

Motivational Factors for UiTM Kelantan Students in Learning Mandarin

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Abstract:- Motivation is defined as something that motivates a person to do something with the aim of achieving success. Without strong motivation, learning a new language would be a tiring and blurry journey. In this study, motivational factors that influence students at Universiti Teknologi Mara Kelantan Branch (UiTMCK) to learn Mandarin were analyzed. The main objective of this study is to identify what are the factors that motivate these students in learning Mandarin and also, discover the main motivational factors that encourage them to learn Mandarin. The respondents were 100 students from three different study programs, namely Business Management, Accounting, and Computer Science and Mathematics. This study used a quantitative method using questionnaires and interviews to obtain data related to motivational factors that encourage these students to learn Mandarin. The findings revealed, even though these students are from three different study programs, they share similarities regarding the main factors that motivate them to learn Mandarin, which are career and communication with the Chinese community. In addition, the findings also showed that the pattern of the students' motivation factors is closely related to the conditions, syllabus content, and learning outcomes of the study program taken. his electronic document is a "live" template and already defines the components of your paper [title, text, heads, etc.] in its style sheet.

Keywords:- Learning Motivation, Mandarin Language Learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), is one of the public higher education institutes in Malaysia that offers third language courses as elective courses to students. In UiTMCK, there are two language courses offered which are Mandarin and Arabic. There are many reasons university students choose Mandarin as their elective course, and it is not just for the sake of learning a new language. Being proficient Mandarin speakers offers them an advantage in their future career prospects as they will stand out from other candidates. Besides, the fact that China is the second largest economy in the world and it is spoken by over one billion people around the world fires up the students' motivation to master this language in order to communicate with the Chinese community.

Studies on motivational factors in learning a language have been widely discussed in previous studies. Among them was a study conducted by Ayuni Mohamad Bakri and Rohaidah Kamaruddin (2016), in their research 'Extralinguistic Factors: Motivation in Learning a Second Language among Foreign Students at Five Universities in Malaysia'. In addition, Alhaadi Ismail and Norimah Zakaria (2019) also did a related study on factors affecting motivation to learn Malay among students at SJKC Chung Hwa Teluk Kemang. Besides, Zaliza Mohamad Nasir and Zaitul Akma Zainon Hamzah also conducted a study in 2014 regarding students' attitudes and motivation towards learning Malay. Jamila Mohd and Talaibek Musaev (2017) also carried out research on the motivational factors of university students in learning the Japanese language.

Based on the studies conducted above, it was proven that motivation is an important factor for an individual in learning a language. According to Jamila Mohd and Talaibek Musaev (2017), motivation is the factor that moves a person's internal emotions to try to achieve a certain desire or goal. Noels (2002) added, there are two categories of factors that make up motivation, namely Intrinsic Orientations (Internal Orientations) and Extrinsic Orientations (External Orientations). According to Sardiman (2010: 89, as cited in Alhaadi Ismail and Norimah Zakaria, 2019), intrinsic motivation is the motive to become active, or work without needing to be stimulated from the outside, as within each individual there is a drive to do something. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, exists from external stimuli with the purpose of moving the individual to do an activity that brings benefits to him. In this study, both types of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic were analyzed to study what are the factors that motivate UiTMCK students to learn Mandarin.

II. STUDY OBJECTIVES

There are two main objectives of this study:

- Identify the factors that motivate students in UiTMCK to learn Mandarin.
- Analyze the main factors that motivate students from different study programs in UiTMCK to learn Mandarin.

III. RESEARCH MEHODOLOGY

This study used two methods, namely:

- Questionnaire form
- Follow-up Interview

The respondents of this study were from three different study programs, namely:

- Students who took TMC451 from the Management and Business program
- Students who took TMC451 from the Accounting program
- Students who took TMC451 from the Computer Science and Mathematics program

These students had passed Mandarin Level 1 course (TMC401) in the previous semester and continued to study Mandarin Level II course (TMC451) in the current semester. A total of 85 female respondents involved in this study, while for the male respondents, there were 15 in total. These respondents were separated according to their respective study programs to see more clearly the pattern of factors that influence their motivation in learning Mandarin.

The first group of respondents which were from Management and Business program, made up the majority of respondents who answered the questionnaire. There were 49 respondents. This is because this faculty is the faculty with the largest number of students in UiTMCK. Next, the second group of respondents consisted of students from Accounting program. There were 23 respondents from this second group. The third group of respondents was 28 students from the Computer Science and Mathematics program.

There are four questions in the survey form. All questions must have at least one answer and there is no limit to the number of answers that respondents can give. The first

question is about the reason for choosing to learn Mandarin. The second question is related to motivation in learning Mandarin. The third question is about job choices after graduation and the fourth question is about the desire to use Mandarin in a job or career after graduation. However, only the findings and analysis of the second question were discussed in this study. A follow-up interview was also conducted to obtain further information or clarification on the matters stated by the respondents.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Through the questionnaire provided, all respondents were asked to write one or more answers to the question on motivation in learning Mandarin. In addition, the question ‘Why did they choose to learn Mandarin’ was also asked in this questionnaire to avoid students being confused by the questions asked and mixing up the answers with the main question related to motivation. In brief, the first question is about the reason they chose to learn Mandarin, while the second question is about the motivational factors in learning Mandarin. However, only respondents’ answers to the second question were discussed in the findings of this study. Next, this study also analyzed the responses on motivation in learning Mandarin because the respondents were more aware of what drives their inner emotions. These motivational factors were then arranged according to the number of frequencies stated by the respondents.

A. Group of students from Management and Business program

Figure 1 shows the results of the questionnaire survey of 49 respondents from Management and Business program. The respondents had stated at least one factor in this question. There were 34 factors with 90 frequencies stated as their ‘Motivation in Learning Mandarin’.

Table 1: Group A-Respondents from Management and Business Program–Motivational Factors in Learning Mandarin

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS		
1	Give advantage when looking for a job	10
2	Easy to interact/communicate with other Chinese people	9
3	Want to learn an interesting, unique language (vocabulary/intonation)	6
4	Want to listen and understand Mandarin songs and dramas.	6
5	Interested in learning Mandarin	5
6	Have Chinese friends	5
7	Learning something new/ increasing knowledge	4
8	For future use/interest	3
9	Likes to watch Mandarin stories/drama/movies	3
10	There are Malay friends who speak fluent in Mandarin	3
11	Mastering various language/increasing knowledge of other languages	3
12	Many Chinese in Malaysia	3
13	Strengthening friendship with neighbors or between Chinese people	2
14	Amazed to see many Malaysians proficient in Mandarin when browsing the internet	2
15	Be able to speak in Mandarin when traveling to other countries such Taiwan and Hong Kong	2
16	Easier to understand Mandarin Language stories without looking at subtitles	2
17	There are friends who have mastered Mandarin	2
18	Likes listening to Chinese people speak in Mandarin	2
19	Be able to understand the language of other races	2
20	Want to master/fluent in Mandarin	2
21	To be able to socialize with the Chinese in Malaysia	1

22	Getting to know the culture and uniqueness of Mandarin	1
23	Can give fun and pleasure when studying/ enthusiastic	1
24	Love Chinese celebrity – Jackson Wang	1
25	Want to understand the conversation used when watching Mandarin drama	1
26	Is a popular language in the business world and the most spoken language in world	1
27	So as not to be looked down upon/ be able to speak fluently	1
28	Books and interesting content to learn	1
29	Having advantages in oneself and different from others	1
30	Having younger brother who are good in Mandarin	1
31	Influence from my Mandarin teacher in school	1
32	Facilitating work matters if it is necessary to communicate with Chinese people	1
33	To be able to understand Chinese to buy on a Chinese shopping portal	1
34	Opportunities to continue studying abroad	1
		90

Based on the table, there is a lot of variation in the factors selected by the first group of respondents. The highest score is 11%, where ten respondents ranked ‘Gives an advantage when looking for a job’ as their strongest motivational factor to learn Mandarin. This is followed by ‘Easy to interact/ communicate with other people/ Chinese’ where 10% of respondents chose this factor. Next, the third highest percentage, 6.7% is ‘Want to learn an interesting, unique language’ and ‘Want to listen and understand Chinese songs/ drama’. Other factors with a percentage of 5.6% are

‘Interested in learning Mandarin’ and ‘Having Chinese friends’.

B. Group of Respondents from Accounting Program

Figure 2 shows the results of the questionnaire survey of the second group from Accounting program. The 23 respondents had chosen at least one factor in this question. There were 22 factors with 45 frequencies stated as their “Motivation in Learning Mandarin”.

Table 2: Group B-Respondents from Accounting program – Motivational Factors in Learning Mandarin

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS		
1	Being advantage when looking for a job/ wider job option	9
2	Being able to communicate with Chinese friends/ Chinese people	7
3	Likes to watch/ want to understand/ appreciate Chinese dramas	4
4	Deep interest in Mandarin Language	3
5	Make it easier for me to go on vacation/visit or live in a country that uses the Mandarin language	2
6	Adding knowledge / learning something new	2
7	My friend is fluent in Mandarin	2
8	To be able to communicate in Mandarin	2
9	Interested in the uniqueness of the Mandarin language	1
10	Mandarin is the most widely used language	1
11	Likes to listen to mandarin songs and want to understand the lyrics	1
12	Can help if needed	1
13	Lecturers teach in a more fun way	1
14	Interested in Chinese artist Seventeen June	1
15	Want to learn about Chinese tradition	1
16	Have many Chinese friends	1
17	The use of Mandarin is becoming more widespread in the employment sector	1
18	Motivated by parents who also master foreign languages	1
19	Amazed by Malaysian artists who can speak Mandarin	1
20	Have the opportunity to participate in many activities in Mandarin	1
21	Can be an added value to yourself	1
22	Learning mandarin makes yourself more potential	1
		45

Based on the table, there were various factors selected by respondents as their motivational factors in learning Mandarin. The factor which popularly chosen by this group of respondents was ‘Being an advantage when looking for a job/ wider job options’ which carries 20% followed by 15.6%, on the factor ‘Being able to communicate with Chinese friends/ Chinese people’. The third most important factor is ‘Like to

watch / want to understand / appreciate Chinese dramas’ with the percentage of 8.9%.

C. A group of students from the Computer Science & Mathematics Program

Figure 3 shows the results of the questionnaire survey of the third group of respondents Computer Science and Mathematics program. There were 28 respondents in total. They chose at least one factor in this question. There were 25

factors with 49 frequencies stated as their “Motivation in Learning Mandarin”.

Factor in this question. There were 25 factors with 49 frequencies stated as their “Motivation in Learning Mandarin”.

Table 3: Group C-Respondents from Computer Science and Mathematics program–Motivational Factors in Learning Mandarin

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS		
1	Likes to watch and is interested in Chinese dramas/movies	7
2	To get a job/ easier to apply for a job	6
3	Want to know words spoken in Mandarin	3
4	It is easy to communicate with Chinese people	2
5	Interest in knowing and learning foreign languages	2
6	Can speak Mandarin with friends	2
7	Have Chinese friends	2
8	Good/dedicated Laoshi	2
9	Idols from among Chinese artists- Fiki Naki/ Yang Yang	2
10	Amazed by Malays who can speak Chinese	2
11	Want to learn something new/ increase knowledge	2
12	To be able to speak confidently in Mandarin	2
13	Mastering daily conversation in Mandarin	2
14	Very universal/unique language	2
15	It's fun to study with a Mandarin language lecturer	1
16	To understand Chinese dramas without having to rely on subtitles	1
17	Feeling excited to see other people speak Mandarin	1
18	Can be used when buying and selling with Chinese people	1
19	To give added value to yourself	1
20	To measure self-achievement	1
21	Want to learn a language that is easy to understand	1
22	To become a Mandarin speaker in the future	1
23	Making it easier to communicate with Chinese cousins	1
24	Can get along with many friends from different races	1
25	For future use/ communication	1
		49

According to the table, there were three main factors selected by the third group of respondents. The factor that was highly chosen as their motivational factor in learning Mandarin was ‘Like watching and interested in Chinese dramas/ films’ which holds 14.3%, followed by 12.2% on factor ‘To get a job/ easier to apply for a job’ and lastly 6.1% on ‘Want to know words that are spoken in Mandarin’.

V. ANALYSIS OF FACTORS INFLUENCING UITM KELANTAN STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION IN LEARNING MANDARIN

The findings of the study showed that there were a few similarities in the responses made by the three groups. It was discovered, that the two main motivational factors that motivated them to learn Mandarin were career and communication. These two factors are categorized under extrinsic motivation. This type of motivation refers to external stimulation that aims to move individuals to do activities that bring benefits to them. In this context, it can be seen that the respondents believed learning Mandarin could give them an advantage in job employability and opens up opportunities for them to communicate with the Chinese-

speaking population. Therefore, these two factors encourage UiTMCK students to put in more effort to study Mandarin.

Based on the results of the survey, ‘Gives an advantage when looking for a job’ was rated as the highest frequency compared to the other motivational factors. The finding has demonstrated that, despite coming from three different academic programs, the respondents share the same prime motive in learning Mandarin, which is to enhance employment prospects after graduation. This factor is categorized as extrinsic motivation. This motivation can be stimulated in the language classroom as the instructor discusses with the students how being a competent Mandarin speaker can increase their employability. As the students realize the importance of mastering Mandarin for their future job development, they will not take this elective course for granted. It will be their main drive to excel in this course. Another way to enhance the students’ extrinsic motivation to learn Mandarin can be in the form of praises, rewards, prizes, grades and fostering a positive learning environment that encourage students to learn (Alhaadi Ismail and Norimah Zakaria, 2019). For this reason, this strategy should be practiced by language instructors to increase the students’ motivation to be proficient Mandarin speakers.

Learning for communication emerged as the second most frequently cited factor of why respondents are motivated to learn Mandarin. The respondents personally wanted to be proficient Mandarin speakers to communicate or interact with the Chinese community. They expressed delight and contentment at being able to interact with the community effectively in Mandarin. They believed this was also a bonus that could be used at work. This is relevant since Mandarin is widely used in Malaysia apart from Malay and English. In addition, according to Azman Che Mat and Goh (2010), Mandarin is widely used in Malaysia because the Chinese are the second largest population in this country. Therefore, enrolling in Mandarin language course can expose and improve students' communication skills and this is in line with the modernity of today's globalization era which is concerned with aspects of communication and interaction in society. Based on the follow-up interview, most of the respondents expressed great happiness when they were able to chat in Mandarin with their Chinese friends as well as being able to practice the Mandarin speaking skills they have acquired. Therefore, in light of these two motivational factors, it is clear why students at UiTMCK chose this language course as an elective. They believed it would give them an advantage when applying for jobs in the future and would enable them to communicate with the Chinese community.

In addition to the two factors above, there is another factor stated as an important factor that motivates students from all the three groups of respondents to learn Mandarin, which is 'Interested in learning Mandarin'. This factor is categorized as intrinsic motivation, which is a motive that arises from within to do something without having to be stimulated from the outside. According to Deci Ryan (1985) in Alhaadi Ismail and Norimah Zakaria (2019), people are intrinsically motivated when they have a perception of themselves as capable and can make their own decisions. The behavior of individuals who are intrinsically motivated is also controlled from within themselves without the influence of the environment. Therefore, it was clear that, even though these three groups of respondents were not students in the field of linguistics, they exhibited a deep interest in learning Mandarin without the need for external factors to generate that interest. In other words, self-interest in learning Mandarin is another crucial reason that motivates students at UiTMCK to become fluent Mandarin speakers.

Based on the data, among the other factors related to interest in the Mandarin language listed are such as 'Want to learn an interesting, unique language (vocabulary/intonation)', 'Interested in learning Mandarin/ Deep interest in Mandarin', 'Interest in recognizing and learning foreign languages', 'Learning something new/increasing knowledge' and 'Mastering various languages/ increasing knowledge of other languages'. These factors which are listed under intrinsic motivation category also show that the students who take the Mandarin language course at UiTMCK have a high self-motivation to learn Mandarin as a third language even though it is not a compulsory course in their study program. Therefore, these factors are also important factors in influencing students' motivation to learn Mandarin.

In addition to motivational factors related to interest in Mandarin, there is another important factor listed in the top three factors given by all three groups of respondents. The factor is related to their tendency toward popular Chinese entertainment i.e., drama, film, and song. This is consistent with a study conducted by Norlida Razali (2018) that stated that almost all respondents agreed that they did like watching Chinese movies and dramas on television. Among the factors listed are 'Wants to listen/ understand/ appreciate Chinese songs or Chinese dramas', 'Likes to watch Mandarin-language stories', 'Makes it easier to understand Mandarin-language stories without reading subtitles', 'Interests in Chinese celebrity Jackson Wang', 'Interests in Chinese artists Seventeen Jun', 'Idol Chinese artists- Fiki Naki/ Yang Yang' and 'Want to understand the conversation used when watching Mandarin drama'. Therefore, popular Chinese entertainment in Malaysia certainly influences university students' motivation to learn Mandarin. Furthermore, most of them had been exposed to Chinese entertainment such as drama, movies, and songs since childhood. This demonstrates how essential Chinese entertainment is in inspiring UiTMCK students to learn Mandarin.

All in all, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are the main motivational factors that encourage UiTMCK students to learn Mandarin. Based on the percentage and frequency obtained, respondents are seen as more inclined to extrinsic motivation as their main drive in learning Mandarin compared to intrinsic motivation. In addition, the findings also showed that the pattern of the students' motivation factors is closely related to the conditions, syllabus content, and learning outcomes of the study program taken.

VI. CONCLUSION

Through the findings of the study, the factors that motivate students at UiTMCK to learn Mandarin have been identified, and they are career and communication with the Chinese community. The study also shows that there are similarities regarding the main motivational factors listed by the three groups of respondents.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the motivational factors of the students at UiTMCK are closely related to the conditions, syllabus content, and learning outcomes of the study program taken. Through the motivational factors that have been identified, it is hoped that they can be used as a useful guide for instructors and students towards a more effective teaching and learning process. This study can also give insights to the instructors to better understand the students' hopes, and emotions that influence their interest and motivation to learn Mandarin and indirectly can also provide an environment that suits their needs. This can form a positive attitude among students to be more enthusiastic and active in the learning process in the classroom. Lastly, through this study, it is also hoped to help and ease language instructors to plan and design syllabuses and teaching materials that match the students' interests and motivational factors and in line with the modernity of today's era of globalization.

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