A Study On Mandarin- Learning Process for Art & Design Students in UiTM, Malaysia

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Abstract

Faculty of Art & Design students show a lack of interest in theory-based and facts-based studies such as language-related studies or courses. They are more on solving problems by using imagination and practical skills. In meantime, AD students are required to study a foreign language such as Mandarin but some students opine that learning a third language is the least important. Therefore, a study of the mandarin language is conducted to find the problems faced by lecturers and students in higher learning institutions in the teaching and learning process, specifically in the Mandarin language. The aim is to improve the efficiency in the teaching and learning process for Mandarin learning among higher learning institutions students. Next, quantitative and qualitative research methods were conducted among subject lecturers and AD students. As a result, the study found that the main problem faced by the lecture is related to the student environment factor. For example, students have problems with pronunciation in "Shengmu", memorizing characters, constructing sentences and writing Chinese characters. Besides that, the lecture has a problem in communication with the student. In addition, the duration provided for Mandarin interaction session is inadequate, and the insufficient materials in the textbook syllabus arouse students" difficulties to learn the Mandarin language in the classroom.

1. Introduction

Today, there are many languages spoken in the world, but Mandarin is a popular and very important language in this sophisticated age and era. Mandarin is the world's second largest number of 1.15 Billion speakers. Besides Chinese speaking country, Mandarin is also widely available in other countries such as Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia. Although the Chinese system of writing is complex, the basic structure of the language is remarkably simple (Wong, 1973). According to M.sanders (1987), Mandarin in Mainland China is known as "putong hua- 普通话"; in Taiwan known as "Zhongwen - 中 文 and in Singapore and Malaysia are known as "Huayu- 华 语 ". In Malaysia, Chinese also learned by other communities like the Malays and Indians even though mandarin is not the mother tongue of the Malay or an Indian. Furthermore, every Institute of Higher Learning (IPTA) in Malaysia has also offered a variety of third language as an elective for students.

While a foreign language is a language learned in a community that does not have the environment to communicate, it does work outside the community. In addition, the Chinese language proficiency at each public institution is different. There are universities that use the Hanyu Pinyin system only in Chinese (Hanzi-汉字) and there are also universities that use the Hanyu Pinyin system and Chinese language in teaching Mandarin.

But the main purpose of the university is to produce graduates who can speak more than one language and create more job opportunities.

2. Research method

In this research, mix methods will be used as data can be obtained to strengthen and validate the study. Mixed methods combine quantitative and qualitative research. According Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) broadly define mixed methods research as ,,,,research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

To collect data, a case study approach, interview and questionnaire are used. The research will take an iterative approach to identify the prior issues through 2 stages for stage 1 is Interview, the qualitative method uses the interview method which is individually faced to face or by grouping. According to Zarinpoush (2006), An interview is a conversation for gathering information. A research interview involves an interviewer, who coordinates the process of the conversation and asks questions, and an interviewee, who responds to those questions. This interview will consist of research questions that will be addressed to the sampling of lecturers who teach mandarin in the Faculty of Art & Design in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. Next stage 2 is a questionnaire; this quantitative was used to collect data from the sampling of this study. Research questions based on research objective to find out quantity. Quantitative is based on testing a theory, measured with numbers, and analysed using statistical techniques and it particularly emphasizes objectivity and reproducibility (Smith et al., 1979). Students from the Faculty of Art & Design in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia will be randomly selected to answer the questionnaire.
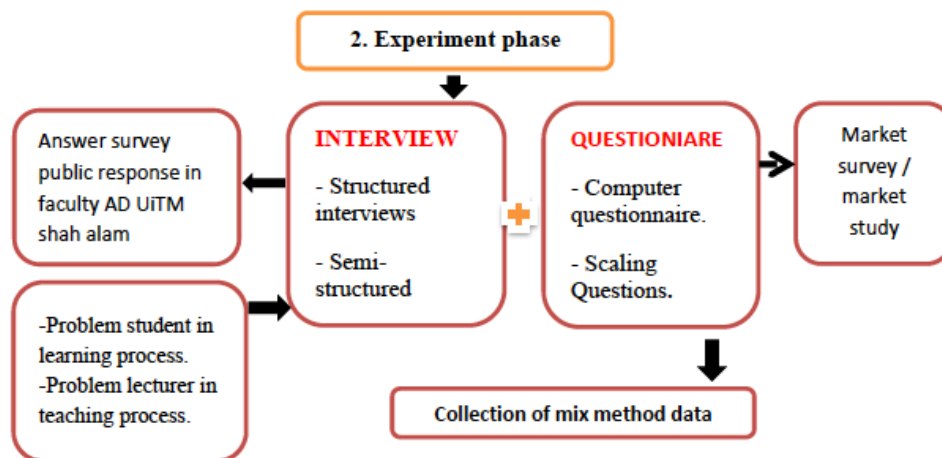

Figure 1. Research Methodology Process

3. Results

There are 8 problems that are categorized after analysis through interviews, 8 categories of problems after being divided are communication, atmosphere, textbooks, time, pronunciation, memorization, sentence making & writing and learning syllabus in the following 8 categories, the first main problem face by lecture is communication according to Guffey and Amonte (2010), communication is a transfer of information and meaning from one party (sender) to another (recipient), it is the most serious problem that faced by a third language lecturer between students. Second main problem to student is main pronunciation, defined pronunciation is the way words or letters are pronounced or pronounced correctly, or the way language is used, however, it is a problem to be faced by students. Below is the table of summary of qualitative:

Table 1: Summary Analysis of qualitative

Keyword	Summary
Communication	-Communication is a main problem face by lecturer in teaching process; because non-native student don''t have basic and hard to understand new language. -Communication is a main point face by lecture in teaching process, because of language varriel student just listening in class and it is a student culture, attitude and behaviour.
Environment:	-Environment is a second problem face by lecturer in teaching process and student, student can''t give a full commitment and more focus to the third language.
TextBook and writing book	-Syllabus in textbook and writing books is limited and non-attraction for student it''s a problem face by lecture in teaching process.
Time	-Student don''t have any longer or enough time for practise it a main problem face by lecturer in teaching process.
Pronunciation	-The main problem face by student is a pronunciation in consonant "shengmu" for pronounce hanyu when learning mandarin language.
Memorize	-The main problem face by student is a remembering and speak out character in mandarin when learning mandarin language
Construct Sentence and Writing Syllabus	The main problem face by student is a construct sentence because less in grammar learning and just memorize "hanyu pinyin" when learning mandarin language The main problem face by student a syllabus in book very compact and a lot of character student don''t have enough time to memorize and understand when learning mandarin language

First, from the data qualitative finding that the problems faced by the lectures when teaching the student with the traditional instruction and limited lesson outline from the conventional teaching tools such as textbooks are Communication is the main problem face by the lecturer in the teaching process; because the non-native student does not have basic and hard to understand new language next Communication is the main point face by a lecturer in the teaching process, because of language varied student just listening in class and it is a student culture, attitude and behaviour. The environment is a second problem face by a lecturer in the teaching process and student, the student can't give a full commitment and more focus to the third language Syllabus in textbook and writing books is limited and non- attraction for the student it's a problem face by a lecture in the teaching process. Students don't have any longer or enough time to practise it a main problem face by the lecturer in the teaching process.

Second, from the data qualitative finding that the main problem faced by the students when learning a mandarin language in a short period is the problem face by the student is pronunciation in consonant "shengmu" for pronouncing hanyu when learning a mandarin language. Next, the problem need face by the student is remembering and speak out characters in mandarin when learning a mandarin language. After that, the problem face by the student is constructing sentences because less in grammar learning and just memorize "hanyu pinyin" when learning the mandarin language. Last, the problem faced by the student is a syllabus in the book very compact and a lot of character students don''t have enough time to memorize and understand when learning the mandarin language.

Third, the findings from the quantitative study found that students prefer neutral higher than difficult level and easy level. Below is findings obtained from questionnaire:

Difficult	Neutral	Easy
Recognize Chinese characters	Pronunciation	Lecture teaching method
Write the characters	Identification in the intonation	Hanzi translation from textbook(grammar method)
Memorizing Chinese characters	Construct a sentence	Learning Face to face in class (direct method)
Master the language in a short period of time	Communication in Chinese with friend	Simulation and role-play in class
Reading in short article	Understanding meaning in communication	Audio and video learning
	Assignment given by lecture	Image and PowerPoint learning
	Chinese final examination in class	Facilities and technology in faculty
	Syllabus in Textbook	
	Teacher''s teaching pace in class	
	Online learning such as MOOC , open distance learning	

Figure 2. Findings Obtained From Questionnaire

For neutral level is pronunciation because the pronunciation is just based on hanyu pinyin, it made them easy to pronounce. Next, identification in the intonation for intonation using hanyu pinyin like spelling Malay therefore, students will be able to call and ring the little, construct a sentence, most of the students will use Google translate to make sentences. Communication in Chinese with a friend, students only use mandarin language communication only in simulation or role-play. Understanding meaning on communication, students only understand basic characters such as "wo, ni, ta". The assignment given by lecture, most of the assignments given by the lecture are just writing character exercises. Chinese final examination in class, most of the exams made will be reviewed a week before the exam. Syllabus in textbook, syllabus made by UiTM is the basis of conversation repeated every sem. Teacher teaching pace in class, students can only follow the time made by the university. Finally, for online learning such as MOOC as open distance learning, students less to open language-related web. Finally, the level for neutral can be further enhanced because it is at the level where students have a basis that only needs to be validated.

Besides that, for a difficult level, the first is Recognize Chinese characters, students find it difficult to recognize characters because characters need a lot of reading, students do not take the time to read. Next, write the character, to write well, students need a lot of practice to write the same character, but students do not like to write words that bother them. Memorizing Chinese characters remembers the character; students find it difficult to remember because students are less exposed to effective ways to remember the character. Students find it difficult to read short articles because the basics of their shengmu are not strong, even in the article or read clearly. Finally, non-native students find it difficult to master the language in a short time, because learning a foreign language other than the mother tongue takes a very long time to master, while there are also some Chinese, who are unable to speak, write or read in Mandarin.

Lecture Level is a simple method of teaching, learning designed specifically for students is easy to be learned by the students because the language is Malay language mediation. Next, Hanzi translation from a textbook (grammar method) is easy, because hanzi does not have a long and deep sentence structure. Many students

prefer Learning Face to face in class (direct method) because this method makes students enter the classroom and learn. For simulation and role-play in class, this method is very useful for students, because this method requires students to make their sentences, write and memorize themselves. So with this method, students are easy to understand and remember the character. Next, Audio and video learning, this method is a method that can stimulate students faster in a short time. Besides, especially for AD students Image and PowerPoint learning is a very important method in the learning process because AD students are only quick to accept the image. Finally, facilities and technology, facilities in the faculty are very limited, only providing studio space for students.

In conclusion, students who study a third language in AD faculty have a foundation in that language, but due to time, habit and environmental factors make students think of the third language only to pass, not have future interests, so the researcher chose to neutral level because the main aim of the study this is to help solve main problems in the Mandarin language learning process or to help students solve communication problems or to speak Mandarin.

4. Conclusion

Researches analysis that the first major problem is Communication, communication is the main problem face by the lecturer in the teaching process; because non-native students don't have basic and are hard to understand the new language. Also, communication is the main point face by the lecture in the teaching process, because of the language barrier student just listening in class and it is a student culture, attitude, and behaviour. Next, the environment is a second problem face by the lecturer in the teaching process and student, the student can't give a full commitment and more focus to the third language. Besides that, Syllabus in textbooks and writing books is limited and non-attraction for the student it is a problem face by the lecture in the teaching process. Last, time management students don't have any longer or enough time to practise it a main problem face by the lecturer in the teaching process. The conclusion is in the teaching process, the lecture certainly has problems that occur between the lecturer and the student. However, every problem has faced by lecturers, they will try to find new methods, new learning materials, or any interesting learning idea to help and attract the students. Besides that, in this research, the main problem in this study is communication. To improve efficiency in the teaching and learning process for mandarin learning, researchers will come up with new ideas and products to help solve the problem.

After that, the second main problem face by the student is the pronunciation of consonant "shengmu" to pronounce hanyu when learning the mandarin language. Next, the student problem is memorizing and speak out characters in mandarin when learning a mandarin language. Besides that, students have a problem in construct sentence because less in grammar learning and just memorize "hanyu pinyin" when learning a mandarin language. Last is the syllabus, when the student facing a syllabus in a book, it is very compact and a lot of character students do not have enough time to memorize and understand when learning a mandarin language.

The conclusions are as a student (non-native) the mentality and goals of the student are very important. If a student is just to pass the exam, it's not commensurate with what they learned, the learning provided by the university is very lossless and worthless. The learning and teaching provided by the university are the best, but in this study, each student still facing pronunciation problems that have been taught even though they are in semester 3. Lastly, to improve efficiency in the teaching and learning process for mandarin learning, researchers will come up with new ideas and products to help solve this problem.

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