



English For Tourism Industry: Descriptive Study On Economic Growth Appeal

Taufiq Kurniawan

Institut Studi Islam Sunan Doe

E-mail : taufikurniawan14@gmail.com

Ivan Suaidi

Universitas Ciputra Surabaya

E-mail : isuaidi01@student.ciputra.ac.id

Ermawati

Institut Studi Islam Sunan Doe

Riza Laely Ikayanti

Kementerian Agama Kanwil Prov. NTB

Abstract. *In these recent years, tourism is one of the most pivotal sectors to be developed in improving the economy development in the world. The quick development of the tourism and hospitality industry can straightly influence the English language which is the most widely used and spoken language in international tourism in the twenty-first century, including Indonesia. The need for the English skills has a major role in tourism industry especially in supporting socio-economic development. The present paper highlights the importance of English in tourism industry as most of the communications in that sector is done in English. It also reveals how English is being widely used in hospitality as a support of the business progress. This study was conducted in measuring to what extend English becomes one of the most essential factors in improving the tourism industry and plays a significant role in developing economy in West Nusa Tenggara. Interviews and open questionnaires were then conducted as a part of data collection. Five different stakeholders supporting the tourism industry in West Nusa Tenggara were taken as research samples. The overview of the results and discussion was further discussed.*

Keywords: *English Roles, Tourism Industry, Economic Development.*

Abstrak. Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir ini, pariwisata merupakan salah satu sektor yang sangat penting untuk dikembangkan dalam meningkatkan pembangunan ekonomi di dunia. Pesatnya perkembangan industri pariwisata dan perhotelan secara langsung dapat mempengaruhi bahasa Inggris yang merupakan bahasa yang paling banyak digunakan dalam pariwisata internasional pada abad kedua puluh satu, termasuk Indonesia. Kebutuhan akan keterampilan bahasa Inggris memiliki peran besar dalam industri pariwisata terutama dalam mendukung pembangunan sosial ekonomi. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya bahasa Inggris di industri pariwisata karena sebagian besar komunikasi di sektor tersebut dilakukan dalam bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini juga mengungkapkan bagaimana bahasa Inggris digunakan secara luas di perhotelan sebagai pendukung kemajuan bisnis. Kajian ini dilakukan untuk mengukur sejauh mana bahasa Inggris menjadi salah satu faktor terpenting dalam meningkatkan industri pariwisata dan berperan penting dalam pembangunan ekonomi di Nusa Tenggara Barat. Wawancara dan kuesioner terbuka dilakukan sebagai bagian dari pengumpulan data. Lima pemangku kepentingan pendukung industri pariwisata di Nusa Tenggara Barat dipilih sebagai sampel penelitian. Adapun terkait gambaran hasil dan pembahasan dibahas lebih lanjut.

Kata kunci: Peran Bahasa Inggris, Industri Pariwisata, Pembangunan Ekonomi.

INTRODUCTION

Each country has a wealth of natural, cultural and diverse customs. This is an essential asset owned by an agrarian as a natural identity of the agrarian itself. These assets are then utilized by the materials in increasing the existence and wealth of a country concerned through development in the tourism sector. According to (Park, et al 2011) “literature on international tourism demand often share an implicit assumption in that the demand is a function of real disposable income”. In line with it, (Cros, Hilari du 2001) states that Culture tourism of which cultural diversity is characterized as visits by individual from exterior the have community persuaded entirely or in portion by intrigued in authentic, local and diverse customs. Tourism itself is an activity carried out by an individual or group to enjoy the beauty of a place that is presented by nature. Through tourism, countries can promote local wisdom and natural potency on an international scale. To promote natural wealth, of course, good communication facilities are needed using the official language that is used by every country in various parts of the world, called English.

English is the official language that is recognized by every country to unite the differences languages in the world. According to (Nazri, et al 2020) showed that there are several languages spoken in everyday life so they need a language that can link them which is English. English is a primary requirement that makes all countries must have the ability to interact using English well. English is needed in various aspects of life, especially in the field of sustainable tourism development. International competition has led to significant growth in the tourism and hospitality industry, and English mastery has become an integral part of the globalization of tourism sectors (Aldohon Ibrahim, 2014). Because of the current position of English as the root of language directly it becomes essential for individual in increasing the ability in speaking English well.

Unfortunately, even though the community is aware of their natural potency, they still lack awareness about how to manage these natural resources. Not only that, the lack of quality human resources is also still a crucial thing due to the lack of government contribution in facilitating the community in efforts to increase the ability of local communities, especially to understand international languages properly and correctly. (Kuniawan, et al 2023) said that participation of government/community is necessary to achievement the collective goals. Due to the importance of developing tourism for a country in improving the well-being and variety of residents. Societies and government must be able to do great participation in expending the common resource they have.

Based on this background. The importance of increasing human resources in connection with increasing natural resources is a matter that must be considered more deeply by both the community itself and the government. Especially in improving good communication skills. For this reason, researchers raised this theme to find out the important role of English in measuring sustainable tourism development. Regarding the English proficiency to fulfil job opportunities in the tourism sector, all the activities that guests and hosts experience may involve interactive communication, and tourism employees are required to follow and use specific professional conversations, language, vocabularies, and speech matter when serving guests (Blue & Harun, 2003).

With respect to international marketing, English language skill is very important to have in order to be able to communicate internationally. Without having good competence in English, it may harden to compete in the global market. Indonesia has a human resource who have both the opportunity and the challenge to survive and compete in this fast-faced era. Human resource is an important key to winning the global competition. Domestic professionals compete with foreign workers and create pierce economic competition. This indicated that many aspects of tourism should be considered to gain the global market (Xudoyarov, 2019).

In fact, people who are required to use English at work for tourism and hospitality purposes need to improve their communicative abilities, language fluency, and accuracy. These people in international tourism and service industry have the opportunity to apply and utilize the target language in their activities and routine work. Cravotta (1990) states that mastering English for Tourism Purposes (ETP) provides people with the required linguistic tools to work in the different chosen professions.

Based on the background stated above, this study will try to examine the use of English proficiency as a tourism purpose in determining the world of advanced tourism industry in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. In line with it, the key point that will be addressed is to what extend English can deliver significant impact of the advanced development on tourism industry in West Nusa Tenggara. Therefore, the main purpose of addressing this point is to know whether the use of English proficiency in tourism industry can drive its advanced tourism development ahead or not.

According to Leslie & Russell (2006), being skillful in foreign language skills is necessary for people working in the tourism and hospitality sector. The reason is that it is the means for having communication with foreign tourists and understanding cultural differences. In fact, for those who are seeking employment in the tourism, hospitality and service industry,

it is essential to stay highly motivated in order to be accurately fluent in a high level of professional service language. In fact, they are required to become proficient in English for Tourism Purposes (Cravotta, 1990): Moreover, Cho (2005) believes that English for tourism is viewed as an area of business English and incorporate business English and English for academic purposes by bridging workplace communication and classroom use. This can help to increase the job opportunities in the international industry.

English for tourism is known as one of the attractive subjects since many of the people will be a tourist at least once in their lifetime. Moreover, learning English for tourism purposes is crucial for those who are working in guest-host relation section such as hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, information centers, and tourist attractions. In industrial sectors, English has recently become a core subject, and hospitality training programs help the employees achieve English proficiency to fulfil the job responsibilities (Hsu, 2010; Chen, Chiu, & Lin, 2011; Kuppan, 2008).

According to Buhler (1990), English for tourism is comparable to other languages and can be examined by principal properties such as functions, structures, and tenses. In fact, English for tourism is a structured language and follows definite grammar rules. Dann (2001) states that vocabulary used in the English for tourism is special and conveys messages through a conventional system of symbols and codes. For instance, the language used for checking into a hotel, giving information about hotel facilities, meal times, giving directions, requesting and giving tourist information, and other communicative activities that can take place in any hospitality setting.

Strutt (2003), in his introduction, describes his textbook (English for International Tourism) as needing no specialized knowledge '*it is not technical or over-specialized in nature.*' In fact, ESP textbooks are significantly similar to any general English textbook. For instance, grammar in these books is used as a means of structure. However, all the examples are used within the tourism, medicine, or business context make a distinction from a usual ELT textbook (Brieger & Sweeney, 1994).

In fact, English for Tourism Purpose (ETP) is important for its learners since it helps be equipped with the specific domains of language skills and knowledge. Consequently, learning the specific skills in English helps apply them properly and appropriately in the specific professions, workplace, and discipline. Because of this, a particular language need of the specified context has a critical role as a requirement to apply a successful language (Shieh, 2012).

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Several recent studies of ESP have been conducted concerning the important role of English toward the fast-growing tourism industry especially in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, such as Li So-mui and Mead, 2000; Edwards, 2000; Lohiala-Salinen, 1996; Huchinson and Waters, 1987; Zahedpishes et al., 2017; Vivek et al., 2020; Husain et al., 2021). However, those studies mainly investigated the correlation tourism and English in tourism industry. Therefore, based on the previous studies and the phenomena described above, this study, once again, aims to examine the role of English in the success of the whole aspects of tourism industry including its economy growth.

RESEARCH METHODS

The present study employed a qualitative research design with descriptive analysis. The data collection in this study was carried out through interviews and an open questionnaire. Interviews were undertaken with several tourism industry owners in Lombok. The interviews were conducted in semi-structured manners and in a calm situation to reveal a real existing phenomena related to the roles of English in the tourism industry. Moreover, the open questionnaire was constructed using open questions or open-ended questions which should be honestly answered to generate reliable results of research with a real picture of English that plays significantly important roles in the world of tourism industry and the improvement of the community's economy. The data obtained either from interviews or from the open questionnaire were then carefully matched. Finally, the data presented in this study was carried out descriptively and then verified to obtain valid and reliable findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tourism is one of the industries that really supports people's economy in Indonesia. Many other industrial sectors depend on the development of the world of tourism. The role of English is very important in the world of tourism since most tourism activities use English as a main medium of communication. Therefore, tourism workers are required to be able to speak English effectively so that they can play an active role in developing tourism so that the people's economy can be maintained and developed. In this section, data related to the role of English for tourism and economic improvement are presented descriptively and argumentatively with the fact found in the field. As stated in the previous section, this study employed interviews and open questionnaires to collect the data to figure out the roles of English in the tourism industry. The followings are the summery of the interview results taken from the tourism industry owners in Lombok as the core informants:

“Well, I think English is very important for the development of tourism especially in West Nusa Tenggara. My employees, who speak good English, can work more efficiently and provide better service to the guest if compared with those who cannot speak English” (Stakeholder A).

“If possible, all tourism staff should speak fluent and good English. When they speak good English, the tourist will be much easier to communicate and they can get appropriate services. Consequently, they would stay longer in my hotel” (Stakeholder B).

“English is definitely important for the tourism industry. Most tourists who come to my shop speak English. So, all my staff has to speak English. Without English, I probably cannot sell anything to tourists with a good price” (Stakeholder C).

Telephoning skill in English is very important for my staff as my businesses are mainly hotel and transportation booking. Without having good English, it will be hard for me to get a customer. Therefore, I only employ booking staff who speak good English” (Stakeholder D).

“Several English skills such as describing, suggesting, and others are very essential for my staff to have as our businesses are mainly in tour guiding. A tour guide should have a high level of English. Otherwise, they cannot do their job properly” (Stakeholder E).

Those excerpts of the interviews from the tourism stakeholders indicated that English language skills are very needed by tourism workers. Tourism workers do not only need good skills to work within their department, but they also should be able to communicate in English in various aspects of the tourism industry. The skill of telephoning, describing, explaining, suggesting as well as making enquire are very important to have by all tourism personnel. These data are relevant to the result of the open questionnaire which indicated that the need for English communication skills is very high.

Table 1. The Needed English Communication Skill Based on the Result of the Open Questionnaire

Tourism Stakeholders	English Language Competence Needed by Tourism Personnel					
	Telephoning	Informing	Suggesting	Directing	Describing	Inquiring
Stakeholder A	High	High	Medium	High	High	High
Stakeholder B	High	High	Medium	High	High	Medium
Stakeholder C	High	High	High	High	High	Medium
Stakeholder D	High	High	Medium	High	High	High
Stakeholder D	High	High	Medium	High	High	High

Source: Author (2023)

English language competence required by tourism personnel to be mastered is mainly dealing with communication skills. The skills of English communication such as telephoning, informing, suggesting, directing, describing, and inquiring are considered to be highly needed as shown by the results of the open questionnaires administered to the tourism stakeholders. There are only a few stakeholders considered that the skills of suggesting and inquiring are in medium necessity. Although it is considered a medium necessity, it is still important to be able to work properly in the tourism industry.

Understanding the essence of the excerpts of the interviews and the results of the open questionnaires conducted to tourism stakeholders, it is clear that both data showed the need for English for tourism development is highly important. This also indicated that English has considerably high roles in tourism development. The tourism stakeholders also confirmed that employees who speak good English provide more effective and efficient services. And as a result, tourists may spend more time staying at their accommodation. Having tourists who are willing to spend more time staying and spend more money to buy things as well as using the facilities at their own cost. These activities certainly improve the quality of the tourism industry and increase the growth of the local economy. The efforts of supporting the local economy definitely also support the national economy.

The Role of English Language in Tourism Sector

The tourism industry is one of the means in increasing the economic progress of the community both locally and globally. It cannot be denied that the tourism industry is the economic sector that has a very fast growth compared to the other economic sectors. Many jobs from the tourism industry have emerged starting from the activities of providing accommodation services, restaurants, tourist services up to the souvenir business have succeeding in helping the government to reduce high unemployment.

The rapid development of the industry tourism brings understanding between cultures through the interaction of tourists with local communities in tourist areas. This interaction is where tourists can get to know and respect the culture of the local community and also understand the background of local culture embraced by the community. Tourism activities can potentially have future effects and be backward (Nikazachenko et al., 2018). Based on the data collected using questionnaires and interviews with the participants of this study, it was found that there are at least three benefits that can be obtained with the development of tourism in an area. First, it provides a significant contribution to the income of the community. Second, it is able to reduce the number of unemployed because of the absorption of workers. Third, it encourages the emergence of entrepreneurs engaged in the tourism industry. These all enable the improvement of the local economy and eventually improve the global economy. The economic growth through tourism business brings wealth and a better living standard for all workers within the tourism industry and other communities.

Nowadays, the developments of international markets have reached Indonesia in various industries and businesses including the tourism industry. The country of Indonesia is rich in tourist attractions that are so enchanting that it has become one of the destinations for both domestic and international tourists. The government has also begun to aggressively develop tourism by building tourist spots in their respective regions. The development of adequate and standard facilities and infrastructure is a comfortable place to be visited by visitors (Robinson et al., 2018). Moreover, with the richness of local culture, Indonesia becomes one of the most popular tourist destinations. The development of tourism in terms of various businesses and facilities certainly supports the local economy. The data of the study showed that most people are eager to work in the tourism industry because they can earn a better income and sufficiently support the living needs of their families. The participants of the study strongly recommended that all people who wish to work effectively in various tourism businesses should be able to communicate English fluently.

The data collected from the participants of this study further confirmed that the development of tourism facilities could be useless if the workers are able to communicate well in foreign languages, especially the English language which becomes the main driving factor in the use of built facilities. This means that without a good command of English communicatively, the facilities built will not be able to be operated as a tourism activity. Sometimes tourism workers are not ready to master English when foreign tourists come and communicate in foreign languages. This is of course very uncomfortable for foreign tourists because they cannot provide good service. Tourism workers will be able to provide good service if they are able to communicate well in English.

During the interviews, participants of the study provided practical examples of the importance of English, for examples English skills in telephoning, informing, suggesting, directing, describing, and inquiring are very essential communication skills to be mastered and be able to provide better services in the tourism industry. This indicated that many tourism activities required good English skills, workers are constantly trying to improve their abilities. Many tourism workers are aware of the importance of English, but there are still many who are unable to communicate well. For this reason, several efforts must be made by the workers themselves as well as the owners of the tourism industry and the government.

Some of the efforts that have been made are the provision of English courses that are conducted in the workplace as well as outside the workplace. However, the results are not optimal due to the limited learning time for workers. Workers mostly must study in their spare time or between working hours. Besides that, their mastery of English when they start working is not sufficient. This is due to the lack of good and intensive English learning when they attend training to work in the tourism industry. This phenomenon needs to be a note the tourism training institutions to improve English language training so that workers will be more professional in carrying out their work (Astawa et al, 2017). Efficient workers within the tourism industry are really needed to ensure all visitors are highly satisfied with the services and they are willing to spend more time to enjoy the tourism activities. These all certainly bring more income to all those working in the tourism industry and indirectly to all communities.

CONCLUSION

The results, as a whole, suggest that the English language skills needed in the tourism sector is crucially pivotal, especially to support socio-economic development through tourism industry. In this study, the use of English as a top priority in the movement and development of business in West Nusa Tenggara has also been highlighted. Hence, the essence of English for business organizations to use English as medium of their communication in other to continue their business relationships and promote their business has been clearly discussed. One of the core advantages of learning English in tourism industry are to make it easier in finding employments as most of job providers ask for the language skills, especially the capability of English communication. This is due to most of the companies are dealing with the international companies. Once the job seekers acquire oral as well as written communication skills, they can then work in any tourism-related workplaces. In the modern business world, English is widely used for all the international business, trade and commerce. As a global language, English serves the purposes of the multi-national companies' needs and it is used as a tool of communication between one business organization and the others. The existence of this information is expected to provide an overview of the English language skills used in the tourism sector to realize sustainable tourism and to support socio-economic development.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, A., Hussan, S., & Malik, M. S. (2018). An Overview of English Language as a Window of Economic Opportunity in Pakistan. *Review of Economics and Development Studies*, 4(2), 281–291. <https://doi.org/10.26710/reads.v4i2.412>
- Al-Khatib, M. (2005). English in the Workplace: An Analysis of the communication Needs of Tourism and Banking Personnel. *Asian EFL Journal*, 7(2).
- Astawa, I. N., Mantra, I. B. N., & Widiastuti, I. A. M. S. (2017). Developing Communicative English Language Tests for Tourism Vocational High School Students. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (IJSSH)*, 1(2), 58–64. <https://doi.org/10.29332/ijssh.v1n2.43>
- Astawa, I. N., Mantra, I. B. N., & Widiastuti, I. A. M. S. (2018). Communicative English Language Test: A Prospective Measuring Device for Tourism Practitioners' Employability. In *PROCEEDING The 9th International Conference of Rural Research and Planning Group (IC-RRPG)* (Vol. 9, pp. 219–230). Denpasar: UNMAS Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20184200052>
- Blue, G. M., & Harun, M. (2003). Hospitality language as a professional skill. *English for Specific Purpose*, 22, 73-91. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(01\)00031-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(01)00031-X)
- Cravotta, J. S. (1990). English for Tourism Purposes. A new approach in the field of English for Specific Purposes. Retrieved from <http://www.espfortourism.blogspot.my/2012/05/english-for-tourism-purposes.html>
- Dudley-Evans, T., & Maggie, J. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: CUP
- Edwards, N (2000). Language for business: effective needs assessment, syllabus design and materials preparation in a practical ESP case study. *English for Specific Purposes*.
- Fatos Gjata. (2017). English and its Role in the Development of Tourism in Albania and in the World. *Anglisticum Journal (IJLLIS)*, 6(11), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1079902>
- Huang, C. S. (2008). English Curriculum Planning for Hospitality. *Proceedings of 2008 International Conference of Applied Foreign Languages*, 138-140.
- Husain, D., Mariana, A., Puluhalawa, Y. M., Talib, D., & Anastasia, H. (2021). The Contribution of English Language Mastery toward Sustainable Tourism in Gorontalo. *Journal of Universal Community Empowerment Provision*, 1(1), 26–30.
- Hutchinson, T. and Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1992). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jing, W. (2010). Integrated teaching English speaking for students planning to work in tourism business in Greater Mekong Sub-region area. *Human Resources Development Journal*, 1(1), 87-98.
- Kuppan, A. (2008). An evaluation of an English course for hospitality management in a tertiary institution. *Dissertation Abstracts International*.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. (1996). The business communication classroom vs reality: what should we teach today? *English for Specific Purposes*, 15 (1), 37-51.

- Shieh, W. (2012). Hotel employees' perception on their workplace English use: An example from Taiwan. *US-China Foreign Language*, 10(11), 1729-1733.
- Simion, M. O. (2012). The importance of teaching English in the field of tourism in universities. *Annals-Economy Series*, 2, 152-154.
- Suprayogi, S., & Budi Eko, P. (2020). The Implementation Of Virtual Exhibition Project In English For Tourism Class For University Students. *Academic Journal Perspective : Education, Language, and Literature*, 8(2), 87.
<https://doi.org/10.33603/perspective.v8i2.4210>
- Tipmontree, S. (2007). The use and the problems of English and intercultural communication skills of Thai tourist police officers. M.A. Dissertation. Thailand: University of the Thai.
- Zahedpisheh, N., B Abu bakar, Z., & Saffari, N. (2017). English for Tourism and Hospitality Purposes (ETP). *English Language Teaching*, 10(9), 86.
<https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n9p86>