

Analysis of Mandarin Language Course Needs for Students of the Economic Education Study Program

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ABSTRACT

Mandarin is becoming one of the most essential foreign languages to learn due to China's rapid and dominant economic and political advancements. This trend has led to the integration of Mandarin language instruction in both formal and non-formal education settings, including within the Economics Education Study Program at Tanjungpura University. To select teaching methods and materials that align with student needs, it is crucial to conduct a needs analysis of the Mandarin language courses for 46 students enrolled in the Economics Education Study Program at Tanjungpura University. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, collecting data through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The findings indicate that the majority of students are beginner learners who require foundational learning strategies. These strategies should be reinforced with more interactive classroom activities, such as translation exercises, speaking practice, and group-based learning. The study emphasises the importance of providing materials and topics relevant to students' fields of study. It is anticipated that these findings will serve as a valuable reference for designing teaching methods and materials that are well-suited to the academic and professional needs of the students.

Keywords: Need analysis; Mandarin Language; Economics Education

INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalisation, Mandarin has become an increasingly important foreign language to learn, particularly in shaping international social, political, and economic interactions. As the national language of the Chinese people, Mandarin is not only the language with the largest number of native speakers worldwide but also one of the most widely used languages in fields such as economics, trade, and diplomacy. China's rapid rise as a global economic and political power has only strengthened this position. As a result, there is growing interest among the younger generation across countries, including Indonesia, in acquiring Mandarin proficiency as part of their academic and professional preparation.

Despite this global and national significance, Mandarin learning in Indonesia still faces challenges, especially at the higher education level. Many students find the

language difficult due to differences in writing systems, pronunciation, and vocabulary compared to Indonesian. The limited availability of contextually relevant teaching materials and learning strategies that respond to students' academic backgrounds also complicates the process. In particular, students of Economic Education programs need Mandarin competence not only as a language skill but also as a practical tool for engaging in future business and trade relations. However, studies that investigate the specific needs of these students remain scarce, leaving a gap between the growing demand for Mandarin and the suitability of the current teaching practices.

The urgency of this research stems from the growing demand for skilled workers in Indonesia who can communicate effectively in Mandarin. China is one of Indonesia's largest trading partners in business, infrastructure, and technology sectors, with collaborations expanding each year. Without adequate Mandarin skills, Indonesian graduates may face limitations in accessing opportunities within these sectors. On the other hand, integrating Mandarin instruction that aligns with students' real needs could empower them to participate more fully in international business networks and strengthen Indonesia's competitive advantage. Addressing this urgency requires not only teaching Mandarin as a language subject but also embedding it into professional contexts relevant to students' fields of study.

Although several studies have investigated Mandarin learning in Indonesia, most have focused on general challenges of second language acquisition rather than on needs analysis in specific academic programs. For example, Li and Wang (2018) highlighted pronunciation and writing difficulties among Indonesian learners of Mandarin, whereas Sari (2020) emphasised the importance of motivation and cultural barriers in classroom learning. Similarly, Tan (2021) explored the effectiveness of multimedia-based instruction in improving Mandarin vocabulary retention. These studies are valuable in understanding general obstacles and potential strategies; however, they do not examine the unique academic and professional context of Economic Education students.

What makes this research distinct is its qualitative orientation toward understanding the needs of students in a specific study program. Unlike Li and Wang (2018), who concentrated on linguistic aspects, this study seeks to connect language acquisition with professional preparation in economics. Unlike Sari (2020), which broadly discusses motivation, this study identifies specific needs that can inform the design of curriculum and teaching materials. Compared to Tan (2021), which examined the effectiveness of learning media, this study emphasises aligning teaching content with the disciplinary focus of economics and business. In this way, the present study not only fills a research gap but also offers a positive contribution: it provides practical recommendations for curriculum development tailored to students' academic and professional trajectories.

This study is feasible and visible because it directly involves 46 students from the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN who have already completed one semester of Mandarin studies. Data collection through questionnaires

distributed via Google Forms ensures efficient access and reliable feedback from participants. Furthermore, the findings can be immediately applied in the local context, serving as a reference for lecturers in designing teaching methods and materials. This makes the study not only feasible to conduct but also directly impactful for improving Mandarin teaching quality at the program level.

This research addresses a pressing educational need, fills a clear gap in the literature by focusing on specific student groups, and is positioned to generate actionable outcomes for lecturers and curriculum developers. By situating Mandarin learning within the academic and professional demands of Economic Education students, it contributes to strengthening both individual competencies and Indonesia's readiness in global economic interactions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Huang (2014), the need to learn Mandarin has increased rapidly, not only in countries with close ties to China, but also in countries that see opportunities to expand their business influence in the global market dominated by China. Based on research (Huang, 2014), the analysis of Mandarin learning needs has become a major focus in curriculum development at leading universities worldwide, with the aim of equipping students with relevant foreign language skills that align with current needs.

A study by Aflah & Rahmani (2018) reveals that a language needs analysis indicates that language teaching should be more contextual and relevant to students' fields of study. For students studying economics and business, their ability to communicate in Mandarin can add value to their work environment and open up opportunities for them to better understand the needs of the Chinese market. (Aflah & Rahmani, 2018) emphasised that a comprehensive needs analysis can help design a curriculum that is more in line with the demands of professionals in the field of economics. In addition, research (Limuria & Sutandi, 2018) has revealed that many companies based in Indonesia have begun to consider Mandarin language skills as a primary qualification in the employee recruitment process. This demonstrates that the demand for Mandarin proficiency in the global workforce is growing, and higher education in Indonesia should be able to respond promptly to this need by offering relevant and adequate Mandarin language learning programs.

The importance of needs analysis in designing a Mandarin language curriculum was also emphasised by Marsakawati et al. (2020) in their research on the competencies of Mandarin study program graduates. They revealed that in the world of work, the Mandarin language competencies needed are very specific, such as being able to master spoken and written Mandarin in a business context, being able to master vocabulary related to economics and business, and even being able to conduct business negotiations in Mandarin. Similar research by Saifuddin & Ardiansyah (2021) also highlights the importance of needs analysis in the context of foreign language courses for students in the field of information technology, indicating that

foreign language teaching must be based on the specific needs of each study program. Both of these studies are relevant to students of the Economics Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, who are taking Mandarin language courses with the aim of mastering vocabulary and communicating in Mandarin as a provision to support their professional careers in the global workplace.

In Indonesia, research related to the analysis of Mandarin language course needs has not been widely conducted, especially at the Higher Education level, including those related to the field of economics. The researcher, as a lecturer in charge of Mandarin language courses in the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, realises that when carrying out learning in class, the content of the material provided should be more specific, related to the field of economics, and oriented towards the goals of students learning Mandarin. Lecturers should be able to provide substantial teaching materials that are designed and developed based on an analysis of their students' needs. The goal is to align teaching materials and teaching methods with students' needs.

Regarding the possibility of differences in the objectives of learning Mandarin among students in the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, the lecturers in charge of Mandarin courses are advised to conduct a survey of students' needs in learning Mandarin. The survey can be conducted by identifying the Mandarin skills that each student wants to achieve. Additionally, it can be conducted by exploring students' opinions regarding their satisfaction with lecturers in delivering materials and the methods used.

Research by Lam et al. (2023) on the analysis of Mandarin language needs revealed that the language needs analysis process must consider both subjective and objective aspects. The subjective aspects include students' motivation, interests, and expectations, while the objective aspects encompass real-world workplace needs and the challenges they face in language mastery. This is relevant to students of the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, who must have goals and interests in learning Mandarin in class and understand that learning Mandarin can enhance their skills in the workforce, especially in fields related to economics and international business.

This study also refers to research by Trihardini & Wikarti (2021), which analysed the need for developing teaching materials for Mandarin conversation courses. They found that students need more complex teaching materials that can reflect real communication situations they will face in the workplace. In addition, research by Mandarinet et al. (2021) revealed that students often face difficulties in understanding complex Mandarin grammatical structures and the pronunciation of tones, which require intensive practice. Research (Ahmed Alsamadani, 2017) in the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) suggests that analysing students' learning needs can enhance learning effectiveness, as teaching materials are adjusted to be more relevant to each student's field of study. From this study, the author understands that in teaching Mandarin, it is essential to develop a more

flexible curriculum tailored to the needs of students in each field, thereby producing graduates with professional Mandarin communication skills. As in the context of learning for students of the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, Mandarin language teaching must be designed by considering the special needs of the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, such as being able to introduce oneself and make presentations in Mandarin, being able to master vocabulary related to education, economics and business, and being able to conduct negotiation conversations in Mandarin and others.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. According to Djam'an, S., and Komariah, A. (2017), qualitative research is a research approach that reveals certain social situations by accurately describing reality, formed through words based on relevant data collection and analysis techniques obtained from natural situations. This study aims to determine the need for Mandarin courses for students of the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, specifically those in semesters one and three who have completed one semtotalling Mandarin courses, totalling 46 students. The data collection technique in this study involved filling out a questionnaire related to needs analysis, consisting of 13 questions. The questionnaire was distributed via Google Form. The students' answers were then processed and analysed to identify the dominant responses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Mandarin language course for students of the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, is a compulsory course that every first and third semester student must take. The implementation of Mandarin language course lectures in the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, is carried out once a week, totalling two credits for 100 minutes. The purpose of learning Mandarin for students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN is to enable students to master Mandarin, both spoken and written, as a skill that will support their professional career. The results of this study will be presented separately based on the following research problems:

Participant Information Data

Based on the results of a survey involving 46 students of the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, with the following identification:

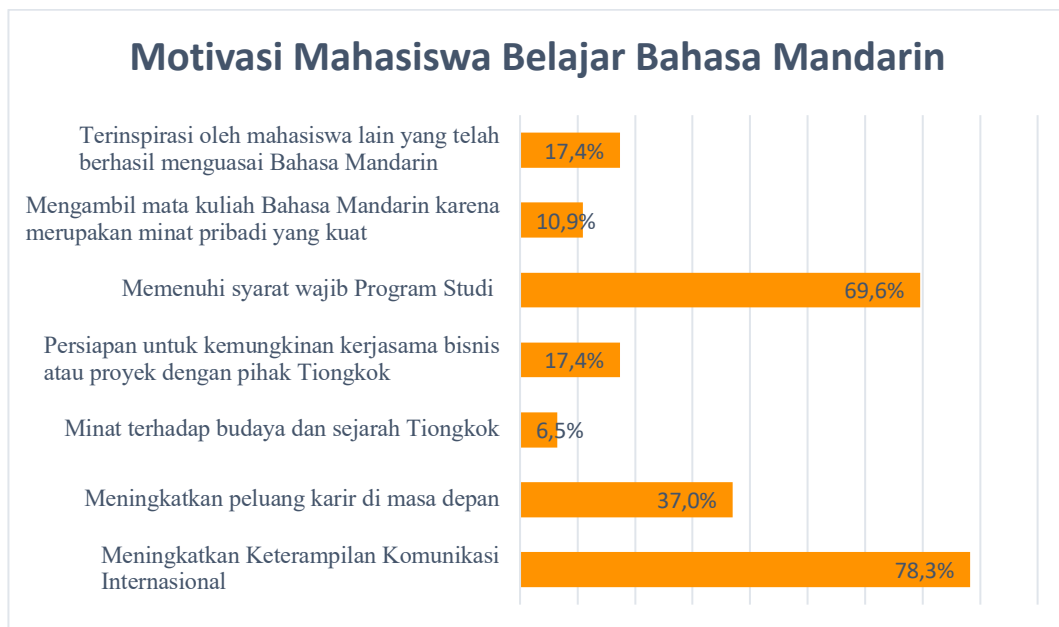
Table 1. Student Information Data

Identification	Specification	Number of Students	Presentation
Gender	Man	4 students	8.7%
	Woman	42 students	91.3%

Learning	Once	8 students	17.4%
Experience	Never	38 students	82.6%

Based on the results of participant identification presented in Table 1 above, it can be seen that the majority of participants are female, accounting for 97.3%, while male participants comprise only 2.7%. In terms of learning experience, the survey results indicate that 82.6% of students have never studied Mandarin, while 17.4% of students have prior experience with the language. This indicates that most students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN are beginner Mandarin learners who are new to the language when taking this course.

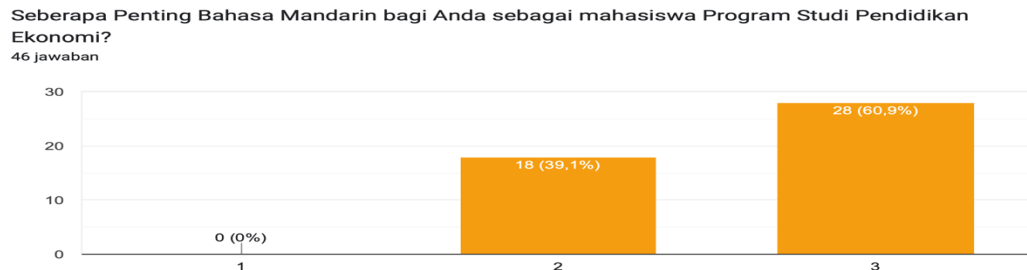
Student Motivation in Taking Mandarin Language Courses



Graph 1. Motivation to Learn Mandarin

In addition, seen from the aspect of student motivation in taking Mandarin language courses, it is quite diverse. As many as 78.3% of students stated that their goal was to improve their international communication skills. In comparison, 69.6% of students reported taking Mandarin language courses to fulfil the mandatory requirements of the Study Program. As many as 37% of students realised that learning Mandarin could improve career opportunities in the future. In addition, as many as 17.4% of students stated that their motivation to learn Mandarin was to prepare for possible business cooperation or projects with Chinese parties and were motivated by other students who had successfully mastered Mandarin. Then, as many as 10.9% of students stated that they took Mandarin language courses because it was a strong personal interest of theirs. In comparison, only 6.5% of students stated that their motivation to learn Mandarin was due to an interest in Chinese culture and history.

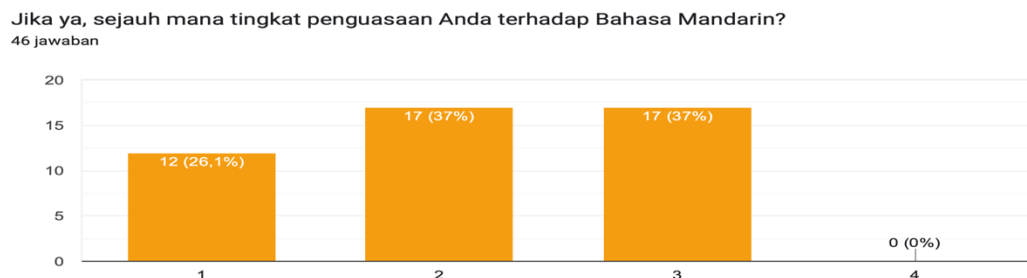
Student Perceptions of the Importance of Mandarin



Graph 2. Student Perception of the Importance of Mandarin

The results show that out of 76% of students, 60.9% of students consider learning Mandarin "very important". In addition, 39.1% of students consider learning Mandarin "important", while no students, or 0%, consider it not important. These results indicate that the majority of students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN understand the relevance and benefits of mastering Mandarin in their education and future careers.

Student Perception Towards Mandarin Language Mastery

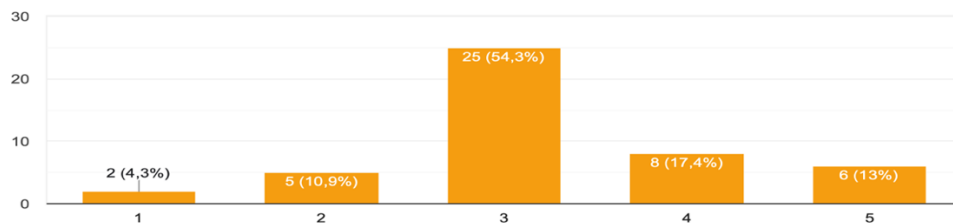


Graph 3. Student Perceptions of the Importance of Mandarin Language Mastery

In this research item, students were asked to rate their Mandarin language proficiency level on a scale of level 1 (very poor) to level 4 (very good). The data showed that out of 46 students, 12 (26.1%) were at level 1, 17 (37%) at level 2, 17 (37%) at level 3, and no students rated their Mandarin language proficiency level as level 4. This indicates that the majority of students perceive themselves as having a low to intermediate level of Mandarin language understanding. This low level of proficiency aligns with the field conditions, where most students have never studied Mandarin before, making it essential to focus on acquiring basic Mandarin language knowledge and skills.

Student Perceptions of Mandarin Language Proficiency Levels

Menurut Anda, dari Skala 1 (sangat buruk) - 5 (Sangat baik), seberapa bagus Bahasa Mandarin Anda?
46 jawaban

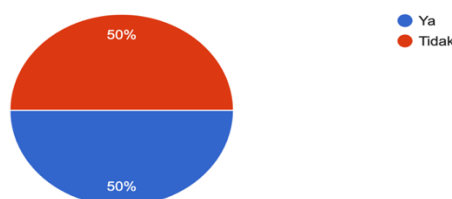


Graph 4. Perception of Mandarin Language Proficiency Level

In this research item, students were also asked to rate their own Mandarin language ability level on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good). The results showed that the majority (54.3%) rated their Mandarin language ability as moderate (scale 3), indicating that they felt quite capable of conducting basic Mandarin communication. A smaller percentage of students rated their Mandarin language ability as good (scale 4), at 17.4%, and very good (level 5), at 13%. It rated it as poor (level 2) in as many as 10.9% of cases, while only a small number of students rated their Mandarin language ability as very poor (level 1) in 4.3% of cases. The diversity in the assessment of Mandarin language ability among these students indicates that there are various levels of understanding of Mandarin language mastery among students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN. This suggests that lecturers need to develop teaching materials tailored to students' needs. In addition, lecturers also need to pay attention and encourage students to continue improving their Mandarin language skills, providing extra support for those who feel less confident in speaking Mandarin, so that their self-assessment of their Mandarin language skills can reach a good or even very good level.

Students' Perceptions of Mandarin Vocabulary Mastery Related to Economic Education

Apakah Anda mengetahui kosa kata atau istilah Bahasa Mandarin yang berkaitan tentang Pendidikan Ekonomi?
46 jawaban



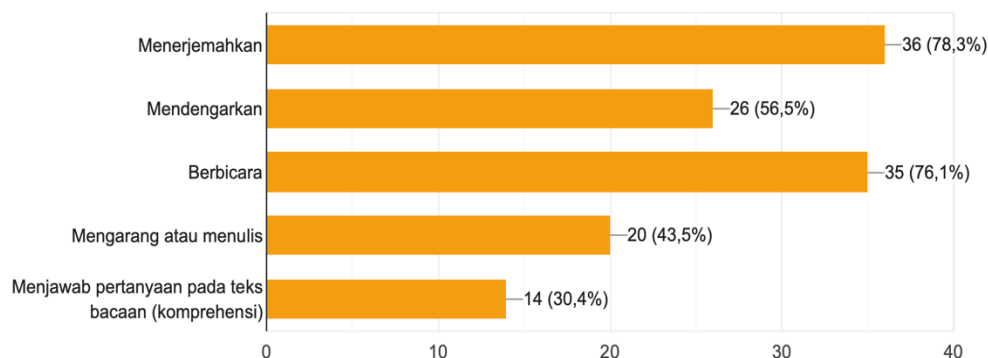
Graph 5. Perception of Vocabulary Mastery

The study's results showed that 50% of students felt they had mastered vocabulary related to economic education. On the other hand, half of the students (50%) felt that they did not master Mandarin vocabulary related to economic education. This suggests that more specific and relevant materials are necessary to address the learning needs of students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, enabling them to master vocabulary related to economic education.

Students' Perceptions of Required Class Activities in Mandarin Language Courses

Menurut Anda, keterampilan atau aktifitas apa yang Anda perlukan pada mata kuliah Bahasa Mandarin? Pilih minimal 2 (dapat memilih lebih dari 2 opsi)

46 jawaban



Graph 6. Student Perceptions of Required Class Activities

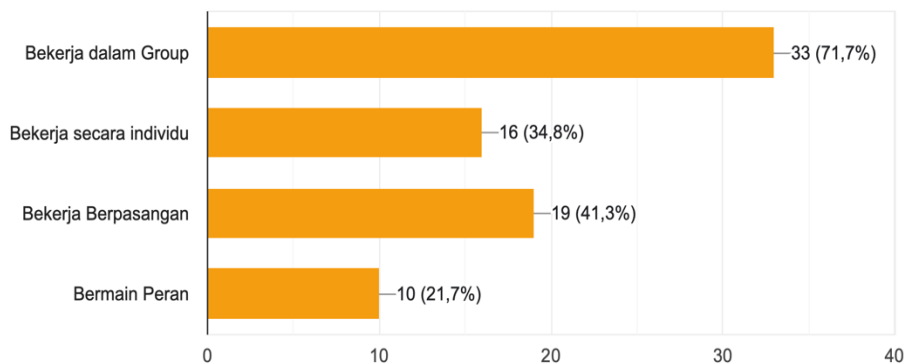
The class activities chosen by students while taking Mandarin courses provide important insights into the types of skills that students consider necessary to learn in class. Based on the data obtained, translating activities are one of the most popular choices among students, with a presentation rate of 78.3%. This indicates that students believe they understand the importance of bilingual translation skills in mastering Mandarin. Speaking activities are also very popular among students, with 76.1% of them participating in them. This demonstrates that students realise and recognise the value of practising speaking Mandarin in class, which helps them master the language orally and become more confident when using it for everyday communication. In addition, most students also emphasise the importance of listening activities (56.5%), which shows that listening skills are also very necessary to understand the correct pronunciation of Mandarin in order to communicate effectively in real situations.

Meanwhile, composing or writing activities receive a lower percentage of 43.5%, and answering questions on reading texts (comprehension) receives the lowest support, namely only 30.4%. This shows that students are more interested in class activities that allow them to interact and apply Mandarin directly. Therefore,

lecturers need to consider more effective ways to attract students' interest in composing or writing activities and in-depth reading text comprehension activities.

Students' Perceptions of Required Class Activities in Mandarin Language Courses

Jenis kegiatan apa yang Anda perlukan untuk kegiatan di kelas? Dapat memilih lebih dari 1 opsi
46 jawaban



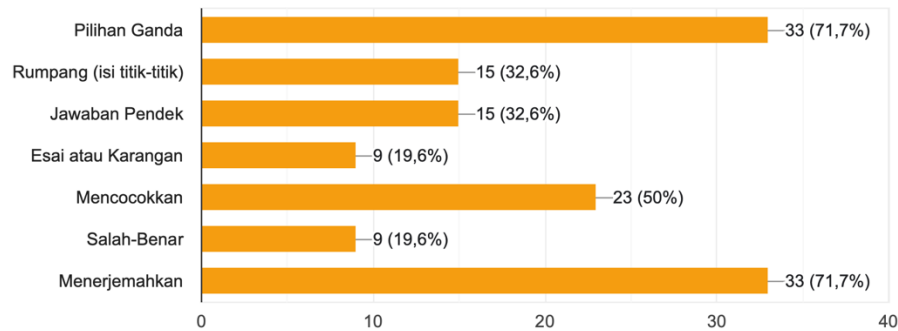
Graph 7. Student Perceptions of Required Class Activities

Class activities required in Mandarin courses, as desired by students of the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, are also important to analyse because, through class activities that students enjoy, learning outcomes and better learning experiences can be improved. Based on the data obtained, group work activities are the most popular choice, with a percentage of 71.1%, indicating that group cooperation provides students with opportunities to learn from one another and fosters a more interactive learning atmosphere in the classroom. The second most popular choice is pair work activities, with a percentage of 41.3%. This reflects that through pair learning activities, they can help and interact with each other while practising Mandarin in class. Meanwhile, only 34.8% of students choose individual work activities, and only 21.7% choose role-playing activities. These results emphasise that students prefer to learn collaboratively with classmates rather than working alone and are less interested in participating in role-playing activities, even though this activity can be an effective learning method. Therefore, a more innovative approach is needed to increase their interest in role-playing activities in Mandarin class.

Student Perceptions of the Types of Practice Required in Mandarin Language Courses

Jenis latihan apa yang Anda perlukan? Dapat memilih lebih dari 1

46 jawaban



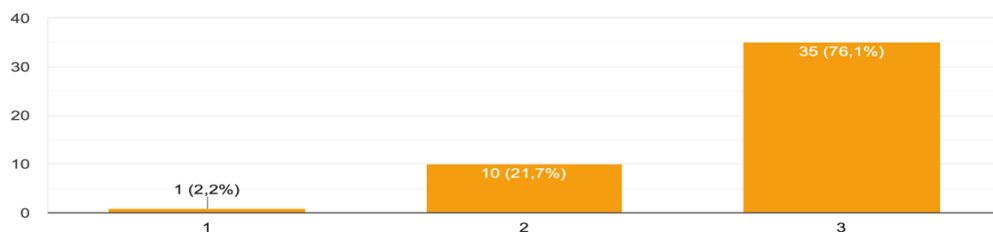
Graph 8. Student perceptions of the types of training required

Furthermore, from the perspective of the types of exercises required by students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, who take Mandarin classes, the survey results indicate that multiple-choice and translation exercises are equally popular among students, with a percentage of 71.7%. Furthermore, matching exercises account for 50%, while gaps and short answers each have a percentage of 32.6%. Meanwhile, essay or writing exercises and false/true exercises both have a percentage of 19.6%. This suggests that students prefer exercises that are objective and direct, and easier to evaluate. Through translation exercises, students believe that these exercises play a crucial role in enhancing their Mandarin language skills.

Student Perceptions of the Material Taught

Apakah materi yang diajarkan oleh dosen relevan dengan kebutuhan mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Ekonomi?

46 jawaban

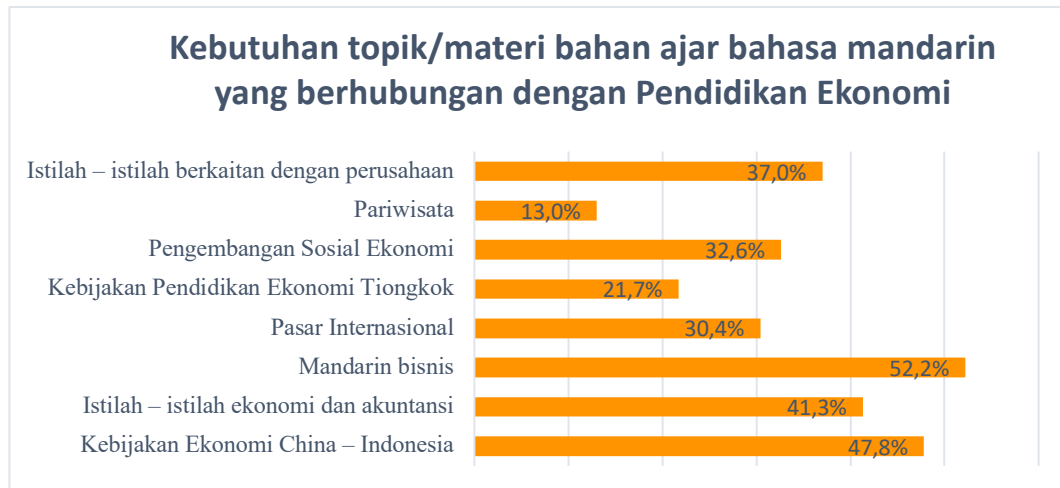


Graph 9. Student Perception of the Material Taught

Regarding the relevance of the material taught by the lecturer to the needs of students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN, it was found that most students (76.1%) considered the material taught to be very relevant. In

comparison, 21.7% of students considered it relevant, and only one person (2.2%) felt it was not relevant. This indicates that the material taught during the lecture aligns with the needs of students, which is expected to increase their interest and participation in learning Mandarin.

Student Perceptions of the Need for Topics/Materials Related to Economic Education



Graph 10. Student Perception of the Need for Topics Related to the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN

Building on the previous analysis, the chart above illustrates that students provide input on topics and materials they consider essential for teaching in Mandarin courses. The survey results show that the topic of Business Mandarin is the topic most often chosen by students, with a percentage of 52.2%. This indicates that they realise/recognise the significance of mastering vocabulary and conversations related to the business and marketing world, which will later aid them in negotiating and interacting with business partners from China and following the topics of China-Indonesia Economic Policy (47.8%) and Economics and Accounting Terms (41.3%), which students also favour. This shows the importance of mastering more specific Mandarin vocabulary or terms related to economics or finance. In addition, students also showed interest in topics related to companies (37%), Socio-Economic Development (32.6%), and International Markets (30.4%). This reflects students' awareness of the importance of mastering vocabulary related to the relationship between economics and society, international markets and organisational structures in companies. Meanwhile, the topics of China's Economic Education Policy (21.7%) and Tourism (13%) have relatively lower percentages, indicating a lack of student interest in learning Mandarin vocabulary or conversation related to these two topics. Overall, among all the topics available, the topics that students are most interested in studying in Mandarin courses are those related to business Mandarin and China-Indonesia economic policy.

Based on the research results presented above, it can be seen that there is a significant need for the development of Mandarin language courses at The Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN, by considering aspects of needs, namely student demographics, learning motivation, student experience, student perceptions of Mandarin language skills, learning methods and relevant materials according to student needs, which are expected to make Mandarin language learning more effective and in accordance with student needs in the Economic Education Study Program, FKIP UNTAN.

Of the total students who were respondents in this study, the majority of students were female (91.3%), and as many as 82.6% of them stated that they had never studied Mandarin before. This suggests that most students start learning Mandarin in class without possessing basic Mandarin language skills, highlighting the importance of understanding students' backgrounds to determine teaching methods that are suitable for their abilities. This aligns with research (Aflah & Rahmani, 2018), which indicates that understanding student demographics is crucial in designing an effective learning curriculum.

Regarding students' learning motivation, most students stated that their primary motivation for learning Mandarin was to improve their international communication skills (78.3%) and to fulfil the mandatory requirements of the study program (69.6%). This finding aligns with research conducted by Ahmed Alsamadani (2017), which demonstrates that students' motivation significantly influences their success in learning a language. Both studies demonstrate that students are motivated to learn due to the need to improve their competence, which can later enable them to compete in the workforce.

Regarding the types of activities or activities that students prefer in class, the results show that the majority of students prefer translating (78.3%) and speaking (76.1%) activities, with group work activities being the most popular choice at 71.1%. These results align with research (Haryono et al., 2020), which emphasises the importance of interactive teaching methods in increasing student participation in class. Learning activities that involve collaboration between students can enhance students' understanding and communication skills, creating a more effective and dynamic learning environment.

Then, regarding the relevance of the material taught in class, most students believe that the material is highly relevant to their needs. This aligns with research (Limuria & Sutandi, 2018), which found that the relevance of the subject matter is crucial in increasing student motivation and participation. Therefore, it is essential for lecturers in Mandarin courses to continually update learning materials to ensure they remain relevant to student needs and current professional and industrial requirements.

Additionally, it is related to the need for materials or topics that are suitable for students. The FKIP UNTAN Economic Education Study Program research results

show that the most expected material needs are about Business Mandarin (52.2%) and China Indonesia Economic Policy (47.8%), and Economic and Accounting Terms (41.3%). Research by Marsakawati et al. (2020) aligns with the results of this study, which demonstrate the importance of identifying and addressing the specific needs of students in curriculum development. This will help prepare students for the challenges they will face in the professional world. Therefore, lecturers teaching Mandarin courses need to develop a curriculum that not only teaches material related to basic Mandarin knowledge but also provides reference materials to students related to professional contexts and relevant economic and industrial fields.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive insight into the learning experiences, motivations, and perceptions of students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN who take Mandarin language courses. This study revealed that 82.6% of students had never studied Mandarin. This suggests that most students are beginners who require more basic, interactive, and practice-based learning strategies to help improve their Mandarin language skills. The primary motivation for students to take Mandarin language courses is to enhance their international communication skills and fulfil the mandatory requirements set by the Study Program. However, despite high motivation, students' Mandarin language proficiency level remains low, indicating a need to focus on basic Mandarin language materials supported by more interactive class activities, such as translation, speaking, and group learning. The relevance of teaching materials is also a major concern, with topics such as Business Mandarin and China-Indonesia Economic Policy being students' favourite topics of choice, indicating their awareness of the importance of mastering vocabulary relevant to the business world and their careers.

Additionally, students' perceptions of the importance of Mandarin are overwhelmingly positive, indicating a high awareness of Mandarin's relevance in the context of education and career opportunities. This awareness suggests that students in the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN recognise that mastering Mandarin can be a valuable asset in supporting their future career or profession. Overall, this study highlights a significant need for the development of Mandarin courses within the Economic Education Study Program at FKIP UNTAN. By considering the relevant research results, teachers can design a curriculum that is more effective and responsive to students' needs, and provide additional support for those who are less confident in speaking Mandarin. This study will make a positive contribution to the development of Mandarin curriculum and teaching methods in higher education, serving as a reference for further research in this field.

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