

THE APPLICATION OF ENGLISH IN FOREIGN TOURIST SERVICES AT ACEH TSUNAMI MUSEUM

Nurul Kamaliah¹⁾, Helmiyadi²⁾, Menalisa³⁾
STKIP Bumi Persada Lhokseumawe
E-mail: nurul_kamaliah90@yahoo.com

Abstract

After the Tsunami disaster in 2004 in Aceh, it provided a great opportunity for the province to be known to the world. Tourism has become one of the sectors that is growing and in demand by foreigners. The tourism object of Aceh Tsunami Museum Aceh is proven to be able to attract a number of tourists which has increased significantly from year to year. One of the supports of the success of tourism is the role of capable and reliable guides in the service sector. Especially that guides who use English to interact with foreign tourists. Seeing the important role of English for the advancement of tourism, this research needs to be carried out with the aim of analyzing the understanding and quality of guides to the English language used in their field of work, as well as analyzing the obstacles found in the field in terms of communicating with English. The research subjects were guides and the head of guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum. This study used qualitative research with a descriptive research design. The data collection techniques used are observation, documentation, and interview. The results showed that the application and quality of guides to English language skills when guiding foreign tourists was quite good. Some of the obstacles faced by guides in implementing English when communicating with foreign tourists are different pronunciations and accents, unstructured training, and guides do not guide regularly.

Keywords: *English, Guides, Aceh Tsunami Museum*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the development sectors that is growing and developing in Indonesia. According to the 2017 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 25, which was officially released by the 2017 World Economic Forum (WEF), Indonesia's tourism competitiveness index jumped up 8 places, from the top 50 positions in the world to rank 42. This result increased after previously Indonesia's position from the top 70 board to number 50 in 2015. Then, the Ministry of Tourism program as an effort to introduce all Indonesian cultural and cultural tourism globally namely "Wonderful Indonesia and the Enchantment of Indonesia (WI-PI)" that won the award namely "Brand of the Year Indonesia 2018" (March 9, 2018, Jakarta, Kompas.com). This achievement proved

that Indonesia was able to compete and prove the quality of Indonesian tourism in the eyes of the world.

Besides attracting domestic tourists, Indonesian tourism also has a large target to attract foreign tourists. Based on the latest data from the Central Statistics Agency 2017, the number of foreign tourist arrivals to Indonesia during 2017 reached 14.03 million. This number has increased by 21.88% compared to last year which reached 11.51 million visits. The majority of foreign tourists coming to Indonesia come from China, Australia, India, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Germany, South Korea and Malaysia. This data shows that the tourists experienced a significant increase from the previous year and came from various countries.

The Law of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism defines tourism as all kinds of tourism activities and is supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, business people, the government, and local governments. The word 'travel' has the meaning of travel activities carried out by a person or group of people with a particular purpose for recreation, personal development, or to learn the uniqueness of the attraction visited in the interim period.

Aceh, known as the 'The city of *SerambiMekkah*' because the majority of the population is Muslim, needs to be grateful because it is equipped with diverse tourist attractions, namely regions rich in natural resources, stunning geographical areas, diverse historical and cultural attractions, and also stunning works of art. Travel Attractions are all things that have a uniqueness, beauty, and value in the form of diversity of natural wealth, culture, and man-made products that are targeted or the purpose of tourist visits (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2009). This potential provides a great opportunity for the province to promote itself nationally and internationally.

The researchers took the Aceh Tsunami Museum as the object of research. The museum is a cultural asset that is a tourist attraction. The museum is an institution that is permanent, does not seek profit, serves the community, is open to the public, obtains, maintains, connects, and exhibits artifacts about human identity and its environment for the purpose of study, education and reaction (International Council of Museum). The museum is a means to care for and display cultural heritage objects, a place for providing information and informative cultural

guidance to students. In other words that the museum could educate the society related to the nation's life, the nation's personality, the national resilience, and the archipelago insight (Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Museum Handbook Palembang, 2013).

The Aceh Tsunami Museum is a museum that built as a symbolic building for the people of Aceh to honor around 240,000 victims in the incident of the occurrence of a major tsunami disaster on December 26, 2004 ago. The existence of this building is to give a message and be a lesson for future generations to always reflect that the great tsunami disaster had occurred in Aceh and claimed many victims. It is located on Jl. Sultan Iskandar Muda, No.3, Sukaramai, Baiturrahman, Kota Banda Aceh, Aceh.

The arrival of foreign tourists to a tourist attraction can't be separated from the management or service of the tourist attraction. One of the priority tourism services that need more attention is the tour guide. Udoyono (2008: 2) explained that a tour guide is someone who has special skills including foreign languages, knowledge of history, social, political, economic, and cultural conditions of Indonesia, and knowledge of tourist attractions in Indonesia, as well as has a positive mental attitude to provide services to tourists. Thus, the good tour guides determine the good tourist satisfaction.

Guides according to the Decree of the Minister of Tourism, Post and Telecommunications No: KM.82 / PW.102 / MPPT-88 dated 17 September 1988, what is meant by guides is someone who is in charge of providing guidance, lighting and instructions on attractions and helping everything needed traveler. Meanwhile, Suwantoro (1997: 13) states "A tour guide

is someone who gives explanations and instructions to tourists and other travelers about everything they want to see and witness when they visit a particular object, place or tourist area".

English is one of the keys to the success of guides in serving foreign tourists. English should be an international language which is dominated by foreign tourists from various countries, compared to other foreign languages. The quality of a tour guide's English will have a significant impact on the satisfaction and expectations of tourists in obtaining information.

The main function of language is as a medium of communication between community members (Keraf, 1997: 1). Communication is needed to convey ideas, thoughts, concept ideas or ideas with informative and communicative purposes. Communication can be established well if the speaker and listener have good language knowledge and realize the language skills appropriately (Omaggio, 1986).

English consists of 4 (four) skills, namely speaking skills, listening skills, reading skills and writing skills (Susanto, 2015: 243). In the world of tourism, the skills that become a priority that must be mastered by guides are speaking and listening. Meanwhile, reading and writing become supporting skills in developing information and insights about tourism.

However, according to the interview results obtained by researchers from the Aceh Tsunami Museum tour guide, the tour guide still had some obstacles in terms of implementing his English ability to communicate with foreign tourists at the Aceh Tsunami Museum. This might happen because English is not a native language that is used every day. Some of the guides still have little English vocabulary, lack of

experience, incorrect pronunciation and guides not English alumni.

Based on the background described above, the formulations of the problems to be investigated are: how is the application of English used in communicating with foreign tourists? And what are the obstacles faced by guides in implementing English when communicating with foreign tourists?

METHOD

This research used a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is the research that is used to describe, explain and answer the problems about phenomena and events that are taking place (Arifin, 2011: 41). Qualitative research is the research that aims to understand social phenomena on the research subjects including behavior, perception, motivation, action, and others as a whole that occur at certain times and conditions by describing them in the form of words and language, in a special and natural context (Moleong, 2011). The method used in this research is descriptive research design. This design is very appropriate in accordance with the characteristics of qualitative research. The subjects in this study were the local guides of Aceh Tsunami Museum, they are one head of guides and four guides. This research was conducted using three data collection techniques, namely: observation, interview and documentation study. Then, the data were analyzed through several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data verification or drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono, 2012: 337).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1) The application and quality of the English language used in

communicating with foreign tourists.

In terms of the four types of language skills, speaking and listening are the two basic skills that are more dominantly needed in guiding matters. Specifically, this research prioritizes the discussions on speaking abilities possessed by guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum.

This refers to the background about the importance of mastering English by guides to serve foreign tourists in the Aceh Tsunami museum. The ability to speak in English contributes greatly to providing information, clarifying information and convincing tourists. According to Brown: 2004, there are several components that affect the quality of speaking guides, namely: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. In addition, several other components, such as self-confidence and body gestures, also contribute to supporting the performance of guides.

According to interviews result, grammar in language does not become a major obstacle in guiding. The language used to guide is not a standard or formal language or in other words, information will be conveyed to tourists as long as the guide is able to use English with simple grammars such as pronouns, to be, WH questions, prepositions, simple tense, and special expressions. However, it would be more effective if the guide could keep improving his grammar skills to become a better guide.

Vocabulary is the main foundation of language, from saying a word, a phrase eventa sentence. The lack of vocabulary owned by a tour guide will have a bad effect on the fabric of communication to tourists. Most of the vocabulary used by museum guides is all vocabulary related to

tourism, tsunami events, Acehnese culture, history and description of museum buildings, contents of museums and disasters.

Pronunciation is also an important aspect in the delivery of information. Especially for a local guide who guides foreign tourists who have different language pronunciations. No matter how many guides master the vocabulary, but if it is not correct in its pronunciation to tourists, it will be feared to cause misunderstanding of intentions and information.

Confidence and fluency to speak are two components that complement each other. Confidence will arise when guides can master grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation well. Confidence can also be formed by frequent practice and experience. When self-confidence can be carried out well, then all the information that the tour guides want to disclose will be conveyed smoothly.

Body movements can be said to be a lifesaving component for guides. Body gesture is a nonverbal communication in which the speaker uses gestures or body movements that have certain meanings and intentions (Liliweri: 1994). Performing certain body movements will usually be used in an urgent condition that is when guides lose ideas or words in the delivery of information. Body movements are usually accompanied by verbal words as well as to provide support or reinforcement when communicating. This is very reasonable because seeing the background of different tourists and the conditions of the tour guides. Conveying messages through body movements can be done in the form of gestures, facial expressions, touch, eye sight, silence, and other body movements (Clayton: 2003).

Below are some brief dialogs that occur while the guiding process is ongoing.

Greeting

Guide : Hello, Good morning everybody?

Tourist : Hello, Good morning

Guide : Welcome to our country, especially to this Museum Tsunami Aceh.

Tourist : Oh yeahhh... thank you.

Guide : Do you ever visit it before?

Introducing

Guide : My name is Annisa

I'm glad to be your guide today. I know this place very well. I've been working in this museum since 2014. I'll accompany you to go around.

Tourist : Wow, that's nice... you had known about this place a lot. We hope you can give us much information.

Telling about the Aceh Tsunami Museum

Guide : Ladies and gentleman.

As we know that, Aceh Tsunami Museum is one of the famous tourism objects in Aceh and it's as a heritage monument for Aceh's society.

Tourist : We are not patient to explore it.

Guide : This building has the concept as...

This building consists of four floors....

Explaining about the route trip that to be taken.

Guide : Previously, I'll explain you about our route of our exploration today. We'll start from buying ticket before coming inside.

Then...

After that....

Later on....

Afterwards....

Ticketing

Guide : Ok guys, we'll buy ticket a ticket per person.

Tourist : How much is this?

Guide : Rp.3000 for one person

In the "Memorial Room"

Guide : This room is called "memories room" which means the victims of Tsunami was in the dark when the water destroyed them.

Guide : What do you mean?

In the "Tsunami Showroom"

Tourist : What is the purpose of this picture?

Guide : This is the condition of Mesjid Raya Baiturrahman area which is every object that is washed away from various place will gather there too much.

Tourist : Oh. I see. So messed up there.

Closing

Guide : Finally, we are at the end of our trip today. I hope you are satisfied for my guidance.

Tourist : We fell like that. Thank you very much.

Guide : You're welcome. Nice to meet you.

Tourist : Nice to meet you too.

Based on the result of collected data, it shows that being a professional guide on duty at the museum has a task that is not easy, in addition to having knowledge related to museum knowledge; they also have language competence to communicate well. Especially when guides serve foreign tourists, then English language skills must always be sharpened

for the achievement of interactive communication.

In order to welcome and serve foreign tourists, foreign languages are an important element that must be mastered by tourism operators. In an economic perspective, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, (1994) stated that the overall decision of customers or tourists might be related to their assessment of service quality. Tour guides are the people who interact the most, face to face and adapt to tourists starting from the beginning to the end of the visit. The foreign language referred to is at least the mastery of English, because it is considered as the most dominant language and the majority is used by foreign tourists from each country. It can be said that the mastery of English by a guide is assumed as the spearhead in the success of serving and fulfilling the satisfaction of foreign tourists.

Therefore, the quality of a tour guide has a big influence on tourist satisfaction. In this term, the using of English by a tour guide is assumed as one of the major service to satisfy the foreign tourists' purpose. The cumulative customer satisfaction is an overall evaluation based on the number of purchases and consumption experience with goods or services over time (Fornel, 1992; Bitner & Hubbert, 1994). The data also confirmed that when a traveler on his trip feels satisfied that meets his expectations, he will have a good experience and dare to pay more for something. But conversely if a tourist is not satisfied then he will stop buying (Reisinger & Turner, 2003).

2) The obstacles faced by guides in implementing English when communicating with foreign tourists

Associated with the service and development of English for foreign tourists in the field, the guides were faced with several situations that are not always pleasant, including:

1. Different pronunciation and accent

Each language has a certain pronunciation and accent. Likewise, the pronunciation of English by everyone from a variety is also different. Pronunciation is very important in the effort to make the communication process easy to understand. All guides stated that the English that was the most difficult to understand was that spoken by tourists from Japan compared to China and France. In the Messi article: 2014, it was revealed that there are five reasons why Japanese people find it difficult to learn English, namely: Japanese are conservative of English, Japanese are not active speakers, Japanese are afraid of making mistakes, Japanese people learn English with furigana, and English is not learned from an early age. In Japanese there are no sounds of death and ending in consonants. All words in Japanese end in vowels and only one consonant, "N". So in Japanese absorption words, the vowels are needed. For example: "passport" is pronounced "*pasuputo*". So, it can be said that even though they read a foreign language, the pronunciation still uses Japanese.

2. Irregular schedule of seminars and trainings

One effort to improve the quality of guides by museum institutions is to provide guidance or training. According to the head of the museum guide, providing guidance and regular evaluation meetings conducted every month, or even more intensive according to the need to identify the latest conditions. However, involving guides in workshops, there was no training or

seminars schedule certainly not even there once every year. This condition occurs because of colliding with the schedule of events and also the availability of a minimal budget.

3. Guides did not guide regularly

The arrival of foreign tourists to the Aceh Tsunami Museum is unpredictable at any time. Thus, the guides could not apply their English skills directly and in a regular time. The Greek philosopher Aristotle said "excellence is an art that is won by practice and habits". Likewise what happens to guides, when they do not use English practice routinely, their abilities will not be honed so that it affects their performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of research and overall data analysis can be obtained the following conclusions.

1. The application and quality of guides for English language skills when guiding foreign tourists is quite good. Some important aspects that really support their professionalism are mastering vocabulary related to tourism, correct pronunciation, fluency in speaking, body language in conveying intentions, and self-confidence. Grammar mastery is not a major obstacle in guiding because the English language used to guide is not a standard or formal language.
2. Some of the obstacles faced by guides in implementing English when communicating with foreign tourists. (1) Different pronunciation and accent of each tourist, because not all tourists who visit use English as their mother tongue. Pronunciation and accent by Japanese tourists is the most difficult to understand compared to Chinese and French. (2) Irregular schedule of

seminars and trainings. The themes of guiding and English are very much needed by guides. (3) Guides did not guide regularly. The arrival of foreign tourists to the Aceh Tsunami Museum is unpredictable at any time. Thus, guides could not apply their English skills directly and in a regular time.

As for the suggestions, the authors can point out in connection with the results of the research obtained are:

1. Increasing the number of guides to provide excellent service to the tourists to maintain the image and existence of the Aceh Tsunami Museum as a tourist attraction. The guides provided should also include guides who have other foreign language skills besides English, such as Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic.
2. There is a need to supply knowledge and skills training in a structured, routine and equitable manner for all guides to develop the potential of guides in the Aceh Tsunami Museum. Expected training material related to guiding and travel content, as well as English language skills, such as speaking, conversation classes, and disaster vocabulary.

REFERENCES

- World Economic Forum (WEF). The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI). 2017
- Kompas. 9 Maret 2018. Jakarta. 2018
- Badan Pusat Statistik. Statistik Indonesia Tahun 2017. Jakarta Pusat. 2017
- Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 10 Tahun 2009 tentang Kepariwisata

- Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Kota Palembang. *Buku Panduan Museum Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II*. Palembang: CV. Limas Jaya. 2013.
- Udoyono, B. *Sukses Menjadi Pramuwisata Profesional*. Bekasi: Kesaint Blanc. 2008.
- Keputusan Menteri Pariwisata, Pos dan Telekomunikasi Nomor: KM.82/PW.102/MPPT-88 1988.
- Suwantoro, G. *Dasar-Dasar Pariwisata*. Yogyakarta: Andi. 1997.
- Keraf, G. *Komposisi: Sebuah Pengantar Kemahiran Bahasa*. Ende, Flores: Penerbit Nusa Indah. 1997.
- Omaggio, A. C. *Teaching Language in Context: Proficiency-Oriented Instruction*. United State of America: Heinle and Heinle. 1986.
- Susanto, A. *Teori Belajar dan Pembelajaran di Sekolah Dasar*. Jakarta: Prenada Media Group. 2015.
- Arifin, Z. *Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya. 2011.
- Moleong, L. J. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Jakarta: Remaja Rosdakarya. 2011.
- Sugiyono. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R & D*. Bandung: Alfabeta. 2012.
- Brown, H. D. *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. San Fransisco State University. 2004.
- Liliweri, A. *Komunikasi Verbal dan Non Verbal*. Bandung: PT. Citra Aditya Bakti. 1994.
- Clayton, P. *Body Language at Work*. London: Octopus Publishing Group. 2003.
- Parasuraman, A., Berry, Leonard L, and Zeithaml, Valerie A. "Reassessment of Expectations as a Comparison Standart in Measuring Service Quality: Implications for Future Research," *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 58, pp. 111-124. 1994.
- Fornell, C. A *National Customer Satisfaction Barometer: The Swedish Experience*, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol 56. 1992.
- Reisinger, Y. & Turner, L.W. *Cross Cultural Behavior in Tourism: Concepts and Analysis*. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann. 2003.
- <http://jadiberita.com/24283/5-alasan-orang-jepang-sulit-belajar-bahasa-inggris.html>