Needs Analysis of the Mandarin Study Program Graduates' Competency

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to describe the expected competencies of the Mandarin Study Program's graduates and to analyze their job opportunities. The research design used in this study was a qualitative case study. The subjects of this study were four tourism practitioners and four vice-principals of curriculum. Data were collected through online interviews and document analysis. The interview guide was used as the research instrument. The collected data were analyzed through stages: data classification, data presentation, data interpretation, and drawing conclusions. The results showed that a) there were four main expected competencies of the graduates: professional competence, personal competence, social competence, and pedagogical competence; and b) job opportunities for graduates of the Mandarin Study Program are as tourism practitioners, front liners/customer service agents, translators, teachers, and marketers in industries/business.

Keywords: *Needs Analysis, Mandarin, Graduates' Competency*

1. INTRODUCTION

Mandarin is one of the foreign languages, which is nowadays becoming an important language to master. It is the most spoken language in the world. Due to the large number of Mandarin speaking people, Mandarin becomes the second international language. Moreover, Mandarin has been recognized as one of the official language of the United Nations. The need of Mandarin's mastery is also indicated by the many demands of the company, which require their candidates and employees to have good spoken and written Mandarin skills [1]. This is because Chinese industries have been growing and flourishing very fast. In Indonesia, Chinese

investments range from the construction of mineral processing facilities (smelters), property, plantations, power plants to the service sector, such as hotels.

The mastery of Mandarin is increasingly needed in Bali. This is due to the increasing number of Chinese tourists visiting Bali. According to data from www.buletindewata.com / tourism, China is the largest number of tourists visiting Bali, which is 1,380,687 or 22.53% of the total tourist portion. Data of the tourist visit data for the January-December 2019 period can be seen in Table 1. To provide a good service for these Chinese visitors, professionals need to be skillful in communicating by using Mandarin.

Table 1. Ten Countries with the Most Number of Foreign Tourists

No	Country	Number of tourists	Percentage
1	China	1.380.687	22,53 %
2	Australia	1.185.557	19,35%
3	India	356.497	5,82%
4	United Kingdom	271.801	4,44 %
5	Japan	264.963	4,32 %

No	Country	Number of tourists	Percentage
6	USA	235.849	3,85%
7	France	198. 679	3,24 %
8	Malaysia	198.499	3,23%
9	Germany	185.703	3.03%
10	South Korea	151.178	2,47%

(Source: www.buletindewata.com/pwisata)

Unfortunately, based on the preliminary study, the large number of Chinese tourist visits to Bali has not been accompanied by many professionals who can communicate in good Mandarin. Even in big hotels, hotel staffs cannot speak Mandarin well. Usually, hotel staffs communicate with body language or with the help of google translate application, which of course, is not effective and professional to do in a hotel.

Based on this empirical gap, the Department of Foreign Language, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Ganesha University of Education sees the need to open a Mandarin study program. In addition to meeting the needs of society, the opening of this new study program is also in line with one of the goals of the Ganesha Education University: developing and improving the quality of human resources in the academic, professional, and vocational fields so that they are highly competitive, independent, and contribute to the national competitiveness. This is also in line with the vision of the Language and Arts faculty: organizing education and teaching to produce high- quality human resources in the academic and vocational fields, both in the educational and non-educational fields, who have a global perspective, based on local wisdom that is humanist, cultured, and care for the environment.

For this purpose, the Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Faculty of Languages and Arts conducted a need analysis in terms of target situations analysis to see the competency of Mandarin graduates needed by stakeholders. In fact, studies concerning needs analysis in Mandarin Study Program have been done by researchers [1,2,3]. It is unfortunate that research concerning the views from stakeholders is rarely found. To fill this need, this paper aims to present the expected competencies of the Mandarin graduates. This paper also describes the job opportunities of Mandarin graduates.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Design

To achieve the research objectives, a qualitative approach, more specifically qualitative case study was used. Qualitative research was used because it provides us to collect authentic data which is naturally existed in the real field. As stated by Creswell, qualitative research is carried out in order to find out how people make sense of their world and how they experience the world [4]. In relation to our research, the graduates' Mandarin competencies became the central phenomenon to be studied. In this study, we described the perspectives of the research participants of the phenomenon under study in their natural setting. The qualitative approach is also in line with our beliefs that people are naturally social beings. This means that knowledge is built and gained through social interaction. Thus, in this study, we interacted with the research participants to construct our understanding of how the research participants perceived the competencies needed by Mandarin graduates.

Our study met the characteristics of qualitative research. First, it studied the meaning of people lives under real conditions. In our study, we conducted the study in natural settings, in the research participants. This is to avoid manipulating data and gaining authentic data. Second, it covered the contextual conditions within which people live. In our study, we represented the views and the perspectives of the research participants concerning the phenomenon under study. Third, the researchers were the key instruments in this study. In our study, we conducted interviews and analysed documents by ourselves. We were the main actors in collecting the data needed. Fourth, we used complex reasoning skills (the inductive-deductive process) throughout the process of our study.

Among some numbers of qualitative inquiry forms, we selected a descriptive case study as our research design. According to Creswell, case studies explore an issue using the case as a specific illustration [4]. In my study, the explored issue was the need of mapping the Mandarin graduates. As for the case, we took the perspectives of the stakeholders concerning the competencies needed by them. Yin further argues that case study provides a contextual and meaningful understanding of real life [5]. This argument was also strengthened in our study in which we described the emic perspectives needed in real contexts: hotels and schools.

2.2. Setting and Participants

Our study was conducted in two sites: hotels and schools. Before entering the sites, we needed access. This

is important for qualitative research to gain natural data. In gaining access to the field, some steps were needed to apply. One of them is seeking the permission of the gatekeeper. As explained by [6]:

> *Gatekeepers as individuals that can be used as an entry point to a specific community. The gatekeepers have inside information that can help the researcher in determining who are the best participants to access in the given community or organization. They also can bridge the researchers and the participants by introducing the researchers or the objective of the researches to the participants. (p.2)*

In relation to our study, the gatekeepers were the Human Resources Managers and the school principals. The process of entering the site was quite lengthy, in which we needed to negotiate with the gatekeepers about the best time to visit the sites and to collect data. To ensure the research ethical code, we also hand in a permission letter from our institution. We also asked their willingness to participate in our study.

Due to pandemic Covid-19 condition and time constraints, our study involved eight research participants: four hotel professionals and four vice-principals of the curriculum. To promote maximum variation, i.e. maximizing the diversity or heterogeneity relevant to the research question [7], we varied the working section of the hotel professionals and the types of the schools. For hotel professionals, the research participants were a human resources manager, a sales and marketing manager, a front office supervisor, and a food and beverage service manager. For vice-principals of the curriculum, two of them were selected from public senior high schools and two others were chosen from public vocational high schools (The details of the research participants are given in Table 2). These research participants were selected by administering a purposive sampling technique. In this technique, we set specific criteria or characteristics in determining our research participants.

Table 2. Profiles of the research participants

Participants (Pseudonyms)	Years of working experience	Gender	Place of working/Section/Department
Yogi	10	Male	Human resources manager
Tini	15	Female	Sales and marketing manager
Yuni	30	Female	Front Office Supervisor
Dodik	20	Male	Food and Beverage service manager
Niya	30	Female	Public senior high school
Dika	30	Male	Public senior high school
Ani	25	Female	Vocational high school
Adi	35	Male	Vocational high school

The criteria for selecting the hotel professionals were: 1) the persons were working at reputable hotels, 2) the hotels where they were working had Chinese market, and 3) the gatekeepers allowed us to collect data. In this case, convenience sampling was also used. Specifically, we communicated with the human resources manager as he was one of our alumni. We explained to him the plan of our research and asked him to facilitate us in finding out persons met with the characteristics. With his helped, we found the research participants. Afterward, we communicated personally to the persons, asking about their willingness to take part in our research. Fortunately, they agreed and voluntarily involved in our study.

The criteria for selecting vice-principals of the curriculum were: 1) the persons were working at reputable schools, 2) the schools had language programs or tourism programs, and 3) the gatekeepers permitted us to obtain data. The schools selected were two senior high schools and two vocational high schools. The processes of entering the site were also challenging, as the study was conducted during the Covid-19 outbreak. Some schools were closed or they held shift working periods. Fortunately, through the good communication, we could meet with the vice principals of each school in person and communicated our ideas and planned about the study. Fortunately, they were helpful and willing to join in this study.

2.3. Data Collection Methods and Analysis

Due to the pandemic Covid-19 outbreak, direct contacts were limited. This condition also affected the process of collecting data. Initially, we had planned and agreed that data were collected by administering observation and interviews. However, in the implementation, we used interviews (online) as our method of collecting data. According to Patton, in a qualitative research, interview is conducted to enter the other person's perspective [8]. This method is in

accordance with the nature of the case study, which aims at developing an understanding of the research participants' perceptions concerning competencies required by Mandarin graduates. Yin emphasizes that interviews are important type of data collection activities administered in a case study [5]. In conducting the interviews, we adopted conversational mode in a modest amount. Even so, we also provided ourselves with interview guides to keep me conversing on the right track.

The interview was conducted based on the time availability of the research participants. In doing this, we set an agreement about when and where the interview was conducted. The interviews with hotel professionals were conducted in May 2020, meanwhile, the interviews with the vice principals of the curriculum were conducted in June 2020. The average time of the interview was 30 to 40 minutes.

Besides administering interviews, we also conducted document analysis. As argued by Yin, this type of collecting data method is also suggested to be used in a descriptive case study as this technique can be used to complement field interviews and conversations and the documents are natural texts created and documented without our intervention [5]. In terms of document analysis, we examined the job vacancies requiring the mastery of Mandarin available at https://id.jooble.org. This is a trustable engine used to search for jobs in Indonesia. This search engine looks for job postings on all major job vacancy sites in Indonesia. In the case of our study, document analysis was also used to attain the second research objective: describing the job opportunities of the Mandarin graduates. To enable us to collect the intended data, we created a data collection matrix, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Data collection matrix

What do I need to know?	Purpose	Data collection strategies	Data sources
What are the expected competencies of Mandarin graduates?	To understand the research participants' perspectives about the competencies of Mandarin graduates.	Interviews and conversations	Audio recordings, Transcriptions, Notes
What are the job opportunities for Mandarin graduates?	To document some job opportunities available for Mandarin graduates	Interviews and document analysis	Documents, Memos

The collected data were analyzed by embracing two layers of data analysis: thematic analysis and textual analysis. In terms of thematic analysis, we employed some stages to analyze data: a) familiarizing ourselves with data. To do this, we listened to the audio recordings of the interview results many times. We also read and re-read all data many times; b) transcribing data. The data transcription was conducted manually as it allowed us to get closer to the data; c) initial coding. In this stage, we highlighted the texts that we were going to analyze. We marked them by using colored pens so that they were easily recognized; and d) searching for themes. In this stage, we found the pattern of the data and selected relevant data. In terms of textual analysis, we adopted the Appraisal analysis framework proposed by [9], which consists of three semantic dimensions. One of them is attitude evaluating humans' feelings and perceptions (affect), human's behaviors (judgment), and evaluating man-made things or natural phenomena (appreciation).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

Having analysed the data, it was found that the expected competencies of Mandarin graduates include professional competence, personal competence, social competence, and pedagogical competence. Eight research participants shared the same perceptions about the need for the mastery of Mandarin communication skills. Some of their responses are presented in the following.

"*To me, the Mandarin study program should equip the students with good language skills, listening, speaking, reading writing.*" (Yogi, interview, May 9, 2020)

"*It would be better if the graduates of Mandarin could speak and write very well.*" (Tini, interview, May 16, 2020)

"*The four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) are a must to be learned by the Mandarin students. Besides, they are also expected to be*

able to use appropriate grammar and choose appropriate words." (Yuni, interview, May 21, 2020)

"*It would be a big bonus for us if we could have candidates who can speak fluently by using good pronunciation and appropriate in our context.*" (Dodik, interview, May 31, 2020)

They further explained that the ability to master good Mandarin skills are beneficial for them in order to execute their job professionally. Specifically, the requirements of competencies constituting professional competency is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Professional Competence of Mandarin Graduates

No	The Expected competencies
1	Able to convey spoken information in Mandarin
2	Able to convey information in Mandarin orally
3	Able to understand written information in Chinese
4	Able to convey written information in Mandarin
5	Able to negotiate in Mandarin orally
6	Able to negotiate in Mandarin by using written mode
7	Able to use special terms in appropriate contexts
8	Able to demonstrate business correspondence
9	Able to translate contextually
10	Able to promote products and services to customers in Mandarin by using spoken mode
11	Able to promote products and services to customers in Mandarin by using written mode
12	Able to handle customer complaints verbally
13	Able to handle customer complaints by using written mode
14	Able to make written reports in Chinese

In addition to possessing professional competency, based on the data analysis, it was found that the research participants also require the graduates of Mandarin to have personal competence, which includes soft skills, as explained by the research participants below.

"*Actually, good mastery of Mandarin is not always the primary concern in our company. Besides this competency, we also observe our candidates' personalities. This is also measured while we are having job interviews*." (Yogi, interview, May 9, 2020)

"*Having excellent Mandarin skills is a good, but more importantly having good attitude is more preferable*." (Tini, interview, May 16, 2020)

"*It is important also to have good characters, such as discipline, willing to help, wiling to learn new things, honest, have high integrity, having high dedication toward their job, able to work under pressure*." (Yuni, interview, May 21, 2020)

"*The university should emphasize also on students' characters, who can adapt to the changes, can think globally act locally, and open with some changes*." (Dodik, interview, May 31, 2020)

The third main competence expected by the research participants was social competency. Tini explained that:

"*In our workplace setting, good collaboration and teamwork are highly needed because in the sales and marketing department, we always work with other people. To ensure that our job runs well, every staff should be able to coordinate, communicate, and collaborate with others well.*"

Tini's explanation concerning the need for having social competency had been also agreed by Yuni. She further argues:

"*We are naturally social human beings. This means that we cannot live without the help of others. In our workplace context, we always deal with people. As front agents, we frequently contact and socialize with people. In executing our jobs, we also need to collaborate and coordinate with other people. Thus, social skills are highly needed.*"

The fourth competency expected by the research participants was the mastery of teaching Mandarin. This is mostly expressed by the vice-principals of the curriculum and the human resources department. Their responses can be seen as follows.

"*In our company, there is a training division, which trains the new employees or the trainees. Sometimes, the trainers will train Mandarin to them. In order to ensure that the trainers can teach the new employees or the trainees Mandarin well, they need teaching skills.*" (Yogi, interview, May 9, 2020)

"*In our schools, Mandarin is taught, especially in Language programs. However, we only have one non-permanent teacher. She learned Mandarin from a Mandarin course. Actually, many of our students like to learn Mandarin as they know that the mastery of Mandarin is important. However, due to the lack of human resources/Mandarin teachers, Mandarin is only taught for language programs. Thus, if Universitas Pendidikan*

Ganesha opens the Mandarin study program, the pedagogical competency is needed to be inserted in the curriculum to fill the need of the lacking of Mandarin teachers in schools." (Niya, interview, June 12, 2020)

"*In our vocational schools, basically Mandarin is highly needed by our students, especially students majoring in tourism. Unfortunately, we do not have Mandarin teachers, and it is quite rare to find persons who can teach Mandarin. Even though there are people mastering Mandarin very well, not all of them could teach Mandarin well. Thus, it is important to add the element of the mastery of pedagogical knowledge and skills for Mandarin graduates.*" (Adi, interview, June 26, 2020)

Based on the results of interviews with tourism practitioners, information was obtained that graduates of the Mandarin study program were needed in the world of tourism. Almost all sections in hotels and other tourist attractions require staff who can actively use Mandarin properly. One of the research participants also added that there were a lot of job vacancies that required Mandarin proficiency for applicants. The ability to speak Mandarin is not only needed in the world of tourism but also in the world of industry/business considering the Chinese market has penetrated very rapidly in Indonesia, including Bali.

Interviews with the vice-principals of the curriculum indicated that Mandarin teachers in schools were highly needed. Of the four schools studied, only one school had a Mandarin teacher, even that was not a civil servant teacher, while the need for mastery of foreign languages other than English is very important to be mastered for students, especially students taking language and tourism programs.

Based on the analysis of documents, plenty of jobs were available for Mandarin graduates. Almost every field of industries need staff who can speak Mandarin very well. Even, Mandarin nowadays have been learned by young learners. This opens opportunity for Mandarin graduates to become Mandarin teachers.

3.2. Discussion

The result of needs analysis conducted in this study showed that the stakeholders expected the Mandarin graduates to have four kinds of competencies: professional competence, personal competence, social competence, and pedagogical competence. These four terms are initially used to describe teachers' competencies. Adopting the terms, professional competence refers to the ability to master the content knowledge which is related to students' future professions. This includes the mastery of particular language knowledge and skills necessary to enable the

students to perform specific social practices in their future workplaces. Personal competence refers to students' traits and personalities. As the development of emotion quotient, which puts emotional elements as another important component for determining people's success, every company puts good personality as one of their requirements in selecting candidates of employees. This includes all positives traits that people have, such as honesty, integrity, self-discipline, tolerance, friendliness, firmness, punctuality, and so forth.

Social competence relates to the ability to socialize with other people. By nature, humans are social beings. They interact and socialize with other people. However, not all of them have good social skills as these skills are also affected by many factors, such as the personality of the people and the environmental factors. In fact, almost all target social practices encountered by the students need the ability to work with other people. Therefore, good social skills are another competency mastered by the Mandarin students. Pedagogical competence relates to the mastery of the nature of teaching and learning, teaching skills, classroom management skills, and assessment methods. This competency is needed to be inserted in Mandarin study program because, in school contexts, the existence of Mandarin teachers is rare to find.

The four main competencies described in this study are important as the basis of developing the curriculum of the Mandarin Study program. As stated by [10] and [11] that needs analysis is the essential starting point for teaching. In this study, the needs analysis has been focused on analysing target situations covering tasks, activities and skills learners are/will be using Mandarin for: what the learners should ideally know and able to do. Needs analysis, in this case, describes the future needs (necessities), which the students need to have. This is the first area that needs to be considered by institutions in developing a curriculum because it gives them a map and guidance about the area of language skills as well as other important elements included in the curriculum. The results of this target situation analysis will help the instructors'/materials developers to design teaching and learning materials, teaching and learning activities, and method of assessments. This also provides information for the institution to prepare the facilities needed in order to meet with the required competencies.

4. CONCLUSION

The present study has provided the information in relation to the competencies needed by stakeholders and job opportunities of Mandarin graduates. In terms of the expected competencies, the study revealed that stakeholders expect the Mandarin graduates have four main competencies: professional competency, personal competency, social competency, and pedagogical competency. In terms of job opportunities, the study

showed that a lot of job opportunities are available for Mandarin graduates.

Due to the high demand for Mandarin, it is recommended for Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha to open the Mandarin language program and insert the results of the needs analysis identified in this present study in the curriculum. Further Group Discussion Forum activities related to the curriculum used to achieve the expected competencies of graduates are also recommended. Besides, analysis of the needs of lecturers, teaching materials and the availability of facilities and infrastructure also need to be prepared. When Mandarin study programs have been established, it is also important to conduct further needs analysis containing students' want and lack. Therefore, the Mandarin study program will have a piece of holistic information concerning the needs of the students. The information can be conducted by administering survey studies by distributing questionnaires to be filled by both lecturers and students.

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