his/her critical interpretation.

The second theoretical limitation of this thesis concerns the three phases in practice, namely, the Enlightenment, Empowerment and Emancipation phases. Critical pedagogy in theory aims to enlighten, empower and emancipate individuals. However, these three phases when experienced by individuals become more complicated in practice than in theory. When encountering and practising critical pedagogy in practice, individuals experience these three phases continuously. Their experience of these phases is dependent on their act of self-interpretation. In this sense, the individuals' experience of these three phases is not a linear experience, which does not necessarily end with the emancipation phase. But rather the practice of critical pedagogy allows the individuals to experience any one of these phases according to each individual's engagement in ideology-critique. For instance, in a classroom, each student experiences any of these three phases differently, because no individual could reflect and interpret critically in the same way. Hence, Sue and Sheena who encountered critical pedagogy in the same classroom did not share the same views on the practice of critical pedagogy.

The practical limitation concerns the introduction of the practice of critical pedagogy in an environment that hinders, rather than promotes it. The resistance of the practice is of two types: resistance from the students and in the educational system. Resistance from the students is due to the attitude and culture, and views of students who have been educated in a technical education system. As Sheena illustrated in Interview I, she described her students as ‘chicken meat’, which refers to chicken, that are raised for their meat. This means that this type of students are taught, or rather trained to answer certain questions, and fulfil certain tasks. The Enlightenment Phase is the phase that received resistance from the students. As had been mentioned in Chapter Nine, p. 230, students taught in a ‘technical’ system of education, have become ‘receptive cans’. Hence, students’ resistance in the form of attitude was the ‘lack of participation’, ‘passivity’, and ‘total reception’ of what was said in the class, and the culture of ‘note-taking’¹, ‘being spoon-fed’² and ‘examination-focussed’³. These types of resistance are similar to the constraints that Kramer-Dahl faced in her attempt to introduce critical pedagogy classroom practices in a Singaporean university. These kinds of resistance that Abdullah faced from the students hindered the progress of his practice because students were not participating in self-interpretation.

¹ The culture of ‘note-taking’ is a phrase that I coined to refer to the emphasis that Malaysian students give in their classes. Malaysian students have this culture of taking down *everything* that is being said in the class, and term it as their ‘notes’ which they perceive could help in passing their exams.

² The term ‘spoon-fed’ has been quoted from the interviews with Sheena (Interview II), and Sue (Interview II). Spoon-fed means the students’ attitude of depending on the teacher to give everything, or to deliver the content. For this reason too, students take notes of everything that the teacher says.

³ ‘Examination-focussed’ is the students’ mindset that is similar to one of Kramer-Dahl’s constraint in her study in 1997 (cited in Koh, 2002: p. 260). It is the mindset of the students that is tied to passing examination.

Another resistance from the students is due to their views. In Sheena's Interview II (see appendix 5 for Sheena's Interview II, p. 339, para. 3, ln. 8 and para. 4, ln. 2), she explained how some students did not like Abdullah because they think he was not a good Muslim. Sheena also explained the reason that these students viewed Abdullah this way is because they were not used to Abdullah's ideas about Islam, and also his pedagogy. When these students view Abdullah's pedagogy as dangerous because it could lead to disbelief, they also discredit him on the basis that he is not a good Muslim. However, according to Sheena, these students viewed Abdullah in that way because they were educated in an 'instrumental' learning environment, which did not teach them to think, but accept whatever the teacher says. Abdullah's critical pedagogy of questioning them led to the conclusion that these questions aim at questioning God and Islamic teachings, rather than making them argue about it.

The second resistance is in the form of the structure of the Malaysian education system. The Malaysian education system is based on an instrumental view of education that is rigidly structured. In the structured system, the roles and responsibilities of designing, and implementing the curriculum are divided. As a result, teachers merely implement the design and strive to achieve the goals that have been set for them. This means that a teacher's role is limited to mere implementers, but that s/he has a critical responsibility to meet the demands of the curriculum designers and policy makers. Due to this structured system of education, Malaysian teachers would face difficulty in practising critical pedagogy, because at the same

time, they are expected to fulfil their specified tasks. In Sheena's Interview II, she admitted that practising critical pedagogy in her classroom would be challenging because of the crowded curriculum, and emphasis on the completion of the syllabus, examination and achievement (see Appendix 5. Sheena's Interview II, p. 342, para. 2, ln. 6). However, she also admitted that she was compelled to practise it anyway, because she viewed that it is equally important to raise the consciousness of her students.

The theoretical weaknesses and practical problems of an Islamic critical pedagogy indicate that, ultimately, a *murabbi* is responsible for the success of his/her practice. A *murabbi*'s practice should neither be totally directed by the theory of an Islamic critical pedagogy that I have developed, nor should it imitate blindly Abdullah's pedagogy. But rather, the reconstructed Islamic critical pedagogy and Abdullah's pedagogy can be considered as a guide for a *murabbi*'s practice. In his/her attempt to practise critical pedagogy, a *murabbi* also needs to use his/her own critical reflection and judgment. The case study illustrated that Abdullah's critical pedagogy is based on the integration of critical teaching and critical literacy. This is because the way Abdullah taught transgressed the normal way of teaching especially his encouragement and engagement in Islamic critique. His practice can also be considered as teaching critical literacy because he questioned the way students read and understand the signs of God. In this sense, Abdullah's Islamic critical pedagogy is an integration of both critical teaching and critical literacy. His practice also

showed that students' need not have a higher level of ability in linguistic and discourse analysis in order to engage in a critique. What the students need is the space that encourage and allow them to be critical, and by experiencing Abdullah's own engagement in a critique.

In this thesis, the Islamic critical pedagogy that I have attempted to reconstruct, does not only promote the development of *murabbis* for Malaysian classrooms that can help to resolve the crisis in Islamic education, but it also promotes Muslims to become better thinkers and more dynamic, thus resolving the crisis in Muslim minds and preparing them for the challenges of secularisation and modernisation.

9.6 Criticisms against Critical Pedagogy in Practice.

Abdullah's practice of critical pedagogy, though it has been reconstructed from an Islamic perspective, has still originated from western critical pedagogy. Therefore it is essential that criticisms that have been forwarded against western critical pedagogy be discussed in the context of the reconstructed Islamic critical pedagogy so that any weaknesses can be identified and, if possible, resolved. Critiques of critical pedagogy concern pedagogical theory and practice such as the theory of the formation of personal identity and 'the gap between the rhetoric of critical pedagogy and the realities of its implementation in actual practice' (Ball, 2000: p. 107).

Miedema and Wardekker (1999) argue that the theory of formation of personal identity in critical pedagogy is based on a modern perspective of identity, which compels the person to remain stable and consistent in order for it to continuously be aware of itself as a judging and acting person. The problem with this modern perspective of identity is that there are many voices within a person that require him/her to either suppress or work with these voices positively. It is the demand of responding to these voices that bring changes to the person. According to Miedema and Wardekker, for a person to be emancipated, s/he needs to become 'the author of his/her world and co-author of his/her cultural narratives' (1999: p. 81, and to achieve this, the identity cannot remain stable and consistent. The modern perspective theory of formation of identity that bases the pedagogical theory of identity in critical pedagogy does not fit in the reconstructed critical pedagogy from the Islamic perspective because of Kazmi's (2000b) notion of self as narrative in the philosophy of Islamic education. Islamic critical pedagogy, though originating in western critical pedagogy, based its theory of identity on its own concept of human nature. As a narrative, the identity of the self is always an open project that does not remain consistent and uncontradictory. The many voices that exist within a Muslim will be responded to positively if s/he engages him/herself in critical activities. In this aspect, critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective takes a post-modernist view on the theory of identity.

The criticism of the gap between the rhetoric and the implementation of critical pedagogy concerns the failure of the practice of critical pedagogy due to several reasons. The first reason is the use of inaccessible language within the literature of critical pedagogy that has caused educators or practitioners difficulty in thinking and planning for improvements in their classroom. The second concerns the exclusionary practice of critical pedagogy where critical pedagogy has been claimed to be dominated by dominant male critical pedagogy theorists (Burbules and Berk, 1997). The dialogues of critical pedagogy revolve around issues that either did not represent the 'voices of women and other groups or misrepresent these voices, which instead of liberating, were repressing' (Ellsworth, 1989). Apart from that, Ellsworth (1989) also claimed that the authoritarian nature of the teacher still remains in critical pedagogy, but this time in the form of emancipatory authority where a teacher may realise that s/he is learning something new from his/her students when s/he is teaching, but this realisation of 're-learning' is not due to the sharing of students' experiences, rather it is enabling him/her to improve his/her strategies to bring the students' understanding up to the level of the teacher. On the other hand, the 'sharing of power' between the teacher and the students may result in a backlash if the teacher practises unlimited freedom of speech. This is because an unlimited freedom of speech allows an individual to become an authority of experience where s/he may silence the voices of others. In another sense, the authority of experience would distort the discourse with his/her power of authority.

All of these critiques concerned the practical realities of a critical pedagogy that has failed to achieve its emancipatory aim. If these critiques were to be considered in the light of Abdullah's practice that has been considered as an Islamic critical pedagogy, then these critiques are either misplaced or inapplicable because they are grounded in the modern view of theory and practice. For instance, the inaccessible use of language in the literature of critical pedagogy represents the critical pedagogy theorists' views on the practice and theory of critical pedagogy. If educators or practitioners are interested in practising critical pedagogy, then they have the opportunity to develop their own view of the practice and theory of critical pedagogy based on its philosophy. A good illustration is the reconstructed critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective that is being practised by Abdullah. The attempt to reconstruct an Islamic critical pedagogy exemplified the attempt of Abdullah as an educator to practise his own view of Islamic critique and critical pedagogy.

Perhaps Abdullah's practice of critical pedagogy was more successful because his first attempt to practise critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective was initiated by his continuous attempt to establish an undistorted communication. This is illustrated in the narrative when Abdullah and his students were discussing the concept of 'commodification of knowledge'. By doing so, he allowed the students to have equal opportunity not only to participate in the issues that he introduced, but this speech situation also allowed the students to 'find' their voices in issues that they never knew they had any opinion of. Abdullah realised that his class had

become the discourse for ‘commonly controversial, sensitive and forgotten issues’ such as the narrative that debated on the issue of polygamy. Abdullah recalled several discourses of his class that have provided the opportunity to female students to develop their views and voice to speak out about certain issues that society may have thought as unimportant. It was surprising to the male students and even some female students in Abdullah’s class because they have always thought such issues were irrelevant because of the dominant and stereotyped views that are prevalent in the society with regards to women’s role, education and even position whether in Malaysian or Muslim society. For instance, the following narrative of the fourth observation allows students to explore how Muslim scholars’ interpretation of the *Qur’an* and *Hadith* has resulted in an unequal distribution of roles and responsibilities between a mother/wife and a father/husband.

Abdullah (A) explained, *“this is a different time, a modern time where there have been many changes in our roles and functions in society. You can’t expect things to remain the same.”* Nirwan (N) argued, *“but Dr. I think it was either in the Qur’an or in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) has mentioned that it is the responsibility of the mother to care for and educate their children, while the father must make sure there’s food on the table. It has been deduced by many scholars that this means the mother should teach the children, discipline them, while the father is the breadwinner in the family...”* A answered N, *“that’s true but today’s role has been reversed because mother father both works at the same time, so don’t you think that they should share the responsibility on the upbringing of the children too?”* Hassan (H) suddenly raised his right hand and said, *“I think that even some Muslims have used the interpretation of the father should make sure there’s food on the table as the father only buys the food but mother has to prepare them. It’s strange but the mother always ends up doing most of the work, don’t you think so?”* Razimah (R) interrupted, *“that’s because most of the interpretations were done by the male scholars!”*

(Observation IV)

Abdullah did not consider his class as a breeding place for feminism, rather he viewed his class as an opportunity to speak about things that people have taken for granted as common or 'natural', and examine them to see and reveal their actual origins. Abdullah's pedagogy encourages the development of his students' minds and ideas, which may even be considered as a 'taboo' to speak about in other classrooms.

The issue of 'emancipatory authority' that a teacher tends to emulate when practising critical pedagogy actually depends on the teacher's own philosophy of teaching and education. If a teacher thinks like Abdullah or any of his students who were teachers, s/he would not become an emancipatory authority because like Abdullah and his students, they believe in sharing students' experiences not for the purpose of their own teaching, rather for the development of the students' own critical reflection. For instance, Abdullah's practice of critical pedagogy was based on his practice of Islamic critique. The Islamic critique that Abdullah practised is based on its own intrinsic purpose of encouraging his students to think and not to achieve any 'targeted learning objectives'. If a teacher shares this same view on teaching, then the emancipatory authority will not exist in the practice of critical pedagogy. Similarly, the issue of an authority of experience that monopolises the discourse can be avoided if the teacher continuously tries to establish an undistorted communication as the groundwork for an open discourse to the practice of an ideology-critique.

In the case of Abdullah's practice, competing voices may silence the other voices but not because of the promotion of authority of experience that intentionally excludes others' experiences. Instead the competing voices may unintentionally silence the other voices because of several reasons such as the passive minds of the typical Malaysian students. The passivity of the minds of these students may be the result of the Malaysian education system or it may also be due to the Malay culture. The Malay culture of observing one's *adab* or manners is usually extended beyond the appropriate social context. In the Malay culture, one has always been taught to observe one's words and actions when in public and this is sometimes applied inappropriately even in the educational realm. In the case of Abdullah's classroom, the passivity of the minds of the Malaysian students can be overcome albeit slowly. From the experiences of his students that had been interviewed, there is a clear change in these students with regard to their criticality when they encountered Abdullah's pedagogy. Once these students understood the role and importance of critical thinking in their lives as Muslims, they gradually changed their old views and beliefs including their 'inappropriate understanding of the Malay *adab*'. In this regard, students were engaging in critical activity where they were able to examine the origin of their previous views and beliefs that they had taken for granted.

9.7 Conclusion.

This chapter begins first with the textually and linguistically oriented discourse analysis (TODA) of Abdullah's attempt to establish Habermas' undistorted

communication, thus enabling the 'ideal speech situation' (ISS) to occur. The ISS provides equal opportunity to Abdullah's students to participate in the classroom discourses. Then TODA shows how Abdullah teaches his students to make Islamic critique. Abdullah's practice of Islamic critique illustrates how it could be used as the basis for ijihad. By examining these two evidences, Abdullah's pedagogy is considered as critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective. The next aim was to investigate whether Abdullah's pedagogy can emancipate Malaysian students into becoming critical thinkers. From the data collected, TODA shows that Abdullah's pedagogy can emancipate Malaysian students but students' previous experiences learning in a Malaysian 'technical' education system inhibits Abdullah's practice. However, Abdullah's continuous practice of his pedagogy could overcome this challenge. In examining whether Abdullah's pedagogy can emancipate Malaysian students, three phases, the Enlightenment, Empowerment and Emancipation phases that students experience, are discovered.

Narrative inquiry in this study explores the students' experiences of their encounter with Abdullah's pedagogy and examines how this plays a role in influencing students' own teaching. The aim of this inquiry is to establish whether Abdullah's critical pedagogy could assist in realising the ideals and values in Islamic education. It has been discovered that students' previous educational background has influenced their teaching. Their encounter with Abdullah's pedagogy has changed their views on learning, made them critical and also changed the way they teach. It is possible

that Abdullah's pedagogy could develop *murabbis* who would practise his pedagogy in their own classrooms. In this case, the relationship between the practice of critical pedagogy and the development of *murabbi* is dialectical because each leads to the other. Although each student differs in their practice of critical pedagogy in their classroom, they agree that Abdullah's pedagogy is important because of its potential in realising the ideals and values of Islamic education, which are reading God's signs critically and hermeneutically, fulfilling each Muslim's responsibility as God's vicegerent and finally transforming the *Ummah*.

There were some theoretical weaknesses, practical problems and resistance that Abdullah's practice faced in his practice. However, despite these resistances, Abdullah's Islamic critical pedagogy integrates between critical teaching and critical literacy and has emancipated his students to some extent. Finally, this chapter has examined some of the practical criticisms that have been made against western critical pedagogy to determine whether these criticisms also stand against Abdullah's Islamisation of critical pedagogy. However, Abdullah's practice, which is based on Kazmi's notion of self as narrative, is not vulnerable to the criticisms. But to bring in the practice of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in a Malaysian classroom or create conditions for a *murabbi* to exist in a Malaysian classroom remains a challenge because of the system of education in Malaysia. Thus there is a need for further reflection and research in this area so that careful considerations on the resolutions of these issues can be resolved. Prominent amongst these issues are,

(i) whether Abdullah's practice can be considered as an Islamic and not a western critical pedagogy, and (ii) how the development of *murabbis* in the Malaysian education system can be achieved, in the light of the resistance from Malaysian students and the Malaysian education system itself. These issues will be briefly discussed in the conclusion to the thesis.

CONCLUSION.

1. Introduction.

The starting point for this thesis was the crisis in Muslim education in Malaysia and the response to the crisis as suggested by the 'Islamisation of Knowledge' project. It has sought to contribute to this project by analysing its epistemological and methodological problems. As a result of this analysis, I have turned to the western project of critical pedagogy in order to ascertain whether an Islamised critical pedagogy can offer a more adequate resolution to the 'crisis'. In order to ascertain whether an Islamised critical pedagogy can actually be practised in a Malaysian classroom, I have conducted a Case Study involving a *murabbi* who tried to introduce an 'Islamised' critical pedagogy in a Teacher Education programme in the International Islamic University of Malaysia. The general conclusion that I have drawn from this is that, while it is possible to practise Islamic critical pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom, it nevertheless gives rise to some theoretical and practical problems. In this conclusion, I offer answers to the research questions identified in Chapter One (p. 4) that the thesis provides. I will then identify some of the issues raised by the thesis, and make recommendations for future research.

2. A Review of the Research Questions.

Question One: *What is the 'crisis' of Muslim education in Malaysia?*

The answer I provided in Chapter One and Two described the 'crisis' as a crisis of *secularisation* due to a dualistic system of education caused by colonisation; and a crisis of *modernisation* due to the influence of, and importance placed upon, western science and technology in the Muslim education system. I have provided a critical analysis of one of the Muslim's responses to this 'crisis': the 'Islamisation of Knowledge' project. In the examination of its epistemological and methodological problems, I argued that the project's epistemology is instrumental, while its methodology (*ijithad*) is 'traditional' (Bugaje, 1996). I further argued that the project needs to consider the critiques of western positivist and empiricist philosophies of science by western philosophers such as Kuhn, Gadamer, and Habermas. On this basis, I have argued that developing the western notion of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective would be a more appropriate response to the crisis in Muslim education. Basically, my argument for this is that critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can assist in retaining the ideals and values of Islamic education by helping to raise the critical consciousness of Muslim learners. Also, through the process of Islamic critique aimed at generating emancipatory knowledge, it can help Muslim learners to become active meaning-makers who are able to read and understand the signs of God critically and hermeneutically.

Question Two: *Can western critical pedagogy be reconstructed and reinterpreted from an Islamic perspective?*

In Chapters Three, Four, and Five, I examined the history and philosophy of both critical pedagogy and of Islamic education in order to identify and synthesise common elements from each. In Chapter Six, I achieve this synthesis by drawing on Kazmi's (2000b) view of 'self as narrative' to explain the Islamic view of human nature. I also draw on his view of the critical and hermeneutical understanding of God's signs to explain the Islamic concept of knowledge. Finally, I use his concept of *murabbi* to explain the Islamic concept of education. I then conceptualised the core educational concepts of Islamic education so as to show how they can be integrated in a reconstructed critical pedagogy. What emerges is an Islamisation of critical pedagogy which, like western pedagogy, is aimed at discovering the ideological origins of dominant ideas, beliefs, views and practices, and liberating from its suppression through its method of ideology-critique and emancipatory knowledge. It is Islamic in the sense that the method of ideology-critique becomes an Islamic critique, based on an Islamic worldview, and the emancipatory knowledge it produces is knowledge that will help Muslims to understand God's signs critically and hermeneutically.

Question Three: *Can critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective be practised in the Malaysian classroom?*

In Chapter Seven, I described the curriculum and pedagogy of Islamic education in Malaysia, and contrasted this with the curriculum and pedagogy of an Islamic education based on a critical view of education that could provide a space for the practice of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective, and retain the ideals and values of Islamic education. However, whether critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective can actually be practised in the Malaysian Education system or not, needed to be studied empirically. For this purpose, Chapter Nine provides a Case Study of a *murabbi's* attempt to introduce and practise critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in the Teacher Education Programme in INSTED of IIUM. What emerged from the case study is that it was possible for the *murabbi* to practise Islamic critical pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom with some resistance from the students and the education system

Question Four: *Can the practice of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective help in retaining the ideals and values of Islamic education?*

The Case Study indicated that the *murabbi's* practice of Islamic critique has the potential to promote the ideals and values of Islamic education. However, the *murabbi's* practice raised another issue which also needs to be considered, which is:

how is the development of *murabbis* possible in an education system which is itself informed by an instrumental view of education?

3. The Islamisation of Critical Pedagogy: Some Issues and Concerns.

What emerged from the thesis are some issues and concerns that need to be addressed based on the general question of *whether Abdullah's practice should be viewed as an Islamisation of western critical pedagogy, or a westernisation of Islamic education*. Thus, there is a need to respond to issues raised by this question, such as (i) What do the western 'Enlightenment' concepts of 'emancipation' and 'emancipatory knowledge' mean when applied in the context of Islamic education?, (ii) What is ideology-critique from an Islamic perspective?, (iii) How could the reconstruction of an Islamic critical pedagogy be viewed as an attempt to Islamise critical pedagogy rather than to westernise Islamic pedagogy?

Critical pedagogy may be a western project, but emancipation and emancipatory knowledge in Islamic critical pedagogy are different from western critical pedagogy. 'Emancipation' in critical pedagogy refers to emancipation from the dictate of ideology, tradition, superstition and religious dogma. On the other hand, 'emancipation' in Islamic critical pedagogy concerns the realisation of the *fitrah* or true potential of human being, which is to become a vicegerent or active meaning-makers. Meaning-makers or agents of change in western critical pedagogy are individuals who have been emancipated from oppressive ideologies, while agents of

change or vicegerents in Islamic critical pedagogy are Muslims who understand the signs of God critically in order to live the Islamic way of life in the contemporary world.

A second issue concerns the meaning of 'ideology-critique', when interpreted from an Islamic perspective. In this thesis, I have interpreted ideology-critique from an Islamic perspective in a very broad sense to mean 'Islamic critique' and I have taken Abdullah's practice as illustrated in Chapter Nine, p. 227 of the Case Study as a practical example. I have also suggested that it can provide the basis for *ijtihad* in islamising knowledge (in Chapter Six, p. 163). Since, in practice, Islamic critique involves reading and understanding God's signs critically and hermeneutically, unlike western ideology-critique, it has a moral and spiritual aim, which is to allow a Muslim to understand the *Qur'an* critically in relation to his/her personal experiences in the world, and live in the world according to Islamic values. In this sense, the aim of Islamic critique is to enable a Muslim to improve his/her relationship to God by becoming a better Muslim or, borrowing Kazmi's (2000b: p. 389) phrase, by being a Muslim who is 'in' history, and not 'of' history.

The responses to these issues provide the basis for the response to the third issue, which is: why should my reconstruction of an Islamic critical pedagogy be viewed as an Islamisation of critical pedagogy, rather than the westernisation of Islamic pedagogy? The two key aspects of western critical pedagogy that are retained in its

Islamised version are its aim, which is to generate emancipatory knowledge, and its method which is ideology-critique. But in Islamic critical pedagogy, both of these are reconstructed on the basis of the Islamic view of human nature (*fitrah*, and vicegerency), and knowledge (*ilm*) (which were discussed in Chapter Five) so as to situate critical pedagogy in an Islamic world view. This Islamised version of critical pedagogy also resonates with the practice of critical pedagogy of the classical Muslims who contributed to the flourishing of Islamic thought and the development of classical Islamic education. Their critical activity, which Rahman describes as ‘a process of Islamisation’ (1966: p. 232), and which I argue is an attempt to Islamise pedagogy, also demonstrates their attempt to resolve the tension between faith and reason, that is central to the contemporary ‘crisis’ in the Muslim mind.

4. Some Recommendations for Future Research.

This thesis is an attempt to Islamise critical pedagogy. In pursuing this aim, some important new questions have arisen. These include, (i) how can resistance to an Islamic critical pedagogy be overcome? and (ii) how can *murabbis* be developed in the Malaysian educational system? In order to be able to address these questions, in the future, I have devised a research strategy that will involve the academic staff in the Institute of Education (INSTED) of IIUM, and also Malaysian school teachers. One of the aims of this strategy is to develop *murabbis* among the academic staff in the Teacher Education Programme of IIUM by including critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in INSTED’s Staff Educational Development Programme.

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Another is to conduct a monthly session that provides academic staff with the opportunity to share their classroom practice through 'friendly observations' and 'critical teaching', then discuss their practice in a 'reflexive session' by reflecting on questions such as 'Whose interest does my practice serve?, Why do I teach what I teach? and Why do I teach in the way that I teach?'.

Another aspect of my future research strategy involves the students in the Teacher Education programme who are teaching in Malaysian schools. This research will attempt to develop *murabbis* in Malaysian schools through 'emancipatory action research' (Carr and Kemmis, 1986), which will enable teachers to reflect on their teaching, and their attempt to practice critical pedagogy in their classroom. I also hope to evaluate the teachers' attempts to practise Islamic critical pedagogy in the 'reflexive session'. Hopefully, engaging in this kind of action research will help to resolve the problem of resistance to the practice of critical pedagogy

5. Conclusion.

In this thesis, I have sought to provide a theoretical framework for an Islamic critical pedagogy. I have also conducted a Case Study to evaluate the practical expression of critical pedagogy from an Islamic perspective in the classroom. The Case Study helps to ground the theories in practical reality. Although the Case Study represents the lived experiences of specific individuals involved in the practice of an Islamic critical pedagogy, it provides some helpful insights concerning the contradiction

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between the theory and practice of Islamic critical pedagogy. What emerged from the Case Study is an example of how the practice of an Islamic critical pedagogy could be made possible in a Malaysian classroom. Although Abdullah faced some resistance in his attempt to practise Islamic critical pedagogy, his belief and views on the importance of Islamic critique and how education should be, have helped to confront these resistances. The Case Study also pointed to the need for the development of *murabbis* in the Malaysian education system.

This thesis has also raised some issues, concerning the defining characteristics of a reconstructed critical pedagogy as an Islamic critical pedagogy. Although this thesis have achieved its aim of evaluating whether critical pedagogy can be reinterpreted and reconstructed from an Islamic perspective in a way that retains the ideals and values of Islamic education, it has also revealed that the successful implementation of the practice of Islamic critical pedagogy in the Malaysian education system depends on developing *murabbis* for Malaysian classrooms. This task will now direct my work in the future. Hopefully, developing *murabbis* in the Malaysian education system, particularly in INSTED and amongst student-teachers in the Teacher Education Programme, will make some contribution to the resolution of the crisis in Muslim education.

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APPENDIX 1

Course Outline for EDF 6050: Advanced Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Islamic Education

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
COURSE OUTLINE

Kulliyyah	Institute of Education								
Department	N/A								
Programme	Social Foundations of Education								
Course Code	EDU 6050								
Course Title	Advanced Philosophical and Historical Foundations of Islamic Education								
Status	Core								
Level	M. Ed								
Credit Hours	3 hrs								
Contact Hours	3 hrs								
Pre-requisites	None								
Co-requisites	None								
Teaching Methodology	Discussion and Tutorials								
Method of Evaluation	<table> <tr> <td>Mid Term</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Term Paper</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final Exam</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </table>	Mid Term	30%	Term Paper	30%	Final Exam	40%	Total	100%
Mid Term	30%								
Term Paper	30%								
Final Exam	40%								
Total	100%								
Semester offered	Semester I, 2004/2005								

Course Description

Course Synopsis	The course is designed to introduce students to the inquiry called foundations of education which properly understood is a profoundly critically enterprise. Familiarity with foundations of education will lead to reflecting on and understanding of the philosophical and historical foundations of Islamic education. The course emphasizes the mode of thought required to reflect on the foundations of education in general and Islamic education in particular, and in what ways the requirements of the two are different and why.	
Course Objectives	Upon completion of this course students should be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to understand what is foundations of education and why and how it is a critical enterprise 2. to be able to think foundationally and to design foundations of Islamic education 3. to be able to think critically 	
Course Outlines		
Week Beginning	Topics	Task
1 and 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. what is foundation of education – philosophical, social and historical b. its need and relevance c. the need and the necessity of thinking about Islamic foundations of education d. the role of critical thinking in Islam as part of foundations of Islamic education 	(Ozman and Craver)
3 and 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> e. Assumptions of foundations of Islamic education- the Qur’anic view of human being. Human being as historical and history as spiritual f. the notion of the “otherness of history” and its relevance for education 	(Wan Daud and Kazmi)
5 and 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> g. the notion of tradition – normative and the sociological h. Dualism in education i. Education of tradition or traditional education 	(Kazmi and Rosnani)
7 and 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> j. The notion of Murabbi in Islam and commodification of knowledge 	(Kazmi)

9 and 10	<p>k. The notion of authentic self (Abd) in Islam as opposed to the secular notion of self</p> <p>l. Spiritual salvation and social justice in Islam. Spirituality is historicized</p> <p>m. Purpose of seeking knowledge in Islam</p> <p>n. Education as a spiritual enterprise</p>	(Kazmi)
11 and 12	<p>o. Historical Foundations of Islamic Education</p> <p>p. Rise of Culture of Learning in Early Islam; Muslims as producers of knowledge and culture and not just passive consumers</p> <p>q. The decline in the culture of learning</p> <p>r. History of early Islamic educational institutions of learning</p>	(Magdisi)
13 and 14	<p>s. The political and spiritual stagnation and the colonial experience</p> <p>t. The efforts to revive the community spiritually, socially and politically through education. Three responses:</p> <p>u. Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani: linking of the spiritual with the political</p>	(Qadir)
8	<p>v. Muhammad Abduh: educational and social reforms prior to political reform</p> <p>w. Sayyid Ahmed Khan: Muslim's political and economic salvation in India through Western education</p> <p>x. World conference on Islamic Education</p>	(Qadir)
Revision Week		
Examination Week		
References	<p>Required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wan Muhammad Nor Wan Daud, <u>The Concept of Knowledge in Islam</u> (London: Mansell, 1991) 2. Yedullah Kazmi, <u>Reclaiming the Tradition</u>, The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences Vol. 15 no. 2, summer 1998 <p><u>The Role Critical Thinking in Islam</u>, Hamdard Islamicus, Vol.23, no.1, March 2000.</p> <p><u>The Notion of History in the Qur'an and Human Destiny</u>, Islamic Studies, vol. 37, no. 2, summer 1998.</p>	

	<p><u>The Notion of Murabbi in Islam</u>, Islamic Studies, vol. 38, no. 2, summer 1999.</p> <p><u>Historical Consciousness and the Notion of the Authentic Self in the Qur'an: Towards an Islamic Critical Theory</u>, Islamic Studies, vol.39, no.3, autumn 2000.</p> <p>Recommended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Majid Fakhry, A History of Islamic Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996)2. Rosnani Hashim, Educational Dualism in Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1996)3. George Maqdisi, The Rise of Colleges in Islamic World (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981)4. H. Ozman & S. Craver, Philosophical Foundations of Education (Columbus: Merrill Publishers and Co., 1990)5. C.A. Qadir, Philosophy and Science in the Islamic World (New York: Routledge, 1988)
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APPENDIX 2

Table 8.1: Schedule of Observation and Its Techniques.

Class	Date	Methods of Observation
1 st	21 st June 2004	Field-note taking and audio taping
2 nd	28 th June 2004	Video recording
3 rd	5 th July 2004	Field-note taking and video recording
4 th	12 th July 2004	Field-note taking and video recording
5 th	19 th July 2004	Audio taping
6 th	26 th July 2004	Mid Semester Examination (No observation)
7 th	2 nd August 2004	Review of Mid Semester Examination (No observation)
8 th	9 th August 2004	Mid Semester Break
9 th	16 th August 2004	Audio taping
10 th (last class)	23 rd August 2004	Field-note taking and audio taping

APPENDIX 3

Table 8.2: Table of Interview Schedule.

Date	Time	Detail of Interviews
24/06/04	9.30-10 am	First interview with <i>murabbi</i>
02/07/04	11.15- 11.45am	First interview with Deja (the former student).
12/07/04	1.15- 1.45pm	First interview with Sheena (class EDF 6050, section 2).
14/07/04	9-9.30am	Second interview with <i>murabbi</i> .
26/07/04	2-2.30pm	Final interview with Deja.
09/08/04	10.15- 10.45am	First interview with Zetty (class EDF 6050, section 2).
10/08/04	10-10.30am	First interview with Sue (class EDF 6050, section 2).
12/08/04	2-2.30pm	Final interview with Sue.
13/08/04	1.10- 1.40pm	Final interview with Sheena.
17/08/04	11-11.30am	Third interview with <i>murabbi</i> .
18/08/04	12-12.30pm	Final interview with Zetty.
25/08/04	10-10.30am	Final interview with <i>murabbi</i>

APPENDIX 4

Semi-Structured Interview Questions on MED/PHD Students' Perceptions and Experiences toward Islamic Critical Pedagogy.

Questions on Experiences.

1. Can you please share your previous educational background in terms of your experience in learning from primary to higher education?
2. Can you please describe the teaching method of your teachers when you were learning then?
3. Do you have any experience in teaching at any levels?
4. If yes, can you please describe how your teaching experience was like?

Questions on Perceptions.

1. Do you see any difference between your previous experience in learning and your experience of Islamic critical pedagogy?
2. If yes, can you please describe the differences between both pedagogies?
3. Do you think there are any benefits of both pedagogies?
4. If yes, can you please elaborate?
5. Do you think there are any weaknesses in both pedagogies?
6. If yes, can you please elaborate?
7. Do you think you would practise Islamic critical pedagogy in your classroom?

8. Why do you think so?
9. If yes, how do you think you would do it?
10. In light of the current education system in Malaysia, do you think it is appropriate to practise this pedagogy?
11. Why do you think so?
12. Do you think this pedagogy can be used to teach thinking in Malaysian classroom?
13. Why?
14. Do you think there will be any problems in practising this pedagogy in Malaysian classroom?
15. If yes, what are the problems? Why do you think is the cause of the problems?
16. If no, why do you think so?

APPENDIX 5

Interview Transcripts Cited in the Thesis.

Sheena's Interview I

Suhailah (S): Do you have any teaching experience...at any levels?

Sheena (Sh): As a matter of fact, yes, I do...I have been teaching in secondary schools for more than 5 years now...I taught in lower and also higher secondary levels.

S: Can you describe to me how your teaching experience was like?

Sh: (Sighed). Very demanding, very tiring...sometimes I think I am overworked..people think teaching is the easiest job because you only for teach one session in a day. You either work from 7.50 to 1. 30 pm or from 1.30 to 6 pm. And you also get long holidays when school closes, but actually, that's not true anymore y'know. I think teachers today have a lot of administrative work..especially when you are a class teacher, or if you're teaching students who are sitting one of the big exams...then that is much worse because you'll have to stay back and do remedial classes, revision classes and other extra classes. For me, that's how my life is and by the end of the day, you just want to get it over with...finish the syllabus and do what you're supposed to do.....

S: Can you share with me, if it's alright ...how you teach your students, I mean you mentioned just now that you taught at different levels right?

Sh: Yes, that's right...I teach different levels in the secondary schools. There is a slight difference in the way I teach the lower secondary and the higher secondary classes. Students in the lower level secondary are more dependent than students in the higher level. I don't assign them any group work or general issues to be discussed because otherwise I can't finish the syllabus and prepare them for the exams. These students need to be pushed or you won't get what you want from them. Like in a class, I had to teach them about how Parameswara discovered Malacca. So I gave them a few questions that they need to answer, but I have to tell them where they can find these answers first or they can't finish the tasks. Y' know these students they are not matured yet, I always tell them that they are really like...*katak bawah tempurung* ('frogs trapped under a coconut shell', a famous Malay proverb that means being protected and unexposed to the external world). Even students in the higher level need to be instructed on what they are supposed to do in their groups. And these students just don't care about the current issues that are going around them...not that they're stupid but they just don't read the newspaper, they don't listen to the news and maybe even feel that it is not important to listen to the news. They're like...not bothered y'know..They're so confined to their school life, to the four walls of their classroom, the awareness and consciousness of what goes around them or what it is needed to be aware of is absent within them. All they think that they need to know is how to answer their exam questions. Bear in mind, that I

am not teaching in an under rated public school. My school is a good school because it is *sekolah terpilih* (a 'chosen school' where the school only admits students with good results). And so these students are excellent students...but still..they're dependent...because the problem is that.....everyone wants potential achievement...the product of Malaysian education is like...*ayam daging* (chicken meat)..leave them in their hen house and they ended up staying like that for the rest of their life..*jadi macam ayam mati* (like dead chicken)....like the fresh graduates...digest, digest and accept, accept and answer....according to given questions and answers...the total concept of 'banking education'. Exactly like that. That's why they're dependent and not independent...

S: Is there any difference between your previous experience in learning and your experience of Abdullah's teaching, the Islamic critical pedagogy?

Sh: Oh yes! Most definitely....

S: What is the difference then? Can you tell me more about them...?

Sh:The first time I walked into Abdullah's class, I had this dreadful feeling in the pit of my stomach....not butterflies but flying dragons....I've heard stories about him....not sure whether they're true or not but that uncertainty didn't help lessen my nervousness and worry. I chose a front sit because I didn't like to sit at the back. I was afraid that I might fall asleep....I've met and heard Abdullah speak before and somehow I think his tone of voice and accent can make students go to sleep, a bit monotonous... Some even called him the 'human sleeping pill'! And there are also students who claimed that he's not a Muslim, because of the things he said...but I haven't found anything to accuse him of that yet.

S: what do you mean by that?

Sh: Well...Some students think that we shouldn't ask too much about Islam because we might question everything including about whether God exists or not, blah, blah, y'know...and then become a disbeliever. Another way of putting it in words is that they think Abdullah's questions could lead to disbelief....Sure, I also think that his ideas about Islam are a little bit...aah, different, but they are not against Islam. Alah...Y'know, these students, remember that lecturer, Shabir Akhtar, the students said he's a heretic because he was bad-mouthing the Prophet ^{peace be upon him}, but I was thinking, maybe these students misunderstood him, just like what the students are saying about Abdullah. Maybe,Shabbir like Abdullah..... was questioning them, or testing them by saying something that is not true because they want to hear us argue...and question back. But these students who are so used to accepting and taking notes of what teachers said, thought what they said is true. Do you know what I mean?? Some students also said that he easily gets angry for no reason at all, or if students don't participate in his class. Another reason for my choice of seat. At least if I sit under his nose, I could understand better what he is saying or asking. I don't know why students said all this about him but I am about to find out whether

all these stories were just tall tales or facts! Y'know...After the first few classes I began to get used to his way of teaching.

S: What do you think of his teaching....how does he teach anyway?

Sh: Hmm, for instance...He is forever asking questions but I don't know what it is that he wants us to say. Sometimes we tried answering his questions but they all don't satisfy him and seemed to only lead to more questions. But now I know that's the way he teaches. He is only trying to make us thinkthere is no right or wrong answer to his questions, y'know....we used to have...I mean I especially used to think that teachers ask a question because they want to know whether we understand what they're saying or want to test our knowledge about what they taught us. But Abdullah's questions were for our own benefit rather than to serve his purpose of teaching. His questions developed our minds; our critical reflection and interpretation. I realised now that this is something that you cannot find in other teachers' practices, this makes Abdullah's teaching unique....

S: What about other lecturers? How do they teach differently from Abdullah?

Sh: With other lecturers or teachers, they always have a lesson plan that makes it easier for me to follow their lessons. That's why I guess sometimes, I wish Abdullah has gone into the Diploma in Education programme so that he can learn how to be a good teacher, so that he can learn about individual differences, inductive or deductive teaching methods, set induction, planning and carrying out his lesson plans, so that his lessons are more structured and easy to understand. He was not trained like in Diploma Education, that's why he is knowledgeable but he didn't know how to approach...his technique was not appropriate because he did not learn about teaching techniques...he is brilliant, he has lots of ideas but he didn't know how to approach the students that's why students cannot follow. A lot of knowledge but his approach was unsuitable and his technique wasn't good...not like other Malaysian lecturers who have been trained and have Diploma in Education...they have lesson plans....they know what their objectives are for that day, we know what we have to do on that day, so it is easy. But Abdullah like...he doesn't have any lesson plan y'know, he just jumps into it...Because not everyone can follow the way he teaches and I think, if he has some set objectives, maybe his lessons are more directed...right now, I am sure that he cannot achieve his targets because he doesn't have a lesson plan. The content of his course, his questions are too philosophical and too abstract. He should have started from simple concepts than move to more difficult ones. And he also didn't consider individual differences of his students; that's why his students find it difficult to understand what he is teaching. Some students are not as smart or intelligent as other students and these students may be slower in class, so he needs to learn to use the right techniques to teach these students so that they can understand his class. He also needs to use more lower thinking skills than higher ones because students may even have problems with lower order thinking skills, what more of higher ones.

But with other my other lecturers...it is easy and they give us hand outs and notes, so we don't worry about taking down everything that they say. Like Mr. Hasan, he gives us hand outs on what we are going to do on the day that he is going to teach us that, so I told him that he should give us the hand outs earlier so that we can read it before coming to class...otherwise, when he teaches we will be busy reading the hand outs...But one thing good about Mr Hasan is that he uses transparencies and the projector so we understand what he says, and we can follow his points...no need to guess because his points are very clear....

Sheena's Interview II

S: Do you think there are some good about Abdullah's pedagogy?

Sh: Yes, I have to say yes.....because....but then again, if Abdullah hadn't done what he is doing now, I mean the way he teaches....I would never get rid of my fear for questioning what has been accepted as true or untrue. I would also never have the courage to argue, debate and learn to question even the authority. I have to admit to myself that I don't get butterflies in my stomach now when I attend Abdullah's class because I am getting used to his way of teaching, never ending questions and 'highly abstract philosophical' views. I am beginning to enjoy his class because he has been able to raise this consciousness in me the need to think and the importance of critical thinking in my life. Not just as a teacher but also as a Muslim who needs to 'exercise her intellectual and spiritual muscles'. Abdullah has taught me that life as a Muslim will not be complete if we do not try to understand the *Qur'an*, and the only to do that is to read it **critically**.Because, y'know....it's totally different with Abdullah; he makes me grope early in the morning when I attended his class, another way of keeping me wide awake. But I know there are a handful of students who didn't like his way of teaching because they don't like to feel 'uncomfortable'. Abdullah's questions can make his students feel uncomfortable because he questions our accepted beliefs, positions and 'taken for granted notions'. There are things that we often take for granted without asking the question 'why' just because we were taught to accept and believe it as it is...and here is this teacher, Abdullah, who unravel this accepted idea that we cannot question authority especially teachers, and who keeps on hammering it into our head that we cannot 'survive' in his class if we don't think. And it's not just any kind of thinking that he demands. It's this 'highly abstract' thinking, which is not something that you can do in a few seconds. In fact, Abdullah has the talent to 'confuse' me with his questions and ideas that I have to sort out what I have always thought as something that are right because they are widely accepted, which can even take **days** for me to sort them out!

S: What about other lecturer's teaching...do you think there are any weaknesses if compared to Abdullah's?

Sh: Yeah...like Mr. Hasan...I think there's a change in the way I learn...I don't just accept what they said as true...I tend to question that y'know...Hmmm...I ask a lot of questions in class now...I participate more, and I try to answer their questions too...think more..but somehow I get the feeling that they don't like it.

S: What do you mean?

Sh: Well, just the other day, I was asking Mr. Hasan, about his design of the curriculum...I ask him why he does it that way y'know...and he doesn't like my question..He shushed me and said, just do the way he does it...And I can remember Prof. Daniel, on one of his assignments...I wasn't very clear and I...well, actually I was hoping that I can do it my way, because I think his way of doing it is a bit complicated, and then you know what he said? (laughs) He said, I ask too many questions, like the Jewish people when God ask Moses to present God with a cow....y'know that story in the Qur'an? What kind of cow, how big, what colour, blah, blah, blah...so now, I have to see the situation and the lecturer, the older lecturers, they don't like it when you ask too much...

S: Do you think you would practise Abdullah's pedagogy in you classrooms?

Sh: At this point in time, I don't think I can practise Abdullah's pedagogy in my classroom because I know very well the Malaysian students in school. They are so used to being spoon-fed that it would be difficult to practise Abdullah's pedagogy. Maybe his pedagogy can be practised in the higher secondary level because most students at this level are taught to work independently. No doubt that Abdullah's pedagogy would be a challenging task because of many factors such as the crowded curriculum, emphasis on the completion of syllabus, examination and achievement, blah, blah, blah...yet Abdullah's pedagogy is important and significant in the sense that it has the potential to raise the consciousness of the students in many things. Like the real purpose of education, the importance of critical thinking in human life and particularly as a Muslim. Y'know, there is a difference between Abdullah's pedagogy and the method of 'Critical and Creative Thinking Skills' (CCTS) in teaching critical thinking. It's true that I use CCTS in my daily lesson when I teach my students because CCTS can be used as part of the material, but I don't think students gain much out of it. I know for a fact that they won't be able to think critically like I did when I attended Abdullah's class. Abdullah's teaching of thinking is different y'know. It's not the problem-solving skill kind of thinking. His is more than that. God! It is so difficult for me to explain in words...But whatever it is, I do have to admit that it IS important to teach our students to think that way because otherwise, Malaysian students will become dead chicken meat y'know! (laughs) But I am trying...I'm testing it on my higher secondary level students first...by asking them questions on a specific issue...like, I used the recent bombing of the World Trade Centre in the US as my starting point and asked what they think about it. It's amazing to hear their answers, it shows how shallow they are, not being able to weigh what is wrong or right...it is no wonder so many young and DAFT Muslims got carried away in this terrorist thing. It's because they can't think for themselves...they have become too fundamentalist!"

S: Why do you still want to try and teach the way he does even though, you feel that it is difficult to do that in your classroom?

Sh: Because of what it can do to us...and what it has done to me, actually... I have a lot of questions now...questions which expose the accepted beliefs and views that we have always thought to be true. It is this kind of consciousness that actually makes us view the world differently than we usually do, or others do. It allows us to explore the possibilities of the 'other' of things...y'know. The 'other' that is seldom unquestioned, undiscovered...and unearthed. Abdullah's pedagogy may confuse and make me uncomfortable but at the end of the day, it makes me feel good about myself because it makes me see things in a different light; one that is clearer, less muddled and authentic because it is *my choice* and *my view*.

Zetty's Interview I

Suhailah (S): Do you have any experience in teaching at any levels?

Zetty (Z): Yes I have taught for more than ten years maybe...

S: Can you share with me how your teaching experience was like?

Z: Well, actually I taught longer in private schools than public school. I never like to teach in a public school. I've taught in different levels, from the primary to the secondary levels. The problem with teaching in the public schools is that I had to do a lot of paperwork that has got nothing to do with my classes as well. Like every teacher belongs to a panitia group (subject of specialisation) where each is responsible in planning and developing the activities for their subjects. I belong to the mathematics panitia group because I taught Mathematics. So we have a panitia week and we were in charge of the Mathematics Society. We have to prepare students for the inter-school mathematics quiz...and then each teacher also has to be in charge of a sport club and be a member of one of the school teams. Imagine teaching in a public school is just like being a student ourselves...not to mention that we have to answer to the headmaster if the result of our subject did not meet the headmaster's expectations. Teaching is a different matter...we have to submit our lesson plans for the whole week to the headmaster to be signed before the week starts. We also have to make sure that we cover the syllabus as planned so that students can be prepared for their exams. This is difficult because it means that we have to make them learn using the materials that have been specified. I don't have much liberty in doing what I want to do in a public school. But in a private school, it's much flexible because I can use my own material as long as students learn what they need to know before the exams. One thing you have to remember is that students in a private school are different from those in a public school. They are

different based on their commitment and willingness to study. You don't get many bad apples in a private school y'know. We also teach additional subjects that we think are suitable like there are other languages that they can choose to learn and also problem solving skills classes....

Zetty's Interview II

S: What do you think of Abdullah's pedagogy?

Z: Well...Abdullah's pedagogy....keeps me awake and thinking all the time. You know, in the class, I may be looking at him, but my mind is always thinking of what he is saying....debating with it. And it's not just his method, but the content and his views also keep you on your feet. His pedagogy is practical in the sense that it teaches Muslims to think for themselves, and not merely follow what the scholars say...I mean that is not bad...to listen to the scholars, but we also need to read the Qur'an critically too, to strengthen our faith. I have the experience of studying the States and the lecturers there were open, and they expect us to participate in the discussion. And you have to y'know or you'll be left behind, the American students are so critical and active, sometimes they ask questions that we think is not worth asking...and sometimes they ask questions that the professors cannot answer, like, why they put no. 3 in the sum and not 1, for instance...it's a bit mad isn't it...but you get used to it and I actually also got drag into it...started asking question too when I was in my second year...Can't afford to lose out y'know...otherwise you can't survive. But Abdullah's pedagogy is different because in the States, it's like asking question because of asking....just be critical...but I think with Abdullah, there is a purpose, like to know why is it like this and not that way....and to be sure of it, that all this time you're doing it right because it shouldn't be questioned, but actually we're just human being y'know...we can only try but we cannot say that we're hundred percent right...

S: What do you mean?

Z: Well, especially when talk about our faith, we don't think much...When I was in the States, I do start thinking about Islam and my practices because in the States, Muslims are a minority and there are Muslims that come from different parts of the world...different culture, language and of course different practices too..and you cannot be like the way you are here...for instance, say to do it this way is wrong, unIslamic because you see Muslims from different countries than Malaysia...they do things differently...y'know when I first came back from the States, I started teaching in a public school and that time I was still young..I was praying in the school's *surau* (a smaller building than a mosque where Muslims pray), in the dress that I wore, at that time I was wearing a long dress and a hijab,

but a long one..actually what I wore covered my *aurah* (parts of the body that Muslim women cover) already and I also wore socks but then one of teachers was also praying and came to me and said, that my solat (prayer) is *tak sah* (will not be accept) because I wasn't wearing a '*telekung*' (a long sarong and veil that cover almost the entire body which Malay women usually wear to pray). Can you believe that????

S: Do you think you can teach like Abdullah in your classroom?

Z: I think I can. I think I'm already teaching like him to some extent...

S: Do you think Abdullah's pedagogy can make students better thinkers?

Z: Y'know what...my experience of Abdullah's pedagogy has made me realise that it is possible to teach my students to think critically. There is no such thing as 'impossible' because I know that my students are just like Abdullah's Malaysian students who are passive and not used to thinking in the classroom. But I can see that Abdullah's pedagogy is slowly turning around these students. It will take sometime but I can see that some of Abdullah's students are starting to have the consciousness to think critically and they feel the need to think critically. Abdullah's class made me more aware of the need to be critical in my classroom so that my students can learn from me as how I have learned from Abdullah. Now I always try to make my students participate in my class because I want them to be more critical of issues that are relevant to them and to the subject that I am teaching. I want them to understand why it is important that they know about certain things even things beyond what they are supposed to learn. I think Abdullah's pedagogy can really change Muslim's mind. I think ...imagine if Muslims stop thinking especially about their religion, then this can lead to Muslims not understanding why she or he is a Muslim...then they might leave Islam. Because she or he views Islam as painted or practised by Muslim scholars and majority others...and find she or he unable to live Islam like others lived Islam...So yes, I think it is important that Muslim students learn to think critically."

Sue's Interview II

Suhailah (S): What do you think about Abdullah's pedagogy?

Sue (Su): I think he teaches very differently if compared to the other lecturers in this dept. I read a book on teachers without any goals and students without purposes and I think Abdullah is like this. A teacher without goal, but I don't mean this negatively. We cannot know what he's going to teach and even until the end of the class, we still cannot figure out what it is. But at the end of the class, I know that I have gained something, it's not a matter of knowing more but knowing how to make use of what I know, and of understanding why things is like that.. But actually with Abdullah's class you cannot know where you are, you cannot predict where you are...he makes you think on your feet and uhmm he makes you be aware of things all the time and

y'know suddenly he can just ...POP suddenly BURST your balloon of certainty (laughs).

S: Do you think you would practise Abdullah's pedagogy in your classroom?

Su: I believe I am already teaching my students quite critically because I try to have a discourse in my class whenever it is possible. Though I have to admit that it is difficult because of the mindset of the students who were so used to being 'spoon-fed'. So now instead of telling the students everything, I ask them instead. And sometimes, I question their answer just to make them think. Even if I said something earlier, I will ask them about it later at the end of the class and question what I've said earlier. I never give up trying because I see the impact of Abdullah's pedagogy on his students. His pedagogy is slowly changing the way his students' think. And what about Sheena, she used to be quite afraid of Abdullah but now, just look at her. She is always asking questions about this and that, which shows that she is starting to follow Abdullah's class. I found myself becoming more like Abdullah in terms of his pedagogy. I keep on asking the students questions so that they are always on their feet. Now, I am not afraid or ashamed to admit that I don't know the answer to some of their questions and I also try not to impose my ideas or views on them. I would like them to have a mind of their own so I always ask their opinions about certain topics. So even if I have to teach a certain topic because it is in the syllabus, but I don't believe that the students are to just accept what I have to say about that certain topic. Now, I preferred them to form their own opinions about it so that my students and I can have a discussion and discourse about it. This way, learning that takes place does not only involve my students but it also involves me because I also learn from my students."

Deja's Interview I

Suhailah (S): Can you please share your previous educational background in terms of your experience in learning from primary to higher education?

Deja (D): I attended religious school and have taught to listen and not to question. It's a traditional way of learning but when I was in my undergraduate years, I don't see much difference in the education that I received in school and in the University. It was more like a continuation of my 'education'. Even in my Masters programme, I had the same experience of 'traditional education', except for Abdullah's class. His class was definitely an exception. Abdullah's pedagogy is enlightening because he makes me aware of things that are hidden and not even realised to be existing. He also makes me realised that to be free is to question our long standing beliefs not because to nullify them but to deconstruct and reconstruct it again so that we realised its importance...."

S: Do you think you would practise Abdullah's pedagogy in your classroom?

D: Of course!

S: Why?

D: Because...sometimes we are so used to look at something in a way that we do not realise that it is possible to look at it from a different angle. For instance, when I was teaching pre-schoolers, I found that there were a number of children that have difficulties colouring in the common shapes that had been prepared in their worksheet like square, triangle and circle. So what I did was to break away from the work sheet and create my own. I asked these children to draw the outline of their hands and then colour them. To my surprise these children were not just able to do it, but they also had a lot of fun. It was great to see them breaking from the norms that they were so used to. Indirectly, my way of doing things encouraged the children to be more creative as they realised that they are freer to do things that they like. If their task for the day was to colour scenery on their worksheet, I encouraged them to choose what they like to draw. After that drawing and colouring became enjoyable activities because they have the freedom to draw and colour the things that they enjoy. I believe I did not break any rules when I chose not to use the given materials that had been set for me because ultimately, I was able to teach them what I think is more important and that is to discover their own potential to make their own choices and to be creative. To me those things are more important than the set target of the lesson of the day.

S: Do you think it is possible to practise Abdullah's pedagogy in a Malaysian classroom? Within the Malaysian education system?

D: Why not? I mean, I think Abdullah's pedagogy can be practised even in the pre-schools as long as the teachers know how to practise it. What is important is that teachers need to understand Abdullah's pedagogy so that it is not something that they have to do because it is a set method for teaching. Abdullah's pedagogy is not dependent on the curriculum, rather it is dependent on the teacher. Abdullah's pedagogy can only be practised if the teacher who practises it truly understands and embraces the purpose of Abdullah's pedagogy. For a start, the teacher needs to be able to think critically themselves so that their students will learn to think critically when they see their teacher practises the act of critical reflection. Even though I know very well the mentality of Malaysian students because I used to be one of them, I still believe that they can be taught to think critically based on my own experience as a passive Malaysian student who has become critical when I encountered Abdullah's pedagogy. Sure it may take some time because Malaysian students are not used to critical pedagogy, but they will eventually learn to be critical. That is why I believe that Malaysian students should be exposed to critical pedagogy from an early age because it is easier to raise the consciousness of a developing child rather than an already developed one.

Deja's Interview II

S: What do you think is the benefit of Abdullah's pedagogy?

D: After being in Abdullah's classes, I think I am a better thinker now, in a way, because when I read books, I don't take what is written for granted and I questioned back like is it this way or could it be otherwise..but then y'know...(laughs) reading that way takes a lot of time...and uhhh when you exercise..when you start thinking maybe it's like working ok, therefore sometimes I feel tired just reading one book...(giggles)...but then I think it's just a matter of adjusting myself ...to think and at the same time reading.... What I learned from Abdullah's critical pedagogy is that it has made my belief in God stronger because thinking critically actually helps to understand my relationship with God, which eventually brings me closer to God. Being critical is not to question the validity of our belief but it actually helps us to question the significance of our belief. For me being critical has moved me in the sense that it makes me want to continuously 'exercise my intellectual muscles' by questioning. I realised that I am now interested in reading beyond the scope of my study or my area of interest because the purpose of my reading is not just to have a wider knowledge on a certain area, but it's actually to have ...like a conversation with the book, yknow what I mean...it is like questioning the book itself, of whether it is possible to have a different view than the book's. Although reading this way may take a longer time to finish the book, but I am satisfied with my pace anyway because it makes me see the world in a different way everyday.

S: Ok. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your views or perceptions of Abdullah...or maybe his pedagogy?

D: Well, let me see...I really think Abdullah is unique, y'know...because....Nobody can teach like Abdullah. His teaching is unique because he teaches what he believes in, which is not common in other lecturers. I find Abdullah's class exciting because I feel free in his class. Free to think, free to voice out my views and opinions, free to question him and well, just free to think in anyway. Isn't that wonderful? I have never felt that way in any of my other class before. It's like I can realise my true potentials in Abdullah's class, by being myself and not pretending to be like others. I don't have to agree with what he said because that's not what he wants. All Abdullah wants is for us to think beyond what we usually think. And believe me, we don't usually think much anyway!

APPENDIX 6

Journal Documentation.

Sheena's Journal.

Abdullah teaches by jumping into things without any set induction or introduction. We really need to concentrate to follow his content. If distracted even just for a while, you'll be lost and can never understand what he's saying. But a good thing that I must admit about Abdullah is he can make me think. I began to think critically and creatively, 'use my minds'. Another thing is- I learn how to debate in defending and justifying my arguments and views. I am not afraid to debate anymore!

With other lecturers or teachers, they always have a lesson plan that makes it easier for me to follow their lessons. But it's totally different with Abdullah; he makes me grope early in the morning when I attended his class, another way of keeping me wide awake. I think Abdullah's class has really rubbed on me because I started asking a lot of questions in other classes too but some lecturers didn't like it. Once I asked my IT lecturer, why we have to use the same design that he used to develop our website, but he really didn't like my question and insisted that I follow exactly what he does! So now I really have to be careful not to question too much with some lecturers. It's like I have to contain myself!

I have to admit to myself that I don't get butterflies in my stomach now when I attend Abdullah's class because I am getting used to his way of teaching, never ending questions and 'highly abstract philosophical' views. I am beginning to enjoy his class because he has been able to raise this consciousness in me the need to think and the importance of critical thinking in my life. Not just as a teacher but also as a Muslim who needs to 'exercise her intellectual and spiritual muscles'.

Sue's Cyber Journal

I don't like to spoon-feed my students because I had a tough time adjusting to the different way of teaching when I was in the States. Back then, like other Malaysian students, I was quiet, passive and unresponsive. But I was asked to answer the lecturer's questions. Now when I am a student, I try not to be passive in class, I try to liven things up by being active in all my classes. Similarly, when I teach, I expect my students to be active too. I try to make them participate, whether they like it or not. I don't usually have a lesson plan on how to teach my students. I only know what I am going to teach for the day, and once in the class I will go about teaching the topic of

the day as I wish to do it. Maybe its' because the subject I'm teaching is my area of specialisation. So I know what the students need to know...

APPENDIX 7

Unstructured Interview Questions of the *Murabbi's* Practice of Critical Pedagogy from an Islamic Perspective.

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How would you describe your teaching practice?
3. Why do you teach the way you teach?
4. Do you enjoy teaching?
5. Is there any difference in the way you teach in the States and in IIUM? If any, what is the difference?
6. Is there any difference between the students in the States and in IIUM? If any, please describe the differences.
7. Do you have any difficulty in practising critical pedagogy in IIUM compared to the States?
8. If there is any difficulty, how do you overcome them?
9. Do you have any objectives that you set in your class? If you do, how do you make sure they are achieved?

APPENDIX 8

The Journey of a *Murabbi*: Abdullah's Story.

Abdullah's story is based on his interviews, and has been crafted around two themes, the *possibilities* and *resistance* of Abdullah's practice of Islamic critical pedagogy.

On Teaching and Thinking: Possibilities of Islamic Critical Pedagogy.

Why do we think the way we do? I have always asked that question to my students and myself but I know the answer to that would be to look back to our tradition. The role of tradition has been undermined by many, but for me, I am what I am because of where I have come from, and where I have been. Sure, our adult experiences, and the education that we received play important parts too, but the way we respond to our experiences and education is always connected to our history. Without realising it our tradition shapes the way we think, the things we do, our meaning-making, and influence the way we respond to our experiences and education. With this in mind, I aspire to inspire my students....to think about their tradition and where they go from there.

Teaching has always been my passion. When I was teaching in the States, I knew that my students often said that I moved them. This I know from their evaluation of me. Here in this department too, I try to do the same. Teaching and doing philosophy are not 'accidents' that happen to me like they might happen to other people. I am passionate about thinking and teaching. And to me, I have no theory in teaching. I am not conscious of the way I teach, I have never thought of it consistently in such a way that I can formulise it, but I know I have always been teaching the same way regardless of what and where I teach. That is to make my students think, move them and excite their minds. .

Somehow I found teaching the way I teach challenging when I meet certain types of students. For instance, Malaysian students tend to be more passive than other international students. But then mature students whether Malaysian or international have the tendency to be more active and critical than the younger ones. And more interestingly I found that students with Islamic religious background were able to make meaningful connections with my views despite of my little background in Islamic education. In one sense, this assures me that what I teach does not contradict the Qur'an. In fact I always draw examples from the Qur'an. On the other hand, students who come from a non-Islamic religious background have problems with my teaching. It is interesting because once I had a student who studied in Al-Azhar University and he did his project paper on critical thinking in the Qur'an and Sunnah. What is more interesting is that he was able to synthesise my views and his views

based on his knowledge on Islamic education. It was a little bit strange to read his paper because he quoted me left, centre and right, putting me in the same position of al-Ghazzali and other great Muslim scholars. I was really amazed!

On Ideology and Control: Resistance towards Islamic Critical Pedagogy.

Sure I have a lot of problems with my students especially the Malaysian fresh graduates because they don't really show any signs of comprehension in my class. I never expect them to agree with me on all my views, but it is difficult to really determine what they are really thinking, or whether they are thinking at all because of their blank white faces. But I am actually getting used to them. Year in, year out I will get the same types of students in my class, who do not seem to exist in my class. I try to shake them, jeer them and even be sarcastic to them, hoping that they be awake and keep awake in my class but what else can I do. It is difficult when I get no response from these types of students. I don't blame them really, because it is only partially their fault. They have been taught to not think and to be a 'receptive can'. They have become part of the 'system'. To make them realise of their problem is not a simple task.

But I found that it helps when I discuss their assignments with them. I made them come to see me and consult me about their choice of topic. I gave them the freedom to write on anything that they like but they need to discuss it with me because I wanted to see how they develop their views on the topic. Indirectly, I started making connections with them when they come to see me individually. I encouraged them to develop their own stand and arguments on an issue. I tried to uplift their hidden talent of being critical, something that they have buried deep within themselves. It is just a matter of finding it and polishing it. Sometimes this works because I see them participating in my classes after that. I let them realise that in a class of 30 students, their individual views count to me as much as I value my own views. But does what I teach really hit the mark or not? To that question I do not have the answer because in the long run, the students have the liberty to either choose to think, to be enlightened, to be critical or not.

I have always encountered problems with the administrative of INSTED and also in my previous university where I studied, just because I refused to be under the control of the institution. I can never work in a set and fixed structure. Why do I have to be managed by the institution? Whereas I believe that the institution should work for me and not the other way round. Sometimes I feel sick with the infatuation that the administration have with 'quality management', assessments, and research methodology. All these technical concepts inhibited my passion to teach the way I do...unstructured, unguided and unplanned. So where do I fit in? Am I doing things wrongly? Why the administration is still stuck in this 'vicious cycle' of being controlled by the idea that structure entails effectiveness and efficiency? What are

effectiveness and efficiency anyway? I don't want to be trapped in this cycle. So tell me, how do you think I survived as an academician in an institution that has clear contradictory views in education from mine? I guess I just have to live with that. I tried to manoeuvre around these structures by abiding the rules yet with an open mind, for instance we were always asked to prepare a schema for our exam questions, which was difficult for me because I don't have a clue what the students would answer. It is not my intention to have students answer my exam questions according to my own liking or my so call 'set and targeted objectives or goals'. I don't have a lesson plan and of course I don't have some set objectives in mind when I teach. Neither do I expect the students to have the right answers to my exam questions because there is no right or wrong answer to my question.

My questions are not questions to assess their knowledge. Rather the purpose of my questions is to make them think and give their own views about certain issues. This is my aim of teaching. Certainly it will not fit in the objectives that the administration required of their lecturers, but that is what I can give them. So if they question the open and subjectivity of my schema then I have to admit that, that is the best I can do. In a way I am lucky because I can get away with it. I am not sure whether it was because the administration has started to realise that real education can never be planned or whether they just gave up making me follow their rules. I guess I don't really care because what matters most to me are my work and my students. The belief that I have of my passion, love for teaching and inspiring my students have kept me going all these years. And more importantly, the writings that I have been able to do, particularly on Islamic education, have made me happy and contented.

APPENDIX 9

IUM'S VISION AND MISSION

Vision

"INSPIRED BY THE WORLD-VIEW OF TAWHID AND THE ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNITY OF KNOWLEDGE AS WELL AS ITS CONCEPT OF HOLISTIC EDUCATION"

IUM aims at becoming a leading international centre of educational excellence which:

- Revitalizes the intellectual dynamism of Islam and the Muslim Ummah;
- Integrates Islamic revealed knowledge and values in all academic disciplines and educational activities;
- Seeks to restore a leading and progressive role of the Muslim Ummah in all branches of knowledge; thereby,
- Contributing to the improvement and upgrading of the qualities of human life and civilization.

The summary of the Vision statement is:

"Inspired by the worldview of Tawhid ad the Islamic philosophy of the unity of knowledge as well as its concept of holistic education, the University aims at becoming a leading international centre of educational excellence which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the Muslim Ummah in all branches of knowledge for the benefit of all mankind.:

Mission

Towards actualising the University's vision, IUM endeavours :

- To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences in a positive manner.
- To produce better quality intellectuals, professionals and scholars by integrating the qualities of faith (iman), knowledge ('ilm), and good character (akhlaq) to serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress as well as sustainable development in Malaysia and in the Muslim world.
- To foster the Islamicisation of the ethics of Muslim academic and administrative staff of IUM, and certain aspects of human knowledge -

particularly in the social sciences and humanities - with the view to making them more useful and more relevant to the Muslim Ummah.

- To nurture the quality of holistic excellence which is imbued with Islamic moral-spiritual values, in the process of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication, administration and student life.
- To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers and workers who are motivated by the Islamic world-view and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture.
- To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilization dialogues in Malaysia as well as across communities and nations.
- To develop an environment which instils commitment for life-long learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students.

The summary of the Mission should read as follows:

- i. Integration;
- ii. Islamicisation;
- iii. Internationalisation; and
- iv. Comprehensive Educational Excellence.

Source: IIUM Homepage.

Available from: <http://www.iiu.edu.my/aboutuniversity/vision.shtml>