

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURISM SECTOR IN BANDA ACEH

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Abstract

This study aims to find out how important the use of English is in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh and to find out how English is currently used in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh. The research method used a mixed-method design. The research participants were the leaders and staff at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office, Kana Tour and Travel, MU Wisata Tour and Travel Company, and Awa Tour and Travel which consists of 30 people, they are 4 leaders and 26 staff. This study used questionnaires and interviews as the instruments. The formula used to analyze the questionnaire data was the percentage formula from the Likert scale, and the interviews results were done through data transcription. After collecting data, it was found that based on the questionnaire answers of the staffs (at Banda Aceh City Tourism Office and Travel Agencies), the results of using English in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh reached 93% which were considered important, and only 7% were not important. Meanwhile, currently in the tourism sector in Banda Aceh, English was also very important to use. These results are based on the interview answers of the leaders (at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office and Travel Agencies). But the reasons for using it were different, such as making tour packages, providing tourism information, managing travel documents, interacting with international customers, carrying out activities in their respective fields, and working with other relevant agencies.

Keywords: *Importance, English, Development, Tourism, Sector*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, in Aceh during the implementation of "Aceh Kreatif", the tourism sector in Banda Aceh increased rapidly. One of the flagship programs being developed by the Aceh Provincial Government (Pemprov) is the development of the tourism sector combined with the development of community creative businesses. Henceforth, the Aceh government is aggressively promoting tourism and cultural objects as halal tourism to the world or international level. The selection of Aceh as the World's Best Halal Cultural Destination has further encouraged us to be more enthusiastic about promoting and improving various tourist facilities. According to Fachri (2019) Aceh tourism can achieve the best ranking in the Global Muslim Travel Index. Thus, for the development of the tourism sector, it continues to carry out promotions and improvements in various fields. Therefore, it is necessary to use good language as a mean to promote it. Yasmin et al. (2016) claim that English is needed for tourism workers in three important ways, namely promotion, placement, and personal branding. Therefore, it is clear that English is mandatory for tourism workers from the lower up to the upper level since it is believed that a good

communication between tour guide and the guest can be obtained when both can master English well (Bukit, 2020).

However, there is still a problem to some tourism workers who have limited English that will hinder the development process of the tourism sector. In order to overcome the problem, the writers propose English as a mean of the development in the tourism sector. Some related studies have been conducted by other writers. First of all, a study by Aisy (2018) entitled *A Need Analysis of English Language Use for Tourism: A Case Study in Rahmat International Wildlife Museum & Gallery*. The results of the study found that the most important English skill that the tourism employees in Rahmat International Wildlife Museum & Gallery are listening and speaking but it is also considered as the most problematic to them. The tourism employees in the museum have fewer problems in reading and writing skills. The second one is a study by Al-Saadi (2015) entitled *the Importance of English Language in the Development of Tourism Management*. The result of previous research is that the use of English can encourage practitioners to pay attention to the language issue. Collaboration between English education providers and tourism organizations is needed if they want to compete in the global market.

Based on the above background, the writers intend to conduct a study with the title *The Importance of English in the Development of the Tourism Sector in Banda Aceh*. This study emphasizes the use of English in the tourism sector as a mean of development, especially in the tourism sector in Banda Aceh. Since this research has never been conducted before, the writers want to conduct a study to find out how important the use of English is in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh and to find out how English is currently used in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh.

2. Literature Review

The Importance of English in the Present

As stated by Galloway and Rose (2015), English is the dominant language in some countries, and widely spoken around the world. English has a special role in all aspects of life, because it can be used to improve the relationship in international forums, strengthen relationship among nations, and many more. There are more and more established foreign companies and fields that can attract foreign countries as a contributor to foreign exchange and regional income in Indonesia. Thus, the use of international languages such as English is very widespread, as well as in aspiring entrepreneurs and job seekers that must be able to master English to keep up with the times in this era of globalization. As a result, it is expected that by having a good English mastery can be one of the solutions in reducing the number of unemployed in Indonesia.

As stated by Nasution (2018), English language skills are needed in the current era. In addition to speaking, reading and writing skills are also important to be mastered by workers in workplace. Having a good reading and writing skills can help workers in completing their works such as gaining the meaning from the materials and writing business letters (Azzahra, 2021; Tursina, Susanty & Efendi, 2021). Furthermore, by mastering English well, people can easily find the job, establishing good social interactions, improving careers in workplace, seeking knowledge that can open up insights into science and technology. It is obvious that English mastery become one of the requirements that asked by established company in selecting the employee. Consequently, by having a good English mastery, it will help businesses, fields, and even companies meet their needs and help develop the potential of their regions and countries.

The Importance of the Tourism Sector in Indonesia

This is in line with what is stated in Undang-Undang Nomor 10 Tahun 2009 concerning Tourism which states that the Implementation of Tourism is aimed at increasing national income in the context of increasing the welfare and prosperity of the people, expanding and equalizing business opportunities and employment opportunities, encouraging regional development, introducing and utilizing tourism objects and attractions in Indonesia as well as fostering a love of the country and strengthening friendship between nations. The tourism sector plays an important role in the economy in Indonesia as a whole and is increasingly important in line with current developments, where everything must be as much as possible

by the demands of the times. In this tourism sector, the contribution will be made through foreign exchange earnings, regional income, regional development, as well as investment and employment absorption as well as business development that is spread across various parts of the region in Indonesia. On the other hand, efforts to increase the consumption of foreign tourists also have a greater impact on increasing national income than the impact of increasing the consumption of domestic tourists.

From the results of the achievement of tourism development targets, it is more directed to other economic sectors related to the tourism sector, such as hotels and restaurants, transportation, the handicraft industry, and others. So that tourism can and can accelerate regional or community economic growth as well as the creation of jobs for those who are looking for work.

Using English in the Development of the Tourism Sector

Mastery of English can increase customer satisfaction with the services provided in the tourism sector (Al-Saadi, 2015). This is because English is an international language that is widely used by almost everyone in this world. Often seen a lot of tourists or foreigners who cannot speak Indonesian to communicate. So that with English as a means of communication between nations there will be direct communication between foreign tourists and tourism or residents without the help of a translator who can help increase the potential of tourist destinations and become an added value so that communication can be established smoothly.

Therefore, the ability and communication skills of the community will certainly refer back to one of the supporting elements of the progress of tourism potential, namely foreign languages, especially English. The reason is if the government and the local community want to attract foreign tourists as a contributor to foreign exchange and tourism area income. The dependence of society and tourism on the need for translators can be limited because people can communicate on their own.

3. Research Method

This research used a mixed-method design. This mixed-method design is used to provide a better understanding of the research problems and questions than either method by itself (Geluykens, 2008). In a multiple method design, quantitative and qualitative research methods were combined rather than integrated. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and qualitative data through interviews.

The population in this research was 30 people. Besides, because the population is not too large, the writers took the entire population to be the sample in this research. Arikunto (2006) states that if the subject is less than 100, it is better to take all the subjects of the population and when the subject is greater, it may be taken between 10-15% or 15%-25%. Among them, there were 4 leaders and 26 staff at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office, Kana Tour and Travel, MU Wisata Tour and Travel Company, and Awa Tour and Travel.

In collecting the data, this research used questionnaires and interviews as the instruments. The items of the questionnaire question are ten, which asked the staff about how important is the use of English in developing the Tourism Sector in Banda Aceh. The items of interview question are five, which asked the leaders about how is the current use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh.

In the process of analyzing the data in this study, the formula used to obtain the percentage results from the questionnaire questions is as follows, (Sugiyono, 2008):

$$P = f / n \times 100$$

Notes:

P: Percentage

F: Frequency of each questioner answer

N: Number of respondents

To get valid interview data results, the writers collected data from the right informants according to the data selection and analyzes the data in detail. Therefore, to analyze the interview data, the writers started by using Indonesian when interviewing the leaders. Then record the answers from the leaders.

After that, listening to the results of the interviews and classified based on the transcription and the last coding and conclusion.

4. Results and Discussion

After collecting the data, the writers analyzed the data to get a percentage from the questionnaire and interview. The following is data from research that has been carried out:

The Questionnaire Results from the Staff of the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office

The purpose of using this point is to determine the authenticity of the answers made by 17 staff at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office. The results of the questionnaire can be seen from the table below:

Table 1. The Responses of Banda Aceh City Tourism Office Staff Regarding the Importance of Using English in the Development of the Tourism Sector

ASPECT Points (questionnaire questions)	FREQUENCY (F)			
	VI	I	NI	NVI
The preparation of a tourism promotion work plan	2 12%	13 76%	2 12%	0 -
The preparation of a tourism profile data base	3 18%	12 70%	2 12%	0 -
The analysis of tourism market developments and travel patterns	0 -	16 94%	1 6%	0 -
The publishing and publication of tourism promotion through printed media	6 35%	10 59%	1 6%	0 -
The tourism marketing information system	7 41%	10 59%	0 -	0 -
The tourism business in collaboration with related agencies	5 29%	12 70%	0 -	0 -
The dissemination of tourism promotion through advertising media	0 -	15 88%	2 12%	0 -
The implementation of the tourism exhibition	1 6%	13 76%	3 18%	0 -
The monitoring and evaluation in the field of promotion and marketing	6 35%	10 59%	1 6%	0 -
The implementation of conventions, monitoring and promotional exhibitions	1 6%	11 65%	5 29%	0 -

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that from the 10 points questionnaire questions (4 written English and 6 spoken English) given to 17 staff of the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office about how important the use of English is in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh, the results of the study show that the staff who answered importantly was more than not important.

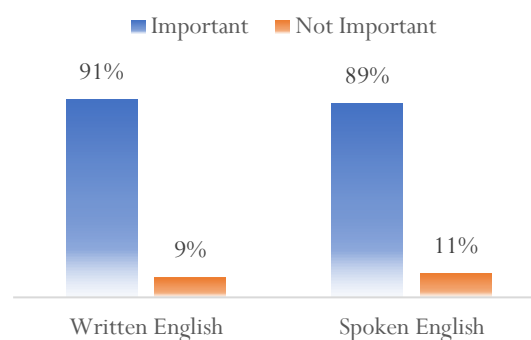


Figure 1. The Percentages Results from Responses at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office Regarding the Importance of Using English in the development of the Tourism Sector

From figure 1, it can be concluded that the percentage of written English points (Important) was higher than the other percentages with an importance level of 91%. While the lowest percentage was

written English (Not Important), this is because the results obtained were smaller than the importance level, namely 9%. Whereas those who answered important from spoken English reached 89%, and those who answered were not important from spoken English were 11%. Thus, it has been confirmed that the use of English is one of the most influential tools in the development of the tourism sector. As in making brochures, tourism marketing such as exhibitions, advertisements and so on need English.

The Questionnaire Results from the Staff of the Travel Agencies

All questionnaires about How important is the use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh have been answered by 9 staff at the (K.T, M.U, and A.T). The results of the questionnaire can be seen from the table below:

Table 2. The Travel Agency Staffs’ Responses Regarding the Importance of Using English in the Development of the Tourism Sector

ASPECT Points (questionnaire questions)	FREQUENCY (F)			
	VI	I	NI	NVI
The planning and packaging tour packages	6 67%	3 33%	0 -	0 -
The preparation of tour packages including (travel agenda, accommodation, etc.)	6 67%	3 33%	0 -	0 -
The provision of tourist information both through online and printed media	4 44%	5 56%	0 -	0 -
The management of individual or corporate business travel	1 11%	8 89%	0 -	0 -
The management of needs at the airport both check-in and lounge	1 11%	7 78%	1 11%	0 -
The organizing religious worship and intensive travel	1 11%	7 78%	1 11%	0 -
The carry out travel document arrangements	5 56%	4 44%	0 -	0 -
The conducting and selling tour packages and other tourism services	4 44%	5 56%	0 -	0 -
The provide training and information for travel needs	3 33%	5 56%	1 11%	0 -
Thepromote tour packages through advertising or social media	5 56%	3 33%	1 11%	0 -

The conclusion was from 10 questionnaire questions (5 of written English and 5 of spoken English) given to 9 staff at (K.T, M.U, and A.T) about How important is the use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh, which the results showed that the staff who answered importantly were more than those who answered not important.

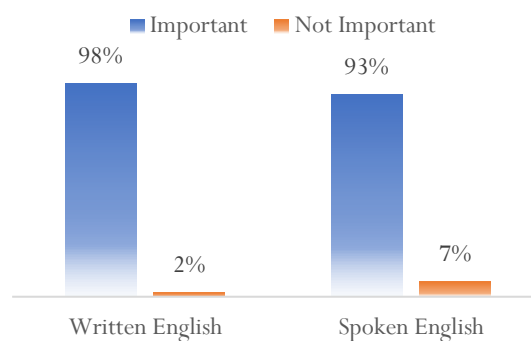


Figure 2. The Percentages Results from Responses at the Travel Agencies Regarding the Importance of Using English In the development of the Tourism Sector

From the results of figure above, it can be concluded that according to the staff at the travel agencies, the importance of using written English reached 98%, it is the highest result of the other points. While the not importance of using written English reached 2%. In contrast to the results of written English, the results of spoken English staff who answered importantly were 93%, while the other 7% stated that the use of spoken English was not important. This means that the use of English is indeed one of the most influential tools in developing the tourism sector. For example, making tour packages, providing tourist information, managing travel documents, and so on, really requires English.

Furthermore, to obtain the final result of the first research question, the writers has combined the results of written English and spoken English from the two agencies according to the frequency, and the results obtained are also divided into two. So it can be concluded that the result of the first research question about how important is the use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh reached 93% which stated that the use of English was important in the developing sector in Banda Aceh, while those who stated the percentage didn't have to be 7%.

The Interview Results from the Staff of the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office and Travel Agencies.

This interview consists of 5 question items. All interviews about How is the current use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh have been answered. The following are data from the results of research that has been carried out:

In this interview results, from the first question about how do you respond to the use of English in the tourism sector?. All the leaders answered that English was important and very needed in the tourism sector today. But the reasons were different.

Excerpt 1

MU-1 *"Bahasa Inggris menjadi kebutuhan sekarang ini, karena travelnya sudah terbuka secara umum sehingga tamu internasional pun sudah lumayan banyak dan otomatis harus berbicara dalam Bahasa Inggris juga"* [English is a necessity nowadays, because the travel is open in general so that international guests are already quite a lot and automatically have to speak English as well].

Excerpt 2

TO-1 *"Bahasa Inggris itu sangat diperlukan, jika ada wisatawan mancanegara yang ingin mendapatkan informasi terkait tempat wisata atau akomodasi pasti mereka datangnya ke Dinas Pariwisata Kota Banda Aceh, dan itu sangat penting dan perlu menggunakan Basaha Inggris"* [English is very necessary, if there are foreign tourists who want to get information regarding tourist attractions or accommodation, they will definitely come to the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office, and it is very important and needs to use English].

For the second question, the writers asked about do staff use English when interacting with fellow staff?. The answer from all the leaders was no.

Excerpt 3

AT-2 *"Penggunaan Bahasa Inggris hanya ketika berinteraksi dengan tamu luar/internasional saja, tidak dengan sesama staff"* [use English only when interacting with foreign / international guests, not with fellow staff].

Excerpt 4

TO-2 *"Saat ini tidak ada interaksi sesama staff dengan menggunakan Bahasa Inggris"* [Currently there is no interaction among staff using English].

Furthermore, the third question that the writers asked about how is the use of English at this time when staff carry out activities in their respective fields?. From this question, each leader gave a different response.

Excerpt 5

AT-3 *"Bahasa Inggris digunakan jika ada paket tour sajakarena Bahasa Inggris penggunaannya itu lebih ke tour, tapi kalau dari sistem aplikasinya kebanyakan Bahasa Inggris juga, jadi minimal vovab dasar Bahasa Inggris nya"*

harus bisa” [English is used only if there is a tour package because English is more like a tour, but if the application system is mostly English too, so at least basic English vocabulary must be able].

Excerpt 6

MU-3 “*Bahasa Inggris digunakan ketika ticketing dan reservasi saja, karena penggunaan Bahasa Inggris sekarang sudah menjadi kebutuhan dibagian itu*” [English is used when ticketing and reservation only, because the use of English has now become a necessity in that section].

Excerpt 7

TO-3 “*Bahasa Inggris digunakan dalam setiap bidang aktifitas di sektor pariwisata ini, seperti dibagian promosi domestik ataupun internasional, dalam pembuatan brosur dan dalam memberikan informasi di beberapa tempat destinasi wisata*” [English is used in every field of activity in the tourism sector, such as in the domestic or international promotion section, in the production of brochures and in providing information on several tourist destinations].

Followed by the fourth question, the writers asked about do staff use English when interacting with customers? How is it used?. From these questions, each leader gave a response according to the experience it had gained in the field and the office.

Excerpt 8

AT-4 “*Jika berinteraksi dengan tourist memang harus menggunakan Bahasa Inggris, contoh penggunaannya seperti memberi tahu harga dan menanyakan destinasi*” [if interacting with a tourist you must use English, examples of use such as telling prices and asking for destinations].

Excerpt 9

MU-4 “*Iya, kalau untuk sekarang ini penggunaannya lancar, kalau ada tamu luar harus Bahasa Inggris dan sudah bagus. Contoh penggunaannya seperti untuk menanyakan rute dan kebutuhan dari pelanggan*” [yes, for now the usage is smooth, if there are foreign guests they must speak English and it's good. Examples of its use are like asking for routes and needs from customers].

Excerpt 10

TO-4 “*Jika pekerja yang dilapangan artinya di objek wisata, maka pekerja itu saling berinteraksi dengan pengunjung wisatawan mancanegara, dan yang pasti menggunakan Bahasa Inggris*” [if the workers in the field mean at a tourist attraction, then the workers interact with foreign tourists, and certainly use English].

And finally, the fifth question is related to is English used when collaborating with other relevant agencies? How is it used?. From these answers, the writers got different answers from each leader.

Excerpt 11

MU-5 “*Terkait kerja sama misalnya dengan instansi NGO, kerja sama dengan airlines pun airlines luar, dan pengurusan visa juga dengan kedutaan yang berbahasa Inggris*” [related to cooperation, for example with NGO agencies, cooperation with airlines and foreign airlines, and visa management also with embassies that speak English].

Excerpt 12

KT-5 “*Iya, adanya kerja sama dengan pihak asing. Karena travel ini termasuk agent internasional yang artinya agent terakreditasi, jadi ketika kerja sama via email pun yang mana tidak berinteraksi langsung tetapi juga perlu menggunakan Bahasa Inggris*” [yes, there is cooperation with foreign parties. Because this travel is an international agent, which means that the agent is accredited, so when collaborating via email, which does not interact directly but also needs to use English].

Excerpt 13

TO-5 “*Iya, jika ada tamu dari luar terkait kerja sama seperti Malaysia, Australia dan sebagainya, itu pasti menggunakan Bahasa Inggris*” [yes, if there are guests from outside related to cooperation such as Malaysia, Australia and so on, it must be in English].

Therefore from the five questions above, it can be concluded that the current use of English in several tourism sectors in Banda Aceh, especially for the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office and Travel Agencies was very important. The use of English was very important and necessary in interacting and communicating while working, starting from interaction with fellow staff, with domestic and international customers, when working with other relevant agencies, and in carrying out activities in their respective fields, such as: making tour packages, providing tourism information, managing travel documents. That way, from the services provided to customers, they will feel their needs and satisfaction are being met and the cooperation will also remain smooth. So that the tourism sector in Banda Aceh will develop rapidly.

Discussion

The first discussion is about how important is the use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh. Meanwhile, the second discussion focuses on how is the current use of English in developing the tourism sector in Banda Aceh.

The intensity related to the question from the focus of the first discussion has found results based on questionnaire answers of the staff, it was found that 93% believed that the use of English (both written and spoken English) was important in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh. This result is similar to the previous study by Aisy (2018), which also emphasizes the importance of English skill, particularly the listening and speaking skill (spoken English) in the tourism sector.

Meanwhile, related to the result from the focus of the second discussion, based on the results of interviews, the writers has also found that the current use of English in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh was very important and necessary in interacting and communicating while working, starting from interaction with fellow staff and with domestic and international customers, in carrying out activities in their respective fields, and when working with other relevant agencies. This result is also similar to the previous study by Al-Saadi (2015), which claims that English is important for global communication, particularly to compete in the global market in the tourism sector. Even though the previous study seemed to be more futuristic, while this current study had a focus on daily use, both of the study claimed that English is important for communication needs in the tourism sector.

Therefore, from the above discussion, it can be concluded that the use of English has a positive and significant influence in the tourism sector, such as: in making tour packages, providing tourism information, managing travel documents, interacting with international customers, carrying out activities in their respective fields, and working with other relevant agencies. The use of English helped the leaders and staffs in a way that is easier to communicate with foreigners, faster, and more fun for both of them so that it is very supportive of tourism development, especially in Banda Aceh.

5. Conclusions

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, the writers obtain conclusions that can be drawn from this study regarding the Importance of English in the Development of the Tourism Sector in Banda Aceh as follows:

1. The importance of using English in the development of the tourism sector in Banda Aceh has a very important role. Based on the questionnaire answers of the staffs (at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office and Travel Agencies), the results of using English in the study showed that the qualifications were good with a percentage of 93% that was included in the important, and only 7% it was not important.
2. The current use of English in the tourism sector in Banda Aceh was also very important. These results are based on the interview answers of the leaders (at the Banda Aceh City Tourism Office and Travel Agencies). The use of English was also a positive and significant influence in the

tourism sector, such as: making tour packages, providing tourism information, managing travel documents, interacting with international customers, carrying out activities in their respective fields, and working with other relevant agencies.

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